

Health Ministry Announced on Sunday That the Number of Deaths From the Coronavirus Pandemic in Iran Increased to **144,519** With **Three** More Iranians Killed by the Virus Over the Past 24 Hours

# IRAN NEWS

The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Ground Forces Will Hold a Military Drill in the Upcoming Days in the General Area of the Aras Region in the North of East Azarbaijan Province of Iran

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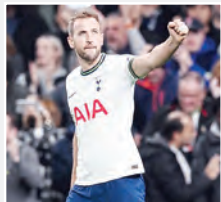


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## SPORTS

Kane Helps Tottenham Close Gap On Leaders Arsenal



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## Iran Slams Biden's Support For Riots as Intervention In State Matters

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's Foreign Ministry has vehemently censured the United States over meddling in the Islamic Republic's domestic affairs after President Joe Biden voiced support for riots in the country, made an interventionist statement, and sought encouragement of violence.

"On Saturday, Biden interfered for the umpteenth time in Iran's state matters by supporting the riots as he has done ever since the outbreak of recent developments in Iran," Nasser Kanaani said in a statement on Sunday.

He added, "Given the fact he neither does enjoy trusted advisers nor a good memory, I remind him that Iran is so strong and steadfast that it would not give in to his cruel sanctions and idle threats. It is also so proud that would be unfazed by the interventions and exclamations of a politician tired of years of the futile campaign against Iran."

Biden said on Saturday that "he was surprised by the courage of the people taking to the streets in protest in Iran."

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## All Iranian Nuclear Facilities Out of Reach of Enemies

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) spokesperson Behrouz Kamalvandi said that all the Iranian nuclear facilities are invulnerable to any military strikes so, no option remains for the enemy but diplomacy.

Kamalvandi said that "in terms of vulnerability in the nuclear field, the country is completely invulnerable for various reasons."

Speaking in an administrative meeting in Tehran, Kamalvandi added that "Our enemies have no option but diplomacy."

He also touched upon the use of the nuclear industry in the country and exports of nuclear-related products to other countries, the AEOI spokesman added "Not only pharmaceutical drugs are used in the country despite all the sanctions, we also see 400 to 500,000 people using these drugs abroad."

He also noted that the enemy's claim that the sanctions do not target food and medicine imports into Iran is a big lie.

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## Iran Current Account Balance To Rise Nearly \$21b in 2022



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - International Monetary Fund (IMF), in its latest estimates of the world's macroeconomic indicators, has seen Iran's current account balance increase by \$20.886 billion in 2022.

Based on the IMF data, Iran's account balance reached \$32.031 billion in 2022 from \$11.145 billion in the previous year.

According to the fund, the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) based on purchasing power parity reached \$1.6 trillion in 2022, indicating an increase of \$150 billion from \$1.45 trillion in 2021.

The IMF put the Islamic Republic's GDP per capita at \$18,660 in 2022, increasing \$1,580 from 2021 in which the figure stood at \$17,080.

The fund, in its latest World Economic Outlook report titled "Countering the Cost-of-Living Crisis" published on October 11, predicted that Iran's economy will experience a positive growth of three percent in 2022, following its upward trend for the third consecutive year.

IMF anticipated that Iran's inflation rate will also improve in the current year.

The international body had put Iran's inflation rate in 2021 at 40.1 percent, adding that not only Iran's inflation rate will not increase in 2022 as compared to a year earlier, but it will hit 40 percent at large, showing a bit decline.

Therefore, the IMF expects Iran's economy to experience positive growth for the third year in a row in 2022 in spite of tough sanctions imposed by the United States against Iran.

Iranian economy experienced a 3.1 percent negative growth in 2019 following the U.S. maximum pressure policy imposed against Iran, IMF said, adding that Iran's economy moved out of recession in 2020 despite the global coronavirus pandemic.

Earlier this week, World Bank also predicted the Iranian economy to grow by 2.9 percent in 2022.

## Strikes Against Iraq-Based Terrorists to Persist

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's senior military commander vows that the Islamic Republic will keep up its defensive operations against U.S.- and Israeli-backed separatist terror groups holed up near the country's northwestern borders in Iraq's Kurdistan region.

The separatists, who are "backed by the U.S. and other enemies," have been operating in the Iraqi Kurdistan region since the victory of Iran's Islamic Revolution in 1979, Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Baqeri said on Saturday as cited by Iran's Tasnim news agency.

"Over the past several years, however, their based have turned into a complex [operating] against our national security with American support," he further underlined, noting that "currently, there are 1200 military bases in northern Iraq" with 3000 armed terrorists operating against us.

The top commander said on several instances the Israeli regime would handpick a number of these terrorists, and train them before dispatching them across the border to conduct terrorist and destabilizing activities.

"They were being used as terrorists for hire," Baqeri said, pointing out that "in effect, these (terrorist strongholds) were Zionists bases," and one of such bases in Erbil recently came under attack by the Aerospace Division of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps (IRGC).

He also pointed out that Iran has on countless occasions warned the Iraqi Kurdistan's local authorities that it "will not tolerate the presence and bomb-making and military activities" of terrorist groups along its borders, insisting that "these operations and even bigger ones will continue as long as it takes" to flush out and disarm the terrorists.

Tehran has urged the Kurdish officials on many occasions to either disarm or expel the terror groups, General Baqeri further noted, adding that the failure of those officials to make good on their pledges has prompted Iran confront the outfits on its own as a self-defense measure.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the top Iranian general said Iran continues to keep US bases across Iraq "under surveillance."

Citing a recent claim by American officials about the alleged downing of an Iranian drone over Erbil, Bagheri reiterated that "We know where the American bases are located" across Iraq "as well as the number of forces in them and the nature of their activities."

He then warned, "Effective today, if [the Americans] take any action against our drones, we will certainly take responsive measures, and we reserve the right to respond to their recent action."

Bagheri also said that Iran has notified its neighbors that "should any action be taken against our national security in any American bases in neighboring countries, Iran would surely retaliate against the headquarters [in question]."

## ViewPoint

By: Hamid Reza Naghashian



## A Clown Named Biden

Since taking office in January 2021, U.S. President Joe Biden has turned into a laughing stock both inside the U.S. and abroad and every time with some behaviors and remarks make the public laugh.

On Saturday and reacting to what happened in Evin Prison in Iran, Biden once again opened his mouth for uttering such nonsense remarks against Iran while this President has gotten stuck in the mud in domestic affairs in his country.

Biden said on Saturday that "he was surprised by the courage of the people taking to the streets in protest in Iran."

Reacting to the nonsense remarks of Biden, Iran's Foreign Ministry vehemently censured the United States over meddling in the Islamic Republic's domestic affairs as well as Biden's support for riots in the country.

"On Saturday, Biden interfered for the umpteenth time in Iran's state matters by supporting the riots as he has done ever since the outbreak of recent developments in Iran," Nasser Kanaani said in a statement.

This is not the first time that Biden makes people laugh either in Iran, in the U.S. or in the world as this aging President seems losing control of his mouth and language.

Iranian officials have repeatedly said that the U.S. is not sincere in its words and have asked the nations especially the Iranians not to trust this arrogant country which has nothing to do but fooling the nations to loot their wealth.

The senior Iranian diplomat highlighted that neither Biden's comments nor Washington's meddlesome gestures will not surprise Tehran as intervention, aggression, and killing form the backbone of the US political system.

"Since the 1953 coup d'état up until today, the anti-Iranian policies of the US administration have been well recorded in our minds. And of course, the history and every part of the world would testify the wounds that America's crimes and violence have inflicted," Kanaani pointed out.

"You (Americans) are accustomed to fishing in troubled waters," the spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry said.

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## Iran Exports to Replace Its Oil Revenues

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade Reza Fatemi Amin said that the Islamic Republic's export is growing very fast, and that there is only a 3.5-billion-dollar gap to be able to omit oil revenues from the country's trade balance.

Fatemi Amin made the remarks in the Standard Week in Tehran on Sunday that the volume of non-oil exports and imports reached 48.5 and 52 billion dollars, respectively during last year, showing a significant increase in Iran's non-oil export.

As to the need for adopting instant measures to improve the situation of standard in Iran, he said that the focus on non-oil export, as well as coordination with other countries' standard institutes, are among the main efforts, which should be done in this respect.

Now, Iran's complexity rating stands 65 in the world, he said, noting that the Islamic Republic tries to improve the ranking to stand at less than 40 with the four years.

According to the minister, the need for pursuing a unified method in terms of standard has been underlined in a recent meeting of the high council for standard, and President Ebrahim Raisi supported the plan.

He further underscored that Iran should have good standard-related interactions with countries involved in trade ties, noting that this effort will help the country to reform its standards in order to turn into an exporter of complex manufactured products not merely raw materials.

The minister also called for inventing localized standard criteria in order to get rid of depending on translation-based standards such as Euro 4 and Euro 5.



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# Iran Determined to Continue Advancing Nuclear Industry

TEHRAN (IRNA) - The spokesman for the Iranian government said that Iran was determined to advance its nuclear industry, noting that over 200 medical centers use 50 radiopharmaceuticals manufactured by the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran.

Ali Bahadori Jahromi said that Iran had prioritized increasing the capacity of nuclear power generation, noting that the president had instructed the Bushehr Nuclear Plant to increase its capacity to 10 megawatts.

He also said that Iran was moving towards becoming a research nuclear reactor producer and it would leverage the technology and the scientific capability in other industrial fields.

## Iran Expands Range of Homegrown Missile Defense System

**TEHRAN (PressTV) - Commander of Iran Army’s Air Defense Force Brigadier General Alireza Sabahi-Fard says Iranian military experts and technicians have expanded the operational range of the domestically-designed and manufactured Bavar-373 (Belief-373) surface-to-air missile system to 300 kilometers.**

Addressing a ceremony at Khatam al-Anbia Air Defense University in Tehran on Sunday, the high-ranking commander said that Iran has run initial tests on Bavar-373 missile system at an operational range of 300 kilometers praising the country’s progress in the development of air defense systems for high altitudes.

“We are monitoring the enemies at their bases. Our radars can detect objects at a distance of thousands of kilometers away,” the commander said, adding that the Iranian Armed Forces are at the highest level of deterrence power.

