

President Ebrahim Raisi Said on Arrival at Mehrabad Airport Early On Saturday That His Trip to Uzbekistan Was Aimed at Strengthening Neighborhood Policy And Economic Multilateralism

IRAN NEWS

Russia Supports Acceleration of Iran's Membership process in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Which Would Affect the SCO Positively, Russia's President Vladimir Putin Said in the SCO Summit

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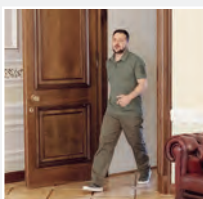


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Leader Attends Arbaeen Mourning Ceremony

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN – Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei attended a mourning ceremony on Arbaeen, the fortieth day after the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS) on Saturday.

Ayatollah Khamenei took part in a mourning ceremony on Arbaeen, the fortieth day after the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS) on Saturday.

The participants in the mourning ceremony attended by the Leader were student associations and the ceremony is held in Imam Khomeini's (RA) Hosseiniyeh in Tehran.

Addressing the participants in the ceremony, Ayatollah Khamenei hailed Arbaeen march and called it a sign of Almighty God's power and it keeps the flag of the Prophet Household hoisting.

He also said that congregations should try hard to keep alive this movement and memory of the Prophet Household.

The leader also urged the youth to pursue that path of right and keep the color of God in all fields especially in the universities and encourage others to join this path.

U.S. Has to Take Trust-Building Measures Amid JCPOA Talks

TEHRAN (PressTV) - President Ebrahim Raisi says "the U.S. has to take trust-building measures" amid the ongoing negotiations over restoration of the 2015 nuclear deal.

Raisi made the remarks in an interview with Qatar's Al Jazeera television network on Thursday.

When asked about the potential of direct talks between Iran and the United States over the deal, he said, "Direct talks with the US over the nuclear agreement is of no avail."

The deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), came about in Vienna following marathon direct negotiations between Iran and the P5+1 group of countries that comprised the U.S., the UK, France, Russia, and China plus Germany.

Raisi also censured a raft of new sanctions that Washington has imposed on Iran, asking, "If Washington is after an agreement, why does it apply new sanctions during the course of the nuclear talks?"

He noted, "We are determined to put up a decisive defense of Iran's and its people's rights" during the negotiations.

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Raisi Calls on SCO to Confront U.S. Unilateralism



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - President Ebrahim Raisi has called on the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) member states to adopt new approaches so as to confront the United States' unilateralism.

Speaking at the 22nd meeting of the council of heads of the SCO member states in Samarkand on Friday, Raisi said that the U.S. administration seeks to impose its intentions and internal laws on the international system and independent states.

"There is no doubt that the U.S. is after blocking these countries on their path to development," he said.

He called on the Shanghai Cooperation Organization to "adopt special measures to confront the United States' unilateralism and cruel sanctions."

One of the solutions, he continued, is forming sustainable trade between the SCO member states which requires joint development of infrastructure in the areas such as financial transactions.

Raisi described transport and energy security as two other key areas for the SCO. Referring to the lack of sufficient infrastructure in the transit sector among member states, he said Iran had given a special priority to the development of the North-South corridor, investing heavily in the project.

"In addition, the China-Central Asia-West Asia-Mediterranean Sea Corridor, which has high potential, is currently described as an important part of the solution for the development of trade between East and West Eurasia. With the cooperation of the members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, it is possible to provide the necessary grounds for the implementation of this corridor and for the members to benefit from its advantages," he added.

A sustainable transit requires multilateral cooperation between member states in developing needed infrastructure, he said, adding that Iran is ready to offer its transit network and the capacities of its ports in the Caspian Sea, Sea of Oman, and the Persian Gulf to boost the transit sector of the SCO.

Touching upon the issue of energy security and cooperation among members, Raisi noted that owners of the world's largest energy reserves as well as major energy-consuming countries are present in the SCO while other member states enjoy great potential for energy transit. "This combination is prone to the formation of diverse and effective cooperation in the field of energy."

Iran, he continued, is ready to play an effective role in order to alleviate the concerns of the members in ensuring the security of energy supply, given its unique capacities, including its proximity to the world's two largest oil and hydrocarbon fields, oil and gas transportation network and a suitable transit location and expert manpower.

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Russian Delegation of 80 Large Companies To Visit Iran

TEHRAN (PressTV) - President Vladimir Putin says a Russian delegation of 80 large companies are set to visit Iran next week, as the Islamic Republic signed documents pertaining to its full membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which is due to take place in the near future.

Putin made the announcement in a meeting with Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi on the sidelines of a SCO's summit in the Uzbek city of Samarkand on Thursday, Russia's state-owned news agency RIA Novosti reported.

The Russian leader said Moscow was "very happy" that Iran would soon join the Eurasian political, economic and security organization, which brings together China, Russia, India, Pakistan and four ex-Soviet Central Asian countries.

"As we agreed with you, we have done everything for Iran to become a full member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Our partners in this organization have supported your application; all that is left is one last formality. It is indeed a formality, and Iran is joining this already serious, large and authoritative international organization," Putin said. "And we are very happy about this."

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Iranian Diplomat Blasts Shameful European Statement at IAEA

TEHRAN (PressTV) - An Iranian diplomat has lambasted as "shameful" the statement of the three European signatories to the 2015 Iran nuclear deal at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Governors (BoG) meeting, saying such "hypocritical acts" will impede the conclusion of sanctions-removal talks in the Austrian capital of Vienna.

Mehdi Hosseini Matin, the chargé d'affaires of the Iranian Embassy in Britain, made the comment in a tweet on Thursday after two-thirds of the UN nuclear watchdog's 35-nation Board of Governors endorsed a non-binding statement by the United States, Britain, France and Germany that accused Iran of lack of interaction with the UN nuclear agency and claimed that Safeguard issues still remained unresolved.

"With continued terrorist acts & sanctions by US-Israel against Iran & failure at the IAEA, U.S., UK, Germany and France initiated a shameful controversial statement against Iran's legal remedy measures," Hosseini Matin wrote.

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Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran Railway Has Great Potential

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC NEWS

TEHRAN - Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran' railway has a great potential, President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev said at the expanded meeting of the Heads of State Council of SCO member states.

"I would like to point separately to the priority vectors of economic cooperation - the transit and transport sector, food and energy security. The adoption of the Concept of Cooperation between the SCO countries on the development of effective economic and transport corridors has been a serious achievement in improving logistical interconnectedness," he stated.

According to him, the matter is about the rail transportation in 'China - Europe' direction and the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route, as well as plans to build a third railway crossing point on the border of Kazakhstan and China.

"I invite SCO partners to use the opportunities that are opening up in this regard. 'Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran' railway has a serious potential, which opens the shortest route from East Asia to the countries of the Persian Gulf."

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Venezuela Receives Third Oil Tanker Built by Iran

CARACAS (Dispatches) - Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro says the country has received an "advanced" oil tanker from Iran as part of a bilateral contract amid increasing cooperation between Tehran and Caracas in various fields.

"We have just received a ship with the most advanced engineering and technology in the world," Maduro said according to Venezuelan state TV. He said that the ship was manufactured by Iran upon Venezuela's order.

The oil tanker "now comes to serve as a cargo ship for our revolutionary PDVSA," he added.

This is the third Iran-made oil tanker delivered to Venezuela. The South American country received the second tanker on June 11, 2022.

The second tanker was of Aframax type with a deadweight between 80,000 and 120,000 metric tons (mt) which can carry 113,000 mt or 750,000 barrels of oil. The 250-meter-long vessel is equipped with a 21,000 horsepower engine and three diesel generators that are capable of producing 900 kilowatts of electricity.

Maduro said in June that the fourth tanker will also join the Venezuelan state-owned oil and natural gas company (PDVSA) in 2024, marking the conclusion of a 2006-signed contract on four oil tankers between the two states.

The tankers are produced by Iran Marine Industrial Company (Sadra) located along the Persian Gulf coast in Bushehr province.

The delivery comes as both Iran and Venezuela are under severe economic sanctions imposed by the United States. Tehran and Caracas have expanded cooperation in recent years, especially in the field of energy, to neutralize Washington's unilateral measures.

The Venezuelan president made an official visit to Iran in June, inking a 20-year partnership agreement aimed at improving bilateral cooperation in various fields such as technology, agriculture, oil and gas, petrochemicals, tourism as well as culture.

The ceremony to deliver the second oil tanker was held during this visit with presidents of the two nations in attendance.



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Zionist Regime Founded on Crime

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Foreign Ministry spokesman commemorated the anniversary of Sabra and Shatila massacre which was carried out by the Zionist regime and its allies in 1982 against Palestinians in refugee camps.

Today, September 16, marks the anniversary of the start of the 3-day unimaginable, heinous massacre of Palestinian refugees in Sabra and Shatila camps in the south of Beirut 40 years ago, Nasser Kanaani wrote in an Instagram post on Friday.

Kanaani noted that the massacre was carried out by the bloodthirsty Zionist regime and its accomplices.

U.S. Unilateral Coercive Measures Against Iranians Violate Int'l Law

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - The top Iranian rights official has blasted the U.S. and its allies for their unilateral coercive measures (UCM) against Iranians, saying the measures violate the basic principles of international law, the UN Charter as well as fundamental human rights.

“Unilateral coercive measures are in flagrant contradiction with the principle of the rule of law,” Secretary of Iran’s High Council for Human Rights Kazem Gharibabadi said at the 51st session of the UN Human Rights Council.

He underlined the need for the establishment of effective mechanisms in order to hold the sanctioning states to account, stressing that the step must be an integral part of any appeal and legal discourse on the negative impacts of sanctions.

“How come certain states, which are always pretending to support the human rights of Iranians, have the face to encroach upon the rights of Iranians on a large scale by imposing and supporting cruel sanctions or remaining silent about them?” the official went on to question.

Gharibabadi stressed that it was an absolute necessity to establish a conceptual framework for a compensation and grievance mechanism in order to make reparations



to the victims of human rights violations as a result of sanctions.

He underlined that significant attention should be paid to the impacts of unlawful unilateral coercive measures.

In the same meeting, Alena Douhan, UN Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on human rights, said the proliferation of secondary sanctions has resulted in a growing fear of sanctions and over-compliance with unilateral sanction regimes, leading to serious adverse effects on the human rights of millions of people around the world.

“Today the world faces a proliferation of secondary sanctions, applied extraterritorially to states, entities or individuals for their presumed cooperation or association with sanctioned parties,” said Douhan.

