

President Ebrahim Raisi, Heading a High-Ranking Delegation, Will Attend The 22nd Meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in The City of Samarkand in Uzbekistan

IRAN NEWS

Health Ministry Announced on Monday That the Number of Deaths From the COVID-19 in Iran Increased to **144,199** With **21** More Iranians Killed by the Deadly Virus Over the Past 24 Hours

VOL. XXVIII, No. 7589 TEHRAN Price 50,000 Rials

www.irannewsdaily.com

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 13, 2022 - SHAHRIVAR 22, 1401

2 DOMESTIC

E3 Adopt Wrong Stance At Inappropriate Time In Vienna Talks

> SEE PAGE 2



3 DOMESTIC

Iran Exports To Iraq Down 8%

> SEE PAGE 3



4 INTERNATIONAL

Ukraine Offensive Snowballs With Fall of Russian Stronghold

> SEE PAGE 4



8 SPORTS

Verstappen Wins Italian GP To Close in on F1 Title

> SEE PAGE 8



Iran Army Develops Advanced Drone Designed To Hit Tel Aviv, Haifa

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - A high-ranking Iranian military commander says the country has developed an advanced drone designed to target the coastal cities of Tel Aviv and Haifa in the Israeli-occupied territories in case of a military confrontation with the regime.

The Arash-2 drone, which is a newer version of the previously unveiled Arash-1 aircraft, has been developed by the Iranian Army's Ground Force, the force's commander, Brigadier General Kioumars Heydari, told the state-run IRIB TV1 television channel during an interview broadcast late on Sunday.

The new drone enjoys unique specifications and capabilities, and can successfully retrieve information multiple times before it strikes and destroys the designated target, Heydari explained.

"The drone has been specifically designed to target Haifa and Tel Aviv," he said, hailing it as a "peerless" aerial vehicle.

It has already been added to the Iranian Army's inventory, and its capabilities will be showcased during future military exercises, Heydari added.

See Page 7

Official Blames West for Prolongation of Nuclear Talks

TEHRAN (PressTV) - An adviser to Iranian negotiators at the Vienna talks says there could have been a deal on reviving the 2015 nuclear accord months ago if the United States and its European allies had not "dragged their feet."

"If the US/E3 had not dragged their feet in Vienna, there could have been a deal months ago. The current text was achievable long ago," Mohammad Marandi said in a post on his Twitter account.

He also blamed U.S. President Joe Biden for stalling the talks between Iran and the other parties to the nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), because he fears that his predecessor Donald Trump would call his administration weak for giving concessions to Iran.

"Now team Biden is stalling, because it fears Trump will call it weak," Marandi said.

The advisor once again reiterated Iran's demand for an "airtight text" and a "clear path forward."

See Page 7

Supreme Leader Outlines General Policies of 7th National Development Plan



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei has outlined the general policies of the country's Seventh Five-year National Development Plan (2022-2026), IRIB reported.

As reported, the mentioned policies are determined with a focus on economic development and the promotion of justice as the major priorities.

The plan has set an average economic growth of eight percent as the goal for the duration of the mentioned plan, emphasizing the increase in the efficiency of all production factors including human resources, capital, technology, and management.

Establishing stability in the prices of consumer items and forex rates, reaching a single-digit inflation rate, as well as directing liquidity and bank credits towards productive sectors are also among the major policies set by the plan.

Reforming the structure of the government budget through:

- Clarification of public debts and obligating government institutions and entities to pay their debts.
- Realization of resources and managing government expenses and avoiding budget cuts.
- Completing semi-finished development projects with the participation of the private and public sectors.
- Clarifying and regulating the revenues and expenses of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) and other government-owned companies in the national budget.

Was also among the major policies stressed in the Seventh National Development Plan.

Transforming the country's tax system with the approach of turning taxes into the main source of government revenues is also another major policy set by the plan.

This transformation entails creating new tax bases, preventing tax evasion, and strengthening the role of guiding and regulating taxes in the economy with an emphasis on the prosperity of production and tax justice.

Establishing a comprehensive social security system that encompasses relief, support, and insurance at the basic, surplus, and supplementary levels to provide fair services was the final economic policy that the executive bodies are obliged to follow in the said five years.

India Launches Digital TIR With Iran for Smooth Functioning of INSTC

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - India flagged off the first Intermodal Digital TIR Pilot Transport between India and Iran in INSTC which facilitates seamless and paperless cross-border transit of goods, under the customs guarantee of the TIR system.

The TIR system is an international road transport system which plays an important role in facilitating cross border trade flow, adding considerable value to improving regional trade mechanisms. Globally, the TIR system has been a successful model for reducing trade transaction costs and facilitating higher growth of intra-regional and inter-regional trade.

Originally designed as a paper-based solution, the TIR system now offers fully digital capacities, making international freight transits even faster, more efficient and more secure. Indian Customs Administration is actively working towards full implementation of digital TIR system in the country.

India acceded to the United Nations TIR Convention - the Customs Convention on June 15, 2017, the global customs transit system that enables movement of goods between countries affiliated to the TIR Convention, a 1975 UN -ratified agreement allowing for duty-free movement of freight across nations. It is overseen by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and managed by the International Road Transport Union (IRU), Geneva. TIR stands for 'Transports Internationaux Routiers' or International Road Transports.

The convention allows goods to be outlined in a TIR carnet and sealed in load compartments. Customs verify the carnet and check the seals, with no need for physical checking of the contents, enabling shipments to pass through countries without being opened at borders.

TIR helps in facilitation of trade and transport, preventing delays in border crossing operations by minimizing the formalities which decreases the transportation costs, facilitating the border crossing operations with the use of standard documents and unified controls, which encourages the development of international trade. This system provides many advantages and benefits to the national economy by simplifying the movement of national and international transport, giving access to over 64 TIR operational countries.

Tehran, Damascus Keen To Enhance Cooperation In Industrial Field

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) - Syria and Iran have discussed bilateral cooperation between the two friendly countries in the industrial sector and the current joint coordination between them to resume work on joint industrial projects in Syria and to overcome all work difficulties and exchange experiences for achieving that.

That came during a meeting between Minister of Industry Ziad Sabbagh and Iranian Ambassador in Damascus Mahdi Sobhani.

Minister Sabbagh briefed Ambassador Sobhani, during the meeting, on the latest developments in the economic and industrial situation in Syria and indicators of its recovery in light of the efforts made to overcome the repercussions of the siege and economic war imposed on Syria.

The Minister expressed the government's keenness to rehabilitate the industrial sector, which had been massively damaged during the terrorist war wage on Syria, and to provide all the requirements for its recovery through cooperation with friendly and allied countries.

For his part, the Iranian ambassador reiterated his country's position in support for Syria, calling for strengthening cooperation and industrial partnership between the two countries in a fruitful and promising manner.

Tehran, Minsk to Manufacture Heavy-Duty Mining Dump Trucks

TEHRAN (PressTV) - A senior Iranian mining industry official says the country will team up with Belarus for manufacturing of heavy duty mining dump trucks, a project he says is aimed at boosting Iranian mining output by at least 40% per year.

Ali Rostami, who leads the National Iranian Copper Industries Company (NICICO), said on Saturday that Iranian and Belorussian manufacturers of mining machineries are in the final stages of talks to sign a contract for joint manufacturing of heavy duty dump trucks inside Iran.

Rostami said the project had been agreed during a visit by Iranian industries minister Reza Fatemi Amin to Minsk in late July.

He said a total of 500 heavy duty dump trucks will be manufactured in Iran over the next three years under the joint project with Belorussian companies.

NICICO chief said Iranian mining machinery manufacturer HEPCO will be a key part of the joint project, adding that the company will become involved for a first time in manufacturing 136-ton and 240-ton mining dump trucks.

See Page 7

Crews of Greek Oil Tankers Seized in Iran Released

TEHRAN (Dispatches) - Some sources have confirmed the release of the crews of the Greek oil tankers seized in Iran after the trip of a Greek delegation to Tehran.

In a statement, the Panhellenic Union of Merchant Navy Sailors claimed that during the recent visit of a Greek delegation to Iran, the Iranian side took a significant step back and agreed to the replacement of the two crews.

The release of the sailors is expected to begin on Monday with the crew members of the Prudent Warrior ship while the members of the "Delta Poseidon" will follow.

Some sources also claimed that Tehran allowed the release of the crews after the 100,000 tons of oil originally seized by the Greek authorities at the request of the US was returned to the tanks of the Iranian-owned ship Lana in late August.

The news has not yet been confirmed by the Iranian authorities.

In April, the Greek authorities seized an Iranian-flagged tanker, handing over its cargo of crude to an American tanker. Two days later, Iran responded by seizing two Greek oil tankers in the waters of the Persian Gulf.

See Page 7

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Army Navy to Unveil New Missile Systems, Vessels

TEHRAN (MNA) - Chief Commander of Iran's Army Navy Force Rear Admiral Shahram Irani announced the unveiling of new missile systems, surface and subsurface vessels in near future.

On the occasion of the Sacred Defense Week [the beginning of the imposed Iraqi Baathist regime war against Iran in 1980], some equipment, including surface and subsurface vessels, will join the Army Navy of Iran, said the commander.

He also added that some new missile systems will be unveiled in Sacred Defense Week.

E3 Adopt Wrong Stance At Inappropriate Time In Vienna Talks

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN – Tehran has slammed as “wrong” and “ill-considered” the joint statement issued by Germany, France and the United Kingdom on the revival of the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Speaking at a weekly presser, Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani said Tehran did its best in the negotiation process and acted “constructively” to reach an agreement. “An agreement is a two-way street. It was expected that the [other] negotiating parties would also act constructively.”

The three European parties to the JCPOA in a press release on Saturday questioned Iran's intentions and commitment to a successful outcome on the JCPOA over Iran's calls for a settlement of Safeguards issues between Tehran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Iran ratified the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1970, which requires nonnuclear-weapon states to accept comprehensive IAEA safeguards. Also, as a goodwill gesture, Iran voluntarily chose to have extensive cooperation with the UN nuclear agency, beyond the safeguards agreement.

Kanaani said that the IAEA's frequent reports have confirmed the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear program, urging the agency to act “professionally” and without any pressure exerted by a third party – making an apparent reference to Israel.