The Bavar-373 system was formally unveiled during a ceremony attended by former Iranian President Hassan Rouhani on August 22, 2019. It reportedly can detect targets or planes at more than 300 kilometers, lock them at about 250 kilometers, and destroy them at 200 kilometers.

While Iran manufactured the first prototype of the Bavar-373 missile defense system with a range of 200 kilometers, the road-mobile system has been upgraded in direct proportion to potential threats.

The long-range air defense system is said to be capable of detecting up to



100 targets, tracking 60 of them, and engaging with six simultaneously.

Moreover, Bavar-373 uses a vertical launching system with rectangular canisters. It employs three different types of missiles to hit targets at various altitudes.

Iran for the first time employed the homegrown Bavar-373 missile defense system during a joint air defense exercise, codenamed ‘Guardians of Velayat Sky-99’, in late October 2020.

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

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

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has repeatedly called for efforts to maintain and boost Iran’s defense capabilities.

## Iran Opposing Foreign Forces Deployment In Caucasus Region



TEHRAN (MNA) – Foreign Minister termed the presence of foreign forces in the Caucasus as a common concern of the countries of the region, emphasizing Iran’s opposition to the deployment of any foreign forces in the region.

Hossein Amir-Abdollahian made the remarks in a telephone conversation with the Foreign minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan Jeyhun Bayramov on Saturday night.

Referring to the recent developments in the Caucasus region, he emphasized Iran’s support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries including the Republic of Azerbaijan and Armenia and said that this approach is the permanent policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Jeyhun Bayramov, for his part, opposed the presence of foreign forces in the region and supported the position of the Islamic Republic of Iran in this regard.

Referring to the relations between Iran and the Republic of Azerbaijan, Amir-Abdollahian described the recent meeting of the presidents of the two countries on the sidelines of the 6th edition of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) in Astana, Kazakhstan as important.

Azeri foreign minister also called the relations between the two countries important and stable.

## 4 Dead, Dozens Injured in Evin Prison Fire Incident

TEHRAN (IFP) - A brawl and an ensuing fire that broke out in Evin prison in the Iranian capital Tehran on Saturday has left at least four inmates dead and 61 more injured due to smoke inhalation, according to Iran’s Judiciary.

The report says, the incident happened after a clash among a number of prisoners convicted of financial crimes and theft in the prison in northwestern Tehran.

The prisoners reportedly set fire to a warehouse full of prison uniforms, which caused the blaze, but security forces intervened to restore calm.

Video footage showed plumes of smoke rising into the sky amid the sound of an alarm, but firefighters extinguished the flames within hours and rescued 70 inmates.

Tehran Prosecutor Ali Salehi denied the incident was related to the recent unrest and riots in Iran that saw the detention of many people involved in the mayhem.

Meanwhile, officials dismissed an earlier report by Iran’s Fars News Agency that several prisoners lost their lives after fleeing the scene and running towards the mine field in the northern part of the prison.

The Iranian Judiciary said conditions in Tehran’s Evin Prison are “completely normal” and the facility’s daily affairs are being carried out as usual after a large fire broke out in one of the prison’s workshops.

The media center of the Judiciary said on Sunday that the blaze erupted in one of the tailoring workshops of Evin Prison following clashes between a number of prisoners convicted of financial crimes and theft.

“Shortly after the conflict and the fire at the workshop, the prison’s security officers embarked on taking control of the clashes, and the fire station located in the prison immediately started the fire extinguishing operation and the fire has been contained and put out,” the Judiciary’s media center said.

Other reports said the police force helped the prison’s security officers establish peace in Evin as quickly as possible.

The Judiciary’s media center underlined that the prisoners had called their families after the incident to reassure them of their safety, saying, “Last night and after the fire in Evin Prison, it was immediately possible for the prisoners to contact their families and this situation continued until the morning.”

## Deputy FM Stresses Need for Participating in Exclusive EXPOs

TEHRAN (MNA) – Attending the 27th International Exhibition of Tiles, Ceramics and Sanitary Porcelain, Mehdi Safari emphasized the need for maximum participation of Iranian companies in exclusive exhibitions.

Iran’s Deputy Foreign Minister for Economic Diplomacy also noted that the presence of Iranian tiles in neighboring countries and the competitive market of the region shows the strength of competition and diversity in the country’s tile and ceramic production.

Safari considered strengthening commercial and economic relations with Iraq and the Central Asian

countries as one of the priorities of the economic diplomacy of Iran’s foreign ministry.

On the sidelines of the exhibition, the President of the Iranian Ceramic Producers Syndicate (IRCPS) Behnam Aziz Zadeh noted that more than 140 production units in the tile and ceramic industry are active, more than 95% of which are private sector.

Referring to the export target market of these products in 38 countries, Aziz Zadeh noted that 70% of the total amount of exports was made to Iraq.

He also noted that Iran is the sixth producer and the fifth exporter of ceramic and tiles in the world.

## Alumina Powder Production Up 2% in H1 on Year

TEHRAN (MNA) - Production of alumina powder in Iran rose two percent in the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, according to the data released by Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO).

The IMIDRO’s data put the alumina powder output at 118,845 tons in the six-month period of this year, while the figure was 116,192 tons in the same time span of the previous year.

As the organization has previously reported, alumina powder production increased 11 percent in the first quarter of the present year, from the first quarter of the past year.

The IMIDRO’s data put the alumina powder output at 62,291 tons in the three-month period of this year, while the figure was about 55,974 tons in the same time span of the previous year. Based on the data previously released by IMIDRO, Iran has produced 230,682 tons of alumina powder in the past Iranian calendar year 1400 (ended on March 20).

The IMIDRO’s data put the alumina powder output at 231,612 tons in year 1399.

Aluminum oxide, which is commonly called alumina, is an inert, odorless, white amorphous material often used in industrial ceramics.

Alumina is an important ceramic material for industrial applications. The numerous fields of application range from construction materials, to filling materials,

as well as abrasives and catalysts.

In plants and mechanical engineering, alumina ceramics are mainly used for wear and corrosion protection.

The particle size distribution largely determines the application range and the quality of an alumina powder. Reliably identifying the differences in particle size is therefore an essential requirement of the measuring instrument.

## Iraq’s Kurdistan Urged to Counter Terrorist, Apartheid Groups

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian says the Iraqi government and the Kurdistan Regional Government must shoulder their full responsibility and counter terrorist and apartheid groups based in Iraq’s semi-autonomous Kurdistan region.

“Given good relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Iraq, we do not expect the territory of the Iraqi Kurdistan Region to be a place for terrorist acts and threats against Iran,” Amirabdollahian said in a meeting with Iraqi National Security Adviser Qasim al-Araji in Tehran.

He added that Iran has always supported a developed, free and independent Iraq and prosperity for its government and nation.

Iran, however, “will not tolerate the continuation of the armed terrorists’

presence in the Kurdistan Region and their moves against Iran’s security,” the top diplomat emphasized. Amirabdollahian noted that Tehran and Baghdad have growing strategic relations in all sectors and stressed the importance of improving bilateral cooperation in the security fields, including the battle against armed terrorists based in Iraq’s Kurdistan.

“We regard Iraq’s security as Iran’s security,” the foreign minister added.

Al-Araji, who is in Tehran at the head of a high-ranking security delegation, said the Iraqi government and the Kurdistan Regional Government would definitely counter any measure against Iran’s security.

Based on Iraq’s constitution, no individual or movement is allowed to conduct a move that disturbs security of the neighbors.

## Iran, Eurasian Union to Start Free Trading in Near Future

TEHRAN (MNA) - The head of the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran (TPOI) says that free trade with the Eurasian Economic Union will probably be implemented from the next Iranian year 1402 (Starting from March 21st, 2023).

Alireza Peyman-Pak stated that between 2015 and 2021, trade turnover between the Eurasian Economic Union and Iran increased from \$2.3 billion to \$5 billion.

Stressing the importance of the presence of Iranian activists in unions and regional links, Peyman-Pak said that 9 meetings were held during the past year regarding Eurasia.

“According to what has been announced, after the governments have reviewed and approved the details of the negotiations, the final approval of free trade with Eurasia will be determined by the end of the month of Azar ( 21st of December), and if this procedure continues, free trade with Eurasia will start next year,” he added.

Saying that preferential trade increased the exports to this union by 55%, Peyman-Pak emphasized that implementing free trade with Eurasia provides a 700 billion dollar market for Iran’s industry and production, through which trade can be expanded favorably.

## Iran Provides Afghans, Iranians With Similar Opportunity

TEHRAN (IRNA) - The Islamic Republic of Iran has been providing a great number of Afghan refugees with a similar situation that the Iranian citizens are living in, an Iranian envoy said.

Iran’s Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office in Geneva Ali Bahraini wrote on his Twitter account over his speech in the 73rd session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner for Refugees’ Program.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has spared no efforts in hospitalizing and protecting millions of Afghan refugees and groups, he wrote.

Bahraini also went on to say that Iran has provided a great number of asylum-seekers with the opportunity and condition, which has been offered for the Iranian people.

## Mahsa Amini Didn’t Die of Blows to Body

TEHRAN (IFP) - The Iranian parliament’s fact-finding committee has released a report on the death of Mahsa Amini, confirming the results of an earlier investigation by Iran’s forensic organization that the young Iranian woman did not die of blows to any part of her body by the police.

The report was released on Sunday, emphasizing that there was no evidence of “physical assault or attack” against the deceased woman and demanded prosecution of those who provoked people into protests and deadly riots by “hasty and contradictory statements” before the matter was clarified.

22-year-old Mahsa Amini died on September 16, three days after she collapsed in a police station where she was taken for a briefing on her hijab and fell into a coma. Her death sparked unrest and deadly riots in several Iranian cities.

The parliament’s fact-finding committee also called for structural reforms in the executive processes of maintaining social security without playing into the hands of the enemies.

Iranian officials say foreign elements orchestrated the riots to disrupt the country’s security.

The committee also called for an amendment of the Article 638 of the Islamic Penal Code to remove any ambiguities about the concepts related to hijab, which is the compulsory dress code for women in Iran.