No Boundaries for Expansion of Iran- Pakistan Ties

TEHRAN (IRNA) - President Ebrahim Raisi has expressed Islamabad-Tehran relationship as important, noting that the Islamic Republic sets no boundaries for expansion of ties with Pakistan.

In the second day of his stay in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, Raisi made the remarks in a meeting with Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on the sidelines of the 22nd summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

The Iranian president described relations between Iran and Pakistan as significant.

President Raisi also expressed condolences on the fatal flooding in Pakistan, wishing patience and health for victims and families of the incident.

The Pakistani premier, for his part, noted that the recent floods in his country happened because of climate change, calling for the Islamic Republic’s support for standing against the main elements who are behind the greenhouse gas emissions.

In the meeting, the two sides welcomed cooperation in respect of energy sector, emphasizing the necessity for following up efforts to remove obstacles in the way of mutual collaborations.

The two heads of states also agreed upon forming a committee of relevant officials of both countries to pursue implementation of such joint projects.

President Urges Expansion of Ties With India

TEHRAN (IRNA) - President Ebrahim Raisi said in a meeting with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi that the two countries could leverage existing capabilities to expand ties.

The meeting took place on the sidelines of the 22nd Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in Samarkand, Uzbekistan.

During the meeting, Raisi said that boosting ties with India was among Iran’s foreign policy priorities, describing the current relationship between the two nations as friendly.

The Iranian President said that Tehran and New Delhi could elevate their relations and expand collaborations by leveraging the existing capabilities in oil, gas, and transportation, especially Chabahar-Central Asia route which connects the Indian Ocean to Central Asia, as

well as cooperation in regional and international issues where they share common views.

India’s Prime Minister Modi, for his part, expressed New Delhi’s disagreement with unilateral sanctions against countries.

He underscored the significance of Chabahar Port in southern Iran in freight transportation and said that development of the port could contribute to development of the countries in the region.

Modi highlighted the common stances of Iran and India on the development in Afghanistan and called for continuation of regional and international collaborations with Iran on the issue.

The two leaders exchanged invitations to pay a visit to each other’s countries.

Iran Not Accept Changes in Internationally-Recognized Borders

TEHRAN (MNA) - In a meeting with the President of Turkey, President Raisi said rejected any change in the internationally-recognized, historical and geopolitical borders in the region as unacceptable to Iran.

President Ebrahim Raisi held a bilateral meeting with Recep Tayyip Erdogan on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in Uzbekistan’s Samarkand, during which the two sides discussed the developments in the region, including the issues of Syria, Afghanistan and the latest developments in the Caucasus.

The two presidents also reviewed the agreements made during Erdogan’s recent visit to Tehran and the holding of the 7th Supreme Council of Economic Cooperation between the two countries, once again emphasizing on speeding up the implementation of these agreements.

Ayatollah Raisi emphasized, “The basis of our policy in the region is that the fate of the countries should be determined by themselves and their national sovereignty and territorial integrity needs to be respected.

” Citing examples of Iran’s support for friends and neighbors during the crisis, the president clarified that Iran is a friend to its neighbors.

Referring to the developments in the Caucasus, Ayatollah Raisi explained the Islamic Republic of Iran’s strategic policy to welcome the liberation of Karabakh and readiness for participation in its reconstruction, while describing any change in the internationally-recognized, historical and geopolitical borders in the region as unacceptable to Iran.

In the meeting, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan emphasized the continuation of efforts to implement the agreements between the two countries.

Iran Ready to Share Scientific Experience With Kyrgyzstan

TEHRAN (IRNA) - President Ebrahim Raisi said that Iran has achieved great progress in technical and scientific fields despite existing sanctions, and is ready to share its experiences with Kyrgyzstan.

President Raisi made the remark in a meeting with his Kyrgyz counterpart Sadyr Japarov on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization’s summit in Uzbekistan’s southeastern city of Samarkand. Raisi referred to historical, cultural and civilizational bonds between Iran and Kyrgyzstan, calling for stepping up efforts to boost economic relations.

He said that the two sides can also promote their regional cooperation with the participation of other countries such as Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

Japarov, on his part, said that the expansion of ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran is among the priorities of his government.

He stressed the importance of promoting bilateral cooperation in the transit sector, and called for speeding up efforts to complete a railway construction project between Iran’s southern port city of Bandar Abbas and the Central Asia.

The Kyrgyz president said that the project plays a key role in expanding economic cooperation between Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan.

Japarov also thanked Iran for providing medical assistance to his country during the Covid pandemic.

Iran’s SCO Membership Practical Measure in Neutralizing U.S. Sanctions

TEHRAN (IP) - An Iranian lawmaker says the Islamic Republic’s membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) amounts to a “practical measure” in neutralizing the sanctions imposed by the U.S. on the country.

Abbas Moghtadaei, deputy chairman of the Iranian Parliament’s National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, told IRNA that the SCO could play a special role for Iran and other member states given the developments unfolding on the international stage and the particular type of interactions among major powers.

He said the US was using sanctions to paralyze Iran, but the policy was doomed to failure from the start.

The SCO, the lawmaker said, will consolidate Iran’s ties with China, Russia, India, and other members.

The current trend shows that if Iran pushes ahead with the development of diplomacy in different fields, such as neighborly diplomacy or economic diplomacy, it will prove the defeat and inefficiency of the sanctions in practice, Moghtadaei said.

He described Iran as an emerging power in Asia and the entire world, saying the Islamic Republic, its immediate neighbors and other regional countries are capable of creating joint markets to address each other’s needs.

The legislator also said the Islamic Republic can also help regional countries strengthen their security given the country’s achievements in the defense industry.

China, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan are SCO full member states.

FM Discusses Latest Int’l Developments With UN Official

TEHRAN (MNA) - Foreign Minister and the UN Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs discussed the most important regional and international developments.

Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian met and held talks with United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Rosemary DiCarlo.

In this meeting, the two sides discussed and exchanged opinions about the most important regional and international developments.

They also touched upon the latest developments in Yemen, Afghanistan, and Ukraine.

Also, the UN Secretary General’s initiative for regional collective cooperation and the latest status of negotiations to remove sanctions were discussed in this meeting.

Hossein Amirabdollahian is accompanying president Raisi on his visit to Uzbekistan to attend the 22nd summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Samarkand.

Iran Oil Export Up In Third Consecutive Month

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Kpler, a commodities data intelligence firm, has reported that the Islamic Republic of Iran has exported 20 million barrels of its stored oil to the international markets within the last three months.

The information based on tracking of ships show that Iran’s oil export increased in August as the third consecutive month.

The commodities data intelligence firm declared that Iran’s onshore oil ready for export has decreased six million barrels, reaching to 50 million barrels; moreover, its offshore oil ready for export also decreased from 107 million barrels to 93 million barrels, showing 14 percent decline.

According to the report, Iran exported crude from both daily production, as well as 20 million barrels of its stored oil to the world markets. An important section of the stored oil export was transported to China.

Furthermore, Vortexa, a real-time energy cargo tracking, verified that Iranian oil export experienced an increasing trend, reporting that Iran’s oil export in January stood at one million bpd, while it decreased to 700,000 bpd in May, but the volume hiked from June to August.

Tehran Blasts Fresh U.S. Sanctions Against Iranian Individuals



TEHRAN (PressTV) - The spokesman for Iran’s Foreign Ministry has strongly condemned the United States for slapping a fresh raft of sanctions on Iranian individuals and firms after falsely accusing them of being involved in cyber attacks against Washington and its allies, emphasizing that persistence on a campaign of deceitful propaganda and disinformation against Tehran will not succeed.

Nasser Kanaani said that the U.S. administration is empty-handed in dealing with the Islamic Republic of Iran, noting “Washington’s insistence on resorting to foolish, unlawful and norm-defying behaviors against independent governments and nations is indicative of the American statesmen’s inability to clearly understand global equations and adapt themselves to the existing facts.”

He added that resorting to “a campaign of false propaganda and promotion of disinformation against the Islamic Republic of Iran are all part of the U.S. administration’s failed policy of Iranophobia, which will of course get nowhere.”

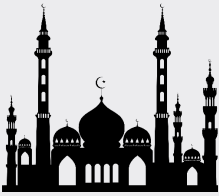
Kanaani went on to highlight that Washington, which has previously kept mum on numerous cyber attacks against Iran’s infrastructure and peaceful nuclear facilities, and has even directly or indirectly supported such attacks, lacks any justification to level accusations against others.

“As a country that has been repeatedly targeted by cyber attacks, the Islamic Republic of Iran has been an important part of responsible international efforts aimed at dealing with the threats of cyber attacks,” the senior Iranian diplomat pointed out.

In a statement published on Wednesday, the US Department of the Treasury levied sanctions on ten Iranian individuals and two firms for alleged involvement in cyber attacks.

The designated entities have been identified as Najee Technology Hooshmand Fater LLC (Najee Technology) and Afkar System Yazd Company (Afkar System).

This comes as earlier this month, Albania, which has for years hosted anti-Iran terrorists in collusion with the U.S., severed diplomatic ties with Tehran, accusing it of orchestrating a July “cyber attack” against Tirana.



PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	12:58
■ Evening (Maghreb)	19:25
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	05:25
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:50

52. Behold! he said to his father and his people, “What are these images, to which ye are (so assiduously) devoted?”

53. They said, “We found our fathers worshipping them.”

Surah 21. The Prophets (52 - 53)

Iran, Uzbekistan Sign 17 MoUs to Expand Ties

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Iran and Uzbekistan have signed a total of 17 memoranda of understanding (MoUs) as the two countries seek to expand their bilateral ties.

The documents were signed in a ceremony attended by Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, his Uzbek counterpart Shavkat Mirziyoyev and their accompanying delegations of ministers and government officials in the Uzbek city of Samarkand.

Iran's official IRNA news agency said the MoUs would allow Iran and Uzbekistan to boost their cooperation in the fields of trade, cargo transit, cultural exchanges, health and customs issues, among others.

Raisi's website said in a report that Iranian president had hailed the signing of the documents as a major step toward the expansion of economic and trade ties between Iran and Uzbekistan.

Raisi said the two countries can easily increase the size of their bilateral trade by three to four times from a current annual figure of around \$500 million.

The Iranian president has traveled to Samarkand to attend a key summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

Raisi said his administration's top priority is to interact with neighbors and regional countries. He made the comment in a meeting with Iranian businesspeople in Uzbekistan on Thursday.