It was “unfortunate” that the European trio has been “influenced by pressure exerted by a regime that is not a member to any of the comprehensive safeguard agreements of the International Atomic Energy Agency,” Kanaani said.

He noted that Iran is waiting for “an official response” from the United States to its opinion on the US's own response to the European Union's draft text for the revival of the deal.

The spokesman called on Washington to adopt a “constructive behavior” to reach an agreement.



He underscored that “It is America that must prove that it is a reliable member,” considering that it is the party that quit the JCPOA.

He also noted that Iran has not made any new demands in its latest response and that an agreement on the revival of the nuclear deal would depend on the political will of the other negotiating parties.

Answering a question about the global fuel crisis, Kanaani said that Iran, as an important actor in the field of the energy market, is able to meet the needs of the global energy market and those countries who are interested in using this capacity.

On Iran's ascension to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the spokesman said that Iran's full membership is in progress and was mutually beneficial for both Iran and the SCO.

He said that Iran was going to sign the commitments memorandum on President Ebrahim Raisi's upcoming visit to Uzbekistan to take part in the SCO summit in Samarkand.

Asked about the visa issuance for President Raisi to be able to attend the United Nations General Assembly, Kanaani underlined that the US government is obliged to prepare the ground for the participation of world leaders in the global event and Iran expects Washington to do so in this case.

The spokesman also dismissed the allegations that Iran had carried out the cyberattacks against Albania, criticizing the countries making statements on the alleged attacks while they were silent when Iran was targeted by similar attacks.

Iran Hopes Yemen Ceasefire Will Usher in Peace

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian says Iran supports an ongoing ceasefire in Yemen, calling it a potential precursor to establishment of sustainable peace in the war-battered country.

The top diplomat made the remarks in Tehran on Sunday during a meeting with Mohammed Abdul-Salam, spokesman of Yemen's Ansarullah popular resistance movement, who has travelled to the Islamic Republic to meet with senior Iranian officials.

Amirabdollahian laid emphasis on the existence of a profound and historical relationship between Iran and Yemen, saying, “The Islamic Republic has invariably voiced its support for [realization of] the Yemeni people's demands and will.”

The official also expressed hope for complete elimination of a siege that Saudi Arabia and its allies have been enforcing against the Arab world's poorest nation since 2015.

Abdul-Salam, for his part, expressed gratitude towards the Islamic Republic for its support for the Yemeni people, advising the Iranian foreign minister of the latest developments that had taken place in his country.

The Yemeni official criticized the Saudi-led coalition for its insufficient implementation of the main components of the ceasefire. He considered the coalition's respect for the humanitarian issues in Yemen to be crucial to advancement of just peace in the violence-weary country.

Responsible Bodies Urged to Present Road Map Within 3 Months

TEHRAN (IP) - The Chief of the Department of Environment (DOE) said that in the next three months, the agencies are required to present their road map that is in accordance with the announced policies of the Environment Department to compensate for the shortcomings.

At the first conference of the general policies of the environment, Ali Salajegheh stated that the seventh plan, which is based on the transformative document of the government, and which was announced in the environmental aspect and originated from the policies announced by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei and the 50th article of the constitution, is an excellent strategy in the implementation of the rules to protect the environment.

He added that the booklet of policy measures along

with the indicators considered by the environmental organization will be printed and published in the coming months and will be available to all institutions for implementation.

Also, in the conference, the Deputy of the Department of Environment in the development of legal management, and parliament affairs, referring to the study of indicators such as water consumption, energy intensity, and carbon dioxide gas production, underlined: The country's environmental situation is not stable, therefore, we should make good use of the capacities to protect the environment.

Reza Anjam Shua continued: “The field of environment needs changes, developments, and taking advantage of opportunities.”

He emphasized: “We need to equip the environmental organization with updated and advanced technologies.”

Iran, Uzbekistan to Ink 22 Cooperation Docs

TEHRAN (MNA) –Deputy Foreign Minister for the Economic Diplomacy says that in the upcoming visit of President Raisi to Uzbekistan dozens of documents for cooperation with Central Asia will be signed.

Mehdi Safari said that during President Ebrahim Raisi's upcoming visit to Uzbekistan to attend Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), “Between 18 to 22 cooperation documents between Iran and Uzbekistan have been prepared in various fields, especially in energy, customs, trade and goods transit areas, which will be signed during the president's visit to that country, which will take place in the next few days.”

Safari said, “In the meeting, the official membership of our country in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization will be decided upon, and 400 to 500 contracts that have been drawn up in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the past year will be handed over.”

He added that Iran eyes cooperation in two fields of energy and goods transit after joining the SCO.

According to the Iranian economic diplomat, the capacities of the North-South and East-West International Corridor that cross Iran are very important to the country, which in turn adds to the SCO capacities.

“In the past few years, not a single Chinese train transported goods from Iran to Europe, but since our country joined the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, one or two Chinese trains have so far passed through the corridor of our country to Europe, which is very important,” he added.

Safari also referred to the benefit of energy reserves as one of the other Iran's potential which SCO membership can flourish and said, “By being a member of the Shanghai Organization, we will have our own customers for exporting energy to member countries such as China, India, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, and if we focus on this market, we can have a high share of the export of this product.”

The Deputy Minister for Economic Diplomacy expressed his hope that in the next one or two years Iran will no longer export crude oil and will be able to export only refined and processed products, which will give more advantages to Iran.

UAE to Host Exhibition of Iranian Foodstuff, Agricultural Industries

TEHRAN (MNA) - An exhibition of Iranian foodstuff and agricultural industries is slated to be held in the United Arab Emirates during November 7-10, Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) announced.

As IRIB reported, a conference on the investment opportunities of Iran's food and agriculture industries is also going to be held on the sidelines of the mentioned exhibition.

This conference, in addition to providing practical information on the Iranian market and familiarizing businessmen and traders with the latest achievements of the Iranian food and agriculture industries, will introduce the existing capacities of the country in the mentioned sectors.

With an annual turnover of \$16 billion, the UAE's food and beverage market is one of the largest and most dynamic consumer markets in the region, which can be a good opportunity for the development of Iran's food and beverage exports.

Currently, Iran holds nearly three percent of the food and beverage market in the UAE, which can be significantly improved with proper planning.

Increasing non-oil exports to neighboring countries is one of the major plans that the Iranian government has been pursuing in recent years.

UAE has been among the Islamic Republic's top trading partners among the country's neighbors.

According to the data released by the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), the UAE was Iran's third main export destination in the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-July 22).

Iran exported non-oil products valued at \$2.264 billion to the UAE in the mentioned four-month period while importing goods worth \$4.875 billion.

The UAE was the Islamic Republic's top source of imports in the mentioned time span.

Vice CEO of Etkā Organization Serves Pilgrims of Arbaeen



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN – Vice CEO of Etkā Organization Mr. Amir Habibi, accompanied by deputy head of organization on economic affairs Eng. Jafari, received some of Arbaeen pilgrims and moukabs (special shelter, called moukeb, to feed pilgrims and provide them with a place to rest and stay overnight) of the Defense Ministry and served them with foods.

Mr. Habibi on Sunday along with Managers of Etkā Stores in Kermanshah Province Mr. Paykar, attended the moukeb of Arbaeen pilgrims at the Defense Ministry and was informed practically of ways of serving Arbaeen pilgrims and was informed of the shortages and needs of the moukabs.

Speaking among the staff of Arbaeen moukeb of the Defense Ministry, he said that serving these pilgrims will boost everyone's livelihood in their life and all should work hard to offer the best and quality services to these dear pilgrims.

Then Mr. Habibi served the pilgrims in person while being accompanied by managers of Etkā stores in Ilam and Kermanshah Provinces.

Then Mr. Paykar pointed to different services given by the moukeb to the pilgrims and said that Etkā stores in Kermanshah Province have distributed among the pilgrims over 154,000 liters of fruit juice, 2,800 packs of different kinds of canned food, over 4,000 bottles of mineral waters, 4,870 boxes of biscuit, 1500 packs of cookies, 1000 kilograms of date and 30,000 one-man-packs of cheese.

Then manager of Etkā stores in Ilam Province Mr. Alizadeh said that stores of the organization in this province has distributed goods among pilgrims like bottles of mineral waters, bread, and fruit juice.

Meanwhile Etkā stores in Tehran Province has done its contribution to serve the pilgrims by sending over 1m bottles of mineral waters and thousands of packs of bread to the borders and different goods.

The organization staff in the border provinces have offered their facilities to pilgrims for their convenience.

Vice CEO of Etkā Organization has been in the border towns of Mehran and Khosravi since last week to monitor serving the pilgrims.

Sri Lanka Seeks to Attract Tourists From Iran

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iranian Ambassador to Sri Lanka Hashem Ashjazadeh, met with Ports, Shipping and Aviation Minister Nimal Siripala de Silva at Sri Lanka's Ports, Shipping and Aviation Ministry.

At the meeting, matters pertaining to airline services and the tourism sector of the two countries were discussed at length. The discussions were also focused on initiating direct airline services between Iran's capital Tehran and Sri Lanka and making the service a fruitful mean to encourage more Iran travellers to the island.

The Minister said that encouraging more Iran travellers to Sri Lanka would obviously help ease the foreign exchange issue faced by the country at present and that the measures would also highlight a boost in bilateral relations between the two friendly nations.

The Minister also discussed the matter of obtaining aviation fuel and said that the Ambassador would be apprised after discussions with the Power and Energy Minister.

Appreciating the quality of Ceylon Tea, the Ambassador said that Iran currently purchases a large amount of tea from Sri Lanka.





PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	13:00
■ Evening (Maghreb)	19:33
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	05:21
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:46

46. If but a breath of the Wrath of thy Lord do touch them, they will then say, "Woe to us! We did wrong indeed!"

47. We shall set up scales of justice for the Day of Judgment, so that not a soul will be dealt with unjustly in the least, and if there be (no more than) the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it (to account); and enough are We to take account. Surah 21. The Prophets (46 - 47)

Iran Exports To Iraq Down 8%

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Secretary General of Iran-Iraq Joint Chamber of Commerce Jahanbakhsh Sanjabi says Iran's exports to Iraq in the first five months of the current Iranian year have declined and reports on the rise of exports are questionable.

