

Health Ministry Announced on Wednesday Said That the Number of Deaths From the Coronavirus Pandemic in Iran Increased to 144,605 With One More Iranian Killed By the Virus Over the Past 24 Hours

IRAN NEWS

Worth of Iran's Foreign Trade Exchange Is Estimated Over \$60b During the First Seven Months of the Iranian Calendar Year Which Shows Ten Percent Increase When It Is Compared With the Preceding Year

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Tehran Warns UK Over Hostile Acts

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iranian Intelligence Minister Esmail Khatib has said the UK will pay the price of its attempts to destabilize Iran, adding that the country's security community now recognizes the so-called Iran International channel based in London as a terrorist organization.

In remarks on Tuesday, Khatib also said that the US, Britain, the Israeli regime and Saudi Arabia played an overt role in the recent riots in several Iranian cities, which erupted following the death of a young Iranian woman in hospital on September 16, three days after she collapsed in a police station in the capital Tehran.

"We will never support terrorist and destabilizing acts in other countries as the UK does, but we also will not be committed to preventing the occurrence of insecurity in such countries," he said.

He then hastened to warn that London will pay the price of acting to make the great country of Iran insecure.

Referring to the so-called Iran International TV, he said the "elements of that network" will be pursued by the Intelligence Ministry. "From now on, any kind of connection with this terrorist organization will be considered as entering the terrorist domain and threatening the country's national security," he said. [See Page 7](#)

Iran Signs \$40b MoU With Gazprom

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Iran has signed an MoU worth about \$40b with the Russian majority state-owned multinational energy corporation 'Gazprom', Iranian Petroleum Minister Javad Owji said.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the cabinet session on Wednesday, Owji said Iran has started swapping byproducts and hoped for operationalizing gas swap in winter.

Iran has also put on its agenda developing fields and gas export pipelines, he said referring to signing an MoU worth about \$4b with Russia.

Earlier, Owji said that the oil and gas swap between Iran and Russia would make Iran the hub of energy in the region.

The two countries would make new agreements on establishing facilities and extracting joint gas fields, mentioning a joint investment with Russia's Gazprom in LNG production and gas-related technologies. [See Page 7](#)

Russian Top Official In Tehran for Talks



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation Nikolai Patrushev is in Tehran to talk with Iranian officials on different topic as he met yesterday with Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) Rear Admiral Ali Shamkhani.

Referring to the regional and global situations, Shamkhani said that the solution to solve the existing crisis is regional and international dialogue and cooperation.

Referring to the dimensions of the combined war of the domination system against the Iranian nation and the effects of the U.S. sanctions, Rear Admiral Ali Shamkhani noted, "Expanding bilateral and regional cooperation, especially with neighboring countries in the economic field, is one of the strategic priorities of our country."

He also stressed the need for strengthening the Iran-Russia cooperation process in different fields including trade, banking, energy, transportation, and agriculture. "By taking the necessary measures, the obstacles in these sectors should be removed quickly," Shamkhani added.

Shamkhani also noted that it is necessary to strengthen multilateral cooperation in regional organizations, especially SCO, to intelligently use the exchangeable capacities of the member countries.

The SNSC secretary went on to say that danger of terrorism and extremism continues to threaten the security of the region and the world, emphasizing the need to continue and increase regional and international cooperation to completely eliminate the dangers of this phenomenon.

Referring to the Ukraine crisis, Shamkhani said, "Iran welcomes and supports any initiative that leads to a ceasefire and peace between Russia and Ukraine based on dialogue and is ready to play a role in ending the war."

He also called for forming joint institutions to deal with sanctions and activating the capacity of international institutions against sanctions and sanction-imposing countries.

Nikolai Patrushev, for his part, expressed satisfaction with the acceleration of cooperation between Tehran and Moscow in various fields.

Referring to the previous agreements reached between the national security institutions of Iran and Russia, Patrushev stated that the main goal of the visit of him and his accompanying delegation to Iran is to exchange opinions over speeding up the implementation of joint projects, as well as providing dynamic mechanisms to start new activities in the economic, commercial, energy and technology fields.

Creating synergy in transit capacities, especially the rapid completion of the North-South corridor is an effective step to improve the quality of bilateral and international economic and commercial cooperation, he added.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the top Russian security official noted that Western countries, especially the United States, are seeking to impose their political will on independent countries by violating the United Nations Charter and using combined warfare.

Turning to the ongoing war in Ukraine, Patrushev stated, that from the beginning, the media empire of the West, by inverting the facts, has made a wide effort to create a deviation in the world public opinion regarding how the Ukraine crisis started and the related realities.

India Ramps Up Oil Imports From Iran And Russia

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - As India's oil and gas demand continues to grow, the South Asian country is looking to any supplier offering a low-cost product, regardless of how controversial they may be. India's refiners are diversifying their supply, in response to recent OPEC oil quota cuts, and turning to sanctioned states, such as Russia and Iran, to ensure their crude supply. With little support from the West to support the country's burgeoning renewable energy industry, India's partnership with controversial oil suppliers is likely to continue. In October, India announced it would be speeding up the diversification of oil imports to mitigate the risk of potential OPEC+ oil cuts. The country's oil minister, Hardeep Singh Puri, explained that OPEC cuts would "hurt large importers like India, who spent around \$120 billion last year on the import of petroleum products." OPEC introduced oil production cuts of 2 million bpd for the coming months in anticipation of a decrease in global demand for crude due to growing economic pressures worldwide.

India is the third-largest consumer and importer of oil worldwide, purchasing around 85 percent of its oil demand from abroad. Puri has previously pointed towards India's intention to diversify its crude suppliers to ensure its energy security stating, "Some diversification has already happened and we will further diversify... there are many sources and we will not hesitate to take actions." He also suggested that OPEC cuts may send several countries into a deeper recession than already being experienced, as fuel prices are pushed upwards.

In recent weeks, India's oil refiners have been racing to establish new partnerships and further diversify their oil supply to ensure they are not negatively affected by the OPEC cuts. Refiners are also concerned about the potential for the West to impose stricter sanctions on Russian energy in the coming months, which could further hinder India's oil supply. Indian Oil Corp and Bharat Petroleum Corp are both trying to establish new deals with a range of oil-rich countries including the U.S. [See Page 7](#)

Iran-France Trade Up 53% In 8 Months

TEHRAN (MNA) - The value of trade between Iran and France increased by 53 percent to reach €235.4 million in the first eight months of 2022, according to the data released by the European Union's statistics office Eurostat.

Based on Eurostat data, the trade between the two countries stood at €153.2 during January-August 2021, IRNA reported.

During the said eight months, Iran's imports from the country marked a 58-percent rise to hit €225 million. The European country exported €42 million worth of goods to Iran in the first eight months of 2021.

Despite the significant growth of French exports to Iran during the January-August period, the country's imports from Iran decreased by seven percent and settled at €10.4 million. France had imported €1.2 million worth of commodities from Iran in the first eight months of the previous year.

The 53-percent growth of the trade between the two countries in the mentioned period is significant because the trade between Iran and France has gone through a downward trend over the past four years, so that in 2018 the trade between the two countries declined 36 percent, in 2019, 83 percent, and in 2020, as much as 31 percent. The volume of trade between the two countries decreased by 10 percent in 2021. [See Page 7](#)

Iran Starting Works to Develop Key Oilfield Shared With Iraq

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - The National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) says development works on a key oilfield shared with Iraq will start within days as Iran moves ahead with plans to expand its massive petroleum industry despite sanctions imposed by the United States.

NIOC's CEO Mohsen Khojasteh Mehr said that a domestic contractor will start executive works on Sohrab oilfield later this week, a project which he said is currently worth around \$1 billion.

The NIOC had awarded an \$800 million contract in February to local upstream contractor Dana Energy to develop Sohrab field.

The oilfield is located in the southwestern Khuzestan province and holds some 2 billion barrels of crude oil. NIOC data show the oilfield shares a reservoir with the Iraq's Huwaiza field, which holds some 1 billion barrels of oil.

However, total output from the field over 20 years of the contract with Dana Energy will amount to 160 million barrels.

In recent years, Iran has ramped up projects to develop oilfields that are shared with neighbors, especially reservoirs located near the border with Iraq. [See Page 7](#)

Lebanon-Bound Convoy of Iranian Fuel Tankers Attacked

TEHRAN (PressTV) - A convoy of tankers carrying fuel from Iran to Lebanon has come under attack on the Iraqi-Syrian border, according to Iranian and Iraqi media reports.

The reports said the attack occurred early on Wednesday, when 22 tankers were carrying diesel fuel from Iran to Lebanon through Syria.

An IRIB correspondent said an "American drone" targeted two of the tankers in the incident, after eight tankers passed from Iraq's al-Qa'im border crossing into Syria.

There have been conflicting reports about the attack and the casualties caused.

Iranian authorities have not yet commented on the reports.

Iraqi sources said earlier that at least four explosions rocked the al-Qa'im border crossing. Warplanes and helicopters could be heard flying over the region. Some local sources said the attack was a drone strike targeting resistance forces' positions in that area. [See Page 7](#)

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Iran Will Firmly Respond to Enemy's Mistakes

MASHHAD (IRNA) - Commander of the Ground Force of the Iranian Army Brigadier-General Kiumars Heidari said that if the enemies take a mistake in dealing with Iran, they will receive a rigid response from the country's armed forces.

The commander made the remarks during a visit to an Army checkpoint at the Iranian northeastern border of Dogharoun. He said that the Army forces are ready to do their utmost to defend the Iranian borders.

The deployment of Army forces at the borders is not an indication of the existence of elements of threat; it is rather meant to develop a better monitoring of the borders and ensuring sustainable security.

Tehran Calls on Armenia, Azerbaijan to Focus on Regional Formats to Solve Disputes

TEHRAN (IFP) - The spokesman of the Iranian foreign ministry says the solution to the Caucasus problems does not lie in a resort to extra-regional forces but in the capitals of regional countries.

Nasser Kanaani added the Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to help resolve the outstanding issues between Azerbaijan republic and Armenia in bilateral and trilateral formats.