Raisi noted that Iran wants interaction with the whole world but it's counting specifically on neighbors.

He then underlined the need to facilitate financial transactions between Iran and Uzbekistan, saying the Iranian Central Bank and Saderat (Exports) Bank must remove obstacle to such transactions as soon as possible.

He said Iran and Uzbekistan aim to increase trade and economic relations fourfold.

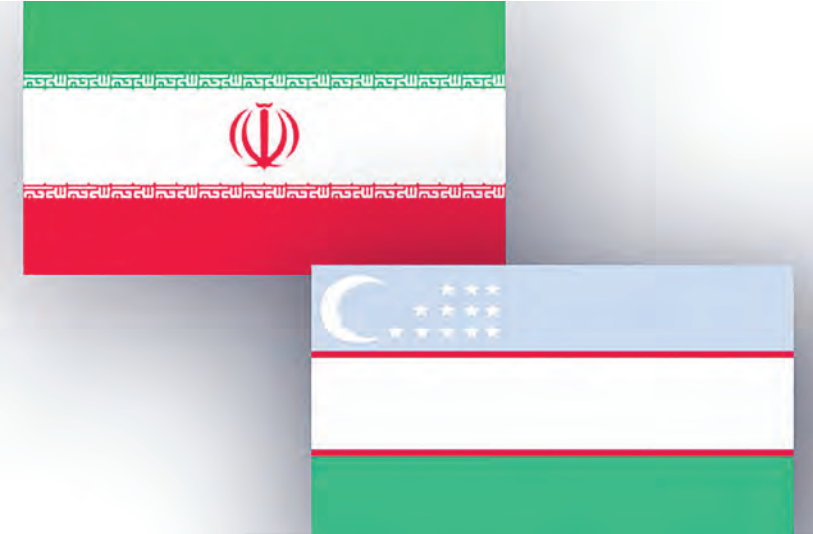
Raisi added that in the meeting with his Uzbek counterpart, the two underlined the need to expand bilateral relations.

He also said Iran is not pleased with the level of economic and trade ties between the two countries and the relations must be strengthened.

Raisi then referred to the US sanctions against Iran and their failure. He said despite that the bans were massive, Iran turned them into an opportunity.

Iran Oil Minister and the Acting Minister of Energy of Uzbekistan also signed a memorandum of understanding for cooperation in eight different areas of energy.

During the meeting of Iran's Oil Minister Javad Owji with Acting Minister of



Energy of Uzbekistan Azim Ahmad Khojaf, a memorandum was signed for cooperation between the two countries in various energy sectors.

Earlier, Raisi met and held talks with Uzbekistan President Mirziyoyev. Congratulating the anniversary of Uzbekistan's independence, President Raisi said that Iran-Uzbekistan relations have undoubtedly made good progress in these years, especially during Mirziyoyev's presidency.

He underlined that Tehran's relations with Tashkent are not only neighborly and regional ties, but it is also civilizational, deep, and cultural.

President Raisi noted that despite the sanctions, the Islamic Republic of Iran has made great progress over the past years, adding that the willful nation turns threats into opportunities. "Today, we have progress in various fields and many capacities have been created in the Islamic Republic of Iran."

Uzbekistan's progress is Iran's progress and there are no obstacles to the development of relations between the two countries, he went on to say.

He further noted that there is a readiness to increase mutual ties in different fields, including trade, transit, and transportation exchanges which can increase the level of cooperation between Tehran and Tashkent.

President Raisi expressed Iran's readiness to cooperate with Uzbekistan in the field of energy.

Referring to the talks between oil ministers of Iran and Uzbekistan and the inking of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two states, he expressed hope that good steps would be taken to develop energy relations and signing of the documents is a good manifestation of the will of the two states to develop relations in different fields.

Mirziyoyev, for his part, described President Raisi's visit to his country as a historic trip, adding that Iran and Uzbekistan have entered the path of development and these trips will be strong foundations for the development of Iran-Uzbekistan ties.

Pointing to the great history of Iran, he noted that economic exchanges between the two countries have increased due to the common historical ties.

Iran to Increase Oil Export To Central Asia

TEHRAN (IP) - Deputy Minister of Oil for International Affairs says Iran will increase oil export to Uzbekistan.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has put the increase in cooperation with the central Asian countries on its agenda as a priority.

Ahmad Assadzadeh said Uzbekistan has two major oil refineries with a refining capacity of 230,000 barrels: "In the recent negotiations we had with Uzbekistani officials, it was decided to export Iranian oil to the country's refineries in order to revive and rebuild these refineries."

He said that the rest of the negotiations would be pursued in detail within four workgroups in the next week as the Uzbek delegation would visit Iran.

Iran-Pakistan Border Market to Open in October

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - The Pakistan-Iran Pishin border market is expected to open in October, which will help promote free trade between the two countries, Pakistan Commerce Minister Syed Naveed Qamar said.

He made the remarks during a meeting in Islamabad with Iran's parliamentary delegation, reports Xinhua news agency.

The market's construction has been completed and its inauguration is on the cards, while work on the other three border markets including in Gabd, Rimdan, and Kohak will start soon, he said.

Qamar said that a total of 12 border markets were proposed to increase the trade volume between the two countries, out of which nine have been mutually approved, adding that there will be trade activities through these border markets under a barter system.

There is a dire need to increase the trade of petroleum and gas, the Minister was quoted as saying in the statement.

Speaking on the occasion, Malek Fazeli, the head of Iranian parliamentary delegation, said that Pakistan and Iran "are neighboring countries with a common border spread over 920 km from which mutual trade is carried out and movement of people continues throughout the year".

He desired that there should be increase in the volume of mutual trade, adding that Iran cooperated with Pakistan in overcoming the shortage of onion and tomatoes.

Iran Trade With Russia In Surplus in July-August

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's ministry of trade (MIMT) says trade with Russia was in surplus for a first time in July-August amid a surge in sales of manufacturing products to Russian customers.

An MIMT statement published in the official IRNA news agency said that Iranian exports to Russia had jumped in the two calendar months to August 22.

However, the statement did not provide any exact figure about the value of the Iranian exports to Russia over the July-August period.

It said total exports to Russia in the five months to late August had amounted to more than \$291 million, an increase of 32% against the same period in 2021 and up 20.2% compared with the entire calendar year to late March.

That comes as Iran had a trade deficit of more than \$424 million with Russia in the five months to late August, according to the figures announced in the statement.

The MIMT reiterated that higher Iranian exports to Russia over July and August were mainly due to a surge in exports of manufacturing precuts.

"Iran's mix of export to Russia has changed to cover more manufacturing products rather than agricultural products," read part of the statement.

Russia has sought to deepen its economic and trade ties with Iran since February when it came under an inclusive regime of Western sanctions because of the war in Ukraine.

Iran and Russia have signed major deals in recent months to expand their cooperation in areas of energy and manufacturing as the two countries aim to unite in their efforts to offset the impacts of foreign sanctions on their economies.

Head of KFZO Orders Removal of Economic Hurdles In Way of Investors

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Deputy Head on Tourism of Kish Free Zone Organization (KFZO) says the chairman of the organization Mr. Mehdi Keshavars has ordered the launch of a think-tank for removal of economic hurdles and problems in way of investors in the zone.

Dr. Morteza Ramezani announced the news and said that this think-tank has been launched due to efforts of the chairman of the organization and in line with creating a safe climate for investment and using all trade capacities of economic activists.

He went on to say that to launch the think-tank, all economic elites and related insiders will be invited. He invited all club-owners, hoteliers, economic activists and all people who can have a share in the economic boom and investment of the zone to join the think-tank.


Ramezani noted that in line with developing trade opportunity, the legal deputy department of the organization has entered the case of City of Padideh Kish in order to remove hurdles and minimize investment risks for economic elites.

He also announced holding of several sessions in the organization, adding that the management has started reviewing and probing different cases in useful sessions to remove hurdles which have hindered investments and exploiting investments.

He reiterated that a climate should dominate in the country and society so that all people consider themselves partners in the national economy and in the progress and resistance of the country and to be proud of it.

Meanwhile CEO of the Kish Entrepreneurs and Investors Mr. Rahman Sadat Najafi pointed to the mega project of City of Padideh Kish and said that it is source of happiness and joy that the ground has been provided for encouraging Kish investors and private sector that this project is being re-launched and they as a private sector would welcome the performance of the government and judiciary in this regard.

The project of City of Padideh Kish is to be carried out in southwest of beautiful Kish Island and on a land around one million square meters. This proud Iranian project is multifunctional and it will include various sections like five-star hotel with 2,000 beds, a big international mall, conference hall, big recreational pier, water Park, garden of marine plants and a roofed amusement park. The project will create over 400 job opportunities as well as 100,000 jobs and it will create many job opportunities for the knowledge-based centers and startups.



MSTF Gathers Female Scientists To Talk Gender and STI Ecosystem

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - In a scientific panel held by Mustafa (PBUH) Science and Technology Foundation in collaboration with World Forum for Women in Science on September 14, prominent female scientists addressed a gender-inclusive sustainable future through science, technology and innovation.

A key issue discussed in the panels was the role of gender in meeting all the sustainable development goals (SDGs). Ana Persic, a Program Specialist at UNESCO, talked about gender equality in UNESCO in the realm of science, technology and innovation.

"Science, technology and innovation have a crucial role in meeting all the sustainable development goals, and so does gender equality," Parsic said.

"Reducing inequality by attracting more women into STEM fields will support the achievement of SDG targets," she added.

Further, according to a UNESCO Science report, overall 33.3 percent of the total researchers in the world are women. Breaking down this number, Persic stated that leadership positions among women are only 12 percent.

"Sustainable development can only be achieved when women have equal access to scientific information and scientific careers because the world cannot afford to neglect the scientific potential and the brains of half of the world's potential," she maintained.

Next, Jackie Ying a 2015 Mustafa (PBUH) Prize laureate, lectured on Nanotechnology as "the enabling tool for the 21st century." She talked about the grand challenges for the 21st century in engineering that impact sustainability, health, vulnerability, and joy of living.

These include early diagnosis of diseases using nanodevices, engineering better medicine using nanomedicine, providing access to clean water using nanoporous membranes, sequestration of greenhouse gases through nanocatalysts, and making solar energy economical through nanocomposites.

Ying also talked about the problems with detection instruments that are their high prices and lengthy turnaround time. The solution to these issues is using nanoprobe for nucleic acid detection. She further compared nanoprobe assays and conventional test, concluding that nanoprobe technology is more accurate, much simpler, and less expensive.