Speaking to ILNA, Mr. Sanjabi said that unfortunately Iranian goods after removal of the subsidized dollar rate of 4200 tomans saw rise in prices above the international prices and the first reaction of purchasers after the delivery was to resist and refrain to buy.

He confirmed the reports on decline in Iran's exports to Iraq in the first five months of the current year and said that the assumption of rise in trade volume with Iraq in first five months is not true and one should look at it with doubt.

He reiterated that the rise in the foreign trade volume is just because of rise in prices, adding that Iran has exported some 44.1m tons of goods that earned the country some \$20.9b while Iran's exports were 45.6m tons in the same period last year and figures show that Iran's exports have declined over 1.6m tons in terms of weight.

Sanjabi reiterated that the country exported some \$17.2b in five months and the figure shows that although there has been 21% growth in the exports of goods in terms of value, the exports have declined 3.5% in terms of weight and this difference is because of the rise in the global rise in prices.

He noted that Iraq is considered as Iran's second trade partner that 31.38m tons out of 44.1m tons of Iran exports belong to Iraq, adding that China, Iraq, the UAE, Turkey and India are Iran's top five trade partners, respectively. He added that it means Iraq accounts for 19.64% of Iran's total exports in terms of weight and 14.15% in terms of value.

He said that last year in the mentioned period, exports to Iraq accounted for 26.61% of Iran's total exports in terms of weight and 18.67% in terms of value and therefore exports to Iraq have declined both in terms of weight and value.

Sanjabi reiterated that comparing the statistics regarding exports to Iraq in recent two years shows that Iran has exported 8.665m tons of goods to Iraq while the figure was 12.152m tons in the same period last year. He said that the value of exported goods to Iraq in the first five months of last year \$3.22b while this figure has been \$2.961b this year which bespeaks of 8% decline in terms of value and 28% in weight.



He noted all working hard to increase exports at least to last year's level and even more than it.

He reiterated that if inflation continues rising in Turkey in the second half of the year, Iran can restore its market in Iraq which has been lost due to elimination of 4200-toman dollar rate in Iran.

He admitted elimination of preferential forex rate in Iran caused Iran's goods to lose Iraq market especially in the dairy and noodle sectors.

Meanwhile Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for the Economic Diplomacy Affairs on Sunday considered country's trade with Iraq 'very important' and put Iran's exports value to neighboring Iraq at about \$14 billion.

Speaking in a session of Iran's Foreign Economic Relations Coordination Headquarters with a focus on the latest measures taken for organizing the Exclusive Exhibition of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Turkmenistan capital of Ashgabat and reviewing the latest situation of economic relations with Iraq, Mehdi Safari the Deputy Foreign Minister for the Economic Diplomacy termed organizing this exhibition and active participation of the private sector and commercial envoy of the country in this fair 'very important'.

He went on to say that active participation of Iran's private sector will spur export and boost trade balance to Turkmenistan as well.

Preliminary agreements have been reached with Turkmen side regarding the export of technical and engineering services to this country, Safari added.

Considering the trade between Iran and Iraq, the Deputy Foreign Minister termed Iran's trade with Iraq as 'very significant' and put the total exports value of the country to this country at about \$14 billion.

He then pointed to the shared border crossings with Iraq and put the volume of Iran's exports to Iraq at about \$14 billion.

Tehran, Basra Universities Sign MoU in Scientific Fields

TEHRAN (MNA) - Tehran and Basra universities signed a Memorandum of Understanding for further cooperation in scientific and educational fields.

Seyed Mohammad Moghimi, the President of the University of Tehran, visited Basra University on his trip to Iraq and held talks with Saad Shaheen Hamadi Al-Taher, Basra University President.

In the meeting, the two sides signed a memorandum of understanding between the universities of Tehran and Basra.

Joint research activities including the exchange of faculty members, students and researchers, holding short-term specialized training programs, joint guidance of postdoctoral researches, the development of joint research institutes and scientific centers, science and technology parks, cooperation in creating multi-disciplinary programs in master's and doctoral courses are among the axes of this memorandum.

Iran Pioneering in Combating Money Laundering

TEHRAN (IRNA) - The head of the Financial Information Center of the Ministry of Economy said that Iran is a pioneer in anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing in the region, underscoring measures taken in this area.

Hadi Khani said that by launching the financial and economic profile as well as the integrated AML system, we can prevent money laundering and economic corruption through monitoring financial and economic information.

He also stressed the importance of increasing people's awareness about fighting money laundering.

By increasing the coordination between custodial bodies and those interested in combating money laundering, we can introduce Iran as a pioneer in fighting money laundering and economic crimes in the world.

Int'l Renewable Energy Expo Kicks Off In Tehran

TEHRAN (MNA) - The 12th Iran International Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Exhibition kicked off at Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds.

The opening ceremony of the exhibition was attended by senior energy officials including Energy Minister Ali-Akbar Mehrabian and Head of Iran's Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA) Mahmoud Kamani.

As reported, over 97 domestic and foreign companies are showcasing their latest achievements and products at this four-day exhibition.

Five press conferences are also scheduled to be held on the sidelines of the exhibition which will cover various issues including financing the construction of renewable power plants, energy efficiency, policies and programs, development of knowledge-based technology in the renewable energy sector, construction challenges, and branching power plants.

Renewables, including hydropower, account for seven percent of Iran's total energy generation, versus natural gas's 90 percent share.

Overall, in the next four years, Iran is aiming for a 5,000 MW increase in renewable capacity to meet growing domestic demand and expand its presence in the regional electricity market.

According to SATBA, the number of small-scale solar power plants across the country which are used by households or small industries is also increasing noticeably as Iranian households and small industries are embracing the new technology with open arms and investors also seem eager for more contribution to this area.

Iran is also planning on expanding its presence in the region's renewable energy market.

According to the energy ministry, the country has great potential in the field of renewable energies and can have a significant role in developing the region's market for such energies.

"Relying on the high potential of renewable energy sources, including solar, wind, biomass, geothermal, etc., the Energy Ministry has planned good measures in order to implement new policies for creating positive changes in the development of the country's renewable energy sector," the minister said.

Tehran Ready to Broaden Economic Cooperation With Dakar

TEHRAN - Iranian Ambassador to Senegal Mohammad Reza Dehshiri offers the services of his country with a view to strengthening Senegalese agriculture.

Dehshiri, points out that according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) report, Iran is among the top 7 food-producing countries with the production of 23 agricultural products.

In an interview with Senegalese media, he added that Iran ranks first in fruit production in the Middle East and North Africa.

The agricultural sector contributes significantly to job creation and the country's non-oil exports, says Dehshiri in La Tribune. "The biodiversity of Iran, due to the presence of various types of vegetation and climate, provided a very large capacity for the production of various types of agricultural products.

The existence of various geographical contexts with the possibility of cultivating and harvesting all kinds of agricultural products has placed Iran third in the world in the index of diversity of agricultural products. This has contributed to Iran's significant share in global and regional markets," the Ambassador continues.

It does not fail to list the areas in which cooperation between the two countries could prosper. The existence of various geographical contexts with the possibility of cultivating and harvesting all kinds of agricultural products has placed Iran third in the world in the index of diversity of agricultural products.

This has contributed to Iran's significant share in global and regional markets," the Ambassador continued. It does not fail to list the areas in which cooperation between the two countries could prosper. The existence of various geographical contexts with the possibility of cultivating and harvesting all kinds of agricultural products has placed Iran third in the world in the index of diversity of agricultural products.

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IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK



and rice cultivation, Iran can have effective cooperation with Senegal in this essential field as well as in the field of greenhouse cultivation of various agricultural products.

Iran having dryers for all kinds of fruits, including mangoes, is ready to cooperate with the Senegalese side in this field. Iran's experiences in the field of cropland irrigation, including drip, can be made available to Senegal. In the field of the creation of green spaces and artificial forests as well as desertification, air, and soil improvement, Iran can transfer its experiences to Senegal," adds the Iranian ambassador.

He does not fail to make it known that given its capabilities in the field of agricultural education, Iran is willing to transfer experiences in the field of training in methods of production and cultivation of agricultural products. "Iran is a producer of cold storage equipment for storing fruits and vegetables, and also has the knowledge of plant breeding through biotechnology, as well as the ability to pack vegetables and fruits, and can bring his experience and technical knowledge to Senegal," concludes Dehshiri.

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80% of Iran's Trade Being Made With Neighbors

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Eighty percent of Iran's trade is being made with neighboring countries, according to an official with the knowledge of the issue.

Ahmadreza Alaei, deputy head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization, said that a reduction in Iran's exports to Iraq and Afghanistan is not a source of concern and is rather due to natural fluctuations.

He said that the main cause of reduction in Iran's exports to the two neighboring countries is political changes and lack of political stability in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

The official also said that another reason for the fall in Iran's trade with Iraq and Afghanistan is a change in domestic policies of the two countries.

"Both countries are after supporting their national production and as a result of that, a number of commodities that we used to export to these countries have no more customer," Alaei said.

He said for instance that Afghanistan has no plan to import plastic products anymore and Iraq is seeking to stop the imports of its agricultural needs.

Gov't Approves Amendments To Charters of 1st, 2nd ETFs

TEHRAN (MNA) - The cabinet approved the amendments to the charters of the first and second exchange-traded funds (ETFs) on Sunday.

As announced by Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO), the approved amendments are:

- 1- Changing these funds into sector investment funds
- 2- Changing fund management from passive to active
- 3- Setting market maker for the mentioned funds

In mid-March, SEO Head Majid Eshqi had said that the structure and charter of the mentioned ETFs would be amended, noting that the two funds had become a problem in the capital market and have a special structure.

"If this structure is reformed, the price of these two funds could be closer to the net value of their assets," he added.

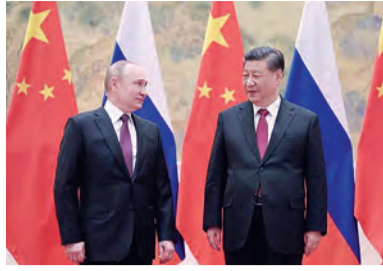
According to Note 2 of the budget law of the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20, 2021), the government is allowed to offer and sell its remaining shares in the state-owned companies in the usual way or through the exchange-traded funds.