Kanaani reiterated, "Our principled policy is based on good neighborliness and expansion of relations with all neighbors, and strengthening of ties with a neighbor does not mean those relations are against another neighbor."

He added, "The Islamic Republic of Iran has constantly emphasized protection of the territorial integrity of the Republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan and a peaceful resolution of their differences while respecting rights and within the framework of international law. That is why Iran condemned the occupation of Azerbaijan's territories and supported their liberation at the highest levels."

He also spoke on the recent remarks by the Azeri president regarding Iran's ties with Armenia. Kanaani said, It has been nearly two years that officials of Azerbaijan and Armenia, at different levels of representation, have held bilateral and multilateral meetings at various political, military and security levels, and on the path to constant peace and reconciliation, something that has had the support of the Islamic Republic of Iran, but



the reasons for concerns in Baku over conventional neighborly meetings are incomprehensible.

Kanaani referred to Iran's recent military drills on the borders of Armenia and Azerbaijan, describing them as a routine and pre-planned move, of which relevant neighbors were informed in advance through official channels.

Anti-Unity Remarks To Help Enemies

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Majlis Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf has warned that any kind of stance, which hurts unity, will be considered as loading the enemy's gun.

Qalibaf made the remarks in a Wednesday session of parliament, calling for preserving unity among the Iranian nation.

He emphasized that unity has been of great importance when it comes to ethnic and religious issues, adding that the symbol of unity in this parliament is that there are representatives of all religions and ethnicities in the assembly.

Unity has been the basis of the victory of the Islamic Revolution and the continuation of the Islamic Republic in Iran as well as enhancement of anti-Arrogance spirit, he noted.

As to the southeastern province of Sistan and Baluchestan, he said that a look into the history of the province shows that the Baluch people have always defended Iran and its independence and that they have been at the forefront of fighting colonialism and global arrogance.

The speaker went on to say that the enemy seeks to disintegrate Iran; thus, we should preserve the unity in the country and the anti-Islamic Revolution foes in particular the United States and the Zionist regime are attempting to react to revolutionary movements, so we should protect unity to be able to stand against them.

Mohammad Taghi Naghdali, a lawmaker, said on Wednesday that some figures are talking about a referendum, while the religious system has provided the highest sort of referendum of itself because the religious establishment is the only government, which has asked people of its governance.

Those, who claim that there is no freedom in the country, should be answered that if there was no freedom, you could not have a tribune to say whatever you want every week, Naghdali argued.

The massive march by Iranians from all walks of life to mark the National Day of Fighting against Global Arrogance was a wakeup call for figures to stop sowing discord, the legislator warned.

Gov't Announced Support for Boosting Domestic Platforms



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - The members of the Supreme Council of Cyberspace emphasized on the use of internal platforms and strengthening the stability of the network, especially the speed and quality of the Internet, and referring to the significant increase in the presence of businesses on these platforms, they ordered the Ministry of Communications to take action to improve the status of network services.

In the meeting of the Supreme Council of Cyberspace, which was held on Tuesday evening under the chairmanship of President Ebrahim Raisi, a report on the latest status of the National Information Network, as well as the status of the digital economy and the challenges in this area, were discussed and exchanged among the members.

Protecting the privacy and security of users' information on Iranian platforms was also one of the orders of today's meeting of the Supreme Council of Cyberspace, after discussion and review, the members decided that the judiciary should issue a circular in this regard to the relevant institutions.

In this meeting, it was also emphasized on the use of internal platforms and strengthening the stability of the network, especially the speed and quality of the Internet, and it was decided that the Ministry of Communications should take action to improve the status of network services.

According to the report presented by the National Centre for Cyberspace in this meeting, in the field of digital economy, the presence of businesses on 10 domestic platforms has increased and more than 60% of businesses have appeared on Iranian platforms.

According to this report, the delivery of postal packages has increased significantly compared to September, which shows the prosperity of the digital economy in the field of small businesses in the cyberspace.

In this meeting, the government's support for the presence of businesses on Iranian platforms was also emphasized.

Iran Calls for Implementing Intra-Regional ECO Trade Treaties

TEHRAN (Dispatches) - Head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Gholam-Hossein Shafei has criticized the lack of implementation of intra-regional trade treaties among members of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in a meeting with the organization's Secretary General Khosro Nazari.

Shafei, who is the periodic Head of the ECO Chamber of Commerce and Industry, expressed dissatisfaction with the level of trade exchanges among the members of the union,



saying that the level of trade is not in accordance with the capacities of the region.

"The volume of exchanges within the ECO region has not exceeded 70 billion dollars, while the ten ECO members' annual trade with the world amounts to 930 billion dollars" he regretted.

The Economic Cooperation Organization or ECO is an Asian political and economic intergovernmental organization that was founded in 1985 in Tehran by the leaders of Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey.

Leaders of Recent Unrests Trained in 7 Countries

GORGAN (IRNA) - Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi pointed to direct role played by the U.S., the Zionist regime, Saudis, and some European countries in recent unrests in Iran, said, "The leaders and organizers of those unrests were especially trained in 7 countries for these unrests."

Vahidi who was speaking with the Shi'a and Sunni clerics of Gorgan and Golestan provinces, reiterated, "In the course of the recent plot, in addition to the United States, which in shortest possible time voiced its support for the rioters, such countries as Germany and Britain, too, alongside Saudi Arabia and the Zionist regime, had openly established a headquarters and were busy supporting the rioters."

He added that the global arrogance tried to guide the recent events towards tribal issues, and to pretend that it is a supporter of different Iranian tribes and ethnic minorities, which was a big lie that was soon rejected by the Iranian people of different races.

"Although the enemy spent large expenses for this combinate war and unrests, their plots led to defeat, but while they know about this defeat, they have no way, but to insist on continuation of this hybrid war," he added. The interior minister stressed that the false support of the oppressors for the nations had been proved in the past, and among them we can refer to their support for massacring the Iraqi Kurds and the Sunni Muslims in Mosul.

Gov't Seeks Strategic Support of Stock Market

TEHRAN (MNA) - Finance and Economic Affairs Ministry has said the government plans to continue supporting the stock market in the long run and shareholders can count on the government's strategic support, IRNA reported.

"The government, along with its short-term and temporary measures to support the stock market, has a long-term strategic plan to continue supporting the market in the future," the ministry said in a statement released on Tuesday.

The ministry's statement was released in response to an article published by Sharq Newspaper titled "fear and hope in the capital market" in which some worries regarding the future of the market have been addressed. The government managed to show its serious support for the capital market with its recent support package, the statement read.

"Of course, the 13th government has always supported the capital market and the stability and outlook of the market have always been important for the government. Of course, the capital market and the developments in this market are affected by the instrumental view of the past as well as the real economic developments in the country and the changes of different variables and risks in the political, economic, commercial, and social fields," the ministry stated.

Transactions With Africa Top \$880m in H1

TEHRAN (MNA) - Transactions between Iran and African countries stood at 1.65 million tons worth \$881.16 million in six months.

Iran's transactions with African countries stood at 1.65 million tons worth \$881.16 million during the first six months of the current fiscal year (March 21-Sept. 22), registering a 47.1% year-on-year rise in terms of value, respectively.

South Africa with 393,564 tons worth over \$214.01 million was Iran's main trade partner during the period, registering a 17.61% and 102.92% growth in weight and value respectively, Financial Tribune reported.

It was followed by Mozambique with 261,037 tons (up 1,182.81%) worth \$145.44 million (up 2,119.11%) and Nigeria with 194,721 tons (up 45.14%) worth \$114.93 million (up 162.86%).

Qatar World Cup Can Boost Social Solidarity

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Minister of culture and Islamic guidance said World Cup is a cultural, social and sports event, and this important event can both boost social solidarity and create jubilation and happiness in the country.

Mohammad-Mahdi Esmaili, who was speaking on Sunday at the 2nd Harmonizing Meeting of Concerned Minister and Organizations for World Cup, sponsored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said, "We look at the World Cup as an important cultural event side by side with its sports significance."

The culture minister added that the World Cup can boost the social solidarity and create jubilation and happiness in the country.

Meanwhile, the shirt and pants of the national football team was unveiled at the meeting, and Esmaili said that the full pack of the football fans' designed clothes, too was unveiled on Saturday and praised very much.

Iran, Syria Officials Follow Up On Bilateral Issues

TEHRAN (IP) - Foreign Minister's senior advisor for special political affairs met with the Director of the Diplomatic Institute at the Syrian Foreign Ministry and the Syrian Ambassador in Tehran to follow up on bilateral agreements.

Ali Asghar Khaji, along with a number of senior officials of the Iranian Foreign Ministry held talks Tuesday with Imad Mustafa and Shafiq Dayoub to discuss means of boosting cooperation between the two sides and following up on bilateral issues earlier discussed by Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian with his Syrian counterpart Fayssal Mikdad during his latest visit to Tehran last week.

The two sides discussed bilateral ties and the latest developments in Syria, the region, and the world.

The Syrian delegation also discussed with Mahdi Safari, the Deputy Foreign Minister for Economic Diplomatic affairs, aspects of the economic cooperation and upgrading it to the high level of strategic relations between the two countries.

Hamid Nouri Being Tortured In Sweden's Jail

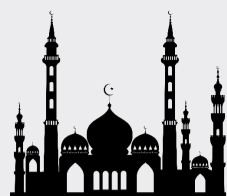
TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iranian citizen Hamid Nouri's son says there are concerns over his father's health condition because he has suffered torture and solitary confinement for three years.

Majid Nouri, Hamid Nouri's son, said that his father was arrested by the Swedish police forces in October 2019 and was sent to a solitary confinement cell, adding that the judge wrote him in an email a couple of months ago that the restrictions had been lifted.

Unfortunately, prison guards continue to restrict his father in spite of the fact that the judge ordered the lifting of limitations; so, Hamid Nouri is being kept in a solitary confinement cell yet and he cannot have any visit or contact with his family members, the son noted.

Moreover, his father has been under torture, he said, adding that his eyes' sight and hearing have been hurt due to being beaten during the imprisonment.