Ying talked about the function of Paper-based lateral flow assays as rapid test kits devised by their research team. These RTKs, according to Ying, incorporate a proprietary built-in signal amplification mechanism which provide a superior limit of detection compared to conventional lateral flow assays.

Orzala Nemat from Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit, addressed the unity of female innovators and technologists.

Nemat stated that with the invasion of Extremist Islamic groups in Afghanistan, the colonial agenda keeps women in darkness.

According to Nemat, under the pretext of bringing an Islamic order to the country they stand against women in "the most un-Islamic" manner by banning secondary and highschool education for girls across Afghanistan.

However, Afghan women have not surrendered.

She highlighted the female figures that are shaded by mainstream media. She introduced shakardokht Jafari, an Afghan Medical Physicist who developed an efficient and low-cost method of measuring a medical dose of radiation.

Further, Nemat introduced The Afghan Girl's Robotic Team, also known as the Afghan Dreamers, who are an all-girl robotics team from Herat.

Another speaker, Rike Yudianti, professor at the Research Center for Advanced Material in Indonesia and one of the prominent guests of Mustafa (PBUH) Prize Week, addressed women's participation in research and innovation platforms and specifically Indonesian women's contribution in science.

She then rightly referred to gender stereotypes that hinder women's chances at taking leadership roles.

Given the disappointing data on the number of women enrolling in the fields of STEM in 2018, Erdogan stated that women need role models to whom they can relate.

Erdogan also stated that 33 percent of researchers in OIC countries are women, but in some countries of the region, more than half of the adult population is illiterate and more than 70 percent of the women are illiterate.



At Least Nine Dead as Flash Floods Hit Italy

CANTIANO (Dispatches) - At least nine people were killed by torrential overnight rains and floods in the central Italian region of Marche, authorities said on Friday, as rescuers continued to search for four still missing.

In Cantiano, a village close to the neighboring Umbria region, residents were clearing mud from the streets, Reuters footage showed, after torrents had swept through several towns leaving a trail of trapped and damaged cars. "My fruit shop has been turned upside down," Luciana Agostinelli, a local resident, told Reuters.

Around 400 millimeters (15.75 inches) of rain fell within two to three hours, the civil protection agency said, a third of the amount usually received in a year.



Biden Says Haters Won't Have Last Word

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - U.S. President Joe Biden called on Americans to speak out against racism and extremism during a summit at the White House, and said he would ask Congress to do more to hold social media companies accountable for spreading hate.

"White supremacists will not have the last word," Biden told the 'United We Stand' summit of bipartisan local leaders, experts and survivors.

Biden said America had long experienced a "through line of hate" against minority groups, one that had been given "too much oxygen" by politics and the media in recent years.



Zelenskiy Accuses Russia of War Crimes, Sees No Early End to War



KYIV (Dispatches) - President Volodymyr Zelenskyy accused Russia of committing war crimes in Ukraine's northeast and said it was too early to say the tide of the war was turning despite rapid territorial gains by his forces this month.

The Ukrainian leader also told Reuters in an interview that the outcome of the war with Russia, now in its seventh month, hinged on the swift delivery of foreign weapons to his country.

He compared the situation in newly liberated areas of the northeast "to the bloody soap opera after Bucha", a town near Kyiv where he accused Russian forces of committing numerous war crimes in the first phase of the war. Moscow denied the charges.

"As of today, there are 450 dead people, buried (in the northeastern Kharkiv region). But there are others, separate burials of many people. Tortured people. Entire families in certain territories," Zelenskyy said.

Asked if there was evidence of war crimes, he said: "All this is there... There is some evidence, and assessments are being conducted, Ukrainian and international, and this is very important for us, for the world to recognize this." The Kremlin did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Zelenskyy's new allegations.

Russia regularly denies targeting civilians during what it calls its "special military operation" in Ukraine and has said in the past that accusations of human rights abuses are a smear campaign.

The governor of Kharkiv region, Oleh Synhubov, told reporters on Friday at one of the burial sites in the city of Izium that some bodies exhumed there had been found with their hands tied behind their backs.

Moscow has not commented on the mass burial site in Izium, which was a Russian frontline stronghold before Ukraine's counter-offensive forced its forces to flee.

Friday's interview took place in the president's office in the heavily-guarded government district, which is now like a citadel for Zelenskyy and his advisers. Sandbags were piled up in the windows of the building's labyrinthine, dimly-lit corridors.

An air raid siren - used to warn of the danger of incoming missiles - sounded in Kyiv shortly before the interview.

Zelenskyy, who visited Izium on Wednesday, repeated his appeal for Western countries and others to step up weapons supplies to Ukraine.

"We would want more help from Turkey. We would want more help from South Korea. More help from the Arab world. From Asia," he said.

Zelenskyy also cited "certain psychological barriers" in Germany to supplying military equipment because of its Nazi past but said such supplies were vital for Ukraine to defend itself against what he called Russian "fascism". He has often accused Berlin of dragging its feet over providing arms.

He lauded Ukraine's rapid counter-offensive but played down any suggestion that the war was entering some kind of end game. "It's early to talk about an end to this war," he said.

Xi, Putin Challenge World Order At Regional Summit



SAMARKAND (Dispatches) - Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese leader Xi Jinping called for a shake-up of the world order as they met with Asian leaders for a summit challenging Western influence.

The meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in ex-Soviet Uzbekistan brought Putin and Xi together with the leaders of SCO members India, Pakistan, and four Central Asian nations, as well as the presidents of Iran and Turkey.

Putin and Xi met on Thursday for their first face-to-face talks since the start of the conflict in Ukraine, and on the Chinese leader's first trip abroad since the early days of the coronavirus pandemic.

The summit has been put forward as an alternative to "Western-centric organisations", at a time of increasing pressure on Moscow over Ukraine and growing anger in Beijing over US support for Taiwan.

Xi told leaders at the summit that it was time to reshape the international system and "abandon zero-sum games and bloc politics".

Leaders should "work together to promote the development of the international order in a more just and rational direction," Xi said.

Putin hailed the growing influence of countries outside the West, slamming what he called "instruments of protectionism, illegal sanctions and economic selfishness".

"The growing role of new centers of power who cooperate with each other... is becoming more and more clear," Putin said.

The summit has been Putin's first major international outing since Moscow sent troops into Ukraine in February, sparking a conflict that has left thousands dead and seen Russia hit with waves of economic sanctions.

Xi on Thursday said China was willing to work with Russia to support "each other's core interests", though Putin admitted that Beijing had "concerns" about the situation in Ukraine that he would address.

EU Toughens Stance on State Meddling in Media

BRUSSELS (Dispatches) - The European Commission unveiled a raft of new rules to ensure media independence after growing fears of state meddling in eastern EU countries such as Hungary and Poland.

Brussels has grown increasingly worried about the weight of the state on news and media in a growing number of EU countries, with public television in Hungary widely seen as a mouthpiece for Prime Minister Viktor Orban.

Media pluralism is also a concern in the Czech Republic where former Prime Minister Andrej Babis owns a major media group and has been accused of subverting press freedom after he used his newspapers to attack the integrity of other news outlets.

The European Media Freedom Act will provide "common safeguards... to guarantee that our media are able to operate without any interference, be it private or public," said EU commissioner Thierry Breton.

"We're proposing a regulation which will apply across the board in Europe in the same way and according to the same rules," he said.

One of the main components of the law will be a new authority that will allow the EU's 27 countries to have an eye on media mergers that would affect the plurality of media ownership.

It will also demand that funding of state media be "adequate and stable" in order to prevent governments using budget allocations to pressure publicly owned media companies and newsrooms.

The regulation, which needs to be approved by EU member countries and the European Parliament, would also require that national governments pass laws that adequately guarantee the protection of journalistic sources.

The European-wide watchdog will be composed of national regulators that would ensure the proper enforcement of the law across the EU.

They would also coordinate the EU's response to non-EU media, a key source of concern after the difficulty of aligning a united response to the presence of Russia Today, a Kremlin-funded television channel, in the days following the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Kyrgyzstan Says Tajikistan Resumes Shelling After Ceasefire Deal

BISHKEK (Dispatches) - Kyrgyzstan accused Tajikistan of fresh shelling late on Friday despite a ceasefire deal reached by the two countries' presidents, as a deadly border conflict forced thousands of people to evacuate.

Kyrgyz President Sadyr Japarov and his Tajik counterpart Emomali Rakhmon agreed to order a ceasefire and troop pullback in a meeting in Uzbekistan on Friday, the Kyrgyz president's office said.

The former Soviet republics, both of which are Russia's allies, earlier accused each other of restarting fighting in a disputed area that has left at least three dead and dozens wounded.

The ceasefire was set to take effect from 16.00 local time (10.00 GMT), Kyrgyz border guards said in a statement. Tajik authorities confirmed that the agreement had been reached.

The Kyrgyz side, however, said two of its villages were shelled again after the agreement took effect.

Earlier on Friday, Moscow urged a cessation of hostilities.

Kyrgyzstan has said that Tajik forces using tanks, armored personnel carriers and mortars entered at least one Kyrgyz village and shelled the airport of the Kyrgyz town of Batken and adjacent areas.

About 18,500 people have already left the area, Russia's RIA news agency cited the Red Cross as saying.

In turn, Tajikistan accused Kyrgyz forces of shelling an outpost and seven villages with "heavy weaponry" in

the same area, which is famous for its jigsaw-puzzle political and ethnic geography and became the site of similar hostilities last year, also nearly leading to a war.

A civilian was killed and three injured, authorities in the Tajik city of Isfara said. Two Tajik border guards were killed earlier this week.

Kyrgyzstan reported one dead and 55 wounded on Friday in its southern Batken province which borders Tajikistan's northern Sughd region and features a Tajik exclave, Vorukh, a key hotspot in recent conflicts.

Japarov and Rakhmon both attended a regional security and cooperation summit in Uzbekistan on Friday. Neither mentioned the conflict in their speeches at the event where Russian President Vladimir Putin and other leaders were present.

Clashes over the poorly demarcated border are frequent, but usually de-escalate quickly.

Border issues in Central Asia stem to a large extent from the Soviet era when Moscow tried to divide the region between ethnic groups whose settlements were often located amidst those of other ethnicities.

Both countries host Russian military bases.

Temur Umarov, a fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace focusing on Central Asia, said the remote, agricultural villages at the center of the dispute are not economically significant, but that both sides have given it an exaggerated political significance.