Xi to Meet Putin in First Trip Outside China

LONDON (Dispatches) - Xi Jinping will leave China for the first time in more than two years for a trip this week to Central Asia where he will meet Russia's Vladimir Putin, just a month before he is set to cement his place as the most powerful Chinese leader since Mao Zedong.

The trip, Xi's first abroad since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, shows just how confident he is about his grip on power in China and just how perilous the global situation has become.

Against a backdrop of Russia's confrontation with the West over Ukraine, the crisis over Taiwan and a stuttering global economy, Xi is due on a state visit to Kazakhstan on Wednesday.



Peru's New FM Resigns in Latest Blow to President

MEXICO CITY (Dispatches) - Peru's foreign minister, Miguel Rodriguez, has resigned after just one month in office, the country's foreign ministry said, after public clashes between the official and leftist president Pedro Castillo.

"I am writing to you to submit my irrevocable resignation to the position of Minister of State in the Office of Foreign Relations," Rodriguez wrote in a letter published by the foreign ministry on Twitter.

"The goal was to revitalize Peru's foreign policy, correct mistakes and try to strengthen the course of our country's international life," he added, without elaborating.



Ukraine Offensive Snowballs With Fall of Russian Stronghold



KYIV (Dispatches) - Ukrainian forces kept pushing north in the Kharkiv region and advancing to its south and east, Ukraine's army chief said, a day after their rapid gains forced Russia to abandon its main bastion in the area.

President Volodymyr Zelenskiy hailed Ukraine's offensive in the northeast Kharkiv province as a potential breakthrough in the six-month-old war, saying this winter could bring more rapid gains of territory if Kyiv can get more powerful weapons.

Ukraine's chief commander, General Valeriy Zaluzhnyi, said the armed forces had regained control of more than 3,000 square km (1,158 square miles) since the start of this month.

"In the Kharkiv direction, we began to advance not only to the south and east, but also to the north. There are 50 km to go to the state border (with Russia)," he said on Telegram.

In Moscow, Russia's defense ministry said Russian forces were hitting Ukrainian army positions in the Kharkiv region with precision strikes by airborne troops, missiles and artillery.

The retreat from the city of Izium, an important logistics hub for Russian forces, was their worst defeat since they were repelled from the capital Kyiv in March, as thousands of Russian soldiers left behind ammunition and equipment as they fled.

Moscow's almost total silence on the defeat - or any explanation for what had taken place in northeastern Ukraine - provoked significant anger among some pro-war commentators and Russian nationalists on social media. Some of them called on Sunday for President Vladimir Putin to make immediate changes to ensure ultimate victory in the war.

Ukraine's gains are important politically for Zelenskiy as he seeks to keep Europe united behind Ukraine - supplying weapons and money - even as an energy crisis looms this winter following cuts in Russian gas supplies to European customers.

"I believe that this winter is a turning point, and it can lead to the rapid de-occupation of Ukraine," Zelenskiy told a political forum. "If we were a little stronger with weapons, we would de-occupy faster," he said in remarks published on his website late on Saturday.

Ukrainian officials stopped short of confirming they had recaptured Izium, but Zelenskiy's chief of staff Andriy Yermak posted a photo of troops on its outskirts and tweeted an emoji of grapes. The city's name means "raisin."

Defense minister Oleksii Reznikov said Ukraine needed to secure retaken territory against a possible Russian counterattack on stretched Ukrainian supply lines. He told the Financial Times that Ukrainian forces could be encircled by fresh Russian troops if they advanced too far.

But he said the offensive had gone far "better than expected", describing it as a "snowball rolling down a hill". "It's a sign that Russia can be defeated," he said.

Kyiv-based military analyst Oleh Zhdanov said the gains could bring a further push into Luhansk region, whose capture Russia claimed at the beginning of July.

"If you look at the map, it is logical to assume that the offensive will develop in the direction of Svatove - Starobelsk, and Sievierodonetsk - Lysychansk," he said.

Ukrainian service members walk past a former position of Russian soldiers captured during a counteroffensive operation in Kharkiv region.

Britain's defence ministry said on Sunday Ukrainian forces had made gains in the Kharkiv region over the past 24 hours. But fighting continued around Izium and the city of Kupiansk, the sole rail hub supplying Russia's front line across northeastern Ukraine, which has been retaken by Ukraine's forces.

As the war entered its 200th day, Ukraine reported more Russian missile and air strikes overnight and regional officials reported heavy Russian shelling in the east and south.

Swedes Head to Polls In Close-Run Election

STOCKHOLM (Dispatches) - Swedes voted in an election pitting the incumbent center-left Social Democrats against a right-wing bloc that has embraced the anti-immigration Sweden Democrats as it tries to win back power after eight years in opposition.

With opinion polls pointing to a tight race, lines to vote were long in many places. The campaign has seen parties battle to be the toughest on gang crime, after a steady rise in shootings that has unnerved voters, while surging inflation and the energy crisis following the invasion of Ukraine have increasingly taken center-stage.

"I'm fearing very much a repressive, very right-wing government coming," said Malin Ericsson, 53, a travel consultant outside a voting station in central Stockholm. Polls show the center-left running neck-and-neck with the right-wing bloc and suggest the Sweden Democrats will be the second biggest party behind the Social Democrats, overtaking the conservative Moderates.

Paediatrician Erik George, 52, said he thought the election campaign had been marked by a rise in populism. "I think that times are really tumultuous and people have a hard time figuring out what's going on," he said outside the voting station. For others, the main goal is change.

"I have voted for a change in power," said Jorgen Hellstrom 47, a small business owner, as he voted near parliament. "Taxes need to come down by quite a bit and we need to sort out crime. The last eight years have gone in the wrong direction."

While law and order is home turf for the right, gathering economic clouds as households and companies face sky-high power prices may boost Social Democratic Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson, seen as a safe pair of hands and more popular than her own party. "I have voted for a Sweden where we continue to build on our strengths. Our ability to tackle society's problems together, form a sense of community and respect each other," Andersson said after voting in a Stockholm suburb.

Andersson was finance minister for many years before becoming Sweden's first female prime minister a year ago. Her main rival is Moderates' leader Ulf Kristersson, who sees himself as the only one who can unite the right and unseat her.

Primary-school aged girls and female university students are still able to attend class.

The Taliban have said that they are working on a plan to re-open high schools for girls, but have not specified when.

The Taliban sources, who asked for anonymity as they were not authorized to speak publicly on the matter, said many in the group wanted girls to be able to go to high school.

The Taliban education officials in Paktia and Kabul did not reply to a request for comment. The group's spokesperson declined to comment.

The ruling Taliban made a sudden U-turn on promises to open girls' high schools in March, leaving some female students who had turned up to class in tears.

Authorities in Paktia said this week that girls' high schools had re-opened, though the move had not been officially approved.

On Saturday, the head of Paktia's information department told journalists any suggestion schools were closed was "propaganda".

But three residents and three Taliban officials, who all declined to be named, told Reuters that schools were shut on Saturday. The residents, one of whom is a teacher, asked to remain anonymous for security reasons and said the closure had prompted some girls to protest.

Video footage shown by local broadcaster Tolo on its website and Twitter account showed dozens of girls in school uniform marching down a street while chanting. Reuters could not independently verify the footage.

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Greece Coastguard Fires on Suspicious Turkish Cargo Ship

ATHENS (Dispatches) - Greek coastguard ships opened fire on a cargo vessel sailing in international waters in the Aegean Sea, escalating tensions with Turkey that have mounted in recent weeks.

There were no casualties in the shooting 11 nautical miles (20km) southwest of the Turkish island of Bozcaada on Saturday, a Turkish coastguard statement said.

After "harassment fire" from two Greek vessels, two Turkish coastguard ships went to the area and the Greek boats left, it added.

The Greek coastguard confirmed it fired "warning shots" at a ship "moving suspiciously" in Greek territorial waters off the island of Lesbos.

The captain of the cargo ship refused to allow an inspection and was later escorted to nearby Turkish waters, said Greek coastguard officials, noting they informed maritime authorities in Turkey about the incident.

The area is known for many ships bringing migrants from Turkey to the European Union countries of Greece and Italy. The Greek coastguard says it regularly checks ships behaving suspiciously in the Aegean.

The neighboring countries have been embroiled in disputes for decades and friction has ratcheted up in recent weeks, with both sides alleging airspace violations. Greek officials have raised concerns about another outbreak of conflict in Europe following Russia's war in Ukraine.

Ankara has accused Athens of "occupying" some Aegean islands and harassing Turkish jets with Russian-made S-300 defense systems stationed there. Athens denies the claims.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has warned Greece it would pay a "heavy price" if it continues to harass Turkish fighter jets over the Aegean and hinted at military action.

Greece says it needs to defend its eastern islands, including tourist hotspots Rhodes and Kos, which are much closer to Turkey than to the Greek mainland, against its larger and militarily stronger neighbour.

Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis said on Sunday he remained open to a meeting with Erdogan.

"I consider recent statements by the Turkish president unacceptable. However, we will always try to keep communication channels open," Mitsotakis said, adding that an informal EU summit early October in Prague might be a chance for this to happen.

Video footage from Saturday purportedly shows a Greek coastguard vessel alongside the Anatolian cargo ship as the sound of about a dozen gunshots is heard. A crew member speaks in Turkish, saying they are being attacked by the Greek coastguard.

The video, which was released by the Turkish coastguard and seems to have been filmed on a mobile phone, shows what appears to be a bullet hole in a window and in the ceiling of the cargo ship's bridge.



Queen Elizabeth's Coffin in Edinburgh as Mourners Line Streets

EDINBURGH (Dispatches) - Queen Elizabeth's coffin arrived in Edinburgh today after a six-hour journey from her summer home in the Scottish Highlands, past tens of thousands of mourners lining the route, many in somber silence, some applauding and others in tears.

Shortly after 10 a.m., a hearse carrying Elizabeth's oak coffin emerged from the gates of Balmoral Castle, where she died on Thursday aged 96, at the start of a slow drive to the Scottish capital. The coffin was draped in the Royal Standard of Scotland with a wreath on top made of flowers taken from the Balmoral estate including sweet peas, one of Elizabeth's favorites.