My father is being under physical and spiritual torture in the prison, so the family is very worried about his health condition, the son added.



PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	11:48
■ Evening (Maghreb)	17:20
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	05:10
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:36

16. "Therefore let not such as believe not therein but follow their own lusts, divert thee therefrom, lest thou perish!"..

17. "And what is that in the right hand, O Moses?"

Surah 20. Ta-ha (16-17)

Tehran, Yerevan Stress Reaching \$3b Bilateral Trade

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN- Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Ehsan Khandouzi and Armenian Finance Minister Tigran Khachatryan in a meeting in Tehran stressed materializing the objective of reaching \$3 billion annual trade between the two countries.

The two ministers also emphasized the need to increase the volume of bilateral trade to five million tons, as well as expand and facilitate financial, banking, trade, and customs ties between the two sides.

At the beginning of the meeting, Khandouzi said, "Today's conversation between the Iranian and Armenian delegations is being held in a situation where the prime minister of Armenia also had appropriate talks with the president of Iran in the past days."

"Mr. Raisi's government is very serious in pursuing the neighborhood policy with an emphasis on the Caucasus region, and I hope that the target of three billion dollars of trade between the two countries, which was raised in the meeting between the presidents of the two countries, will be realized in this government", the minister added.

The Armenian minister of finance for his part expressed his happiness that during his first visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran, very good discussions on the development of cooperation between Iran and Armenia were raised, and added: "The economic and political relations between Iran and Armenia have traditionally existed for decades."

Referring to the important issues raised in the talks between Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, Khachatryan said:



"The basis of all talks is long-term cooperation between the two countries and setting a target of three billion dollars for the level of trade between the two countries shows these basic foundations."

Mentioning the 25-percent growth in the trade between the two countries in 2021 compared to the previous year, the Armenian minister said, "According to the statistics and figures of the nine months of the current year, it is predicted that the growth of the trade between the two countries for this year will be more than 40 percent."

As previously announced by the director-general of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO)'s office of Central Asia, Caucasus, and Russia, the value of Iran's export to Armenia increased 15 percent in the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-October 22), from the first half of the previous year.

Iran and Armenia signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on energy cooperation in Tehran on November 1.

Based on the MOU, signed by National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC) Head Majid Chegeni and Armenian Minister of Territorial Administration and Infrastructures Gnel Sanosyan, the two sides agreed on extending a previous agreement on swapping gas for electricity by the end of the Iranian calendar year 1409 (March 2031).

Management Standard Certificates of HOSCO Extended



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Manager of Industries Engineering at Hormozgan Steel Company (HOSCO) says the company managed to extend its standard certificates through taking required actions regarding observing management standards requirements.

Marzieh Hamidi announced the news and said that at the end of protection auditing which was carried out in presence of deputies and managers of HOSCO and head evaluator of SGS Company in early this month, the company could extend 6 certificates of its management standards.

She added that the evaluation process was carried out with active collaboration of his colleagues in the company. She noted that last month HOSCO was under scrutiny and auditing of SGS Company for getting energy management standard ISO 50001-2018 and could extend the certificate.

Hamidi went on to say that the company has managed to get the following management standard certificates: ISO 10015-1999, ISO 10004-2018, ISO 10002-2018, ISO 45001-2015, ISO 14001-2015, ISO 50001-2018 and ISO 9001-2015.

South Pars Phase 11 Gas Available By Winter

TEHRAN (Shana) -- The CEO of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) announced the ongoing negotiations for the development of the Iranian oil market, and said: "Oil exports have improved in recent months, but we are negotiating with new and old customers to develop the market."

Speaking on the sidelines of the first national conference on increasing the productivity of oil and gas wells, Mohsen Khojastehmehr told reporters on Tuesday that any knowledge-based company can make five wells productive within three years.

To revive low-yield and hamstrung wells, 40 companies are applying for cooperation, and after their evaluation, a contract will be signed with these companies to start working together with well technical service companies, said the NIOC CEO.

Touching on the 16th Joint Economic Commission with Russia, he said: "In this round of meetings, discussions were held on two axes; first, the status of seven oil fields, and second, the latest status of geological and reservoir studies of the \$40 billion contract with Russia."

The CEO of the National Iranian Oil Company announced the deployment of Russian study teams in Iran's oil and gas fields, and said: "After the studies are over, a steering team will leave for Tehran to summarize the studies at the end of November."

He also told the reporters about the development status of phase 11 of South Pars: "The Oceanic vessel is located in Asaluyeh and the activities of the South Pars phase 11 development project are underway, and this winter, gas from phase 11 will be available."

The deputy minister of oil also clarified about the imbalance between gas production and consumption and the safe passage of winter: "The country's gas production capacity, which is one billion cubic meters, will not decrease for this year, but we have increased in the consumption sector, and the Iranian Central Oil Fields Company is working to increase gas production in order to pass the winter safely."

Regarding the status of Azadegan Field and its development process, he said: "20 new wells became productive this month and 10 more wells will become productive by next month."

Khojastehmehr said, "Currently, the country's oil production capacity is 3.8 million barrels per day and will reach 4 million barrels per day by the end of this calendar year (to March 20, 2023)."

Sri Lankan Embassy in Tehran Holds Tourism Promotion Program



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - The Embassy of Sri Lanka in Tehran, in collaboration with the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau and the Association of Air Transport and Tourist Agencies in Iran, organized a Tourism Promotion Programme "Visit to the Amazing Sri Lanka during the NOWRUZ Season-2023 (Persian New Year)" in its Chancery premises on 07th November 2022. Objectives of the event were to create awareness on Sri Lanka as a potential tourist destination among Iran travelers and encourage all tourism stakeholders in Iran to facilitate the Iranian tourists to visit Sri Lanka during their Persian New Year.

During his opening remarks, Ambassador of Sri Lanka to Iran G.M.V. Wishwanath Aponu introduced Sri Lanka as a country of natural wonders, historical momentous, unique lifestyles with more delicious typical cuisine, friendly people and safe & secure destination. Highlighting the recent growth of Iranian tourists' floor to Sri Lanka, the Sri Lankan envoy appreciated the significant role of tour operators, travel agencies, airlines and relevant others for achieving the present progress of tourist arrivals. Further, he made an open and friendly request to all represented tourism stakeholders in the Promotion Program to encourage the friendly people of Iran to continue visiting in Sri Lanka and the Sri Lankan tourism is ready to welcome them with their required facilities with great hospitalities.

During the productive discussion of the Program which was contributed by the four panelists, Deputy President for International Affairs, Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries,

Mines & Agriculture Dr. Alireza Yavari, Expert of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iran Mohammad Deldari, Airline Specialist Majid Singh and Former Secretary General of the Air Transport and Tourist Agencies Faramarz Saedi highlighted Sri Lanka as unique and affordable tourist destination. Several suggestions including the need of operating direct air link between Iran and Sri Lanka, conducting regular tourism awareness programmes, convening B2B meetings between the both Chambers, introducing reasonable tour packages, initiating FAM tour campaigns, providing publicity through electronic and print media and facilitating for bilateral instruments were also discussed.

In response, Ambassador Wishwanath Aponu pointed out that the Embassy of Sri Lanka in Tehran is in the process of working on some proposals in coordination with the concerned authorities of Sri Lanka and Iran with a focus on expanding two-way tourism floor between the two countries. In this scenario, he emphasized all tourism related stakeholders of both countries have a significant role to proceed the proposals and expressed that reaching for rapid growth expected in tourism is "leave no one behind". On behalf of the Iran Tourist Association, Saedi thanked the Sri Lanka Embassy for timely organizing the tourism event and assured his Association fullest support to expand two-way tourism.

The event was attended by over 65 participants working in Iran tourism industry, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Foreign Ministry, airlines, media personnel and prominent business people. The invitees were treated to a reception with several Sri Lankan typical food items with Ceylon tea taste.

Car Exports to Azerbaijan to Top 3,500 in Next 12 Months

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's largest carmaker the IKCO says car exports to Azerbaijan are expected to hit a new record of 3,500 units in the next 12 months.

IKCO's CEO Mehdi Khatibi said that the target will be equivalent to a half of all exports by the Iran Khodro Company to Azerbaijan over the past years.

Khatibi said IKCO models, including Dena and Samand, have become increasingly popular in Azerbaijan in recent years. "You can see many of these products on the streets of this country," he said during a visit to a car plant in Azerbaijan's Neftchala region where the IKCO manufactures its popular models.

Khatibi said, however, that KCO's plans for increased exports to Azerbaijan will only cover Tara and Dena models. He said his visit to Azerbaijan was aimed at negotiating prices with manufacturing partner the Khazar Automobile Company, adding that the IKCO eyes increased profitability from sales in the Azerbaijani market.

PGSOC Chief Felicitates National Quality Day

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – On the occasion of National Quality Day, the CEO of Persian Gulf Star Oil Company (PGSC) Mr. Alireza Jafarpoor felicitated the day in a message issued on Wednesday.

Alireza Jafarpoor in his felicitation message said that all services and products require quality and quality is possible when all processes and activities of the organization are designed continuously based on the needs and expectations of consumers.

He added that he is proud that due to the skillful personnel of the biggest gas condensate refinery of the world and with moving towards comprehensive quality system, the company has been able to materialize the excellence goals like boosting customers' satisfaction, continuous improvement, boosting efficiency and compliance with standards and achievement to the sustainable economic and financial results.

Jafarpoor then thanked his dear colleagues in Persian Gulf Star Refinery who produced high quality fuel products of the country with strong determination and congratulated them on the occasion of the National Quality Day and wished them and the country success.

Arfa Co. Offers Steel Products In Export Ring of IME

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – With God blessing and special cooperation of Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) and Iranian Mines, Mining Industries Development and Renovation (IMIDRO) and for the first time in the country, Arfa Iron and Steel Company offered successfully its steel products at the export ring of IME.

According to reports the steel ingot product of Arfa Iron and Steel Company was offered on the IME as the company is to continue offering its products on the export ring in the future.