More Than 210 Dead in Armenia-Azerbaijan Clashes



YEREVAN (Dispatches) - Armenia and Azerbaijan said that more than 210 people died in border clashes this week, with Yerevan accusing Baku troops of atrocities in the arch foes' worst fighting in two years.

US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said she will travel to Yerevan after this week's escalation has largely undone recent Western efforts to bring Baku and Yerevan closer to a peace agreement.

The Caucasus neighbors have fought two wars -- in 2020 and in the 1990s -- over the contested Nagorno-Karabakh region, Azerbaijan's Armenian-populated enclave.

Both sides accused each other of provoking the clashes, which erupted on Tuesday and ended with international mediation overnight on Thursday.

On Friday, Azerbaijan's defense ministry revised the death toll among its troops to 77 from an earlier reported 71.

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said: "For the moment, the number of dead is 135."

"Unfortunately, it is not the final figure. There are also many wounded," he told a cabinet meeting.

Armenia's rights ombudsperson, Kristina Grigoryan, later said one civilian was also killed and six wounded in shelling by Azerbaijani forces.

The chief of staff of Armenia's armed forces, Eduard Asryan, accused Azerbaijani troops of committing "atrocities," saying they mutilated and dismembered the bodies of dead Armenian servicemen.

"This is a horrible atrocity, a violation of international humanitarian law," he told foreign diplomats in the city of Jermuk.

Grigoryan said the clashes also forced hundreds of Armenian civilians to flee their homes.

"Azerbaijan targeted peaceful residents," she said -- a claim which Baku flatly denies.

It was the worst fighting since the two countries fought a six-week war in 2020 and comes with Armenia's closest ally Moscow distracted by its nearly seven-month war in Ukraine.

Armenia's security council said the violence ended late Thursday "thanks to international mediation" after earlier failed attempts by Moscow to broker a truce.

Solar Bitcoin Mine Plan Divides Villagers In El Salvador

NUEVA CONCEPCION (Dispatches) - When residents learned of plans for a \$200-million solar energy plant to mine bitcoin in their village in northern El Salvador, some saw opportunities for jobs, infrastructure investment, or simply to get their homes connected to power. As the country marks a bumpy year since it made the digital coin legal tender, some hope the complex offers a brighter future while others have raised environmental concerns and doubts over whether locals will benefit.

"When you're a certain age, you see that no one ever gives anything away without later taking advantage of the people they give it to," said Luis Alonzo Valle, a 66-year-old subsistence farmer. El Salvador - one of the poorest countries in Latin America - last year became the first country in the world to adopt bitcoin as legal tender in an effort to boost the economy and help citizens save on remittance fee transfer charges.

The government has voiced support for the plans for a solar energy farm powering a bitcoin plant in El Gavilan village, within the rural municipality of Nueva Concepcion. Officials say it will bring investment into the poor farming community and fulfil one of the Bitcoin Law's goals of lifting Salvadorans out of poverty, adding that the solar farm can also help produce power for the national grid.

Details remain scant: the project was announced in June by Milena Mayorga, the Salvadoran ambassador to the United States, who said Josue Lopez - a Switzerland-based Salvadoran investor - was investing some \$200 million. "It is an honor to be able to direct this project ... I owe myself to El Salvador, and all the investments of my fund will be for the purpose of benefiting our beautiful country," Lopez said in response on Twitter.

In separate posts, he said his companies and business partners were spending \$15 million on proof-of-concept projects around renewables and bitcoin in El Salvador that, once proved successful, should open up access to \$200 million in funding. Raul Pena, the mayor of Nueva Concepcion, supports the project as a way to make up for budget cuts. He said that Lopez had got in touch with him and promised the area would get new roads and power connections to homes.

"If we saw it as something that would harm us, then we would be the first to oppose it," Pena said. "We see it as more of a benefit."

The installation of the solar power plant could lead to the clearance of about 74 acres (30 hectares) of forest, according to calculations by local organization the Intercommunal Association of Water and Sanitation of Nueva Concepcion. "This (forest) is a lung not just for the community, but for all the municipality," said Jose Gilberto Salguero, president of Nueva Concepcion's Communal Development Association.

"If we cut down the little that is left, in what state are we going to leave the municipality?" He voiced concern that the energy-intensive mining process could also draw water to keep the hardware cool. Salguero worried it could divert water that farmers need for irrigation systems, risking crop damage and loss.

The project requires approval from El Salvador's Environment Ministry, which then sends the permits to the mayor's office. The ministry said it had no record of any application for a permit, and Mayor Pena said they were awaiting confirmation of permission before construction could begin.

But Salguero said trees had already been cut down at the site. Lopez did not respond to a request for comment. Bitcoin mining company Cowa and investment firm Lian Group, both affiliated with Lopez, also did not respond to a request for comment.

The government of President Nayib Bukele says its bitcoin policy has attracted investment, reduced bank commissions, increased tourism and promoted financial inclusion.



World in Wrong Direction as Climate Impacts Worsen

PARIS (Dispatches) - Humanity is "going in the wrong direction" on climate change due to its addiction to fossil fuels, the UN said in an assessment showing that planet-warming emissions are higher than before the pandemic.

The UN's World Meteorological Organization and its Environment Programme warned catastrophes will become commonplace should the world economy fail to decarbonise in line with what science says is needed to prevent the worst impacts of global heating.

They pointed to Pakistan's monumental floods and China's crop-withering heatwave this year as examples of what to expect.

"Floods, droughts, heatwaves, extreme storms and wildfires are going from bad to worse, breaking records with alarming frequency," said UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

The UN warned last month that the drought gripping the Horn of Africa and threatening millions with acute food shortages was now likely to extend into a fifth year.

"There is nothing natural about the new scale of these disasters. They are the price of humanity's fossil fuel addiction," said Guterres.

The UN's United in Science report underscores how, nearly three years since Covid-19 handed governments a unique opportunity to reassess how to power their economies, countries are ploughing ahead with pollution as normal.

It found that after an unprecedented 5.4 percent fall in emissions in 2020 due to lockdowns and travel restrictions, preliminary data from January-May this year shows global CO2 emissions are 1.2 percent higher than before Covid-19.

This is largely down to large year-on-year increases in the United States, India, and most European countries, the assessment found.

"The science is unequivocal: we are going in the wrong direction," said WMO Secretary-General Petteri Taalas.

"Greenhouse gas concentrations are continuing to rise, reaching new record highs. Fossil fuel emission rates are now above pre-pandemic levels. The past seven years were the warmest on record."

Last week the European Union's Copernicus climate monitor said that summer 2022 was the hottest in Europe and one of the hottest globally since records began in the 1970s.

Tuesday's report said there was a 93 percent chance that the record for the hottest year globally -- currently, 2016 -- will be broken within five years.

It warned the continued use of fossil fuels meant the chance of the annual mean global temperature temporarily exceeding 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels in one of the next five years was roughly even (48 percent).

Keeping longer term temperatures below 1.5C is the most ambitious goal of the 2015 Paris Agreement.

Despite more than three decades of UN-lead negotiations, rich polluters show little sign of being willing to make the kind of swinging emissions cuts that would keep the 1.5C goal in play.

The UN's Environment Programme, in an update to its annual "emissions gap" assessment following new pledges made at last November's COP26 summit in Glasgow, said Tuesday that even these promises were far from adequate. In fact, it said the ambition even in countries' most recent pledges would need to be four times greater to limit warming to 2C, and seven times higher to make 1.5C.

All told, current worldwide climate policies put Earth on course to warm 2.8C by 2100, UNEP said. Guterres said that Tuesday's assessment showed "climate impacts heading into uncharted territory of destruction".



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Moderna Open to Supplying COVID Vaccines to China

TOKYO (Dispatches) - Moderna Inc has held talks with the Chinese government about supplying COVID-19 vaccines, but no decision has yet been made, CEO Stephane Bancel told Reuters.

As the rest of the world gradually lifts COVID restrictions, China continues to lock down enormous parts of society and conduct mass testing to eradicate the coronavirus. It has not approved any foreign COVID vaccines and relies on several domestically developed shots.

"We are open, we have the capacity", Bancel told Reuters on the sidelines of a media conference in Tokyo about supplying its mRNA-based shots to China, declining to say whether Moderna had submitted its vaccine for approval there.



UK's Recession-Threatened Economy Gets Respite in July

LONDON (Dispatches) - The United Kingdom's recession-threatened economy rebounded in July after a hefty fall the previous month, official data showed last week.

British gross domestic product (GDP) expanded 0.2% after a drop of 0.6% in June, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said in a statement.

The growth, however, remained less-than-expected, with a fall in power production possibly reflecting the sharp climb in energy tariffs and the construction sector also hit by the leap in inflation.

June's big decline had been attributed partly to an extra public holiday celebrating the Platinum Jubilee of late Queen Elizabeth II following her 70 years on the throne.

"The feeble 0.2% bounce back in July was driven by weak GDP in June due in part to the loss of working days from the Jubilee long weekend," noted Yael Selfin, chief economist at KPMG U.K.

"More concerning, July's GDP remains below the level seen in May, pointing to an overall contraction over the first two months of summer."

In the three months to July, GDP was flat compared with the previous three-month period.

"Anecdotal evidence suggests that there may be some signs of changes in consumer behavior and lower demand in response to increased prices," the ONS said regarding a fall in power generation.

Electricity prices leapt by 54% in the 12 months to July, part of the surge in power costs that last week led to new Prime Minister Liz Truss announcing a cap on domestic energy tariffs.

That announcement has reduced the risk of a severe hit to the economy, albeit at the cost of 100 billion pounds (\$116.16 billion) or more to the already stretched public finances.

Last month, the Bank of England (BoE) forecast that Britain would slip into a recession at the end of 2022 and not come out of it until early 2024, due in large part to the hit to living standards from the energy price surge.

The BoE is expected to raise interest rates again on Sept. 22 as it seeks to combat an inflation rate above 10%.

A heat wave in July might also have been a factor behind the fall in power demand, although there were signs that it boosted ice cream manufacturers and visits to amusement parks and golf clubs, the ONS said.

Services output grew by a monthly 0.4% in July but industrial production was down 0.3% and construction dropped by 0.8%, reflecting the jump in prices for materials, part of the broader inflation surge, as well as lost working hours because of the hot weather.

Separate trade figures also showed the impact of soaring prices with the value of imports of fuel hitting an all-time high of 11 billion pounds in July and representing a record 21% of all goods imports.