Crowds, fifteen deep in places, massed in the center of Edinburgh to greet the cortege, which included the queen's daughter, Princess Anne, as it made its way to the Palace of Holyroodhouse where it was met by a military guard of honor.

Soldiers from the Royal Regiment of Scotland then carried the coffin to the throne room of the palace where it will remain overnight.

"There was no way I could miss this. I would regret it for the rest of my life," said Eilidh Mackintosh, 62, who left her home at 6 a.m. to be sure of a good view on Edinburgh's famous Royal Mile where large crowds were gathering.

"She never let us down and I didn't want to let her down either. Now she has gone there is a big hole in the heart of the nation." The journey from Balmoral was the first of a series of events leading up to the state funeral at Westminster Abbey in London on Sept. 19.

In an emotional tribute to his mother on Friday, the new monarch, King Charles, said she had begun a "last great journey" to join Prince Philip, her husband of 73 years who died last year.

Her death has drawn tears, sadness and warm tributes, not just from the queen's own close family and many in Britain, but also from around the globe - reflecting her presence on the world stage for seven decades.

Wherever the cortege went as it wound its way through picturesque countryside, villages, small towns and cities, people lined the road or stopped their cars to get out and watch. At one point, it passed a guard of honor formed by dozens of tractors lined up in adjacent fields by farmers.

Many watched silently in bright sunshine. Some threw flowers into the road. For others, the emotion of the moment moved them to tears. "It's just very, very sad. I'm happy I was here to say our goodbyes," said Elizabeth Alexander, 69, who was born on the day the queen was crowned in 1953.



New Malaria Vaccine Is World-Changing



LONDON (Dispatches) - A malaria vaccine with "world-changing" potential has been developed by scientists at the University of Oxford.

The team expect it to be rolled out next year after trials showed up to 80% protection against the deadly disease.

Crucially, say the scientists, their vaccine is cheap and they already have a deal to manufacture more than 100 million doses a year.

The charity Malaria No More said recent progress meant children dying from malaria could end "in our lifetimes".

It has taken more than a century to develop effective vaccines as the malaria parasite, which is spread by mosquitoes, is spectacularly complex and elusive. It is a constantly moving target, shifting forms inside the body, which make it hard to immunise against.

Last year, the World Health Organization gave the historic go-ahead for the first vaccine - developed by pharmaceutical giant GSK - to be used in Africa.

However, the Oxford team claim their approach is more effective and can be manufactured on a far greater scale.

Trial results from 409 children in Nanoro, Burkina Faso, have been published in the Lancet Infectious Diseases. It shows three initial doses followed by a booster a year later gives up to 80% protection.

"We think these data are the best data yet in the field with any malaria vaccine," said Prof Adrian Hill, director of the Jenner Institute at the university.

The team will start the process of getting their vaccine approved in the next few weeks, but a final decision will hinge on the results of a larger trial of 4,800 children due before the end of the year.

The world's largest vaccine manufacturer - the Serum Institute of India - is already lined up to make more than 100 million doses a year.

Prof Hill said the vaccine - called R21 - could be made for "a few dollars" and "we really could be looking at a very substantial reduction in that horrendous burden of malaria".

He added: "We hope that this will be deployed and available and saving lives, certainly by the end of next year."

Malaria has been one of the biggest scourges on humanity for millennia and mostly kills babies and infants. The disease still kills more than 400,000 people a year even after dramatic progress with bed nets, insecticides and drugs.

This malaria vaccine is the 14th that Prof Katie Ewer has worked on at Oxford as "this is not like Covid where we have seven vaccines straight away that will work... it's much, much harder".

She told the BBC it was "incredibly gratifying" to get this far and "the potential achievement that this vaccine could have if it's rolled out could be really world-changing".

The currently approved vaccine - made by GSK - shares similarities with the one developed in Oxford.

Both target the first stage of the parasite's lifecycle by intercepting it before it gets to the liver and establishes a foothold in the body.

The vaccines are built using a combination of proteins from the malaria parasite and the hepatitis B virus, but Oxford's version has a higher proportion of malaria proteins. The team think this helps the immune system to focus on malaria rather than the hepatitis.

The success of the GSK vaccine has partly paved the way for Oxford to be optimistic of having their vaccine out next year - such as by assessing how feasible a vaccination program in Africa would be.

It is hard to give a direct comparison of the two vaccines. GSK's has gone through large real world trials whereas Oxford's data may appear more effective due to being given just ahead of the peak malaria season in Burkina Faso.

DNA Reveals Donkeys Were Domesticated 7,000 Years Ago in East Africa



LONDON (Dispatches) - From pulling Mesopotamian war chariots to grinding grain in the Middle Ages, donkeys have carried civilization on their backs for centuries. DNA has now revealed just how ancient humans' relationship with donkeys really is.

The genetic instruction books of over 200 donkeys from countries around the world show that these beasts of burden were domesticated about 7,000 years ago in East Africa, researchers report in the Sept. 9 Science.

"The history of the donkey has puzzled scientists for years," says Ludovic Orlando, a molecular archaeologist at the Centre for Anthropobiology and Genomics of Toulouse in France. This discovery shows that donkeys were domesticated in one fell swoop, roughly 3,000 years before horses.

DNA has great potential for unraveling humankind's shared history with our animal companions. In 2021, Orlando and his colleagues used DNA from the bones of horses to track their domestication to the Eurasian steppes, in what's now southwestern Russia, more than 4,200 years ago (SN: 10/20/21).

But the history of donkeys (Equus asinus) had remained murky. Today, domesticated donkeys are found all over the globe. A dwindling number of wild asses in Asia and Africa — the closest wild relatives of donkeys — pointed toward one of those continents as the likely donkey homeland.

Archaeological evidence — including a 5,000-year-old Egyptian tablet depicting marching asses, sheep and cattle — zeroed in on Africa as the most probable contender. But genetic studies attempting to pin down when and where donkeys were domesticated have been largely inconclusive.

This was probably because scientists were lacking donkey DNA from many regions of the world, Orlando says. For example, to date, there have been no published genomes from donkeys living south of the equator in Africa. To get a broader diversity of DNA, Orlando and his colleagues gathered 207 genomes from donkeys living in 31 countries, ranging from Brazil to China, along with DNA belonging to 31 donkeys that lived between 4,000 and about 100 years ago.

By comparing these genomes with those of wild asses, the researchers found that all donkeys could trace their lineage back to a single domestication event in East Africa, perhaps in the Horn of Africa, around 5000 B.C. From there, domesticated donkeys spread to the rest of the continent and into Europe and Asia, where they formed genetically distinct groups based on region. Humans have now brought donkeys to nearly every continent on Earth, carrying their genetic legacy with them.

These results add new clarity to the story of donkey domestication, says Emily Clark, a livestock geneticist at the Roslin Institute at the University of Edinburgh. "Donkeys are extraordinary working animals that are essential to the livelihoods of millions of people around the globe," she says. "As humans, we owe a debt of gratitude to the domestic donkey for the role they play and have played in shaping society."

Exactly why people chose to tame wild asses in Africa thousands of years ago is unclear. But the timing of their first spread across eastern Africa coincides with a period when the Sahara started becoming more arid and expanded.

"Donkeys are champions when it comes to carrying stuff and are good at going through deserts," Orlando says. As the desert grew larger, donkeys could have provided much needed help moving goods across the increasingly dry terrain, he says.

The archaeological record for donkeys in Africa outside of Egypt is sparse. The new result could help archaeologists narrow their search to new areas to learn more about the first donkeys and the people who tamed them, Orlando says.



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Turkish Central Bank's Gold Reserves at 2-Year High

ANKARA (Dispatches) - Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey (CBRT) has become the central bank that bought the most gold in the first seven months of this year, as the central bank's demand for gold remained robust in July, according to official data.

The CBRT has purchased 75 tons of net gold in the first seven months of the year and increased official gold reserves by 12 tons in July, the World Gold Council data showed. This was broadly in line with the monthly average so far this year and takes year-to-date net gold purchases to 75 tons, the data showed.



India Curbs Rice Exports in New Blow for World Food Prices

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - India has decided to curb rice exports in a move that is expected to lift world prices of the staple and trigger a rally in rival wheat and corn markets, deepening concerns over food inflation.

Rice prices in key exporters India, Thailand, Vietnam and Myanmar are set to rise, traders and analysts said, hitting food importers already suffering from higher costs due to drought, heat waves and Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

India banned exports of broken rice and imposed a 20% duty on exports of various grades of rice on Thursday as the world's biggest exporter of the grain tries to augment supplies and calm local prices after below-average monsoon rainfall curtailed planting.

"There is going to be substantial stresses on food security across many countries," said Phin Ziebell, agribusiness economist at National Australia Bank. "Global fundamentals could see further upside across the grains complex."

Chicago wheat prices rose on Friday, poised for a third straight weekly gain, as India's move and talk about Russia's restrictions on Ukrainian grain shipments underpinned the market.

"This is an inflationary move for food prices," said Ole Houe, director of advisory services at agriculture brokerage IKON Commodities in Sydney. "This could trigger a rally in wheat and corn prices."

India exports rice to more than 150 countries, accounts for more than 40% of global rice shipments and competes with Thailand, Vietnam, Pakistan and Myanmar in the world market.

"Myanmar prices should go up by \$50 a ton while suppliers in Thailand and Vietnam will be quoting higher prices," said one Singapore-based trader. Five percent broken rice in Myanmar was quoted around \$390-\$395 a ton, free on board, before India's decision on export restrictions. In India, 5% broken white rice prices were quoted around \$348 a ton.

The decision will impact trade flows as India's white rice prices of the variety are about \$60-\$70 per ton cheaper than Thailand's, Chookiat Ophaswongse, honorary president of the Thai Rice Exporters Association, told Reuters.

"More orders will flow for Thai and Vietnamese rice," he said. "We have to wait and see how long this policy from India will go on for, if it is longer, it will increase demand for Thai rice exports..."

India's rice exports touched a record 21.5 million tons in 2021, more than the combined shipments of the world's next four biggest exporters of the grain: Thailand, Vietnam, Pakistan and the United States.

The world's top rice importers China and the Philippines are likely to take an immediate hit with higher rice prices.

China, one of the biggest importers of Indian broken rice for use in animal feed, is expected to shift to corn, traders said.