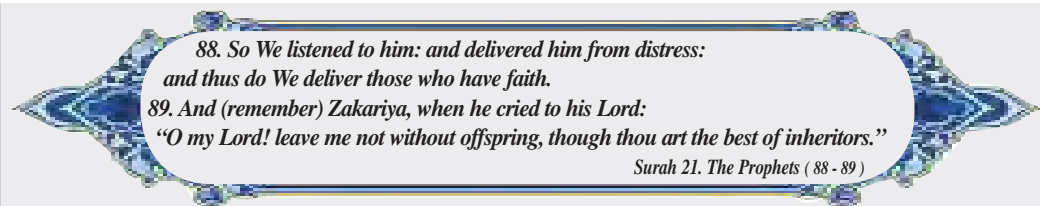
While praising the police for their role in maintaining security in the country, the report said the fallout of the incident could have been prevented by providing fast and accurate information to pre-empt the foreign-based biased media’s ‘fake narratives’, and also by apologizing for any possible negligence or wrongdoing in the incident.





## PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	11:49
■ Evening (Maghreb)	17:45
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	04:50
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:13



## Iran Eyes Entering Russia's Medicine, Medical Equipment Market

**TEHRAN (MNA) - Iranian Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry has announced plans to enter Russia's medicine and medical equipment market, the portal of Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) reported on Saturday.**

As reported, TPO, as the Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry's foreign affairs body, is preparing a comprehensive action plan for the facilitation of Iranian pharmaceutical companies' presence in Russia's medicine and medical equipment market.

Speaking in a seminar on the promotion of the export of medical and pharmaceutical equipment to Russia, which was held with the aim of making the necessary preparation for the participation of Iranian companies in the Moscow Health Week exhibition, TPO Head Alireza Peyman-Pak said: "Medical equipment is among the group of goods that the government has a special program for its promotion and exports."

"The government's approach is to do special programs for products that have a good market and our producers have the ability to compete with foreign products in the destination markets. Participation in specialized exhibitions is one of these programs," Peyman-Pak said.



Stating that participation in specialized exhibitions should be planned in advance and according to the goals, the official emphasized: "We saw an example of this planning at the Moscow Automobile Exhibition, which was a good achievement for our automobile and parts manufacturing industries."

He said according to statistics, Russian imports over \$20 billion worth of medicine and medical equipment annually, adding: "With the withdrawal of western companies from this country due to sanctions, a suitable market has been opened for Iranian companies that can be used."

The TPO head also pointed to the organization's support for the export of medical equipment and said: "In this regard, solving financial exchange problems, opening a brokerage account between Iranian and Russian banks, providing financing for purchase credit, issuing guarantees and insurance policies, and discussing quick registration for medicines and medical equipment are being followed up by TPO in Russia."

## Isfahan to Host 25th Int'l Exhibition on Building Industry

**IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK**

ISFAHAN – The 25th International Exhibition on Building Industry will be held with presence of famous brands at the Permanent Fairground of Isfahan on October 18-21.

According to the public relations of Isfahan International Exhibition, the Exhibition on Building Industry will start its work with presence of 128 companies and producers. Some active

companies in the fields of making resistant and lightweight, sanitary faucets, producers of windows, brick, smartization, producers of concrete and elevator are to put on display their latest achievements and capacities in this four-day exhibition.

The International Exhibition on Building Industry of Isfahan will be held on area around 8900 meters with presence of companies and producers from Tehran, Khorazasn Razavi, Isfahan, Fars, Semnan, Khorasan Shomali, Qom, Yazd, Hormozgan and Khuzestan Provinces.

The event is held in a condition that its quality has improved comparing to the previous editions and gathering of more famous brands. The event will be held on October 18-21 from 11 a.m. to 20 p.m. at the Isfahan Permanent Exhibition.



## 100 Freight Wagons To Join IRISL Group Fleet

**IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK**

TEHRAN – The CEO of the Iran Multimodal Transportation Company (MTC) Captain Alireza Ebrahimizadeh in the ceremony for signing deal for purchase of 100 freight wagons said that the goal of MTC which is one of the subsidiaries of the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL) is to have a serious role playing in the upcoming years with developing rail sector.

He pointed to 20 years of experience of MTC and said that the company has some 1200 fuel carrier and low-sided wagons and some tank wagons are active and they play key role in carrying fuel for the IRISL fleet and National Iranian Tanker Company (NITC).

Ebrahimizadeh went on to say that the company is in charge of transporting oil products, general and container cargos with 450 low-sided wagons.

He noted that the one of the goals of MTC is to enter new routes and markets as well as offering better services for owners of the goods and to this end, the company has put on its agenda the purchase of 100 high-sided wagons and expressed hope signing this contract would be a beginning for purchase of some wagons every year in order that the company can take more serious steps in carrying the bulk products.

Ebrahimizadeh went on to say that after the purchase of these 100 freight cargos, the company will put on agenda the purchase of 100 26-meter low-sided wagons for simultaneous carrying of two 40-feet containers. He added that it can reduce the time of transit of goods and also transport of goods based on the door-to-door format.

He noted that one of the reasons for the purchase of the new wagons is the activation of different corridors like the North-South corridor and MTC as one of the subsidiaries of IRISL Group wants to ease access to the new routs of transportation through the purchase of these wagons, adding that 500 new wagons are to join the transportation network in three years.



## In Presence of Governor of Kerman Province

# Home-Made Liner Handling Machine Unveiled in Sarcheshmeh Copper Complex of Rafsanjan



With the presence of Kerman Governor, the home-made "Liner Handling" machine was unveiled in Sarcheshmeh Copper Complex in Rafsanjan. According to the public relations report of Sarcheshmeh Rafsanjan Copper Complex, the unveiling ceremony of the localized "Liner Handling" machine in Sarcheshmeh Copper Complex, with the presence of Dr. Fadakar, Governor of Kerman, Engineer Rezaei, Governor of Rafsanjan, Engineer Ahmadi, a member of the Board of Directors of the National Iran Copper Industries Company, and the manager Sarcheshmeh Copper Complex in Rafsanjan and a group of complex managers were held. The manager of the slag flotation project of Sarcheshmeh Copper Complex said on the sidelines of the unveiling ceremony of this device: The work of this device is to install and remove metal liners, which are gradually worn out at least once a month, and it is very difficult to do this with human power. Engineer Mohammad Soleimani stated that the foreign equivalent of this machine is imported at a very high cost, and said: The domestic manufacturing cost is approximately 110 thousand euros, but the purchase cost is more than 1.2 million euros, which has resulted in a tenfold saving of currency with local production. He continued: In 2017, emphasizing the localization of parts needed by industries and reverse engineering and the manufacture of imported parts, it was decided to manufacture parts for the copper industry in

order to eliminate the need for imports. The manager of the slag flotation project of Sarcheshmeh Rafsanjan copper complex announced the construction of this device by one of the knowledge-based companies of Kerman province and said: We have the construction and supply of other parts on the agenda, which can be done by relying on the knowledge and ability of domestic specialists to localize them.

### Governor of Kerman Announces

Great Work of Localizing "Liner Handling" Machine Through Support of Managers of Sarcheshmeh Rafsanjan Copper Complex and Local Experts. The governor of Kerman considered the localization and construction of the "Liner Handling" machine in the Sarcheshmeh Copper Complex in Rafsanjan as a big task, which was done with the risk-taking and support of the managers of this complex. According to the public relations report of Sarcheshmeh Copper Complex of Rafsanjan, Dr. Mohammad Mahdi Fadakar, the governor of Kerman, on the sidelines of the unveiling of the localized "Liner Handler" in Sarcheshmeh Copper Complex, said: "Indeed, a great work has been done and the machine, which had very high foreign exchange costs, should have been imported under the conditions of sanctions." With the trust and support given by National Iranian Copper Industries Company (NICICO) Group to a knowledge-

based company, it has been achieved. The high official of the government in Kerman province stated: The important thing is that with this localization, the exchange rate and the cost of the device have reached one-tenth, and the concerns of providing the device in the copper complex have been resolved and there will be no problem in this regard. Fadakar noted: the capacity of very good technical knowledge has been formed inside and this is a very big event; Both the fact that that company took courage and took action to build this device, and the managers of the copper company who accepted this risk and supported to do this great work; God willing, we will see bigger works in this field in the future. At the end of his visit to Sarcheshmeh Copper Complex, the governor of Kerman said: the conditions show that the work done by the complex is a great work and it shows that Sarcheshmeh Copper Complex has the motivation to use knowledge-based activities for the development of localization and domestication. Support parts. It is worth noting that purchase of the liner handler machine from other countries would have cost more than 1.2 million euros, and by localizing it at a cost of 110,000 euros by a provincial knowledge-based company in Sarcheshmeh Copper Complex in Rafsanjan, a tenfold saving in currency has been achieved.

**Public Relations  
of Sarcheshmeh Copper Complex in Rafsanjan**



# At Least 14 Killed, Dozens Trapped in Turkey Mine Blast

ISTANBUL (Dispatches) - Rescuers pulled out 14 bodies Friday and searched for signs of life among dozens of coal miners still trapped under hundreds of meters underground after an apparent methane blast tore through a pit on Turkey's Black Sea coast.

Interior Minister Suleyman Soyly said 28 people who either managed to crawl out on their own or were saved by rescuers had suffered various injuries in one of Turkey's deadliest industrial accidents in years. "We are facing a truly regretful situation," Soyly told reporters after urgently flying out to the small coal mining town of Amasra. "In all, 110 of our brothers were working (underground). Some of them came out on their own, and some of them were rescued."



# Shelling', Fire at Russian Fuel Depot



KYIV (Dispatches) - "Shelling" at a Russian fuel depot in the Belgorod region has sparked a fire, a local official said, without specifying the attack's origin.

Russia's defense ministry claimed its forces have stalled Ukrainian attempts to advance in the Kherson region, as well as an attempted advance near Lyman in the eastern Luhansk region.