U.S. Emergency Oil Reserves Tumble to Lowest Since 1984

HOUSTON (Dispatches) - U.S. emergency crude oil stocks fell 8.4 million barrels last week to 434.1 million barrels, their lowest since October 1984, according to U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) data released.

The release from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) in the week ended Sept. 9 was the steepest draw since May. It comprised of about 6.3 million barrels of sweet crude and around 2 million barrels of sour crude.

President Joe Biden in March set a plan to release 1 million barrels per day over six months from the SPR to tackle high U.S. fuel prices, which have contributed to soaring inflation.

The Biden administration is weighing the need for further SPR releases after the current program ends in October, Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm told Reuters last week. A DOE spokesperson later said the White House at that time was not considering new releases beyond the 180 million barrels.

The Biden administration is less likely to release barrels from the SPR after October if benchmark oil futures continue to drop. Last week, the 50-day moving average of U.S. and European prices both fell below the 200-day moving average, noted research analyst Paul Sankey said.

The SPR stocks also have declined due to sales from congressional mandates and Biden's price initiative. The oil is sold to qualified oil companies via online auctions, and prices set using a five-day average bracketing the date of delivery.

The DOE has proposed to replenish the SPR by allowing it to enter contracts to purchase oil in future years at fixed, preset prices. The administration said it believes the plan would help boost domestic oil production.



IMF Confirms Discussions About Expanding Emergency Aid for Food Shocks

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - The International Monetary Fund (IMF) confirmed that it is looking into expanding its lending toolkit to help countries hit by the food crisis, including through a new "food shock window," which would provide emergency financing.

The plan, first reported by Reuters on Monday, would allow the IMF to boost lending to countries struggling with balance of payments issues caused by the food crisis unleashed by Russia's war against Ukraine and global inflation following the COVID-19 pandemic.

IMF executive board members reviewed the proposal at an informal session on Monday.

IMF spokesman Gerry Rice said the fund, which has lent over \$268 billion to 93 countries since the start of the pandemic, was using all available tools to support its members, and was looking at "all options to enhance our toolkit, including to help countries impacted by the food crisis."

In a statement to Reuters, he said the board had just begun informal discussions about "one such proposal: a new food shock window under our emergency financing arrangements."

He said further discussions were planned with the executive board to ensure formal approval of the changes.

Rice said the fund had provided \$27 billion in loans to 57 low-income countries, and was continuing to encourage its member countries to "come to us early for needed financial support." The proposal discussed Monday would temporarily increase existing access limits and allow all member countries to borrow up to an additional 50% of their IMF quota under the IMF's Rapid Financing Instrument, with low-income countries able to tap the Rapid Credit Facility, sources familiar with the plan said.

Germany Drawing Up New China Trade Policy

BERLIN (Dispatches) - Germany's economy minister said the government was working on a new trade policy with China to reduce dependence on Chinese raw materials, batteries and semiconductors, promising "no more naivety" in trade dealings with Beijing.

Sources told Reuters last week the economy ministry was considering a raft of new measures to make business with China less attractive. This is the first time the minister has made clear the tougher line was being translated into policy measures.

Robert Habeck told Reuters that China was a welcome trading partner, but Germany could not allow Beijing's protectionism to distort competition and would not hold back criticism of human rights violations under threat of losing business.

"We cannot allow ourselves to be blackmailed," he said in an interview.

Habeck did not outline new measures in full, but said they would include closer examination of Chinese investments in Europe, such as infrastructure.

China has been Germany's biggest trade partner for the past six years, with volumes reaching over 245 billion euros (\$246 billion) in 2021.

But the center-left government is taking a tougher line towards Beijing than its center-right predecessor, worried about Germany's dependence on Asia's economic superpower.

On Thursday, Reuters reported the economy ministry was considering measures including reducing or even scrapping investment and export guarantees for China and no longer promoting trade fairs.

Habeck said Germany must open up to new trading partners and regions as many sectors were heavily dependent on selling to China.

"If it (the Chinese market) were to close, which is not likely at the moment ... we would have extreme sales problems," Habeck said, adding the economy ministry was contributing to the new German-China policy, much of which is already in place. "And from this you will see that there is no more naivety," he added.

Berlin also wants to examine Chinese investments in Europe more critically, he said, adding Europe should not support China's Silk Road Initiative, which aims to buy up strategic infrastructure in Europe and influence trade policy.

As an example, Habeck signalled he was opposed to plans by China's Cosco to buy a stake in a container operator at Germany's Hafen Hamburg port, signalling concerns about Chinese takeover deals are spreading out from the technology arena into other industry sectors, such as logistics. "I'm leaning towards the fact that we don't allow that," he said.

China has not joined the West in imposing sweeping sanctions on Moscow following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, but has also not endorsed Moscow's actions as Beijing needs to maintain trade relations with Europe.

Stubbornly High Rents, Food Prices Boost U.S. Inflation in August

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - U.S. consumer prices unexpectedly rose in August and underlying inflation accelerated amid rising costs for rents and healthcare, giving the Federal Reserve ammunition to deliver a third 75 basis points interest rate hike next Wednesday.

The surprisingly firm inflation readings reported by the Labor Department on Tuesday were despite an easing in global supply chains, which had contributed to a surge in prices earlier in the year. With a resilient labor market supporting strong wage growth, inflation has probably not peaked, keeping the Fed on an aggressive monetary policy path for a while.

"The Fed is all but sure to hike rates aggressively next week, likely by 75 basis points, while pushing back strongly against talk of a near-term pause in the tightening cycle," said Sal Guatieri, a senior economist at BMO Capital Markets in Toronto.

The consumer price index edged up 0.1% last month after being unchanged in July. Though consumers got some relief from a 10.6% decline in gasoline prices, they had to dig deeper to pay for food, rent, healthcare, electricity and natural gas.

Food prices rose 0.8%, with the cost of food consumed at home increasing 0.7%. Food prices surged 11.4% over the last year, the largest 12-month increase since May 1979.

Economists polled by Reuters had forecast the CPI dipping 0.1%. In the 12 months through August, the CPI increased 8.3%. That was a deceleration from July's 8.5% rise and a 9.1% jump in June, which was the biggest gain since November 1981. Inflation has overshot the Fed's 2% target.

Beyond the dilemma the August inflation numbers present to the U.S. central bank, they are a headache as well for the Biden administration and congressional Democrats hoping to limit their losses in the Nov. 8 mid-term elections, which are expected to flip the House of Representatives into Republican hands. The annual CPI has remained above 8% for six straight months.

President Joe Biden said on Tuesday it would "take more time and resolve to bring inflation down," and cited the recently passed Inflation Reduction Act aimed at lowering the cost of healthcare, prescription drugs and energy as steps taken by the White House to ease the burden of higher prices on Americans.

Fed officials gather next Tuesday and Wednesday for their regular policy meeting. Financial markets have priced in a 75 basis points rate increase next Wednesday, with potential for a full percentage point, according to CME's FedWatch Tool.

Stocks on Wall Street fell, ending a four-day winning streak. The dollar rallied against a basket of currencies. U.S. Treasury prices rose.

"It's becoming more apparent to market participants that the amount of tightening from the Fed thus far has not been enough to cool the economy and bring down inflation," said Charlie Ripley, senior investment strategist at Allianz Investment Management in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Swiss Economy Grows 0.3% in Q2

ZURICH (Dispatches) - The Swiss economy grew a real 0.3% in the second quarter versus the first three months thanks to the services sector's continued recovery from pandemic restrictions and robust consumer spending, data showed.

That compared to growth of 0.3% in the first quarter, or 0.2% when stripping out the impact of large sporting events, the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs said.

Gross domestic product expanded 2.4% year on year, and also 2.4% adjusted for sporting events.

Economists polled by Reuters had expected GDP to rise 0.4% quarter-on-quarter and 3.0% year-on-year.

The Swiss economy has weathered recent turbulence on world markets relatively well.

The government sees no immediate need for measures to help cushion the burden of surging energy prices, it said last week, noting the economy was performing well, unemployment was low, and inflation was set to wane next year.

Consumer price inflation rose a higher-than-expected 3.5% in August, the seventh month in a row it has surpassed the Swiss National Bank's 0-2% target range.

Most Swiss public health restrictions to contain the spread of coronavirus were lifted at the start of April, helping the accommodation and food services sector expand 12.4% in the quarter, SECO said.

Inbound tourism saw a marked increase in overnight stays, especially by European and U.S. guests, but the value added by this sector was still around 10% below pre-crisis levels.

Only two service sectors saw a decline in value added in the quarter: financial services (-1.5%) and trade (-2.1%), the latter mostly due to food retailing and wholesale trade.

Overall domestic demand saw robust growth, accompanied by a 2.1% rise in imports.

The manufacturing sector slipped 0.5% after seven quarters of strong growth driven by the chemical and pharmaceutical industry, which faced declining exports.

But other industrial sectors which are typically more sensitive to the economic cycle recorded modest growth.

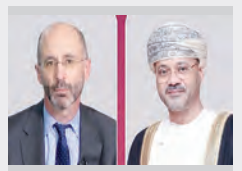
Malley, Omani FM Confer on JCPOA

TEHRAN (Dispatches) - U.S. special envoy for Iran Robert Malley and the Omani Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr al-Busaidi held a phone talk on the latest developments on the JCPOA.

“Grateful for my latest call with Omani Minister of Foreign Affairs Badr Al-Busaidi today. I reiterated the United States’ thanks for Oman’s close cooperation on

regional issues and in particular our efforts to reach a deal on mutual return to full implementation of the JCPOA,” wrote Malley in a tweet on Friday.

The United States, under former President Donald Trump, abandoned the agreement in May 2018 and reinstated unilateral sanctions that the agreement had lifted.



79% of Turkish People in Favor of EU Accession

ANKARA (Dispatches) - A vast majority of Turkish people are in favor of Turkey’s accession to the European Union, Deputy Foreign Minister and EU affairs director Faruk Kaymakcı said.

“I can inform you that 79% of Turkish people want EU membership,” Kaymakcı wrote on Twitter in response to a posting by a political communications specialist at the European Commission.

He quoted the figure in response to Adviser to the European Commission’s Director-General for Communication Tom Moylan, who on his personal Twitter account posted a graphic titled “Who wants to join the EU most?” along with pictures of over a dozen countries – failing, however, to include longtime candidate country Turkey’s.