Arfa Iron and steel Co. is the biggest supplier of raw steel ingots in Iran, and one of the leading enterprises operating at regional and national levels.



China Warns Taiwan of Opposition After Lithuania Chip Plan



BEIJING (Dispatches) - China has vowed resolute opposition to any efforts by Taiwan to collude with external forces and pursue independence, a spokesman of its foreign ministry said.

The remarks came in response to a query about a plan announced this week by the self-ruled island to invest more than 10 million euros (\$10 million) towards chip production in Lithuania.

Tension in the Taiwan Strait is due to authorities of Taiwan's ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) colluding with external forces, the spokesman, Zhao Lijian, added at a regular briefing in the Chinese capital of Beijing.

EU Leader's Speech to China Trade Expo Cancelled



BEIJING (Dispatches) - A speech by EU Council head Charles Michel scheduled to be broadcast at the opening of a major Chinese trade fair was abruptly cancelled due to wrangling over censorship, diplomats told AFP.

The pre-recorded video address was meant to be shown at Friday's opening of the China International Import Expo (CIIE) in Shanghai, but Michel's spokesman and three Beijing-based diplomats confirmed it was not broadcast.

"The Chinese wanted to censor parts of Charles Michel's speech. Brussels preferred to cancel the speech altogether instead," one European diplomat told AFP, requesting anonymity due to the sensitivity of the matter.

Race for U.S. Congress Is Tight, No Republican Red Wave



PHOENIX (Dispatches) - Control of Congress was up for grabs early on Wednesday after the U.S. midterm elections, with many of the most competitive races uncalled, leaving it unclear whether Republicans would crack Democrats' tenuous hold on power.

In a critical win for President Joe Biden's party, Democrat John Fetterman flipped a Republican-held U.S. Senate seat in Pennsylvania, beating Republican celebrity doctor Mehmet Oz and bolstering his party's chances of holding the chamber.

The mood at the White House improved as the night wore on, with once-nervous aides allowing smiles to creep onto their faces and saying early signs for Democrats were better than expected. On Twitter, Biden posted a photo of himself happily congratulating some of the Democratic winners by phone.

In the House of Representatives, Republicans remained favored to win a majority that would allow them to block Biden's priorities while launching politically damaging investigations into his administration and family.

By early Wednesday, Republicans had flipped six Democratic House seats, Edison Research projected, one more than the minimum they need to take over the chamber.

Republicans will have the power to block aid to Ukraine if they win back control of Congress, but analysts say they are more likely to slow or pare back the flow of defense and economic assistance.

Stuart Cole, head macro economist at Equiti Capital, said partisan deadlock between a president and Congress and a Republican-controlled House would likely prevent any tax increases and limit government spending, which could mean interest rates will not have to rise as much to curb inflation.

House Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy had hoped to celebrate a resounding victory that would propel him into the top job of House speaker.

Instead, he had to settle for a promise to his supporters: "When you wake up tomorrow, we will be in the majority and (Democratic Speaker) Nancy Pelosi will be in the minority."

However, only 13 of the 53 most competitive races, based on a Reuters analysis of the leading nonpartisan forecasters, had been decided, raising the prospect that the final outcome may not be known for some time.

The party that occupies the White House almost always loses seats in elections midway through a president's first four-year term, and Biden has struggled with low public approval.

But Republican hopes for a "red wave" of victories faded as Democrats showed surprising resilience in several key races. Democrats were projected as the winners in 11 of the 13 close contests that had been decided.

"Definitely not a Republican wave, that's for dam sure," Republican U.S. Senator Lindsey Graham told NBC in an interview.

Pelosi said in a statement, "It is clear that House Democratic members and candidates are strongly outperforming expectations around the country."

Republican former President Donald Trump, who took an active role in recruiting Republican candidates for Congress and is hinting at a third run for the presidency in 2024, had mixed results.

Ukraine Denies Pressure To Soften Stance On Talks With Russia



KYIV (Dispatches) - Ukraine denied that it was under Western pressure to negotiate with Russia, doubling down on its insistence that talks could take place only if Russia relinquishes all occupied territory.

The remarks came days after a high profile Washington Post report that the United States had encouraged Kyiv to signal willingness for talks. It also coincided with U.S. mid-term elections that could test Western support for Ukraine.

In an overnight address before he was due to address world leaders at a climate summit, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy recited what he called Ukraine's "completely understandable conditions" for peace talks.

"Once again - restoration of territorial integrity, respect for the U.N. Charter, compensation for all damages caused by the war, punishment of every war criminal and guarantees that this will not happen again."

Ukraine had repeatedly proposed such talks, but "we always received insane Russian responses with new terrorist attacks, shelling or blackmail", Zelenskyy said.

On Monday, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov repeated Moscow's position that it is open to talks but that Kyiv was refusing them. Moscow has repeatedly said it will not negotiate over territory it claims to have annexed from Ukraine.

Zelenskyy's senior adviser Mykhailo Podolyak said it was absurd to suggest that Western countries would push Kyiv to negotiate on Moscow's terms, as they were the ones supplying Ukraine with the weapons to drive Russian forces off its land.

"Ukraine receives from its partners, first of all from the United States, quite effective weapons," he said in an interview with Radio Liberty. "We are pushing the Russian army out of territory. And against this background, forcing us to the negotiation process, and in fact to recognize the ultimatum of the Russian Federation, is nonsense! And no one will do that."

Sweden Vows Firmer Stance for Turkey's Approval for NATO Bid

ANKARA (Dispatches) - Sweden's new prime minister vowed on Tuesday a firmer stance on fighting crime and terrorism during a visit to Turkey where he will seek the approval of President Tayyip Erdogan for his country's bid to join NATO.

Sweden and Finland applied to join NATO in May in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. But NATO member Turkey raised objections, citing security concerns related to the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) and other groups, and over the Nordic states' ban on arms exports.

The three countries signed a memorandum in June that lifted Turkey's veto while requiring Sweden and Finland to address its remaining concerns.

"I think the new government will have an even firmer approach in (relation to) the NATO application from Sweden," Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson told reporters in Ankara during a visit to the Turkish parliament.

"One of this government's main priorities is fighting crime, fighting organized crime, fighting the connection between organized crime and terrorism," he said.

Erdogan, who has previously accused Sweden of harbouring PKK militants, was set to host Kristersson at the presidential palace later on Tuesday, with a news conference scheduled for 1530 GMT.

Swedish Foreign Minister Tobias Billstrom said on Saturday his country's new government would distance itself from the Syrian Kurdish YPG militia in its bid to win Turkey's support for its membership of the Western defense alliance.

Turkey views the YPG as an extension of the PKK, which launched an insurgency against the Turkish state in 1984 and is designated as a terrorist group by Turkey, the European Union and the United States.

Sweden, along with the United States and several other NATO countries, has supported the YPG in its fight against Islamic State. Turkey has vowed to block Sweden's application if it doesn't stop.

UN Draws Red Line Around Net Zero Greenwashing

SHARM EL SHEIKH (Dispatches) - The UN's chief called for an end to a "toxic cover-up" by companies as a sweeping report said they cannot claim to be net zero if they invest in new fossil fuels, cause deforestation or offset emissions instead of reducing them.

Antonio Guterres said businesses as well as cities and regions should update their voluntary net zero pledges within a year to comply with the recommendations by UN experts, as he trained his sights on fossil fuel firms and "their financial enablers".

"Using bogus 'net-zero' pledges to cover up massive fossil fuel expansion is reprehensible. It is rank deception," he said at the launch of the report at the COP27 conference in Egypt.

"This toxic cover-up could push our world over the climate cliff. The sham must end."

The UN expert panel, convened by Guterres after UN climate talks in Glasgow last year, set its sights on drawing a "red line" around greenwashing in net zero targets from companies, cities and regions.

A huge surge in decarbonisation pledges in recent months means that around 90 percent of the global economy is now covered by some sort of promise of carbon neutrality, according to Net Zero Tracker.

"It's very easy to make an announcement that you are

going to be net zero by 2050. But you have to walk the talk and what we've seen is that there is not enough action," said Catherine McKenna, Canada's former environment and climate change minister, who led the panel.

"We have to do two things to reach net zero -- we need to drastically reduce emissions, and we need to invest in clean (energy)," she told AFP.

She added it was currently "extremely hard" to properly evaluate whether firms were cutting emissions and called for greater transparency.

The report lists a slew of recommendations, including calling on governments to begin putting in place binding regulations.

A central recommendation from the panel is that net zero plans must be in line with the Paris Agreement's most ambitious aim of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial temperatures.

But to do that UN scientists say that global emissions must be slashed virtually in half by 2030, and after that they should be reduced to net zero by 2050.

There have been growing concerns that some firms have not aligned their efforts with the latest climate science -- by failing to account for emissions from key activities, or by saying they can make up for increasing pollution today with "carbon credits" from activities like tree planting.



Turkey Slams Macron Over Accusation of Imperialism in Africa



ANKARA (Dispatches) - French President Emmanuel Macron made "a serious mistake" by

accusing Turkey of being "an imperialist power" in Africa, the country's ruling Justice and Development Party (AK Party) spokesperson Omer Celik declared via a Twitter thread condemning Macron for his accusation.

"He's wrong to reduce France's foreign policy to animosity towards Turkey," Celik said after the French leader accused Turkey, along with China and Russia, of being "imperialist powers" in Africa.

"French companies have been exposed for supporting both Daesh and PKK in Syria in connection with French institutions. Macron made a grave error by accusing Türkiye of being an 'imperialist power' when he needs to apologize to the Turkish nation for this," Celik added.

The weight of our past is on our shoulders, Macron remarked earlier on Monday concerning France's colonial history in Africa. "On the other hand," he continued, "anti-French sentiments have been growing throughout Africa in recent years. This is steered by social media users and activists and is funded by a small number of countries, largely by Russia."

"Are the Chinese, Russians, Turks, and others doing better than us? They're doing things ten times worse than we did," Macron claimed.

Celik argued in response that "With this attitude, Macron is hurting the capacity for cooperation that should be developed against the challenges NATO is facing."