Russia's Defense Ministry has said its troops have halted Ukrainian attempts to advance in the Kherson region. "In the direction of Mykolaiv and Kryvyi Rih, the enemy made unsuccessful offensive attempts near the settlements of Dudchani, Sadok, Ishchenka of the Kherson region. As a result of the actions of the Russian troops, all attacks were repelled," Spokesman Igor Konashenkov said.

Konashenkov also said that Russian troops blocked Ukrainian attempts to make inroads into Russian defenses near Lyman in the eastern Luhansk region.

Ukraine has reclaimed large swaths of territory since launching a counter-offensive in the south and east of the country.

Germany's foreign minister has warned that Russia could seek to spark division in the West through refugees, as Moscow seeks to expand its "hybrid war".

"This war is not only waged with weapons, it is also waged with energy and for that, we have found an answer. But it will also be waged with fear and division, and that is precisely what we have to prevent," said Annalena Baerbock at a congress of her Greens party.

"In this situation, it is clear what will be next - refugees and not refugees from Ukraine ... but because this war is hybrid, other countries are also participating," Baerbock said, pointing to Serbia which she accused of letting in plane loads of migrants without visas.

She said that there cannot be a situation "where people are being used as weapons", adding Germany was in talks with the Czech Republic and Slovakia on the issue.

The first Russian soldiers to take part in a new joint force with Belarusian troops have arrived in Belarus, Minsk's defense ministry has said.

The troops arrived after the leader of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, accused Ukraine on Monday of plotting to attack his country and announced a joint force with Moscow.

"The first convoys of Russian servicemen from the regional force group have arrived in Belarus," the ministry said, adding that their mission was "exclusively to strengthen the protection and defence of the border".

Nevertheless, the deployment has sparked fears that Belarusian troops could join Russia's offensive in Ukraine.

Lukashenko accused Poland, Lithuania and Ukraine of training Belarusian radicals "to carry out sabotage, terrorist attacks and to organise a military mutiny in the country".

# North Korea Not to Overlook Any Kind of Military Provocations

SEOUL (Dispatches) - North Korea on Saturday warned that it would take "overwhelming military countermeasures" against what it called deliberate provocations by South Korea, as tensions remained high following the North's ballistic missile launches in recent weeks.

The warning by an unnamed spokesman of the North's Korean People's Army (KPA) came a day after it fired a short-range ballistic missile into the sea and hundreds of artillery rounds near the border with the South.

KPA frontline units conducted artillery firing on Friday to send a clear warning to "repeated provocation by the enemies in the front areas," the spokesman said in a statement carried by the North's official KCNA news agency.



# Thousands From Rival Tunisian Parties Protest Against President

TUNIS (Dispatches) - Two rival Tunisian opposition groups staged one of the biggest days of protest so far against President Kais Saied, denouncing his moves to consolidate political power as public anger grows over fuel and food shortages.

Thousands of supporters from the Islamist Ennahda party and the Free Constitutional Party held parallel rallies in adjacent areas of the capital, Tunis, accusing Saied of economic mismanagement and of an anti-democratic coup.

"Tunisia is bleeding. Saied is a failed dictator. He has set us back for many years. The game's over. Get out," said protester Henda Ben Ali.

Saied, who moved to rule by decree after shutting down parliament last year and expanding his powers with a new constitution passed in a July referendum, has said the measures were needed to save Tunisia from years of crisis.

In a speech on Saturday to commemorate the departure of French troops upon Tunisia's 1956 independence, he demanded the departure today of "all who want to undermine independence" - an apparent allusion to his political foes.



# Sadrist Camp Refuses to Join New Gov't

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) - Iraqi firebrand cleric Moqtada Sadr's movement announced its refusal to join a new government being formed by prime minister-designate Mohammad Shia al-Sudani.

The announcement came two days after lawmakers elected Abdul Latif Rashid as Iraq's new president, and he swiftly named Sudani as prime minister in a bid to end a year of political gridlock since October 2021 elections.

"We stress our firm and clear refusal for any of our affiliates to participate... in this government formation," Mohammed Saleh al-Iraqi, a close associate of Sadr, said in a statement posted on Twitter.

The 52-year-old Shiite former minister Sudani has the backing of Sadr's Iran-backed rivals, the Coordination Framework, which controls 138 out of 329 seats in the Iraqi legislature.

In June, Sadr had ordered the 73 lawmakers in his bloc to resign, leaving parliament in the hands of the Framework, which includes representatives of the former paramilitary Hashed al-Shaabi.

In his statement Saturday, Iraqi charged that the upcoming government has a "clear subordination to militias" and would "not meet the people's aspirations".

The Sadrist official said the movement refused to take part in any government led by Sudani "or any other candidate from among the old faces or those affiliated with the corrupt".

"Anyone who joins their ministries does not represent us... rather, we disavow them," Iraqi said.

Snap elections were held last year following nationwide protests that erupted in October 2019 to decry endemic corruption, decaying infrastructure and the absence of services and jobs for youth. The stakes are high for the next cabinet, with a colossal \$87 billion in revenues from oil exports locked up in the central bank's coffers.

# Strikes Persist at TotalEnergies Refineries, Fuel Depot in France

PARIS (Dispatches) - French refinery and fuel depot workers at five sites owned by oil giant TotalEnergies vowed to continue striking, compounding concern over petrol supply ahead of wider protests early next week.

Four of France's seven refineries and one fuel depot were out of action, after strikers rejected a pay offer from the hydrocarbon industry leader.

Operations had resumed earlier in the week at two other refineries run by Esso-ExxonMobil, however, after workers struck a bargain with management.

The blockages have caused queues outside petrol stations, and worry across all sectors of the economy, from mobile healthcare workers to farmers.

President Emmanuel Macron's government forced some strikers back to work this week to open fuel depots, a move that infuriated unions but has been upheld by courts.

The hard-left CGT union, which launched the industrial action three weeks ago, said on Saturday that workers at three TotalEnergies sites had decided to extend their strike.

"The action has been extended at three sites," said Eric Sellini, the CGT coordinator at the company.

Employees at the two others, including France's largest refinery near the northwestern city of

Le Havre, had already decided to prolong their action.

Left-wing opponents of Macron have called for anti-inflation marches on Sunday.

The CGT has called a strike for Tuesday that could disrupt public transport nationwide.

The union risks stoking resentment in a country where three-fourths of workers rely on personal vehicles for their jobs, with public support for the strike at just 37 percent in a BVA poll released Friday.

The CGT is pushing for a 10-percent pay rise for staff at TotalEnergies, retroactive for all of 2022.

It says the French group can more than afford it, citing TotalEnergies' net profit of \$5.7 billion in the April-June period as energy prices soared with the war in Ukraine, and its payout of billions of euros in dividends to shareholders.

It walked out of talks with the French group in the night of Thursday to Friday, even as other unions representing a majority of workers accepted a deal for a lesser pay hike.

TotalEnergies on Saturday urged its workers to resume work, "in view of the signing of a majority deal on salaries" with two other unions.

Esso-ExxonMobil has said it would take two to three weeks to relaunch production at its refineries.



# Pakistan Summons U.S. Envoy Over Biden's Remark

ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) - Pakistan summoned the U.S. ambassador for an explanation after President Joe Biden described the South Asian country as "one of the most dangerous nations in the world" and questioned its nuclear weapons safety protocols.

Biden made the apparently off-the-cuff remark late Thursday while talking about United States foreign policy during a private Democratic Party fundraiser in California, but the White House later published a transcript of his comments, sparking outrage in Pakistan.

Washington's relations with Pakistan have soured since last year, when the US ended a two-decade war in Afghanistan.

Pakistan provided crucial logistical access, but US officials believe Islamabad's powerful military and intelligence apparatus also aided the Taliban, who swept back to power as foreign troops pulled out.

Biden was speaking about his frequent interactions with Chinese leader Xi Jinping, when he said: "Did anybody think we'd be in a situation where China is trying to figure out its role relative to Russia and relative to India and relative to Pakistan?"

"This is a guy who understands what he wants but has an enormous, enormous array of problems. How do we handle that? How do we handle that relative to what's going on in Russia?"

"And what I think is maybe one of the most dangerous nations in the world: Pakistan. Nuclear weapons without any cohesion."

Hours after the transcript of his address was posted, Pakistan summoned the US ambassador Donald Blome to the foreign office in Islamabad.

"I have discussed it with the prime minister, and we have summoned the ambassador of the United States... for an official demarche," Pakistani Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said during a press conference in Karachi.

"I am surprised by the remarks of President Biden. I believe this is exactly the sort of misunderstanding that is created when there is lack of an engagement." Zardari appeared to offer Washington some room to maneuver.

"It was not an official function, it was not an address to the nation or an address to the parliament," he said.





## IMF Plugs Financing Gaps as Riskier Emerging Markets Face Squeeze

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - There's little relief in sight for a host of developing nations from Egypt to Malawi and from Pakistan to Ecuador, all of whom are facing a painful economic squeeze as the costs of servicing debt rise further.

Officials from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other bodies expect the debt crunch to heap more pressure on these so-called 'frontier markets', which are already struggling with the impacts of Russia's war in Ukraine and the Federal Reserve's tightening cycle to cool U.S. inflation. Many of these countries are also still wrestling with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Locked out of worldwide debt markets and with China redrafting its role as the lender of choice to many poorer nations, countries are increasingly relying on the help of the IMF to plug financing gaps. "Their fiscal space to deal with all of this is very little," Gita Gopinath, the IMF's first deputy managing director, told a seminar on the sidelines of the annual IMF-World Bank Meeting. "We will grapple (with this) for several months to come."

The Washington-based lender has agreed new programmes or augmented existing ones for 18 countries to the tune of \$90 billion since Russia invaded Ukraine in February, its managing director Kristalina Georgieva said. Including support since the start of COVID-19, this total rises to \$260 billion for 93 countries while another 28 have expressed interest in receiving support.

The fund needs to navigate shoring up fragile economies while ensuring often painful economic reforms don't fall by the wayside.

"The IMF is trying to strike balance between conditionality and agility," said Patrick Curran, senior economist at Tellimer, who is in Washington for the international lender's meetings.

"Countries like Pakistan, Egypt, Lebanon and Sri Lanka can't simply have the funding without any sort of commitments from the government."