China purchased 1.1 million tons of broken rice in 2021, while African countries such as Senegal and Djibouti bought it for human consumption.

"We expect import volumes will decrease with this ban...the new Chinese corn crop is coming to market soon and there are large volumes of other imported grains," said Rosa Wang, analyst at Shanghai JC Intelligence Co. Ltd.

Japan's Economy Grows in Q2 as Consumer Spending Increased

TOKYO (Dispatches) - The Japanese economy grew at an annual rate of 3.5 percent in its second quarter, up from the initial estimate of 2.2 percent, as consumer and business spending rebounded with the easing of COVID-19 restrictions.

The figure is above the median market projection of 2.9 percent growth. Japan's gross domestic product (GDP) increased by 0.9 percent quarterly, up from 0.5 percent in the previous quarter, Kyodo News reported.

The economy was boosted by increased consumer spending, with capital spending growing 2 percent and private consumption increasing 1.2 percent, both of which were revised from their initial estimates of 1.4 percent and 1.1 percent growth, respectively. Japan's exports increased by 0.9 percent and imports by 0.6 percent. Domestic demand as a whole contributed 0.8 of a percentage point to revised GDP growth, while net exports added 0.1 of a percentage point.

The country has lifted most of its COVID-19 measures and resumed accepting foreign tourists from countries classified as having the lowest risk of COVID-19 since August, but only for package tours.

Japan has lagged behind other major economies in shaking off the effects of the pandemic due to a slow consumption recovery, blamed partly on aging consumers who are reluctant to spend on services like dining out and travel due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Rising fuel and commodity costs have pushed Japan's inflation above the 2 percent target, but the Bank of Japan (BOJ) maintains its ultra-loose monetary policy to support economic recovery.

Japan's loose monetary policy stands in stark contrast to a global wave of interest rate hikes, which has led to a sharp selloff in the yen, complicating the outlook for policymakers.



Taiwan Chip Giant TSMC Sees All-Time High Revenue in August

TAIPEI (Dispatches) - Taiwanese semiconductor giant TSMC said today its August revenue rose nearly 60 per cent to a record high of TW\$218.13 billion on soaring global demand.

Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company operates the world's largest silicon wafer factories and produces some of the most advanced microchips used in everything from smartphones and cars to missiles.

The vast majority of the world's top-notch microchips are made by just two companies — TSMC and Samsung — both of which are running at full capacity to alleviate a global shortage.

The Taiwanese firm controls more than half of global foundry output, with clients including Apple and Qualcomm. Its August revenue rose 58.7 per cent on-year and 16.8 per cent from July to an all-time high of TW\$218.13 billion — the first time it has reached the TW\$200 billion mark, according to a company statement.

Revenue for the first eight months of the year totalled TW\$1.4 trillion, a 43.5 per cent increase on the same period in 2021.

TSMC chief executive C.C. Wei told an investor conference in July that customer demand continued to exceed the company's ability to supply and he expected capacity to remain tight throughout 2022.

But he also expected "a few quarters of inventory adjustment" through the first half of 2023 due to softening demand for some products including smartphones and personal computers.

While Taiwan's semiconductor and high-tech industry has shown impressive growth, other parts of the economy are showing signs of an impact from the general global slowdown.

Canada Sheds Jobs for Third Month

OTTAWA (Dispatches) - Canada shed jobs for a third straight month in August, in a sign higher interest rates may be starting to cool the overheated economy, official data showed, though economists said it was unlikely to force a central bank pause.

The Canadian economy lost a net 39,700 jobs in August, missing analyst forecasts that it would add 15,000, Statistics Canada data showed. The jobless rate rose to 5.4%, missing calls it would edge up to 5.0% from a record low 4.9% in July.

"I think this can be taken as a reasonable indication that the economy is, in fact, slowing," said Andrew Kelvin, chief Canada strategist at TD Securities.

"When you look at the increase in the unemployment rate, that does suggest that maybe a little bit of slack is starting to return to the labor market, though it's not a complete process and it will be a slow process," he added.

Canada has lost a net 113,500 jobs in the last three months. In June and July the majority of those losses were attributed to people leaving the labor force, but that trend reversed in August as 66,200 people joined the workforce.

Over those same three months, job losses were concentrated in educational services, an often volatile segment during the summer months, and wholesale and retail trade. In August, construction jobs also fell sharply.

Three straight months of job losses "hasn't historically happened outside of a recession," said Royce Mendes, head of Macro Strategy at Desjardins Group, adding: "The deterioration in the job market appears to be occurring faster than anticipated."

Still, full-time employment was 3.9% higher than a year ago, Statscan said.

And wage gains continued to accelerate in August, up 5.6% on the year compared with 5.4% in July, with more people saying they were planning on leaving their current jobs in the next 12 months, citing pay and benefits as their top reason.

That wage pressure, which can fuel inflation, will likely keep the Bank of Canada in rate-hiking mode, economists said.

"I think the Bank will be more focused upon the wage side of the picture - the modest acceleration that we have there that's ongoing," said Derek Holt, vice president of Capital Markets Economics at Scotiabank. Money markets pulled back from bets of a 50-basis point increase at the bank's next decision in October after the data, leaning strongly toward 25 bps.

The Bank of Canada lifted its policy rate to 3.25% on Wednesday, its highest level in 14 years, and left the door open to more hikes amid hot inflation.

Euro Zone to Coordinate Fiscal, Monetary Policy To Fight Inflation

PRAGUE (Dispatches) - Euro zone finance ministers agreed on Friday to act together to protect households and companies from soaring energy prices, coordinating their support policies with the European Central Bank to avoid adding to inflationary pressures.

The ministers from the 19 euro zone countries agreed support should focus on providing money to help people and industry cope but that this should be regarded as an emergency measure and be carefully targeted where possible.

Support for companies should be coordinated across borders to preserve fair competition. "We acknowledge and we agree that we must reduce inflation," the chairman of euro zone finance ministers Paschal Donohoe told a news conference. "The failure to do so will make our citizens, the people of Europe, poorer for longer," he said.

France, Germany and other countries have announced multibillion-euro packages to help business and consumers cope with soaring inflation. The Bruegel think-tank estimates EU government support has already reached 282 billion euros (\$285 billion), with more on the way.

But the support itself can fuel inflation, creating a vicious circle.

"Our interventions will be coordinated with the monetary policy of the ECB and we will make all efforts to avoid adding to the inflationary pressure to which the ECB and we as finance ministers are responding to," Donohoe said.

The ECB raised its key interest rates by an unprecedented 75 basis points and promised further hikes, prioritising the fight against inflation as the bloc is likely heading towards a winter recession and gas rationing.

Asked how the ministers would reconcile pumping more money into the economy through support measures while avoiding adding to inflation, Donohoe said the answer was in the scale and design of the measures, but that it was a complex challenge.

European Economic Commissioner Paolo Gentiloni said the difficulty was in keeping the support targeted and temporary.

"I know it is very difficult because when you introduce a measure the tendency to leave it there is inevitable and it is difficult to limit your support to certain groups," he said.

ECB President Christine Lagarde noted that there was some improvement in the design of European support schemes but noted there was still need for improvement.

"It was 10% of the measures that were tailored and targeted, now we are moving to 15%, and there is a clear need of improvement in that respect," she said, adding that when it came to efficiency, income transfers were preferable to price caps.

In Brussels, EU energy ministers are discussing a long list of proposals from the European Commission to tackle the region's energy crisis, including a price cap on Russian gas, a windfall levy on non-gas power plants, a bloc-wide cut in electricity demand, and emergency credit lines for power firms facing soaring collateral requirements.

German Economic Institutes Cut 2023 GDP Forecast

BERLIN (Dispatches) - Two of Germany's leading economic institutes lowered their forecast for Europe's largest economy next year, predicting high energy prices caused by the Ukraine war would take their toll.

The IfW institute in Kiel predicted that the economy would contract by 0.7% in 2023, a U-turn from its June forecast foreseeing growth of 3.3%.

The RWI institute in Essen lowered its 2023 forecast but still predicted growth of 0.8% instead of a previous 2.7%.

For the current year, IfW and RWI still expect the German economy to grow, but not as strongly as previously thought, lowering their forecasts to 1.4% and 1.1%, respectively.

IfW and RWI, part of a group that advises the government, also raised inflation forecasts for this year, citing the rise in energy prices.

The IfW said inflation would reach 8.0% this year and 8.7% next year, while the RWI predicted 2022 inflation at 7.3% and 2023 inflation at 3.5%.

"The recent price jumps for electricity and gas will noticeably reduce the purchasing power of private households and lead to a decline in private consumer spending," IfW said.

The German government on Sunday unveiled plans to spend 65 billion euros (\$65 billion) on shielding consumers and businesses from the effects of soaring inflation. The latest package brings to 95 billion euros the amount allocated to inflation-busting since the Ukraine war began.

Iran Top HR Official in Geneva for UN Session

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Secretary of Iran's High Council for Human Rights, Kazem Gharibabadi, arrived in Geneva, to take part in the UN session of the Human Rights Council.

Gharibabadi, who is also deputy Judiciary chief for international affairs, leads a high-ranking Iranian delegation in Geneva.

The Iranian official is planned to address the UN session and hold separate meetings with the UN officials as well as envoys of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) member states and Islamic countries.



African Nations Push for More Climate Finance Ahead of COP

CAIRO (Dispatches) - African ministers meeting in Cairo two months ahead of the COP27 climate summit called on Friday for a sharp expansion of climate financing for their continent while pushing back against an abrupt move away from fossil fuels.

Egypt, an oil and gas producer considered highly vulnerable to climate change, has positioned itself as a champion for African interests as it prepares to host the summit in Sharm el-Sheikh in November.

A communique released after a three-day forum for finance, economy and environment ministers said Africa benefited from less than 5.5% of global climate financing despite having a low carbon footprint and suffering disproportionately from climate change.

It urged rich countries to meet and expand climate pledges, and said poor countries should be able to develop economically while receiving more funds to adapt to the impact of climate change.

The document stressed "the need to avoid approaches that encourage abrupt disinvestments from fossil fuels, as this will... threaten Africa's development".