The whole world knows what France has done to Africa in its colonial past and what it is still doing, Celik went on saying. He noted that Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan was developing "permanent and in-depth relations" in Africa "with a vision based on equality and partnership."

"Since Macron carries the traces of a colonialist mentality that considers Africa its domain, he is bothered by this situation," the AK Party spokesperson said.

Indeed, Turkey's engagement with the African continent has been gaining pace over the years. Having adopted a one-dimensional foreign policy shaped by its relations with the West for decades, Turkey has shifted to a more diversified, multidimensional and independent foreign policy since the end of the Cold War.

Musk Sparks Debate On Content Accuracy With New Vision for Twitter



LONDON (Dispatches) - Twitter Inc's new CEO Elon Musk said the social media platform's mission was to become the most accurate source of information about the world, sparking debate about how it would achieve that and who determines what is accurate.

A flurry of drastic measures including sacking half the staff and charging users that Musk has taken since he took over Twitter in a \$44 billion deal just about a week ago has provided some early clues to how the platform will be reshaped by the world's richest person.

Some advertisers have pulled spending since the deal was announced, with Musk blaming pressure from activist groups concerned about its content moderation.

"Twitter needs to become by far the most accurate source of information about the world. That's our mission," Musk said on Sunday.

His tweet instantly triggered tens of thousands of replies and provoked lively debates on how the mission will be achieved. "Accurate to who?" Twitter founder and former CEO Jack Dorsey asked.

Musk, who also runs electric vehicle company Tesla (TSLA.O) and rocket firm SpaceX, said last month Twitter will be forming a content moderation council with "widely diverse viewpoints".

The self-described free speech absolutist said at the time that no major content decisions or account reinstatements will happen before that council convenes.

Musk also said on Sunday Twitter users engaging in impersonation without clearly specifying it as a "parody" account will be permanently suspended without a warning.

The comment came as Kathy Griffin's account was banned after the U.S. comedian changed her name to Elon Musk. The FreeKathy hashtag was later circulating on Twitter.

"I guess not all content moderators were let go? LOL," she joked in a post on Mastodon, an alternative to Twitter and other social media sites which she joined last week.

Musk said Twitter previously issued a warning before suspension, but as it is rolling out widespread verification, there will be no warning as well as "no exceptions."

"This will be clearly identified as a condition for signing up to Twitter Blue," Musk said, adding any name change at all will cause temporary loss of verified checkmark.

American actress Valerie Bertinelli also used Musk's name to post a series of tweets in support of Democratic candidates ahead of Midterm elections in the United states this week.

She switched back to her name on Sunday, tweeting: "Okey-dokey I've had my fun and I think I made my point."

Twitter on Saturday updated its app in Apple's App Store to begin charging \$8 for sought-after blue check verification marks as it seeks to shore up revenue.

Benefits of the verification service would include "half the ads", the ability to post longer videos to Twitter and priority ranking for quality content, Twitter said.

But earlier on Sunday, the New York Times reported Twitter is delaying the rollout of verification check marks to subscribers of its new service until after Tuesday's midterm elections.

In a sign of more confusion after Musk's takeover, Twitter is now reaching out to dozens of employees who lost their jobs and asking them to return, Bloomberg News reported on Sunday.

Some of those who are being asked to return were laid off by mistake. Others were let go before management realized that their work and experience may be necessary to build the new features Musk envisions, the report said, citing people familiar with the moves.

Twitter did not immediately respond to Reuters' request for comment about the rehiring efforts.

Airlines Reboot as COVID Sparks a Revolution in One-Day Business Trips



SYDNEY (Dispatches) - Airlines around the world are ripping up schedules and bringing in new flights to cope with a COVID-triggered trend in corporate travel for executives like Jerome Harris - the scrapping of one-day business trips in favor of longer stays.

For Sydney-based Harris, exhausting one-day treks to Melbourne or Brisbane - meaning four taxi rides, two flights, extended waits and the risk of delays - are no more after a pandemic-driven reassessment of his travel habits.

Industry data show business travelers are taking longer trips than before COVID-19, leaving airlines adjusting flight plans. Environmental concerns, rising ticket prices, increased flight cancellations amid staff shortages and a boom in online videoconferencing are all undermining the single-day trip option as an industry standard.

"I'm happier to save the effort and the carbon and do a few days in a location and have time to meet up with multiple people and visit multiple projects," said Harris, who works for an infrastructure company.

Corporate travel agency CWT said in global terms, the proportion of one-day domestic trips has fallen by more than 25% compared with 2019 levels as online meetings grow in popularity.

In markets from Australia to the United States, airlines are having to adapt to maximise revenue. U.S. carriers, for example, are adding more midweek flights as travellers take more trips that blend business with leisure, with many capitalizing on greater flexibility to work remotely.

"Tuesdays and Wednesdays are not as much of a trough as they used to be in a traditional week," according to United Airlines Chief Commercial Officer Andrew Nocella, speaking on an earnings call last month.

For corporate travel agency CWT's head of Asia Pacific sales, Akshay Kapoor, the shift is long term for both airlines and hotels.

"I think the trend away from one-day trips in favor of longer stays is here to stay as travelers become more environmentally and fiscally conscious," said Kapoor. "This could translate into a higher revenue per available room for hotels in the long run."

At a time when airfares have skyrocketed, the average length of a domestic business trip in Australia increased to nearly four days in the third quarter this year, up from three in 2019, according to Flight Centre Travel Group Ltd.

"I think probably because people are paying more they are taking advantage of staying longer," Flight Centre Corporate's head of Australia and New Zealand Melissa Elf said.

Qantas Airways Ltd and Virgin Australia say higher airfares have so far offset any revenue impact from fewer business trips. But the shifting travel patterns are becoming apparent in airline schedules, where flights on popular business routes have been falling, reflecting declining same-day demand, in proportion to ones preferred by leisure travelers.

Sydney-Melbourne is the fifth-busiest domestic route in the world at present, according to travel data firm OAG, down from second in 2019.

In North America, business-heavy Los Angeles-San Francisco, the busiest domestic route in 2019 according to OAG, is down to eighth. It has been replaced at the top by leisure-dominated Las Vegas-Los Angeles and Honolulu-Maui.

Ajit Chouhan, a Texas-based human resources executive, used to go on one-day business trips to San Francisco at least once a month before the pandemic. But now he uses Zoom or Microsoft Teams for shorter meetings, describing the online options as "convenient and more productive".



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Oman Minister Sees Oil Prices Going Down

SHARM EL-SHEIKH (Dispatches) - Oman's energy minister Salim al-Aufi said he saw oil prices coming down from the range of \$90 a barrel after the winter season. "We don't believe that the current prices are sustainable comfortably," he told Reuters on the sidelines of the COP27 climate conference in Egypt's coastal city of Sharm El-Sheikh. "We believe after the winter season they will go down ... we think it will go to a much more comfortable position in the 70s," he said. Aufi said Oman set the oil price for its budget at \$55 a barrel to give a comfortable cushion to pay its debt but that he did not think prices would go down that much.



Nov.20 Presidential Election to Take Kazakhstan To New Era

BY: F. TAHERPOOR



Kazakhstan Ambassador Mr. Askhat Orazbay (C), Dr. Elahe Koulaee (L) and Head of Iran-Kazakhstan Chamber of Commerce Amir Abedi (R) attend the press conference at Parsian Azadi Hoel of Tehran on Tuesday, November 8.

TEHRAN – The Republic of Kazakhstan is getting ready for holding its seventh presidential election since its independence in 1991 as the event will open a new horizon for the country and its people which are eagerly waiting for it, says Kazakhstan Ambassador to Tehran Mr. Askhat Orazbay.

Speaking in a press conference at Parsian Azadi Hotel of Tehran, Mr. Orazbay briefed the participants of recent political and economic developments in Kazakhstan and pointed to the upcoming presidential election which will be held on November 20 and it will be a turning point in the history of the country.

The ambassador first pointed to the historic decision of incumbent Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev for announcing the launch of a new political reform program and a number of socio-economic measures.

A constant institutional reloading and upgrading of the country's party map and electoral system, significant renewal of the composition and functions of the parliament, the government, and the local authorities, partial decentralization of the power, development and democratization of the local administration and representation, increase of the effectiveness of the local law enforcement agencies and establishment of new groups of reforms are long-term reforms in the political system which have been announced by President Tokayev, the ambassador noted.

Mr. Orazbay then went on to say that President Tokayev has called for snap presidential elections which has been decided to be held on November 20. He added that Mr. Tokayev recommended limiting the president's term to one term of seven years and re-election would be prohibited and this will help the political system not to be monopolized by one president.

Then the ambassador pointed to the election campaign promises of Mr. Tokayev in different fields as he has vowed to adjust payment system and boosting livelihood of the people and bring competition and equal opportunities for all people.

The president has vowed to increase the salary base from 60,000 to 70,000 tenge and this will affect the incomes of over 1.8m citizens.

Launching a new national fund for children, issuing visas for high-skilled foreigners and significant investors and easing business activities are of the other promises of Mr. Tokayev, Orazbay continued.

Orazbay noted that Mr. Tokayev has reiterated that if he is elected, there will be rule of law, transparency and openness and justice in the country.

The diplomat then pointed to the important strategic geographical position of Kazakhstan which has made the country a good destination for investment as the country is now the largest economy in the Central Asia as the country has attracted over \$400b of foreign investment the biggest in the region.

Orazbay then reiterated that Kazakh President has realized the country needs some reforms as its young population demands it and he wants to implement the reforms as soon as possible to push the country to a better position in the region and the world.

Meanwhile in the presser, Head of Iran-Kazakhstan Joint Chamber of Commerce Mr. Amir Abedi pointed to the strategic location of Kazakhstan and importance of this country for Iranian traders and said that during the pandemic, Kazakhstan was the only country had kept its borders open for Iranian traders and hailed Kazakhstan for revoking visa regime for Iranian citizens which will help the trade between the two countries to increase.