Sri Lanka recently struck a staff level agreement to unlock almost \$3 billion, while Zambia got the nod on a \$1.3 billion loan programme, a key step to start receiving disbursements.

Both countries have defaulted on overseas debt but are also set to rework debt with bilateral lenders, with all eyes set on China as the IMF and G7 economies insist Beijing implement debt relief for poorer nations.

Ghana, Egypt, Tunisia and Malawi are all in talks on some type of IMF financing.

Rising borrowing costs and risk aversion amid growth woes and soaring inflation have seen the likes of Kenya, Egypt and Ecuador locked out of capital markets.

Over a quarter of emerging market sovereign bonds trade at spreads over U.S. Treasuries in excess of 1,000 basis points - a threshold for distinguishing distressed debt, Deutsche Bank calculated in a recent report. Such yields make it impossible for countries to tap international capital markets.

With major central banks such as the Fed and the European Central Bank still in the early stage of rate hike cycles, pressure on emerging currencies and bond yields would continue at least through mid-next year, said Deutsche Bank's Michael Spencer, adding the hit from FX depreciations, especially against the dollar, was the "main source of risk to government finances" in developing nations.

Investors have yanked \$70 billion from emerging market bond funds so far in 2022, according to data from JPMorgan, which pegs year-end outflows at \$80 billion.

In Washington, discussions were rife as to when creditors might change tack and buy emerging markets bonds again.



## SpaceX Capsule Splashes Down, Returning 4 Astronauts From Space Station

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - The fourth long-duration astronaut team launched by SpaceX to the International Space Station (ISS) safely returned to Earth, splashing down in the Atlantic Ocean off Florida after nearly six months of research aboard the orbital outpost.

The SpaceX Crew Dragon capsule dubbed Freedom, carrying three U.S. NASA astronauts and an Italian crewmate from the European Space Agency, parachuted into the sea at the conclusion of a five-hour autonomous flight home from the ISS.

Freedom began its stay in orbit on April 27. The crew consisted of NASA astronaut Kjell Lindgren, 49, fellow Americans Jessica Watkins, 34, and Bob Hines, 47, as well as Italy's Samantha Cristoforetti, 45, who was commander of their ISS expedition. Watkins became the first African-American woman to join a long-duration ISS mission.

In less than an hour, recovery teams had hoisted the heat-scorched Crew Dragon onto a retrieval vessel before opening the capsule's side hatch and helping the four astronauts out by one for their first breath of fresh air in more than 24 weeks.

Still garbed in their helmeted white-and-black spacesuits, their strength and balance left shaky from 170 days of weightlessness, the four crew were assisted onto special gurneys as they waved and gave thumbs-up for cameras.

Among those greeting them on the deck of the ship was the vessel's namesake, veteran NASA astronaut Megan McArthur.

Each of the returning astronauts was to receive a routine medical checkup aboard the ship before being flown by helicopter back to Florida.

The return from orbit followed a fiery re-entry plunge through Earth's atmosphere generating frictional heat that sent temperatures outside the capsule soaring to 3,500 degrees Fahrenheit (1,930 degrees Celsius).

Two sets of parachutes billowed open above the capsule in the final stage of descent, slowing its fall to about 15 miles per hour (24 kph) before the craft hit the water off Jacksonville, Florida.

During their space station stay, the crew orbited Earth 2,720 times - about once every 90 minutes - to log some 72 million miles (116 million km) in space, according to NASA.

The team was designated "Crew-4," the fourth full-fledged long-duration group of astronauts launched to ISS by SpaceX since the private rocket company founded by Tesla Inc CEO Elton Musk began flying NASA personnel in May 2020.

As for most ISS crews, their primary mission was science-based, encompassing scores of experiments and technology demonstrations.

Highlights included research on microgravity-induced changes in human cells resembling those associated with aging, and documenting effects of dietary improvements in orbit on immune function, gastrointestinal health and nutrition indicators.

They also participated in studies of fire and fuel behavior in weightlessness, and cultivation of plants in liquid- and air-based growth materials in place of soil.

Their exit came a week after their replacement team, Crew-5, arrived aboard the station - a Russian cosmonaut, a Japanese astronaut and two NASA crewmates, including the first Native American woman in orbit.

Crew-5 is remaining on ISS with two other Russians and a third American who shared a Soyuz flight to the ISS in September. One of those cosmonauts, Serge Prokofiev, assumed ISS command from Cristoforetti before Crew-4's departure.



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# OPEC+ Decision to Cut oil Production Correct

*The First Secretary General of the CICA Mr. Kairat Saraby speaks to reporters in a press conference at the end of the six CICA Summit in Astana on Thursday, October 13*



## Kazakhstan, a Key Actor in Security and Sustainable Development in Region, World

BY: F. TAHERPOOR ASL

ASTANA – The Republic of Kazakhstan as a newly independent country has played its role perfectly as a great actor and mentor in the security, peace and sustainable development in Asia and the globe and among its 28 members.

On Thursday, Astana the capital city of Kazakhstan hosted one of the most important and valuable summits to show its determination for boosting cooperation among its members especially in security and sustainable development.

The Sixth Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) summit talks was held in Astana as the summit celebrated its 30th anniversary of foundation. Kazakhstan is the founder of this summit as the first edition was held in Almaty on June 4, 2002, with the participation of sixteen member states and ten observer states and organizations. The Summit adopted the most important constitutive document of CICA – the Almaty Act, which acts as the Charter of CICA.

On Thursday Kuwait was accepted as the new member of the CICA and now it has 28 permanent members and with a bigger community it can continue its role in protecting security in Asia and even in the world.

The first president of the Republic of Kazakhstan and father of amazing progress of the country Nursultan Nazarbayev with his wise initiative founded this summit and his successor President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev is determined to pursue this policy of Nazarbayev and his country for playing a key role in the regional issues.

Addressing the conference, President Tokayev said, “In 1999, there were 15 member states in the conference, and now their number has reached 28. This, in fact, shows that the credibility of the forum in the eyes of the Asian countries and the world community as a whole has increased,” and expressed his congratulations to Kuwait for joining the group.

Turkmenistan joined CICA as an observer. Decisions were made to establish cooperation with the Eurasian Economic Union and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), according to Tokayev.

Eleven heads of state including presidents of Azerbaijan, Belarus (observer), Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Palestine, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkey, and Uzbekistan, as well as the Emir of Qatar and nearly 50 delegations attended the summit, deemed one of the most significant post-pandemic foreign policy events in the country and on the continent.

This gathering revealed the importance of the summit and they key role of Kazakhstan as the members extended Kazakhstan’s chairpersonship of the summit for two years and it bespeaks the trust of members to the sincerity of Kazakhstan in this summit.

The transformation of the conference into an organization topped the agenda of the talks between regional leaders, with many countries expressing their full support.

Ambassador of the Summit from Kazakhstan Mr. Kairat Sarybay was appointed as the new first Secretary General of the Summit.

The participants of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA) sixth summit also adopted the Astana Statement during their plenary session.

This milestone decision has been a key priority of Kazakhstan’s chairpersonship in CICA in 2020-2022. The transformation into an organization will affect development priorities as Kazakhstan renews its chairpersonship for the next two years.

“Are there any objections to the adoption of documents on the transformation of the CICA? There are no objections. The Astana statement on the transformation of CICA is considered to be accepted,” said President Tokayev during the summit.

The importance of this transformation was first raised by Tokayev in October 2021 during his meeting with the delegations participating in the sixth meeting of CICA foreign ministers. He said back then that CICA possessed all the elements of an international organization, including fundamental documents, governing and working bodies, an operating budget, a permanent secretariat, and its transformation will “emphasize Asia’s new role in global affairs.”

Meanwhile the First Secretary General of the Summit Mr. Sarybay in a press conference highlighted the importance of decisions in the six summits and the issues which were discussed in the summit.

He said that the main goal of this summit and bloc is to bring its members together for improving security issues and to boost sustainable development and the group has been almost successful in fulfilling its goals but it needs to take more major and important steps which have been decided in the current meeting.

He reiterated that there are different organizations in the region or the world but what distinguishes the CICA from other blocs is that it is not restricted to certain countries and it covers all countries in Asia and even in the world as permanent members or observer countries.

He once again stressed that the CICA does its job to bring peace and security among its members but sometimes it is difficult but the bloc does make its efforts.

Sarbay also said that it is an honor for Kazakhstan to play an active role in the regional issues especially for restoring peace and security and settling the differences and expressed hope that the CICA would be successful in materializing its goal through sincere cooperation of its members because Kazakhstan is a tool and initiator and it seeks all-out cooperation from its members, adding that the CICA welcomes joining other countries to it because it can ease solving some differences and disputes.

Kazakhstan is determined to make this bloc an impressive and influential one in the region especially in the security issues because security is the main issue for the member states which seek having peace and tranquility in their lands.

CAIRO (Dispatches) - The Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) secretary general said that the OPEC+ decision to cut oil production is correct, and was taken at the right time.

The decision took into account the uncertainty surrounding the performance of the global economy, and was in line with the successful approach taken by OPEC+ in taking proactive steps to avoid any oil market imbalances, especially on the demand and supply sides, OAPEC secretary general Ali bin Sabt added in a statement.



## China’s Economy Slows as Xi Plans for Historic Third Term

BEIJING (AFP) - As China’s leaders gather for a crucial party congress, the country is expected on Tuesday to announce some of its weakest quarterly growth figures since 2020, its economy hobbled by Covid restrictions and a real estate crisis.

The figures for the third quarter, along with a salvo of other economic indicators, will be unveiled in the middle of the week-long political meeting that is expected to grant President Xi Jinping a historic third term in charge.

A group of experts interviewed by AFP said they expected an average GDP increase of 2.5 percent on last year’s July-September quarter.

In the previous quarter, growth in the world’s second largest economy collapsed to only 0.4 percent compared to the previous year, the worst performance since 2020. The country posted 4.8 percent growth in the first quarter of 2022.

Many economists think China will struggle to attain its growth target this year of around 5.5 percent, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has lowered its GDP growth forecast to 3.2 percent for 2022 and 4.4 percent for 2023.