The role of gas in the transition to cleaner energy is set to be a key point of contention at COP27. Climate activists say it needs to be quickly phased out and replaced with renewables.

Nigerian Finance Minister Zainab Ahmed told the Cairo forum that gas was a matter of survival for her country.

"If we are not getting reasonably-priced finance to develop gas, we are denying the citizens in our countries the opportunities to attain basic development," she said.

The communique also called for focusing on climate change in a review of multilateral development banks and international financial institutions.

It suggested the creation of a sustainable sovereign debt hub that could reduce the cost of capital for developing states and support debt-for-nature swaps.

Experts say there is private as well as public sector appetite for financing and investing in climate projects in Africa, but funding is hindered for reasons including risk perception, underdeveloped green finance markets, and local technical and



policy constraints.

States have seen their cost of borrowing rise due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine.

"This is keeping us up at night - how to decrease the cost of borrowing," Egypt's Deputy Finance Minister Sherine El Sharkawy told the forum.

Kevin Chika Urama, chief economist at the African Development Bank, said Africa faced a climate financing gap of about \$108 billion each year.

"Climate finance structure today is actually biased against climate-vulnerable countries. The more vulnerable you are the less climate finance you receive," he said.

Swift and Spielberg Bring Star Power Back To Toronto Film Festival



TORONTO (Dispatches) - After two years of toned-down festivities, the Toronto International Film Festival opens Thursday with full-capacity theaters and more than 200 feature films, aiming to make a mark in Hollywood's awards race.

Oprah Winfrey, Taylor Swift, Steven Spielberg and Lee Jung-jae are among the stars slated to appear on red carpets. Tickets for screenings, which unlike other major film festivals are open to the general public, sold out in minutes.

Several films will have their world premieres at the 11-day festival, which is known as TIFF and is often a launching pad for Oscar contenders.

"A lot of the movies that you see at TIFF are the movies that will be talked about all through Oscar season and over the many months to come," said Christian Blauvelt, executive managing editor of IndieWire.

Among them, Viola Davis stars in "The Woman King," the story of Agojie, the real-life 18th century all-women unit of warriors from the West African kingdom of Dahomey.

"This is the role that she's (Viola) been looking for her whole career," Blauvelt said. "It's such a unique thing. Fictionalized versions of this have appeared in the past, like Black Panther, but this is the real story."

Spielberg's semi-autobiographical film "The Fabelmans" also will debut in Toronto, alongside the musical biopic "Weird: The Al Yankovic Story," featuring Daniel Radcliffe as the musician. Sequel "Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery" starring Daniel Craig also is expected to draw crowds despite Craig's absence from the premiere.

Swift will appear to talk about her 10-minute music video "All Too Well: A Short Film", with many fans left high and dry as tickets to her event sold out in minutes. Some are being re-sold for C\$3,000 at online sites.

Festival opener "The Swimmers," directed by Sally El Hosaini, traces the journey of Yusra and Sara Mardini from war-torn Damascus to Germany, and later, to the 2016 Rio Olympics.

The festival is taking over Toronto's downtown core with events sprawling across King Street. Films will be screened across five venues, with the Royal Alexandra Theatre as the newest addition.

After two years of COVID closures, the hospitality industry is ready to welcome people back. The festival held largely online viewings in 2020 at the height of the pandemic and last year offered a mix of online and limited in-person screenings.

U.S., Indo-Pacific Countries Agree on Roadmap to Strengthen Trade Ties

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - The United States and 13 Indo-Pacific countries agreed on parameters for negotiating closer trade, environment and economic ties that U.S. Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo said would boost investment and jobs in the partner countries.

U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai said that India, the world's largest democracy, did not initially join the U.S.-led Indo Pacific Economic Framework's (IPEF) trade negotiations for now but that she was discussing similar issues bilaterally with her Indian counterpart.

At the conclusion of a ministerial meeting in Los Angeles, the 14 countries agreed on the key outlines for negotiating four major "pillars" of a future agreement: trade including data flows and labor rights, supply chain resilience, green energy and environmental standards, and anti-corruption and tax measures.

IPEF will not include tariff cuts that are the bedrock of traditional free trade deals, but the talks are part of a U.S. effort to re-engage economically with countries in Asia.

The Los Angeles talks included ministers from Australia, Brunei, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. Together with the United States, the participants represent some 40% of global GDP.

Tai said President Joe Biden launched the framework in May to put workers at the center of the economic agenda and work for more equitable, sustainable growth.

"After several days of intensive discussions, we have made real progress toward that goal, and the ministerial statements demonstrate both our ambition and our innovation," she said. "Our intention now is to move towards negotiations with our partners on each pillar with the first round of discussions taking place after this ministerial."

Raimondo, who also participated in the talks, said that a second ministerial IPEF meeting would be held early in 2023, but she declined to say whether an agreement could be reached in time for a U.S.-held leaders summit of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) countries in November 2023.

Thailand's Out-of-Work Elephants in Crisis

SURIN (Dispatches) - In the northeastern village of Ban Ta Klang in Thailand, Siriporn Sapmak starts her day by doing a livestream of her two elephants on social media to raise money to survive.

The 23-year old, who has been taking care of elephants since she was in school, points her phone to the animals as she feeds them bananas and they walk around the back of her family home.

Siriporn says she can raise about 1,000 baht (\$27.46) of donations from several hours of livestreaming on TikTok and YouTube but that is only enough to feed her two elephants for one day.

It is a new - and insecure - source of income for the family, which before the pandemic earned money by doing elephant shows in the Thai city of Pattaya. They top up their earnings by selling fruit.

Like thousands of other elephant owners around the country, the Sapmak family had to return to their home village as the pandemic decimated elephant camps and foreign tourism ground to a virtual halt. Only 400,000 foreign tourists arrived in Thailand last year compared with nearly 40 million in 2019.

Some days, Siriporn doesn't receive any donations and her elephants are underfed.

"We are hoping for tourists to (return). If they come back, we might not be doing these livestreams anymore," she said.

"If we get to go back to work, we get a (stable) income to buy grass for elephants to eat."

Edwin Wiek, founder of Wildlife Friends Foundation Thailand, estimates that at least a thousand elephants in Thailand would have no "proper income" until more tourists return.



Thailand has about 3,200 to 4,000 captive elephants, according to official agencies, and about 3,500 in the wild.

Wiek said the Livestock Development Department needs to find "some kind" of budget to support these elephants.

"Otherwise, it's going to be difficult to keep them alive I think for most families," he said.

The families in Ban Ta Klang, the epicentre of Thailand's elephant business located in Surin province, have cared for elephants for generations and have a close connection to them.

Elephant shows and rides have long been popular with tourists, especially the Chinese, while animal rights groups' criticism of how elephants are handled there has given rise to tourism in sanctuaries.

"We are bound together, like family members," Siriporn's mother Pensri Sapmak, 60, said.

"Without the elephants, we don't know what our future will look like. We have today thanks to them."

The government has sent 500,000 kilograms of grass across multiple provinces since 2020 to help feed the elephants, according to the Livestock Development Department, which oversees captive elephants.

Elephants, Thailand's national animal, eat 150 kg to 200 kg each day, according to the Wildlife Conservation Society.

Siriporn and her mother, however, said they have not yet received any government support.

"This is a big national issue," said Livestock Development Department Director-General Sorawit Thanito.

He said the government plans to assist elephants and their caretakers and that "measures along with a budget will be proposed to cabinet," without giving a time frame.

Iran Army...

FROM PAGE 1

The general went on to say that his force, from the military perspective, is the largest, most equipped, and most diverse armed force of the country in terms of technology and hardware.

Heydari said that the Army's Ground Force is the most unrivaled compared to similar forces in the region given its aerial combat and offensive power and because it has the largest fleet of military helicopters.

The senior Iranian commander further said that his force has undergone changes in terms of organization and structure and has remarkably improved in order to be highly versatile, strategic, integral, fully mobile, and offensive.

Arash-1 drone is a kamikaze and radar-evading unmanned aerial vehicle first launched during the Iranian Army's massive drone exercises in January 2019 from a portable launcher installed on the Makran coast in the southeastern part of the country.

It flew a distance of more than 1,400 kilometers (869 miles) before it hit the designated target in the central Iranian province of Semnan.

Arash-1 drone is said to be approximately 4.5 meters long, and its wingspan is estimated to be measuring between 3.5 and 4 meters.

The drone's wing is of the delta type and has been designed for high speeds. Its design, therefore, enables the aircraft to conserve its fuel for greater endurance and flying longer distances.

Iranian military experts and technicians have in recent years made substantial headways in manufacturing a broad range of indigenous equipment, making the armed forces self-sufficient in the arms sphere.

Iranian officials have repeatedly warned that the country will not hesitate to strengthen its military capabilities, including its missile power, which are entirely meant for defense, saying the Islamic Republic's defense capabilities will be never subject to negotiations.

Official Blames...

FROM PAGE 1

Marandi's tweet came after the three European parties to the JCPOA - France, Britain and Germany - in a press release on Saturday raised doubts about Iran's intentions and commitment to a successful outcome on the JCPOA, charging that Tehran's position contradicts its legally binding obligations and jeopardizes prospects of restoring the nuclear deal.

The European trio claimed they have been negotiating "with Iran in good faith since April 2021 to restore and fully implement" the JCPOA, along with other participants in the deal and the United States.

Tehran, Minsk to...

FROM PAGE 1

Rostami said Iran has been forced to import such machinery in the past as he insisted that local manufacturing of the heavy dump trucks will lead to an increase in annual production from Iranian mines by at least 40%.

Iran has introduced major programs to boost activity in its mining and metals sector since 2018 when its sales of crude oil came under American sanctions.

Exports of minerals and metals have boost Iran's hard currency revenues while the country has been able to create tens of thousands of new jobs for its youth population in recent years.

Crews of Greek...

FROM PAGE 1

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

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

Ginobili Enters Hall of Fame

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Four-time NBA champion Manu Ginobili of Argentina looked back with affection on a career that spanned three continents and included Olympic gold as he entered the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame.

Ginobili, a creative and unpredictable guard whose celebrated "Euro-step" stymied defenders, was greeted by cheers of "Ma-nuuu, Ma-nuuu" as he spoke at Symphony Hall in Springfield, Massachusetts.