Tehran University Teacher Ms. Elahe Koulaee also in the presser pointed to the performance of Kazakhstan since its independence and hailed it for having a balanced political relation with countries and also hailed Mr. Tokayev for his bold decision for implementing reforms which will help the country progress more.

Then reporters in the event raised some questions and Mr. Orazbay answered them.

Kazakhstan on November 20 will hold the seventh presidential election since its independence in 1991 and six contenders will compete to administer the country. For the first time, there are two female candidates in the presidential election in Kazakhstan as the country has invited international observers to monitor the election process.

UN Warns of Worsening Food Crisis in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO (Dispatches) - UN agencies in Sri Lanka say they raised \$79m in aid, they need an additional \$70m to cater to growing number of poor people.

The number of people in Sri Lanka needing urgent humanitarian help has doubled to 3.4 million, the United Nations has said as it warned of a worsening food crisis in the south Asian island nation that declared itself bankrupt in July amid an unprecedented economic crisis.

UN agencies working in Sri Lanka in a joint statement on Tuesday said that they had raised \$79m to feed those in need, but the increasing number of poor people meant an additional \$70m was needed.

"Food insecurity in Sri Lanka has increased dramatically due to two consecutive seasons of poor harvests, foreign exchange shortages, and reduced household purchasing power," the statement said.

UN agencies had estimated in June that 1.7 million out of the 22 million population in Sri Lanka required help.

The UN said its revised plan aims at feeding 2.1 million people, including pregnant mothers and school children and providing livelihood support to 1.5 million farmers and fishermen.

Sri Lanka is facing its worst economic crisis since its independence from the United Kingdom in 1948 and has been enduring soaring inflation, power blackouts, and fuel rationing since last year.

The country defaulted on its \$51bn external debt in mid-April and is in talks with the IMF for a \$2.9bn bailout.

Months of protests against high prices and shortages of food and medicines led to the toppling of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa in July.

The UN has said that the poverty rate in the South Asian nation has doubled to 25.6 percent this year, up from 13.1 percent last year.

EU Eases Bank Capital Rules

LONDON (Dispatches) - European Union member states have backed a temporary watering down and two-year delay to 2025 for the final leg of the globally agreed Basel III bank capital rules, despite the ECB warning they risked "cracking the dyke" that protects stability.

EU states will now negotiate a final deal with the European Parliament in early 2023, with further changes possible.

"One of our main goals was to avoid impacts on European banks that could reduce their ability to finance the European economy," Czech finance minister Zbynek Stanjura told a meeting of EU finance ministers.

Most of the Basel III, a set of tougher capital rules devised for banks after the global financial crisis more than a decade ago, have already been implemented.

"It shows once again our commitment to international standards and multilateral cooperation," said Valdis Dombrovskis, executive vice president of the European Commission, the EU's executive body.

Finance ministers for Germany and France said the package struck the "right balance", with Spain adding that it reflected "idiosyncrasies" in Europe's banking sector.

"This flexibility gives banks enough time to adjust to these new rules," German finance minister Christian Lindner said.

European banks have lobbied hard for a temporary watering down of some of the remaining Basel III features, arguing they already hold enough capital and that higher requirements would crimp lending to the economy.

EU ministers agreed to delay the roll-out of the final rules until January, 2025 due to economic fallout from COVID-19.

The revised rules would give relief until 2032 to largely neutralize capital increases for some banks holding low-risk mortgages, but make it harder for investors to compare European banks with peers from elsewhere in the world, analysts said.

Based on a new "output floor" for determining capital levels, EU states which host banks headquartered elsewhere in the bloc can insist that part of group capital is held locally.

Smaller banks would benefit from simpler disclosure, and EU states pushed back against attempts at stricter EU harmonization in ensuring that top bank staff are "fit and proper".

Nuria Alvarez, analyst at Madrid-based brokerage Renta 4, said the long-flagged delay was positive for banks, but was already priced into markets.

India Says Russia Oil Deals Advantageous

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - India will continue buying Russian oil because it benefits the country, India's foreign minister said today after meeting his Russian counterpart for the fifth time this year, adding that the two countries were expanding their trade ties.

Subrahmanyam Jaishankar is visiting Moscow for the first time since Russia invaded Ukraine in February. His trip comes as U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen visits New Delhi this week to hold talks with Indian officials, including possibly on capping Russian oil prices.

India has become Russia's largest oil customer after China, as its refiners snap up discounted cargoes shunned by Western buyers. Russia's share of India's oil imports surged to an all-time high of 23 per cent in September, from just about 2 per cent before the invasion.

Jaishankar was accompanied by senior officials in charge of agriculture, petroleum and natural gas, ports and shipping, finance, chemicals and fertilizer, and trade — which he said showed the importance of ties with Russia. Both sides are keen to expand their rupee-rouble trade given Russia's problems with the dollar.

"Russia has been a steady and time-tested partner. Any objective evaluation of our relationship over many decades would confirm that it has actually served both our countries very, very well," Jaishankar said in a joint news conference with his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov.

Asked about a Group of Seven plan to cap the price of Russian oil, Jaishankar said that as the world's third-largest consumer of oil and gas where the levels of income were not high, India had to look after its own interests.

Deteriorating European Demand Flagged as Risk for Turkish Exports

ANKARA (Dispatches) - Turkish Trade Minister Mehmet Mus warned of uncertainties for the period ahead as he said the demand that is expected to deteriorate further in Europe constituted a serious risk for Turkey's trade.

"Uncertainties are likely to increase even more in the coming period," Mus said during budget talks at Parliament's Plan and Budget Commission.

The gloomy outlook was affirmed on Tuesday by data measuring conditions in key export markets, showing demand in Turkey's key export markets continued to weaken in October.

Turkey's Manufacturing Export Climate Index dropped to 47.9 last month, a survey by the Istanbul Chamber of Industry (ISO) showed, marking a fall for the third consecutive month.

The reading had run above the threshold level of 50 separating growth from contraction for 19 months before slipping to 48.8 in August. It was unchanged in September.

The deterioration in October was the highest since June 2020 when Turkey was plagued by the first wave of the coronavirus pandemic, ISO said.

Mus cited the growing risk stemming from weakening demand in the European Union, Turkey's biggest export market.

"This is why we are carrying out the necessary studies to strengthen our market diversification by directing our exporters to alternative markets," said the minister.

"Uncertainties are likely to increase even more in the coming period. A difficult period is ahead facing all countries on a global level."

The survey by ISO said output in Germany, the largest export market for Turkish manufacturers in Europe, declined for the fourth month in a row, with the fall accelerating compared to September.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) was the only country of Turkey's top 18 export markets that registered an increase in economic activity in October, the survey said.

"The fact that only the UAE remains in the growth zone among the main export markets ... clearly shows that the slowdown in the global economy is widespread," said Andrew Harker, economics director at S&P Global Market Intelligence.

"Current trends suggest that manufacturers will continue to have difficulty obtaining new orders from export markets at least for the rest of 2022," Harker noted.

Turkey's exports remained buoyant and rose 15.4% from January through October this year to \$209.5 billion, according to official data, marking an all-time 10-month high.

Turkey has set a \$250 billion export target for this year, after reaching a record \$225 billion in 2021.

Shipments to the EU jumped 13.5% in the said period, Mus said, stressing Turkey enjoyed a \$9.7 billion surplus in trade with the bloc.

"This successful performance was achieved despite the negative factors on a global scale, as well as the serious negative effects of the decline in (foreign exchange) parity on our foreign trade," he added.

Mus said exports would have been \$12 billion higher and the trade deficit some \$2.8 lower in the first 10 months had the euro not declined against the dollar.

Japan's Cabinet OKs Extra Budget Spending, Adding to Debt



TOKYO (Dispatches) - Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's cabinet approved a second extra budget spending of 29.1 trillion yen (\$198.54 billion) for an economic stimulus package this fiscal year, much of which will be funded by additional new debt.

The latest stimulus spending underscored the struggle Kishida's government faces in achieving economic growth alongside fiscal reform, leaving Japan as an outlier in a global trend towards dialling back crisis-mode stimulus policy.

"There's no doubt our response is making the fiscal situation more severe. While exiting exceptional response to coronavirus in a shift towards normalisation, we must conduct responsible economic and fiscal management," Finance Minister Shunichi Suzuki told reporters after the extra budget was approved.

"We cannot afford to continue such large fiscal spending. We must also be mindful of risk of national wealth outflow through trade deficit," he said.

The Ministry of Finance (MOF) said an additional 22.8 trillion yen of new debt would be issued to help cover the latest supplementary budget, resulting in total planned new borrowing of 62.5 trillion yen this fiscal year.

The extra budget featured steps to help households cope with surging costs of electricity, gas and gasoline. It also aimed to help various regions take advantage of the weak yen to lure tourists.

It also set aside money for an emergency budget reserve.

The government will quickly prepare to present the extra budget to parliament for approval, Suzuki said.

The government has revised up its estimated tax revenues by 3.1 trillion yen to a record 68.4 trillion yen. Unspent funds from the previous year would help bridge some of the budget gap.

While Japan has opted to inject stimulus, most other major economies are pursuing anti-inflationary policies.

SAC Senior President Meets Counterparts in Brazil

TEHRAN (MNA) - Senior President of the Supreme Audit Court (SAC) of Iran Mehrdad Bazrpash during his meeting to Brazil met and held talks with his other counterparts from China, Greece, Senegal, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, and Armenia. In a meeting with the chairman of the Chinese delegation taking part in the event, Bazrpash said that Iran and China are each other's strategic partners that stand against the unilateralism policy of the United States. Holding joint training courses and exchanging knowledge in the field of government auditing were among the other proposals of Bazrpash in this meeting, which were welcomed by the Chinese side.



Tough Choices as Brazil's Lula Gets Down to Business

BRASILIA (Dispatches) - Fresh off a celebratory beach holiday, Brazilian president-elect Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva got down to uglier business Monday: figuring out how to govern with a hostile Congress, nasty budget crunch and impossible-looking to-do list.

The political horse-trading of the transition period now starts in earnest for the veteran leftist, who will be sworn in for a third term on January 1, facing a far tougher outlook than the commodities-fueled boom he presided over in the 2000s.