AFP’s panel of experts predicted average growth of three percent in 2022, a long way off the 8.1 percent seen in 2021.

That would be China’s weakest growth rate in four decades, excluding 2020 when the global economy was hammered by the emergence of the coronavirus.

“The big policy challenge is accepting that the economy has reached a state of maturity that means growth numbers are likely permanently reset to the zero to 4.5 percent range for the coming decade,” Clifford Bennett, chief economist at ACY Securities, told AFP.

Another factor that has had an enormous impact is Beijing’s zero-Covid policy.

China is the last of the world’s major economies to continue to follow the strategy, which imposes tight travel restrictions, mass PCR testing and obligatory quarantines.

It also involves sudden and strict lockdowns -- including of businesses and factories -- which has disrupted production and weighed heavily on household consumption.

But despite the impact on the economy, “there is no clear sign of a significant easing of the zero-Covid strategy”, Nomura’s Ting Lu said, noting that so far the opposite had happened.

In the week leading up to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Congress, state media have published multiple editorials warning the policy should not be relaxed, and officials have pounced on outbreaks across the country over the last week with increased curbs.

Some lockdown restrictions have returned to major financial hub Shanghai, prompting some to fear a repeat of earlier this year when the city was shut down for two months.

Meanwhile, China is also battling an unprecedented crisis in its real estate sector -- historically a driver of growth in the economy and representative of more than a quarter of the country’s GDP when combined with construction. Following years of explosive growth fuelled by easy access to loans, Chinese authorities launched a crackdown on excessive debt in 2020.

Property sales are now falling across the country, leaving many developers struggling and some owners refusing to pay their mortgages for unfinished homes.

## BoK Governor Says Policy Guidance Harder With Won’s Weakness



SEOUL (Dispatches) --South Korea’s central bank governor said that external factors, such as aggressive U.S. policy tightening buoying the dollar and driving the won currency sharply down, made providing forward guidance on policy difficult.

The Bank of Korea delivered its second-ever 50-basis-point rate hike on Wednesday and made clear the won’s 6.5% slide against the dollar in September that drove up import costs played a major role in the decision. The currency slumped as the Federal Reserve signaled no let-up in its battle to lower inflation from its highest levels in 40 years.

“The Korean won depreciated more rapidly in September in the face of the U.S. Fed’s accelerated tightening,” Governor Rhee Chang-yong told the Peterson Institute for International Economics in Washington, according to a transcript released by the central bank.

After its first 50-basis point rate rise in July, the central bank said a return to its usual quarter-point pace “looked appropriate for the time being” only to change tack last month given expectations of further Fed tightening.

“I have learned that communication with the public is not easy when transitioning from the traditional strategic ambiguity to forward guidance,” Rhee said. “Considering the characteristics of a small open economy, which is exposed to various uncontrollable external factors, I may need to reassess the speed and the degree of this tough transition.”

Rhee said later in a response to a question from the event’s moderator that the Bank of Korea “needs a little bit more experience and technical capacity” in order to engage in a formal forward guidance regime.

He said that while the central bank was not targeting a specific level for the exchange rate, “it has to consider how a sharp rise in the exchange rate would affect financial stability conditions, such as capital outflow pressures.”

## Ukraine Has Tenfold Increase in Poverty Due to War

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - Russia’s attacks on civilian infrastructure in Ukrainian cities away from the front lines will complicate the dire economic situation facing the country, which has already seen a tenfold increase in poverty this year, a top World Bank official said.

Arup Banerji, World Bank regional country director for Eastern Europe, said Ukraine’s rapid restoration of power after this week’s large-scale Russian attacks on energy facilities reflected the efficiency of the wartime system, but Russia’s shift in tactics has elevated risks.

“If this continues, the outlook is going to be much, much harder,” he told Reuters in an interview. “As winter really starts biting ... certainly by December or January, and if the houses are not repaired ... there may be another internal wave of migration, of internally displaced persons. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy this week told international donors that Ukraine needed about \$55 billion - \$38 billion to cover next year’s estimated budget deficit, and another \$17 billion to start to rebuild critical infrastructure, including schools, housing and energy facilities.

Ukrainian officials have stressed that they need ongoing and predictable financial assistance to keep the government running, while also beginning critical repairs and reconstruction.

The response to Zelenskiy’s call - delivered during the annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank - and many other meetings held over the past week was encouraging, Banerji told Reuters in an interview.

## India to Become World’s Third-Largest Economy by FY28

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - India failed to unseat the UK and missed being the fifth-largest economy by \$10 billion in 2021-22. It’ll have to wait another year before it gets that coveted spot in 2022-23, overtaking the UK by \$27 billion.

By 2025-26 (FY26), the Indian economy would equal Germany’s to be the fourth-largest. It would become the third-largest by 2027-28 (FY28), when it is projected to grow bigger than Japan, according to the International Monetary Fund’s (IMF’s) World Economic Outlook.

By 2026-27, India’s economy would not be \$5 trillion as hoped by the finance ministry, but close enough. It would be \$4.94 trillion that year.

The following year, India’s economy would hit the \$5.36-trillion mark, higher than Japan’s at \$5.17 trillion. That year, India would become the third-largest economy.

The size of India’s economy was \$3.18 trillion in 2021-22 (FY22), while Britain’s was \$3.19 trillion in 2021, according to the

flagship publication by the Fund.

The size of India’s economy is calculated on a financial year basis (April to March). For other economies, it is on a calendar year basis.

Earlier, there was a Bloomberg report that stated that India has overtaken the UK in the fourth quarter of FY22, basing it on World Bank data. However, that comparison was made on quarterly figures, not yearly.

India would become a \$3.47-trillion economy, while the UK’s would be \$3.2 trillion in the current financial year (2022-23), according to the data provided by the IMF.

By FY26, India’s economy would be \$4.55 trillion, equal to the size of Germany’s which was bigger than the former by over \$1 trillion in FY22. In fact, if figures are not rounded off, India’s economy would be bigger than Germany’s by \$1 billion in FY26. But \$1 billion is too small a figure for any forecaster to make a precise projection three years down the line, say experts.



## Iranian Students in Europe Urge West to Remove Anti-Iran Sanctions

LONDON (IRNA) - The Union of Islamic Students Associations in Europe issued a statement on Sunday calling on Western countries to stop shedding crocodile tears for the Iranian nation and lift the illegal sanctions on the country instead.

The statement was issued by the London-based union in reaction to the widespread support of the Western countries for the recent unrests across Iran.

It referred to a yes vote for the Islamic Republic at a nationwide referendum in 1979, urging the international community to respect the choice of the Iranian nation.

The statement also said that the United States has to stop fake claims of support for the Iranians and remove the sanctions on the country instead.



## Saudi Oil Power Play Bruises U.S. Ties But Won't Break Them

RIYADH (Dispatches) - Neither side is backing down in a battle of wills over oil between Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince and U.S. President Joe Biden, putting severe strain on their countries' energy-for-security alliance, although a full rupture looks unlikely, Persian Gulf sources and experts said.

As de facto leader of the OPEC+ oil group, Saudi Arabia risked U.S. wrath when the petroleum producers decided to cut output even after the Biden administration sought to stay OPEC's hand for a month with an eye on U.S. mid-term elections.

The move drove up oil prices, and on Tuesday Biden vowed "there will be consequences" for U.S. ties with Riyadh, after several senators called on the White House to freeze all cooperation with Saudi Arabia, including arms sales, following the OPEC+ decision.

"The Kingdom rejects any dictates," the Saudi foreign ministry tweeted on Thursday, saying Riyadh was working to "protect the global economy from oil market volatility".

In an apparent response, White House spokesman John Kirby used unusually direct language about the rift.

"The Saudi Foreign Ministry can try to spin or deflect, but the facts are simple," he said, adding that other nations in the oil cartel told the United States privately they "felt coerced to support Saudi's direction."

Despite the testy exchanges, both sides face constraints in how to pressure each other in practice, according to interviews with analysts and experts in the Persian Gulf. Washington will not want to do anything to risk the security of the kingdom's oil sector, any damage to which would send prices spiralling even higher and possibly drive Riyadh closer to China and Russia.

For its part, Riyadh is aware it cannot easily diversify arms supplies for its military, which has been overwhelmingly equipped and trained by the United States ever since the two countries forged their mutually beneficial relationship in 1945.

Still, the U.S.-Saudi rift is widening as Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, widely known as MbS, flags his country's -- and his own -- importance on the world stage.

Ties were already frayed by Biden's stance on the 2018 murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, the Yemen war and more recently by the U.S. delay, after Prince Mohammed was named prime minister, in granting him status-based immunity in a U.S. lawsuit on the Khashoggi killing.

"The crown prince believes that the U.S. administration has him in its targets and therefore he decided to challenge it and prove the strength of his position within the kingdom and that he does not care about the U.S. stance," said one Persian Gulf source, requesting anonymity due to the sensitivity of the matter.

"They believe the Americans cannot go far in punishing Saudi Arabia so this is a battle of wills and sovereign decision making," said the source, adding that the Saudis calculated they could absorb "limited" U.S. retaliation options.

The Saudi government media office did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment.

MbS gained some leverage on the world stage after Russia's Feb. 24 invasion of Ukraine, with Western leaders, including Biden, beating a path to the kingdom asking for more oil in order to combat high inflation and rising borrowing costs.

They all left empty handed.

"MbS is a very proud man," said Ali Shihabi, a Saudi commentator close to the Royal Court. "The U.S. is definitely a partner MbS wants to keep close and work with, but he will not allow the country to be at the mercy of the whims of US politicians."



"He has made a great effort since day 1 to signal to the U.S. that he wants excellent ties. But U.S. politicians keep on harping on Khashoggi which he admitted was a horrible mistake 4 years ago."

Prince Mohammed, the kingdom's de facto ruler, is aware of Riyadh's oil market power and position as a counterweight to Iran, and may stand firm in the face of U.S. criticism.

But Riyadh's Achilles heel is security. It says it faces a threat from Iran and its proxies, especially after 2019 attacks that temporarily hit Saudi oil output and shook energy markets. Riyadh blamed Tehran, which denied responsibility.