Kaymakcı responded: “Dear Tom, the EU picture would not be complete & fair without Turkey, an EU negotiating candidate. Omitting and adding those who are not even EU candidates distorts the picture of the EU.”

Moylan later responded: “I didn’t make the picture - I just thought it was interesting ... Thanks for sharing the stat though, I agree that Turkey was a glaring omission.”

Turkey has the longest history with the union and the longest negotiation process. The country signed an association agreement with the EU’s predecessor in 1964, the European Economic Community (EEC), which is usually regarded as a first step to eventually becoming a candidate. Applying for official candidacy in 1987, Turkey had to wait until 1999 to be granted the status of a candidate country. However, for the start of the negotiations, Turkey had to wait for another six years, until 2005, a uniquely long process compared with other candidates.

In the years since, talks have been essentially frozen due to political roadblocks by certain EU members, for reasons unrelated to their suitability for membership, according to Ankara.



Turkey-EU relations are marked by disputes on several issues, including tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean, Turkey’s role in Syria, the migrant crisis and the stalemate in Turkey’s accession process to join the bloc. However, Turkey recently reiterated that it is part of Europe and sees its future in the EU, adding that it will continue to work toward full membership.

Ankara is calling to reenergize the accession process, update the EU-Turkey Customs Union, regular high-level dialogues, visa liberalization and counterterrorism.

UN Warns of Serious Threat From Syria Cholera Outbreak



NEW YORK (Dispatches) - The UN says outbreak connected to ‘severe water shortages’ caused by drought, destruction of infrastructure.

A continuing cholera outbreak presents a “serious threat” to people in Syria and the wider region, the United Nations has warned.

In a statement on Tuesday, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Syria Imran Riza said the outbreak is believed to be linked to the irrigation of crops with contaminated water, as well as people drinking from the Euphrates river, which runs north to east in the country from the Turkish border to the Iraqi border, dissecting Syria’s northern Aleppo province.

At least 70 percent of the 936 cases recorded from August 25 to September 10 were reported in Aleppo, with more than 20 percent reported in Deir Az Zor in the east. Other suspected cases were reported in Raqqa, Hassakeh, Hama and Latakia.

Richard Brennan, the regional emergency director of the World Health Organization (WHO) Eastern Mediterranean Region, said the agency had recorded eight deaths from the disease since August 25 – six in Aleppo and two in Deir Az Zor.

“This is the first confirmed cholera outbreak in recent years ... the geographic spread gives cause for concern and so we have to move fast,” he told Reuters.

The number of confirmed cholera cases was 20 in Aleppo, four in Latakia and two in Damascus as of Tuesday.

The UN said the outbreak underscored “severe shortages of water” throughout Syria, where much of the population relies on unsafe water sources following the destruction of national water infrastructure during more than a decade of war.

The situation has been made worse by drought-like conditions that have caused water levels along the Euphrates to drop. Farmers have also blamed Turkey’s water policies for the decrease in flow.

Brennan said the WHO was appealing to donors to increase funding as the organisation was already dealing with several cholera outbreaks in the region, including in Pakistan where floods have exacerbated a pre-existing outbreak.

“We need to scale up surveillance and testing capacity ... efforts are under way to truck clean water to the communities most affected,” he said

Israeli Destruction of Syria’s Infrastructure War Crime

TEHRAN (MNA) – The Iranian envoy to the United Nations Saeid Iravani said that the UN Security Council and the international community have to hold Israeli regime for attacking Syria’s infrastructure.

The Israeli regime’s attacks on Syrian non-military infrastructure, including the latest attack on the Aleppo International Airport, are a clear violation of international law and amount to war crimes, according to Saeid Iravani, the representative of Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations on Wednesday at the Security Council meeting on Syria.

According to the Iranian envoy, the illegal presence of foreign forces in parts of Syria has created grounds for terrorist activities, and this puts international peace and security at risk. He added that the recent airstrikes in northeastern Syria by illegal foreign forces cannot be considered under Article 51 of the UN Charter regarding self-defense. These attacks are blatant violations of international law and the United Nations Charter, Iravani added.

He also said the current attacks carried out by the Israeli regime, especially the targeted and systematic attack on the civilian and vital infrastructure in Syria, including the latest attack on the Aleppo International Airport are in blatant violation of international humanitarian rights and must be considered a war crime. The diplomat said that Iran strongly condemns the repeated airstrikes and violation of Syria’s territorial integrity and sovereignty by the Israeli regime.

Raisi Calls on SCO...

FROM PAGE 1

The remarks come as Iran is set to officially join the Shanghai Cooperation Council. The SCO was founded by China, Russia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan in 2001. It currently constitutes the world’s biggest regional market with eight official members, and three observer states.

Elsewhere in his address, Raisi said that Washington seeks to spread insecurity to other Asian regions.

“Our region has experienced the bitter taste of foreign intervention in the past decades, whose result was nothing by the creation of terrorism and expansion of insecurity,” he said.

Calling the current situation in Afghanistan one of the ramifications of the US-led foreign intervention, Raisi said, “America did not draw lessons from its defeat in Afghanistan, rather, it is expanding the policy of insecurity and intervention to other Asian regions.”

The pattern of modern security in Asia should be based on joint development and deepening of multilateralism without the intervention of foreign power, added Raisi.

The Iranian president noted that pursuing policies of NATO “poses threat to different regions,” pointing to what has happened in Syria and Afghanistan as its examples.

Furthermore, he referred to recent clashes between Azerbaijan and Armenia, noting that security in the Caucasus region is very important for Tehran.

“We have always emphasized respecting territorial integrity, national sovereignty and rejecting any change in the recognized borders between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Armenia,” he said, urging the parties to resolve their differences through dialogue based on international law.

Iranian Diplomat...

FROM PAGE 1

“Hypocritical acts contradict and subvert outlook of a deal negotiated with bona fides,” he added.

With Continued terrorist acts and sanctions by U.S.-Israel against Iran & failure at the IAEA, U.S., UK, Germany and France initiated a shameful controversial statement against Iran’s legal remedy measures; hypocritical acts contradict and subvert outlook of a deal negotiated with bona fides.

The senior Iranian diplomat also attached to his tweet the picture of a Reuters’ news story pertaining to the European troika’s expression of “serious doubts” about Iran’s intentions to revive the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and the resolution of Safeguards issues between Tehran and the UN nuclear watchdog.

Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran...

FROM PAGE 1

Transit and transport cooperation between Kazakhstan and the states of Central Asia is developing dynamically,” Tokayev said.

According to him, Kazakhstan welcomes the implementation of promising projects aimed at ensuring the interconnectedness of the countries of the region.

“Kazakhstan supports efforts to expand transport routes between Central and South Asia, develop the North-South and East-West trans-Eurasian corridors. In general, we are in favor of creating new and modernizing existing multimodal transport corridors and logistics centers,” Tokayev said.

U.S. Has to...

FROM PAGE 1

He added potential fresh removal of the American sanctions has to be accompanied with relevant “guarantees.”

Iranian officials have, time and again, asserted that upon potentially lifting the sanctions, Washington should be able to guarantee that it would not return the bans again.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the president insisted that for the talks to move on, the “safeguard issues” between Iran and the UN nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), have to be resolved.

Raisi also said the West has to ask the Israeli regime to stop its nuclear weapon program instead of picking on Iran over its peaceful nuclear activities.

“Before asking us to stop our nuclear activities, the West has to make this demand on the Zionist regime that owns weapons of mass murder,” he stated.

Raisi, meanwhile, touched on ongoing talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia that seek to mend the differences between the two sides.

Riyadh ruptured its diplomatic ties with Tehran in early 2016 following demonstrations which were held in front of the Saudi Embassy in Tehran and its Consulate in the northeastern holy city of Mashhad by angry protesters censuring the Al Saud family for its earlier killing of the top Saudi Shia cleric Nimr al-Nimr.

“Talks with Saudi Arabia continues. We have held five rounds of talks and will continue to hold more,” the president said.

Addressing Iraq’s drawn-out failure to form a government, Raisi said, “We would be delighted to witness [formation of] a strong government in Iraq.”

Raisi said European countries had approached the Islamic Republic concerning the Iraqi crisis, saying, “We told them that this issue concerns the Iraqis.”

The Iranian president also said, “The region’s problems would be solvable if foreign forces stopped their interference [in the regional affairs],” adding, “The Iraqis should not allow the Americans’ presence [in their country].”

The Iranian president finally addressed the issue of an April-present ceasefire in Yemen.

The truce has been almost holding, despite sporadic violations by a Saudi Arabia-led coalition, which began waging a war on the Arab world’s poorest nation in March 2015.

President Raisi said in order for the truce to enter a permanent state, the coalition had to lift a siege that it has been employing against Yemen since the onset of the invasion.

Russian Delegation...

FROM PAGE 1

The Russian president stressed that Moscow’s and Tehran’s stances are close or coincide on many international issues, saying, “Inter-regional ties are developing. We actively cooperate on the international arena and on many [points] our positions are close, or, as diplomats say, coincide.”

Putin also pointed to the warm welcome by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei during his visit to Tehran in July, saying, “Thanks to his support, many projects are moving forward. We are interested in his further support.”

The Iranian president, for his part, said the Islamic Republic is “seriously determined to develop bilateral strategic relations” with Russia in the fields of politics, economy, trade, and aerospace, adding that the cooperation among countries sanctioned by the United States would make them “stronger.”

“The relationship between countries that are sanctioned by the US, such as Iran, Russia or other countries, can overcome many problems and issues and make them stronger,” Raisi told Putin in the meeting.

“The Americans think whichever country they impose sanctions on, it will be stopped, their perception is a wrong one.”

Raisi also underlined that Tehran’s membership in the SCO and its relationship with member states “can greatly help on the path of economic development for Iran and the development of the region.”

Iran, one of four SCO observer states, applied for full membership in 2008 but its bid was slowed as a result of the illegal sanctions imposed by the United Nations and US.

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian announced on Wednesday the country’s signing of a memorandum of commitments to join the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and starting a “new phase” of interaction with the body.

Zhang Ming, the SCO’s secretary general, congratulated the Islamic Republic on the occasion of Iran’s “permanent accession” and signing of the document, calling it an “important development.”

The SCO was founded by China, Russia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan in 2001, and currently forms the world’s biggest regional market with eight official members, and four observer states.

Gavi Pens New Deal Until 2026

MADRID (Dispatches) - Barcelona midfielder Gavi signed a contract extension until June 2026 with a release clause of €1 billion.