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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

Kiplimo First Ugandan Man Winning Great North Run

LONDON (Dispatches) - World record holder Jacob Kiplimo became the first Ugandan man to win the Great North Run after tributes were paid to Queen Elizabeth II before the race.

Kiplimo powered to victory in his first appearance at the event in north-east England.

The 21-year-old had a 32-second lead as he hit the 12-mile mark on the 13.1-mile course from Newcastle to South Shields.

Verstappen Wins Italian GP To Close in on F1 Title

MONZA (Dispatches) - Max Verstappen won the Formula One Italian Grand Prix to leave himself in touching distance of his second straight Formula One title.

Championship leader Verstappen claimed his first win at Monza and his fifth GP in a row after fighting from seventh on the grid to beat Charles Leclerc over the line on another difficult day for Ferrari.

The Red Bull driver is 116 points ahead of Leclerc in the drivers' standings after winning a race whose final six laps were run with the safety car after Daniel Ricciardo lost his engine and ended up at the side of the track.

"We had a great race, we were quickest on every compound," said Verstappen, who had never even made the podium at Monza and started Sunday's race with a grid penalty.

With six races left, the Dutchman can win the driver's crown at next month's Singapore GP.

The Monza crowd booed and whistled loudly as the cars came over the line as they were denied the chance to see their man Leclerc try to overtake dominant Verstappen, who won his 11th race of the season.

"The end was frustrating, I wish could have had a bit of racing at the end, unfortunately we were second because of what happened before," said Leclerc.

The Monegasque appeared frustrated after Ferrari's plan of pitting early to change from soft to medium tyres backfired.

"Obviously we finished P2 so I'm not extremely happy with the race but we will work on that," added Leclerc.

"I think the pace was quite strong today, we will have to look into it as we were quite strong but it was not enough."

George Russell of Mercedes rounded off the podium, while Leclerc's teammate Carlos Sainz surged from 18th on the starting grid to fourth.

Seven-time world champion Lewis Hamilton also raced from the back of the Mercedes to finish an impressive fifth while a delighted Nyck de Vries scored points on his F1 debut by finishing ninth as a stand-in for Williams' Alex Albon.

Leclerc started on pole and held off an early overtake attempt from Russell to keep first place while Verstappen was already bursting through the pack.



Having started in seventh, Verstappen shifted up four places by the end of the first lap. He moved ahead of Russell on lap five to put Leclerc in his sights.

Verstappen took the lead on lap 13 when a virtual safety car was introduced after Sebastian Vettel crashed out and Leclerc pitted.

Leclerc re-entered the track with no major mishaps unlike at last week's Dutch GP but Ferrari's tactical move would eventually cost them the race.

Verstappen pitted on lap 26 to change from his softs to mediums and rejoined the fray just behind Leclerc with the same compound in which his Ferrari rival had already driven around the track 13 times.

That tyre wear made the difference when Leclerc handed Verstappen the win by pitting again to go back to softs seven laps later.

"It was really good on the tyres, it was really enjoyable to drive today," Verstappen said. "A great day for us. It took a bit of time, but finally we won it."

Daniel Ricciardo's race ended with six laps remaining and with his car stuck beside the track that allowed everyone to pit knowing a safety car would come out.

What they didn't know was that the car would remain on the track until the end of the race, meaning Verstappen strolled over the line for a victory which would likely have come regardless.



Swiatek Clinches US Open Crown

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - World number one Iga Swiatek defeated Tunisia's Ons Jabeur to win her second Grand Slam title of the year with a straight sets victory in the US Open final.

Polish star Swiatek overcame a spirited second set fightback from fifth seed Jabeur to win 6-2, 7-6 (7/5) in 1hr 52min at Arthur Ashe Stadium.

The victory followed Swiatek's win at the French Open in June, making the 21-year-old the first woman since 2016 to win two Grand Slams in a single season.

Swiatek's 10th career title also extended her remarkable record in tournament finals.

She has now won her last 10 finals, without dropping a set.

Swiatek collapsed on court in relief after a win that saw her earn US\$2.6 million (RM11.7 million) in prize money.

"I'm really glad it's not in cash," she quipped as she was presented with her winner's cheque for a tournament she entered with low expectations.

"For sure this tournament was really challenging because it's New York — it's so loud, it's so crazy," said Swiatek who was also French Open champion in 2020.

"So many temptations in the city, so many people I've met who are so inspiring — it's really mindblowing for me and I'm so proud I could handle it mentally."

Jabeur Vows to Come Back Swinging

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Ons Jabeur struggled to hold back the tears after losing a second consecutive Grand Slam final on Saturday, but while the Tunisian said her U.S. Open defeat to Iga Swiatek was tough to take she vowed to come back swinging.

The 28-year-old Tunisian, who lost her first Grand Slam title match at Wimbledon in July, was beaten 6-2 7-6(5) by world number one Swiatek at Flushing Meadows.

She told reporters that not even the sting of defeat on the sport's biggest stage could keep her down for long.

"I struggled to win my first WTA title. It took me time. So I believe this will take me time," said Jabeur, who will regain the world number two ranking after the tournament concludes.

"The most important thing is accepting it, you know, learning from the finals that I lost."

A crowd favorite in New York for her creative play and ebullient personality, she claimed her first Tour-level title last year in Birmingham, England, nine years after first appearing in a WTA main draw.

She went on a tear this year, winning in Madrid and Berlin, before Elena Rybakina came back from a set down to end her title hopes at Wimbledon.

Jabeur's march through the Flushing Meadows draw saw her swat aside a red-hot Caroline Garcia in the semi-finals but a rocky start against Swiatek proved too much for Tunisia's "Minister of Happiness."

"Wimbledon was tough. This one is going to be tough," she told reporters.

"I'm not someone that going to give up. I am sure I'm going to be in the final again."

The first Arab woman to reach a Grand Slam final, and first African woman to reach the U.S. Open championship match, Jabeur said her message to the next generation of girls hoping to follow her path was: "Never give up."

"That's what I was trying to do all my career. I had some ups and downs. Before, it was injuries and getting to know myself on the court. After, it was losing quarter-finals," she said.



Bosnia Criticized for Playing Russia in November Friendly

LONDON (Dispatches) - Bosnia and Herzegovina will play Russia in a friendly match in November, the Bosnia Football Association announced on its official website, sparking criticism from Bosnia midfielder Miralem Pjanic and the mayor of Sarajevo.

The game will take place in St Petersburg on Nov. 19, one day before the World Cup in Qatar is scheduled to start.

Russia's national teams were barred from international competition over Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, which Moscow calls a "special operation".

Bosnia failed to qualify for the World Cup.

"The decision is not good. I am speechless," Pjanic was quoted as saying by Bosnian media. "In the national Football Association, they know what I think."

The 32-year-old former Juventus and Barcelona player has made 107 international appearances since his debut in 2008. He now plays for Sharjah FC in the United Arab Emirates.

The mayor of Bosnia's capital Sarajevo, Benjamina Karic, also reacted negatively on social media to the decision.

"Sarajevo as the city which has been under the longest siege from aggressors and me as a mayor strongly condemn the decision by the national Football Association to play a friendly match with Russia," she posted on Twitter.

Sarajevo was besieged for 43 months between 1992 and 1995 during the Bosnian war. It was the longest siege in modern European history through the 20th century.

Martial Slams Mourinho And Solskjaer for Man United Treatment

LONDON (Dispatches) - Manchester United forward Anthony Martial has slammed former managers Ole Gunnar Solskjaer and Jose Mourinho.

While injury has undermined the Frenchman's start to the season, Martial appeared to have formed a key part of Erik ten Hag's first-choice line-up during pre-season.

Having returned from an ill-fated loan with Sevilla during the second half of last season, the 26-year-old could yet have a long-term future at Old Trafford.

One of the most exciting talents in European football upon his shock move to United in 2015, Martial's career has looked to be on a downward spiral after winning the prestigious Golden Boy Award that same year.

The last of his 30 international caps came last year but Martial looks some way off making the French squad for the 2022 World Cup in Qatar.

Reflecting on his struggles on the international stage, the former Monaco youngster blamed Mourinho for his overlooking in 2018, when France lifted the World Cup for the second time.

Martial told France Football: "It started with the story of the shirt number [handed to Zlatan Ibrahimovic]."

"During the holidays, he [Mourinho] sent me a message to ask if I want to change to the No.11, explaining to me that it is great because it was worn by Ryan Giggs, a club legend."

"I tell him that I have the greatest respect for Giggs but I prefer to keep the No.9. When I returned to the club, I see my name with the No.11, the story did not end well. He [Mourinho] lacked direct respect for me."

"He talked about me in the press, little phrases, a bit like he had done with Karim Benzema at Real Madrid. He likes these little games, but he also knows who he is doing it with."



Barcelona's LaLiga Spending Cap Raised By 800m Euros

MADRID (Dispatches) - LaLiga has raised Barcelona's spending limit by 800 million euros (\$803 million), bringing it out of a spending deficit after the Catalan side sold off chunks of assets to patch up its finances, the Spanish league said.

Barcelona were given a cap of 96 million euros last year, which was slashed by January to minus 144 million euros - meaning the team had to find savings elsewhere to sign new players - after they ran up debts and future liabilities of 1.35 billion euros, with 673 million owed to banks.

As a result of their financial turnaround, the league said on Friday it has given Barcelona a cap of 656 million euros for the 2022-23 season.

To offset losses and comply with LaLiga's financial fair play rules, Barcelona sold 25% of their domestic television rights to U.S. investment firm Sixth Street for the next 25 years in two deals worth over 500 million euros, re-a

The club raised an additional 200 million euros from the sale of a 49% stake in Barca Studios in two separate transactions, while also signing a long-term sponsorship deal with streaming giant Spotify in March.

That allowed Barcelona to spend more than 150 million euros on Robert Lewandowski, Raphinha and Jules Koukou, while Andreas Christensen, Franck Kessie, Hector Bellerin and Marcos Alonso all arrived on free transfers.

LaLiga president Javier Tebas said Barcelona will have to continue to reduce their wage bill to maintain their spending limit for next season. "Without the (sale of assets) it may not be so high next season. They may have to reduce their outgoings by around 200 million euros by selling players or even (selling more) assets," Tebas told reporters.