Several Saudi officials have publicly stressed that the OPEC+ decision had nothing to do with politics, but was a technical one based on safeguarding oil market stability in the face of global monetary and fiscal tightening.

Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan has highlighted a joint Saudi-U.S. interest in maintaining security and military cooperation to help regional stability and provide benefits for the American defence industry.

Riyadh has pressed Washington to supply it with more Patriot missile batteries and scrap a policy of selling only defensive arms, a limit set by the Biden administration over Yemen's war.

Jeremy Binnie, Middle East defence specialist at Janes, said the Saudis are most dependent on the United States for air power, both in terms of defensive and offensive capabilities.

Even if the Saudis were prepared to write-off their vast investments in U.S. military equipment, Binnie said, other countries would struggle to provide comparable capabilities, especially that the Russian defence industry is struggling to obtain key technology due to sanctions.

As a result of Khashoggi's killing by Saudi agents and a crackdown on dissent at home MbS, once lauded as a reformer, became seen in the West as an impulsive and unreliable leader.

MbS, who faces a U.S. lawsuit over Khashoggi's killing, has denied involvement.

"It is a very difficult situation. There is elections posturing (by Biden) but there is also bitterness (on both sides)," said another Persian Gulf source, who also declined to be named. "But it can be ironed out, it can be eventually finessed."

## Brain Cells in Dish Learn To Play Video Game

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - Neuroscientists have shown that lab-grown brain cells can learn to play the classic video game Pong, and could be capable of "intelligent and sentient behavior."

Brett Kagan, who led a study published in the journal Neuron Wednesday, told AFP his findings open the door to a new type of research into biological information processors, complementing normal digital computers.

"What machines can't do is learn things very quickly -- if you need a machine learning algorithm to learn something, it requires thousands of data samples," he explained.

"But if you ask a human, or train a dog, a dog can learn a trick in two or three tries."

Kagan, chief scientific officer at Melbourne-based Cortical Labs, set out to answer whether there is a way to harness the inherent intelligence of neurons.

Kagan and colleagues took mice cells from embryonic brains, and derived human neurons from adult stem cells.

They then grew them on top of microelectrode arrays that could read their activity and stimulate them. The experiments involved a cluster of around 800,000 neurons, roughly the size of a bumblebee brain.

In the game, a signal was sent from the left or right of the array to indicate where the ball was located, and "DishBrain," as the researchers called it, fired back signals to move the paddle, in a simplified, opponent-free version of Pong.

One of the major hurdles was figuring out how to "teach" the neurons.

In the past, it has been proposed to give them a shot of the "feel good" hormone dopamine to reward a correct action -- but that was difficult to achieve in a time-sensitive way.

Instead, the team relied on a theory called the "free energy principle" that was coined by the paper's senior author Karl Friston, which says cells are hardwired to minimize unpredictability in their environments.

When the neurons succeeded in making the paddle hit the ball, they received "predictable" electrical signals. But when they missed, they were sent randomized, or "unpredictable" signals.

## Astronomers Are Captivated by Brightest Flash Ever Seen

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - Astronomers have observed the brightest flash of light ever seen, from an event that occurred 2.4 billion light years from Earth and was likely triggered by the formation of a black hole.

The burst of gamma-rays -- the most intense form of electromagnetic radiation -- was first detected by orbiting telescopes on October 9, and its afterglow is still being watched by scientists across the world.

Astrophysicist Brendan O'Connor told AFP that gamma-ray bursts that last hundreds of seconds, as occurred on Sunday, are thought to be caused by dying massive stars, greater than 30 times bigger than our Sun.

The star explodes in a supernova, collapses into a black hole, then matter forms in a disk around the black hole, falls inside, and is spewed out in a jet of energy that travels at 99.99 percent the speed of light.

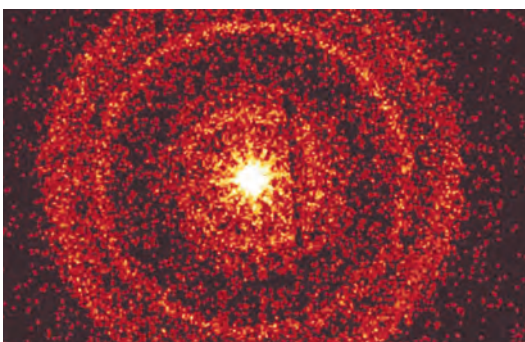
The flash released photons carrying a record 18 teraelectronvolts of energy -- that's 18 with 12 zeros behind it -- and it has impacted long wave radio communications in Earth's ionosphere.

"It's really breaking records, both in the amount of photons, and the energy of the photons that are reaching us," said O'Connor, who used infrared instruments on the Gemini South telescope in Chile to take fresh observations early Friday.

"Something this bright, this nearby, is really a once-in-a-century event," he added.

"Gamma-ray bursts in general release the same amount of energy that our Sun produces over its entire lifetime in the span of a few seconds -- and this event is the brightest gamma ray burst."

The gamma-ray burst, known as GRB 221009A, was first spotted by telescopes including NASA's Fermi Gamma-ray Space Telescope, Neil Gehrels Swift



Observatory, and Wind spacecraft on Sunday morning Eastern time.

It originated from the direction of the constellation Sagitta, and traveled an estimated 1.9 billion years to reach Earth -- less than the current distance of its starting point, because the universe is expanding.

Observing the event now is like watching a

1.9 billion-year-old recording of those events unfold before us, giving astronomers a rare opportunity to glean new insights into things like black hole formation.

"That's what makes this sort of science so addictive -- you get this adrenaline rush when these things happen," said O'Connor, who is affiliated with the University of Maryland and George Washington University.

He added that though the initial burst may have been visible to lucky amateur astronomers, it has since faded out of their view.

Over the coming weeks, he and others will continue watching for the signatures of supernovas at optical and infrared wavelengths, to confirm that their hypothesis about the origins of the flash are correct, and that the event conforms to known physics.

Unfortunately, while the initial burst may have been visible to amateur astronomers, it has since faded

Supernova explosions are also predicted to be responsible for producing heavy elements -- such as gold, platinum, uranium -- and astronomers will also be on the hunt for their signatures.

Astrophysicists have written in the past that the sheer power of gamma-ray bursts could cause extinction level events here on Earth.

But O'Connor pointed out that because the jets of energy are very tightly focused, and aren't likely to arise in our galaxy, this scenario is not something we should worry much about.

## A Clown Named Biden

FROM PAGE 1

When Biden launched his presidential election campaigns, he vowed to revive the JCPOA with the Islamic Republic of Iran but he has not fulfilled his electoral promise in almost over one and a half years and he is struggling and his approval rating is falling in the U.S. as once again the nightmare of Donal Trump is re-surfacing for him.



As the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran Seyed Ali Khamenei told on Friday, the era of unipolarism has ended and the U.S. or any country will be unable to dominate others or meddle in the domestic affairs of other countries.

The U.S. is well aware that major parts of problems in Iran and other countries is the wrong and hostile policies of Washington and its unilateral and cruel sanctions, and Washington is better to stop preaching for other countries and remove sanctions and not to meddle in the other countries' affairs.

Tehran does not take seriously the remarks of this president who acts like a clown and has turned into being a laughing stock for the world. So Biden is better to mind his business and focus on the current chaotic condition in the U.S. and he is not in a position to condemn Iran or bully countries like Iran because the U.S. itself is the main violator of human rights.

The Islamic of Iran has always been the real supporter of human rights and peaceful protests but when countries like the U.S. are gotten red-handed in those protests, then it has no option but to find infiltrators among the real protesters and history has shown that mercenaries have always turned, in the world, the peaceful rights into violencet and since Iran is the main target of the enemies, one can expect such violent protests by the elements of the enemies which make the enforcement forces to act in self- defense and this self-defense becomes a pretext for clowns like Biden to resort to baseless claims against the Islamic Revolution of Iran and Iranians have no way but to laugh.

## Iran Slams Biden's Support...

FROM PAGE 1

The senior Iranian diplomat highlighted that neither Biden's comments nor Washington's meddlesome gestures will not surprise Tehran as intervention, aggression, and killing form the backbone of the US political system.

"Since the 1953 coup d'état up until today, the anti-Iranian policies of the US administration have been well recorded in our minds. And of course, the history and every part of the world would testify the wounds that America's crimes and violence have inflicted," Kanaani pointed out.

"You (Americans) are accustomed to fishing in troubled waters," the spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry said.

## All Iranian Nuclear...

FROM PAGE 1

"Soon, we will have good news in the field of reactor and pharmaceutical drugs," Kamalvandi further said, adding "We are in a very good condition in the field of radiation therapy and other cases, including brachytherapy in the treatment of brain cancers."

Meanwhile Iranian parliament members drafted a plan to develop the peaceful usage of nuclear technology in building a nuclear-propelled ship by the Iranian calendar year of 1420.

The plan was announced in the open session of the Parliament on August 31, 2022, and is scheduled to be reviewed by the Energy and National Security Commissions and the Foreign Policy of the parliament.

The full text of the plan to develop the peaceful usage of nuclear technology has 12 Articles which Article 7 points out that "the Government can make nuclear advances for ships and submarines and carry out operations of at least one nuclear-propelled vessel by 1420 (Iranian calendar year) through the Atomic Energy Organization and the Ministry of Defense and Armed Forces Logistics."

Earlier, the Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami noted that the AEOI has reached about 77 new achievements during the past Iranian year 1400 (from March 21, 2021, to Feb. 22, 2022).

"Among them are 29 achievements in the field of nuclear fuel, 19 achievements in the field of research and development, 15 achievements in the field of energy supply and 14 achievements in the field of radiation application," he cited.



## Wolves Goalkeeper Sa Playing With Broken Wrist

LONDON (Dispatches) - Wolverhampton Wanderers goalkeeper Jose Sa has been playing through the pain barrier since breaking his wrist in August, the Premier League side's interim manager Steve Davis said.

Sa sustained the injury during Wolves' second game of the campaign, a goalless draw with Fulham in which the Portuguese saved Aleksander Mitrovic's second-half penalty.