The 18-year-old's existing deal was set to expire at the end of the 2022-23 season.

Gavi has become a key player for the club after breaking through in August 2021, shortly before being given his Spain debut by Luis Enrique in October 2021, becoming his country's youngest ever player at senior level.

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Halep out for Rest of 2022

BUCHAREST (Dispatches) - Simona Halep has had surgery on her nose and will not play again this year, the former world number one said on social media.

"I don't know how long the recovery will take," the 30-year-old Romanian posted on Twitter and Instagram next to a selfie showing her in a hospital bed with a bandaged nose.

"What is sure is that this year I won't be able to compete in any official tournament." Halep said she decided to address her physical problem after dealing with mental issues earlier in the year.

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SPORTS

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 18, 2022

Man Utd Beat Sheriff, Lazio Thrashed

LONDON (Dispatches) - Jadon Sancho and Cristiano Ronaldo gave timely reminders of their value with both on target as Manchester United got their Europa League campaign back on track with a 2-0 victory at Moldovan side Sheriff Tiraspol.

Dutch club Feyenoord also registered their first points in emphatic fashion, crushing Sturm Graz 6-0 in Group F where Lazio were hammered 5-1 away to Danish side Midtjylland.

Jose Mourinho's AS Roma scored three times in the second half to beat 10-man HJK Helsinki 3-0 in Group C -- Andrea Belotti scoring his first Roma goal to seal the win.

Former Champions League regulars Olympiakos's hopes of progressing from Group G look slim, however, as they went down 3-0 at Bundesliga side Freiburg for whom Michael Gregoritsch grabbed a brace as they moved top.

United's Premier League resurgence was interrupted by a lacklustre home defeat against Real Sociedad last week but they responded with a businesslike win in Chisinau where the match was played because of security concerns.

Sancho, surprisingly left out of England's squad earlier on Thursday, slotted in United's opener in the 17th minute after receiving a pass from Christian Eriksen.

Veteran Ronaldo, given a start by manager Erik ten Hag after being consigned to the bench in the opening weeks of the Premier League season, tucked away a 39th-minute penalty to claim his 699th club goal.

Sheriff, who downed Real Madrid in the Bernabeu in last season's Champions League, offered an occasional threat but three-time European champions United were unruffled on their first ever trip to Moldova.

Sancho said it was "unfortunate" not to be selected for England's Nations League games, but said: "I have to just keep focussing on myself and keep on working hard, week in and week out, that's what I'll do."

United joined Sheriff on three points in Group E with Real Sociedad topping the standings on six points after beating Omonia Nicosia 2-1. Ander Guevara gave the Spaniards the lead but substitute Bruno



levelled before Norwegian striker Alexander Sorloth struck the winner in the 80th minute.

Iranian forward Alireza Jahanbakhsh scored twice in Feyenoord's romp against Sturm Graz to move top of their group on goal difference with each club having three points.

Lazio suffered a humiliating evening at Midtjylland for whom Paulinho opened the scoring and Sory Kaba, Evander, Gustav Isaksen and Erik Sviatchenko were all on target.

It could have been even worse for the Italians with Midtjylland also missing a penalty.

In Group H, Ferencváros moved top with six points thanks to a 1-0 home win over Monaco while former European champions Red Star Belgrade went down 2-1 at Trabzonspor and remain without a point after two games.

Real Betis top Group C with six points after a 3-2 win over Bulgarian side Ludogorets -- a win notable for the fact that their second goal was scored by 41-year-old Spaniard Joaquin who becomes the oldest player to score in the Europa League.

French club Rennes were denied their 100% record in Group B after Turkish club Fenerbahçe struck deep in stoppage time for a 2-2 draw having trailed 2-0. Ukraine's Dynamo Kyiv prop up Group B with no points after losing 1-0 to AEK Larnaca in a match played in Krakow because of the security situation in Kyiv. In Group D two teams have maximum points with Braga beating Union Berlin 1-0 and St Gilloise beating Malmo 3-2.

Norwegians Bodo Glimt beat Zurich 2-1 to lead Group A with four points while Arsenal's match against PSV Eindhoven was postponed because of arrangements for Queen Elizabeth's funeral.



OEIRAS (Dispatches) - Portugal coach Fernando Santos insists that Cristiano Ronaldo remains an important figure for the national team even if his playing time at Manchester United has been limited mainly to substitute appearances so far this season.

Ronaldo was called up to the Portugal squad for Nations League games against the Czech Republic on September 24 and against Spain three days later.

"I have absolutely no worries about Ronaldo's lack of playing time for Manchester United," Santos said.

"As with any player I have to work out what the situation is with him. But I don't think anyone has any doubts that Ronaldo continues to be of great importance to the national team."

Ronaldo and his partner lost their newborn son in April, and he was excused from United's pre-season tour of Thailand and Australia in July for family reasons.

Ronaldo has only started twice for United under new boss Erik ten Hag, who yesterday reiterated that he was counting on the 37-year-old this season.

F1 Unlikely to Return to Malaysia Anytime Soon

SINGAPORE (Dispatches) - Formula One is unlikely to return to Malaysia anytime soon as the government focuses its efforts on rebuilding the economy from the ravages of the coronavirus pandemic, the circuit's boss said.

Azhan Shafriman Hanif, chief executive of the Sepang International Circuit which used to host the race, told reporters in Singapore late Wednesday the government may reconsider its options after two to three years.

The Sepang track, located outside the Malaysian capital Kuala Lumpur, first hosted the race in 1999, with the last Grand Prix held there in 2017.

Malaysia dropped out of the F1 calendar from 2018 amid the rising cost of hosting the event.

"At this juncture, the answer is no, not for the time being," Azhan Shafriman said when asked if Malaysia was planning to host the race again.

"Perhaps in another two to three years when the economy has stabilised." He said Malaysia previously hosted F1 "to put the country on the map" through sports tourism.

But for F1 to return, the government needs to study the "bigger picture" in terms of its benefits to the country.

"We need to know what is the return in terms of the spillover effect," he said.

"We need to look at the rebranding, how do we monetize the platform. We need to talk about technology transfer, talent development and environmental sustainability." He and other circuit officials were in Singapore this week to promote the upcoming Petronas Grand Prix motorcycle racing, also known as MotoGP, to be held at the Sepang track from October 21-23.

It will be the first MotoGP race at Sepang in two years following its suspension due to the pandemic.

There had been speculation about F1's return to Malaysia to fill the void after Russia was dropped from the race calendar following President Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine in February.

Malaysia's neighbour Singapore hosts a Formula One night race which will take place from September 30 to October 2.

Beckham's Miami Stadium Plan Wins Key Vote



Park by transforming land next to Miami International Airport into a stadium complex with a hotel, shops and restaurants.

MIAMI (Dispatches) - David Beckham's long-desired stadium plan for his Major League Soccer team has received key approval from lawmakers that sets up the start of construction for Inter Miami's new home.

City commissioners approved a zoning plan by a 4-1 vote on Tuesday night, setting the stage for development of Miami Freedom

Former England and Manchester United star Beckham, who has tried for years to get approval for a Miami stadium, and billionaire co-owner Jorge Mas will pay for construction and land work on the site.

Commissioners had approved a 99-year lease on the public land earlier this year.

"I want to thank my commission for their continued support of the best sports deals in bringing a Multi-Billion Dollar win for Miami residents using zero taxpayer dollars," Miami Mayor Francis Suarez tweeted.

"A new park, an MLS stadium, & thousands of new jobs coming soon... The Future of Futbol is in Miami." Inter Miami now plays in nearby Fort Lauderdale but would be the major tenant in a US\$1 billion stadium project including a 25,000-seat stadium, offices and a public park.

Haaland Haunts

Former Club Dortmund as Man City Win



PARIS (Dispatches) - Erling Haaland scored an acrobatic late winner against his old club as Manchester City beat Borussia Dortmund 2-1 in the Champions League, while there were hard-earned victories for Real Madrid and Paris Saint-Germain.

Meanwhile Chelsea were held by Red Bull Salzburg in their first match under new head coach Graham Potter, as Rangers lost heavily again and Celtic drew with Shakhtar Donetsk.

In Manchester, Haaland took on the club he left in the close season for €60 million after two and a half prolific years in the Bundesliga.

Yet it looked like Dortmund might spring a surprise as they went ahead just before the hour mark at the Etihad Stadium when England midfielder Jude Bellingham headed in.

City's equalizer did not come until Kevin De Bruyne set up John Stones to smash in with 10 minutes left, and Haaland got the winner in the 84th minute with an outrageous finish from Joao Cancelo's magnificent cross.

Haaland now has 13 goals in nine games for City, who have two wins from two in Group G.

"In the end we showed what we are," Haaland told BT Sport. "Dortmund were really good today (but) three points is what matters." City's next two games will be against FC Copenhagen, who drew 0-0 with Sevilla in Denmark.

In London, Potter took charge of Chelsea for the first time but had to settle for a 1-1 draw against Salzburg in Group E, with Raheem Sterling's opener early in the second half being cancelled out by Noah Okafor.

"It has not been easy for the boys, they have responded to us really well over the last few days and it's a point we will have to take and get better," Potter told BT Sport.

Federer to Retire From The Sport



LONDON (Dispatches) - Roger Federer broke the news fans across the world have long been fearing when he announced today he will retire from competitive tennis after next week's Laver Cup in London.

The 41-year-old Swiss, who has won 20 Grand Slam titles and is regarded by many as the best player ever to wield a racket, has not played a match since last year's Wimbledon.

"As many of you know, the past three years have presented me with challenges in the form of injuries and surgeries," Federer said in a post on Instagram.

"I've worked hard to return to full competitive form. But I also know my body's capacities and limits, and its message to me lately has been clear. I am 41 years old."

"I have played more than 1,500 matches over 24 years. Tennis has treated me more generously than I ever would have dreamt, and now I must recognize when it's time to end my competitive career. The Laver Cup next week in London will be my final ATP event. I will play more tennis in the future, of course, but just not in Grand Slams or on the tour."

Federer, who dominated men's tennis after winning his first Grand Slam title at Wimbledon in 2003, has been troubled by injuries in recent years.

He has undergone three knee operations in the last two years and his last competitive match was a quarter-final defeat against Poland's Hubert Hurkacz at the 2021 Wimbledon.

Federer had announced he planned to return to the tour when he teams up with long-time rival and friend Rafa Nadal to play doubles at the Laver Cup in London.

He had also planned to play at the Swiss indoors tournament at home in Basel.