Lula, 77, celebrated his narrow win over far-right incumbent Jair Bolsonaro in the October 30 runoff election by escaping last week to the sun-drenched coast of Bahia in northeastern Brazil.

He joked he needed a belated honeymoon with his first-lady-to-be, Rosangela "Janja" da Silva, whom the twice-widowed ex-metalworker married in May.

His other honeymoon -- the political one -- could be short, analysts say.

Lula was meeting Monday with advisers in Sao Paulo. On Tuesday, he will travel to the capital, Brasilia, to finish assembling his 50-member transition team and start negotiating with members of Congress, two allies told AFP.

He faces a battle to get bills passed in a legislature where conservatives scored big gains in October's elections.

Lula's coalition has around 123 votes in the 513-seat Chamber of Deputies, and 27 in the 81-seat Senate, meaning he will have to strike alliances to get anything done -- and even just survive, given the threat of impeachment in Brazil, where two presidents have been impeached in the past 30 years.

Lula is expected to meet in Brasilia with lower-house speaker Arthur Lira, a key Bolsonaro ally from the loose coalition of parties known as the "Centrao," a group known for striking alliances with whoever is in power -- in exchange for feeding on the federal pork barrel.

Lula will be under pressure from the Centrao not to oppose the so-called "secret budget": 19.4 billion reais (\$3.8 billion) in basically unmonitored federal funding that Bolsonaro agreed to allocate to select lawmakers to boost support for his reelection bid.

Meanwhile, money will be tight for Lula's campaign promises, including increasing the minimum wage and maintaining a beefed-up 600-reais-per-month welfare program, "Auxilio Brasil."

Bolsonaro, who introduced the program, did not allocate sufficient funding to continue it in the 2023 budget.

"We can't start 2023 without the 'Auxilio' and a real increase in the minimum wage," the leader of Lula's Workers' Party, Gleisi Hoffmann, said Friday.

"That's our contract with the Brazilian people."

Facing the impossible math of funding such pledges without breaking the government spending cap, Lula's allies are exploring their options, including passing a constitutional amendment allowing exceptional spending next year.

But they are racing the clock: it would have to be approved by December 15.



Lula, who ran on vague promises of restoring Latin America's biggest economy to the golden times of his first two terms (2003-2010), faces a bleaker picture this time around.

"The challenge is... how to balance fiscal responsibility with a highly anticipated social agenda," in the face of high inflation and a possible global recession, said political scientist Leandro Consentino of Insper university.

Markets are watching closely -- especially his pick for finance minister.

Lula is expected to split Bolsonaro's economy "super-ministry" into three portfolios: finance, planning, and trade and industry.

Analysts predict a political choice for finance minister, a technocrat for planning and a business executive for trade.

Names floated for the finance job include Lula's former education minister Fernando Haddad and his campaign coordinator, Aloizio Mercadante.

Other closely watched portfolios are the environment and a promised new ministry of Indigenous affairs -- both sore spots under Bolsonaro, who presided over a surge of destruction in the Amazon rainforest.

The former job could go to Lula's one-time environment minister Marina Silva, credited with curbing deforestation in the 2000s.

In a key gesture, the president-elect will make his return to the international stage at the COP27 UN climate summit in Egypt, where he will arrive on November 14, advisers said.

Silva, who will travel with him, told newspaper Folha de Sao Paulo: "The climate issue is now a strategic priority at the highest level."

Tehran Warns UK...

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Meanwhile, the Islamic Republic has strongly censured several countries for provoking the riots through their spy agencies and propaganda apparatus. London, in particular, hosts several anti-Iran networks, including the Iran International, Manoto, and the BBC Persian.

Iran's top intelligence bodies, namely the Intelligence Ministry and the Intelligence Organization of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), also issued a statement last month, casting light on the role of foreign spy agencies in the unrest. They concluded that the CIA played the primary role while closely cooperating with the spy services of the UK, the Israeli regime, and Saudi Arabia.

Undoubtedly, Khatib said, the biggest "influence operation" against a country in the world was carried out against Iran through hybrid operations by the US, the UK, the Israeli regime, and Saudi Arabia.

"In recent events, the hand of the Zionist regime was more evident in implementation; the hand of the UK in propaganda, and the hand of the Saudi regime in funding," he explained.

Iran Signs \$40b...

FROM PAGE 1

Meanwhile the integrated planning director of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) said by applying EOR and IOR methods the country's petroleum production could increase by 15 to 40 percent.

Addressing the first national conference on increasing the productivity of oil and gas wells at the specialized conference center of the National Iranian Oil Company on Tuesday, Karim Zobeidi said that the way to communicate with oil and gas reservoirs is the wells and focused should be directed on their study.

Petrophysical charts, production, imaging, diameter analysis, pressure and temperature, and well testing are the ways of communicating with reservoirs today, he said.

He stated: "Currently, the average recovery from oil and gas wells in the country is 1,500 barrels per day in the oil sector and 1,500,000 cubic meters per day in the gas sector."

The NIOC official further said that production of oil well averaged at around 37,000 b/d prior to the 1979 revolution and investment is needed to enhance output of old fields like Maroon, Gachsaran, Aghajari and Ahwaz.

Iran-France...

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The value of trade exchanges between Iran and France in 2019 amounted to €394 million, which was reduced to €271 million in 2020 and to €242 million in 2021.

According to the Eurostat, the total value of trade between Iran and the European Union reached €3.403 billion in January-August 2022, while the figure was €2.649 billion in the same period of 2021.

The value of Iran's export to the EU member states rose 31 percent in the first eight months of 2022, as compared to the same period in 2021.

Iran exported commodities worth €727 million to the union in the eight-month period of this year, while the figure was €555 million in the same time span of the previous year.

The EU's export to Iran also rose 28 percent to €2.676 billion from €2.094 billion.

Iran Starting Works...

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That comes as Iraq started development works for Huwaiza oilfield in 2017.

Khojasteh Mehr said works on Azadegan field, the main reservoir shared with Iraq, had accelerated in recent months with the launch of oil production from 20 wells in the field.

He said 10 new wells in Azadegan oilfield will come on line within the next few weeks, saying the increased production from the field will help Iran to increase its total oil output to 4 million barrels per day (bpd) from a current figure of 3.8 million bpd.

Developing oilfields shared with neighbors come as Iran has been faced with a series of American sanctions targeting its energy sector in recent years.

The sanctions have forced Iran to increasingly rely on domestic companies for the expansion of its petroleum sector.

Lebanon-Bound...

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An Iraqi spokesperson explained that the entry and exit of the tankers from the Arab country were completely official and legal and based on the agreement of the three countries of Iran, Syria and Iraq.

Iran has supplied fuel shipments to Lebanon via Syria since last year after the Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah asked for Iranian help to ease the energy shortage in the country.

Lebanon has been beset by a severe fuel crisis that has left many households and businesses struggling with recurrent power outages.

India's ONGC Applies to Retain 20% In Russia's Sakhalin-1



NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - India's Oil and Natural Gas Corp has applied to the new Russian operator of the Sakhalin-1 to retain its stake in the oil and gas project in the Far East, a person familiar with the development said.

Russia has established a new entity, managed by a Rosneft subsidiary, that owns investor's rights in Sakhalin 1 after the exit of previous operator ExxonMobil. Moscow gave the state-run company the authority to decide whether foreign shareholders can retain their participation. "Yes," said the person when asked if ONGC has applied to retain its stake in the project.

ONGC holds a 20% stake through its overseas investment arm ONGC Videsh.

ONGC Videsh and Rosneft did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment.

Prior to formation of the new entity, Exxon and Sakhalin Oil and Gas Development Co (SODECO), a consortium of Japanese firms, held a 30% stake each in the project.

Russian oil major Rosneft through Sakhalinmorneftegaz-shelf and R N Astra owned the remaining 20% share.

Foreign shareholders were given a month to Nov. 12 to decide about their stakes.

Last week, the Japanese consortium also decided to stay in the project in a move welcomed by Tokyo.

Sakhalin-1 has turned out to be a money spinner for ONGC Videsh, and accounted for about a quarter of its proved reserves of 124.7 million tons in the year ended March 31, 2022.

Sakhalin-1 was producing 220,000 bpd before Russia invaded Ukraine in February. Its output collapsed however after Exxon refused to accept Russian insurance cover for the tankers as Western insurers pulled out due to the sanctions, according to industry sources.

Production from Sakhalin has appeared to have recovered after a change in its operator and industry sources have said the new Russian entity plans to restore oil output levels on Sakhalin-1 shortly.

U.S. Oil Companies Remain Cautious as Economic Headwinds Grow

LONDON (OilPrice) - The U.S. shale patch will not help ease what could be a very tight global oil market when the EU embargo on imports of Russian seaborne oil enters into force in just a few weeks. Even if they wanted to, American producers would not be able to boost oil production too much, despite repeated calls and threats from the Biden Administration, which is seeking relief for consumers at the pump. Inflation, labor shortages, and supply-chain delays in the short term and a lack of certainty over the U.S. energy policy in the medium term are constraining supply growth from the American oil industry, executives at some of the biggest companies said during the third-quarter earnings calls in the past week.

Add to this the strict financial discipline and the priority to boost shareholder returns, and the U.S. oil production growth is not what it used to be prior to the pandemic when output rose by 1 million barrels per day (bpd) annually in each of 2018 and 2019.

Pioneer Natural Resources CEO Scott Sheffield has said that U.S. oil production growth would likely disappoint this year and next.

Sheffield has forecast that U.S. oil production will add 500,000 bpd this year, but in 2023 the production gains may be lower than this due to constraints, Reuters reported in September.

In its October Short-Term Energy Outlook, the EIA suggests that U.S. crude oil production will average 11.7 million bpd in 2022 and 12.4 million bpd in 2023, which would surpass the record high set in 2019. But the EIA has revised down its growth forecasts since the start of this year, while analysts say its current estimates are too optimistic.

India Ramps...