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## Giga Kick Wins Turf's Biggest Prize

SYDNEY (Dispatches) - Outsider Giga Kick, ridden by veteran Craig Williams, stunned star sprinter and red-hot favourite Nature Strip to win the world's richest turf race, The Everest, in Sydney on Saturday.

The Clayton Douglas-trained gelding surged past Chris Waller's wonder horse in the final 100 metres at Royal Randwick to collect a whopping Aus\$6.2 million (US\$4.6 million) for barely a one-minute dash.

# Kane Helps Tottenham Close Gap on Leaders Arsenal

LONDON (Dispatches) - Tottenham moved to within a point of Premier League leaders Arsenal as goals from Harry Kane and Pierre-Emile Hojbjerg helped beat Everton 2-0 on Saturday.

Spurs are yet to drop a point at home in the Premier League or Champions League this season, but not for the first time were far from a slick attacking force under Antonio Conte.

However, Kane's form is covering over any cracks as the England captain took his tally to 10 goals for the season.

Kane then played a part in setting up the second four minutes from time as the ball eventually broke for Hojbjerg and the Dane's deflected effort found the top corner.

Spurs remain in third, but are now only behind Manchester City on goal difference ahead of the champions' trip to Liverpool on Sunday.

Everton arrived at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium with the joint best defensive record in the Premier League and their new-found solidity under Frank Lampard ensured there would be no repeat of the 5-0 thrashing the Toffees suffered when the sides last met in March.

However, scoring goals has been the issue for Lampard's men and the lack of threat from the visitors meant there was little doubt over the outcome after Kane had smashed home from the spot just short of the hour mark.

Jordan Pickford had been largely untroubled in a tepid first 45 minutes from the hosts, but Tottenham cranked up the pressure after the break.

Pickford beat away a volley from his England teammate Kane before Son Heung-min headed tamely into the arms of the Everton keeper.

However, Pickford was to blame for the opening goal as he spilled Matt Doherty's shot and then brought down Kane as he tried to collect the loose ball.

Kane had uncharacteristically fired over one of two penalties he took in Tottenham's 3-2 win over Eintracht Frankfurt in midweek.

But normal service was resumed as he drilled the ball into the bottom corner despite Pickford going the right way.

Everton were forced to come out of their shell in the final 15 minutes as Lampard threw on Dominic Calvert-Lewin in search of an equaliser.



Yet, that only offered Spurs more space on the counter-attack and when Kane fed Rodrigo Bentancur down the right, the Uruguayan picked out Hojbjerg, who used the run of Son to distract the Everton defense before firing past Pickford.

Earlier Aleksandar Mitrovic scored from the penalty spot on his return from injury to grab a 2-2 draw for Fulham against Bournemouth in a pulsating Premier League game at Craven Cottage.

Dominic Solanke gave the visitors a flying start for the visitors, combining brilliantly with Danish midfielder Philip Billing and rifling home a first-time finish after 62 seconds.

Mitrovic, recovering from an ankle knock, started slowly but burst into life with a snap shot that was turned behind in the 22nd minute, and Issa Diop brought Fulham level with a thumping header from the resulting corner.

Bournemouth were back in the lead seven minutes later when a defensive lapse from Fulham was punished, Solanke running at Tim Ream before cutting the ball back to Jefferson Lerma who slotted it past Bernd Leno.

Fulham levelled again early in the second half when Mitrovic was wrestled to the ground by Lerma, and the 28-year-old Serbian striker made no mistake from the spot to net his seventh goal of the season.

The sides remained close together in mid-table, with Bournemouth in ninth spot on 13 points and Fulham 10th, one point adrift.

## Xavi to Leave Barca If He Thinks He's Not The Solution

BARCELONA (Dispatches) - Barcelona coach Xavi Hernandez says he will walk away from his post if he feels he cannot help the team improve.

The Catalans are close to elimination from the Champions League after a draw with Inter Milan on Wednesday, despite heavy summer expenditure, and have faced criticism this week, ahead of the Clasico.

"I know there's a lot of pressure, a lot of criticism, this is Barca," Xavi told a press conference on Saturday.

"I will not stop working and trying. The day that I'm not sure (of myself), I will leave. I will not be a problem for Barcelona, the day I see I am not a solution."

Xavi's side, La Liga leaders, face champions Real Madrid at the Santiago Bernabeu, where they won 4-0 last season.

The coach insisted that it is too early to judge his team after the new arrivals this summer, and believes they are heading in the right direction.

"It's a vital game for us, and for Madrid too, let's see who comes out of it as leaders," said Xavi. "I think (our) project is under construction. The debacle in Europe is sad, but we are on a good path. We are having a splendid season in La Liga."

"We have made good signings, it's too soon to draw conclusions. We have to keep working, I don't know any other path towards success."

## Swiatek Rips Gauff To Reach WTA San Diego Semis

SAN DIEGO (Dispatches) - World number one Iga Swiatek, seeking her eighth WTA title of the year, cruised over eighth-ranked CoCo Gauff to reach the San Diego Open semi-finals.

In a rematch of the French Open women's final, the 21-year-old Polish star rolled over 18-year-old American Gauff 6-0, 6-3 in 65 minutes.

Three-time Grand Slam champion Swiatek advanced to a semi-final against sixth-ranked Jessica Pegula, who defeated 18th-ranked US compatriot Madison Keys 6-4, 7-5.

Croatia's Donna Vekic made the semi-finals by ousting fifth-ranked Aryna Sabalenka 6-4, 6-7 (5/7), 6-1.

Vekic, ranked 77th, will next face the winner of a later match between Spain's fourth-ranked Paula Badosa and 19th-ranked American Danielle Collins.

Swiatek won her WTA-best 62nd match triumph of the year in her tour-best 12th quarter-final of the season.

Swiatek, a runner-up last week at Ostrava, seeks her 11th career WTA title and her eighth of the year after crowns at Qatar, Indian Wells, Miami, Stuttgart, Rome and the US and French Opens.

Gauff fell to 0-4 all-time against Swiatek, having lost last year in Rome and this year at Miami and Roland Garros, where Swiatek dispatched her 6-1, 6-3 for the trophy.

Swiatek broke three times to lead 5-0, saved two break points in the final game and held to claim the opening set after 29 minutes. Swiatek broke to open and close the second set for the victory.

Swiatek is 3-1 all-time against Pegula, having lost their first meeting in 2019 at Washington but won this year at the Miami semi-finals and US and French Open quarter-finals.

Vekic improved to 5-1 all-time over Sabalenka after two hours and 37 minutes to reach her first semi-final of the year.



The two players were forced to endure a lengthy wait to step on court as they followed the Arthur Rinderknech v Pablo Carreno marathon, which Rinderknech won 18-16 in a final set tie-break. And just two games in, Murray and Korda hinted at a long night of their own as

# Murray Exits Gijon Open at Quarters

GIJON (Dispatches) - Andy Murray's hopes of a first tour title of 2022 are over after he crashed out of the Gijon Open at the hands of Sebastian Korda. Wins over sixth seed Alejandro Davidovich Fokina and Pedro Cachin had seen Murray into the last eight in Northern Spain, but despite him battling back from a set down to level matters, it was American Korda who dominated the decider to prevail 6-4 1-6 6-1.

the latter wasted a string of break points before finally converting a chance to lead 2-1.

The world No 49, who comes from a famous sporting family, then notched the double break and at 5-2, seemed to be cruising towards the opening set. The Scot rallied though, grabbing one break back before saving a set point to take matters back to 5-4 and make his rival serve things out.

He duly did so though, only for Murray to then up the ante early in the second. After winning his opening service game to love, he wasted one chance at break point before an error from Korda yielded his second, and this time the former world No 1 took full advantage.

The three-time Grand Slam champion then survived deuce to make it 3-0, and the one way traffic continued as he took the next two games. Korda, who reached the last 16 of Wimbledon last year, did avoid the bagel but a rampant Murray wrapped the set up 6-1 to force a deciding set for the second straight match.

## Nobody Can Compete With Haaland-Powered Man City

LIVERPOOL (Dispatches) - After five years of dueling for Premier League supremacy, Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp believes Erling Haaland's arrival at Manchester City has made the difficult task of winning a title almost impossible.

Liverpool's first title in 30 years in 2019/20 interrupted City's run of four Premier League wins in five seasons, but twice Pep Guardiola's men have pipped the Reds by a solitary point, in 2018/19 and again last season.

But Klopp's men head into the first league meeting between the sides this season at Anfield already 13 points behind the champions.

Liverpool's worst league start in 10 years has seen their summer recruitment come under scrutiny. Most of the club's transfer budget was splashed on striker Darwin Nunez, who has taken time to adjust to Klopp's methods, while the decision not to reinforce an ageing midfield now looks questionable. By contrast, City have added who Klopp described as "the best striker in the world" to a squad of seasoned winners.

Haaland has struck 20 times already in just 12 competitive appearances and goes into Sunday's clash on a 10-game scoring streak for his new club.

"Nobody can compete with City," said Klopp at his pre-match press conference. "You have the best team in the world and you put in the best striker on the market. No matter what it costs, you just do it."



## Walker Confident of Recovering in Time For World Cup

MANCHESTER (Dispatches) - Manchester City defender Kyle Walker said he is confident he will fully recover from a groin surgery in time to be available for selection in the England squad for this year's World Cup in Qatar.

Walker, 32, went under the knife earlier this month after picking up the injury in City's 6-3 Premier League home victory over Manchester United.

"My first thought now is getting back for England," Walker, who has 70 caps and was a key member of the England teams that reached the Euro 2020 final and 2018 World Cup semi-finals, told the BBC.

"I'm confident" about being ready for the World Cup, he said. "I've been through enough in my career to know my body. I'm well above what they thought I'd be able to do at this point."

"I just feel I can do this. There will be bumps in the road but hopefully, come the selection, I'm included."

Walker said he underwent surgery the day after getting injured to improve his chances of being fit in time for selection.

"It was a little bit manic," Walker said. "I went down on the Monday and I said to the surgeon, 'Please mate, you're going to have to do it, I have a World Cup'."

"He wanted to do it on the Thursday but he said I'll meet you there in an hour. He jumped on the tube, I got in the car and that was it, I was under the knife having surgery."