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An official from a state refiner explained: "We are preparing for a backup plan. When the world is uncertain because of the Russia-Ukraine conflict we need to have all options open." A separate source from another refiner stated, "Due to the Russian-Ukraine conflict, we expect a possibility of tight oil markets and a change in flows with most Middle Eastern crude going to meet the need of European markets so we need to diversify our oil sources." India's refiners are making it clear to the rest of the world that they will diversify their oil supply to any country willing to offer them reliable and low-cost crude, regardless of whether the U.S. and Europe approve of its new partnerships.

India has turned to Iran as one of its potential suppliers, with Iran's ambassador, Iraj Elahi, expressing the country's willingness to provide India with the crude supply it needs to ensure its energy security. Elahi stated, "We always express our readiness to increase our economic ties with India. It's up to India, we are ready to deliver oil." Iran was one of India's primary oil suppliers before sanctions were introduced on Iranian energy in 2019.

Despite the ongoing sanctions imposed on Iranian crude by the U.S. and United Nations, Iran has been steadily rebuilding its oil supply and establishing export partners for its crude. As governments worldwide felt the gap created by the introduction of sanctions on Russian oil and gas, as well as from strict OPEC production quotas, many turned towards controversial oil powers, such as Iran and Venezuela, to provide them with vital oil resources. Iran announced

a 580 percent increase in its oil and condensates income from March to July compared with the same period in 2021, as it showed a clear disregard for U.S. sanctions on its oil industry. Both Turkey and Afghanistan enhanced their partnerships with Iran in a bid to boost their oil imports.

Perhaps more worrying than its partnership with Iran is its ties with Russia, which has become one of India's top oil suppliers in recent months, offering the Asian state low-price oil after losing many of its Western energy partners after it invaded Ukraine. In October, Russia became India's main supplier, providing it with 946,000 bpd, according to energy analytics firm Vortexa. Before the Russia-Ukraine conflict, India imported little oil from Russia, however as the U.S. and EU introduced sanctions on Russian oil and gas, it has become an obvious partner for India that is looking to boost its low-cost oil supplies. Russian oil prices have been highly competitive with Middle Eastern and African crude, leading India, and several other countries, to deepen ties with the oil giant.

India has seen one blow after another, with the U.S. introducing sanctions on several oil and gas suppliers and OPEC+ introducing oil production cuts. In response to this threat to India's energy security, its oil minister and refiners have made it clear that India will establish new partnerships with any country that will provide it with low-cost, reliable oil supplies. This has led it to deepen ties with Iran and Russia, offering the sanctioned states an opportunity to continue exporting their oil and gas.

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Premier League 2023-24 Season to Kick Off Aug 12

LONDON (Dispatches) - The 2023-24 Premier League season will kick off on August 12 and will have a mid-season player break in January, the English top flight league said. This season will be paused after the coming weekend's games for the mid-season World Cup in Qatar, and it will resume on December 26 with Boxing Day fixtures. The final match round of the season is scheduled for May 28, giving players nearly 11 weeks before the next season kicks off.

Neville to Remain Inter Miami Coach in 2023

MIAMI (Dispatches) - Inter Miami said Monday that head coach Phil Neville will return to lead the Major League Soccer team in 2023 after agreeing terms on a contract extension. Inter said in a statement that the former England, Manchester United and Everton player was the right choice to lead the David Beckham-owned team after taking Miami to the MLS Cup playoffs this season. "We are excited to continue our partnership with Phil and build on the foundation put in place this year," Inter sporting director Chris Henderson said.

Griffin Shines as Hawks Suffer First Loss

LOS ANGELES (Dispatches) - Rookie AJ Griffin scored 24 points from the bench as the Atlanta Hawks ended the Milwaukee Bucks' unbeaten start to the NBA season, while Stephen Curry produced a 47-point masterpiece to snap the Golden State Warriors' five-game losing streak. Griffin was one of six Hawks players to make double digits as Atlanta shrugged off the absence of star playmaker Trae Young to hand the Bucks their first defeat of the 2022-2023 campaign. The Bucks went into the game seeking a 10th straight win after a 9-0 start left them as the NBA's only unbeaten team. But Atlanta recovered superbly after being outscored 36-25 in the first quarter before trailing by six points at half-time. The game swung decisively in Atlanta's favor in the third period as the Hawks' scoring erupted with 37 points. Atlanta wrapped up a 117-98 victory with a 28-18 fourth quarter that saw the Hawks improve to 7-3 for the season. Dejounte Murray led the Hawks' scorers with 25 points, eight rebounds and 11 assists. But the real stars of the show for Atlanta came from a potent bench led by teenage rookie Griffin, who combined for 59 points to set up the win. Justin Holiday drained four three-pointers in a 14-point contribution, while Onyeka Okongwu added 12. "Before the game started, the coach said 'Believe'. I feel the whole team wanted more," 19-year-old Griffin said. "It was a great win. We knew the gameplan — just pitch in and make sure we had each other's back." Milwaukee's scoring was led by Giannis Antetokounmpo with 25 points, while Jrue Holiday added 16 points. In other games, Golden State ended their five-game losing streak but only after a brilliant fourth-quarter performance from Curry against Sacramento. Curry scored 17 of his 47 points in the final frame as the Warriors outscored the Kings 37-25 to sneak a 116-113 win.



In Philadelphia, Joel Embiid drained a perfect 16-of-16 from the free throw line in a 33-point display as the 76ers outgunned the Phoenix Suns 100-88. Embiid's shooting accuracy was backed with a red-hot contribution off the bench from Georges Niang, who sank seven three-pointers in a 21-point contribution. Tobias Harris also scored 21 points for the Sixers. Devin Booker led the Phoenix scoring with 28 points, while veteran playmaker Chris Paul hobbled off with a sore right heel. The Suns said Paul was removed from the game as a precaution. Embiid was satisfied with his free throw accuracy as he returned after a three-game absence due to illness. He said the Sixers (5-6) would overcome the injury absence of James Harden in daunting upcoming games against Atlanta and Milwaukee. In Memphis, Jayson Tatum's 39-point display carried the Boston Celtics to a 109-106 victory over the Grizzlies. Ja Morant scored 30 points for Memphis, including five three-pointers, but Tatum's dynamic performance sealed a battling win for the Celtics. Jaylen Brown added 21 points for Boston, with Al Horford and Marcus Smart scoring 15 apiece. In Miami, Josh Hart drained a three-pointer on the buzzer as the Portland Trail Blazers snatched a 110-107 win against the Heat.

Qatar Is a Mistake

ZURICH (Dispatches) - Sepp Blatter, the former president of FIFA when Qatar was awarded the 2022 World Cup hosting rights in 2010, told Swiss newspaper Tages Anzeiger "Qatar is a mistake," adding that "the choice was bad." The Qatar decision has been marred by controversy, including allegations of corruption and human rights violations, since it was first announced. Blatter, who led FIFA for 17 years, has also been embroiled in accusations of corruption during his tenure. He was cleared of fraud by a Swiss court in June. The prosecutors have appealed the ruling. "It is too small of a country. Football and the World Cup are too big for it," Blatter said of Qatar, the first country in the Middle East to host the tournament. He said FIFA in 2012 amended the criteria it used to select host countries in light of concerns over the working conditions at tournament-related construction sites in Qatar. "Since then, social considerations and human rights are taken into account," he said. Blatter said he will be watching the tournament, which kicks off in less than two weeks, from his home in Zurich.

Garcia Overpowers Sabalenka To Win WTA Finals

FORT WORTH (Dispatches) - France's Caroline Garcia won the biggest title of her career by defeating Aryna Sabalenka 7-6(4) 6-4 to win the WTA Finals in Fort Worth, Texas. Garcia covered her face with her hands and fell on her back after a Sabalenka forehand sailed wide on match point to cap a serving masterclass and earn her fourth title of the year. Both players' thunderous serves were firing early and neither faced a break point in the first set of the final of the season-ending tournament, which features the WTA Tour's top eight players. But in the tiebreaker the Belarusian's second serve, which has bedeviled her at times this season, failed her again — first a costly double fault to fall behind 5-2 and then another on set point. Garcia kept the pressure on from there, breaking to open the second set and coming through a deuce game to seal the win. The 29-year-old was ranked outside the top 70 in mid-June but has since won four titles, made the semi-finals of the U.S. Open and will now rise to a career-high number four.

"Whatever it takes to get a win at this point," Curry said. "There was a sense of desperation coming off that road trip struggling like we did... we still can show that championship kind of grit and competitiveness to pull out a game like that. "We know how to do it — I just needed to light the fire a little bit."



Eriksen Named in Preliminary Denmark Squad for World Cup

COPENHAGEN (Dispatches) - Manchester United midfielder Christian Eriksen, who suffered a cardiac arrest during Euro 2020, was one of 21 players named by Kasper Hjulmand in Denmark's World Cup squad, with the coach set to name the remaining five players in the coming days. The full list must be presented by next Monday at the latest, the day before the team leaves for Qatar. "There are 10 to 12 players competing for the last places," said Hjulmand. "A lot can happen. It's uncertain, but it's the right way to go. There are two games left for many players, and things could change."

Eriksen spent eight months out of the game after collapsing in Denmark's opening game of the European Championships against Finland in Copenhagen on June 12 last year, remaining lifeless for long minutes. He had to be resuscitated on the pitch, lying unconscious for several minutes as the stunned crowd and millions of television viewers around the world watched on in horror. Eriksen spent several days in hospital and had a pacemaker implanted to regulate his heartbeat which necessitated a move from Inter Milan to Brentford in the Premier League. He then scored on his international return against the Netherlands in March. Regulars such as captain Simon Kjaer are on the list although there is no place yet for Leicester defender Jannik Vestergaard and Leipzig striker Yussuf Poulsen. In Group D, Denmark begin their World Cup on November 22 against Tunisia, before meeting France, the defending champions, and Australia.

Alves Makes Brazil World Cup Squad

RIO DE JANEIRO (Dispatches) - Brazil have included 39-year-old defender Daniel Alves but left out Liverpool forward Roberto Firmino in their 26-man World Cup squad which was named by coach Tite. Four years after having been ruled out of the 2018 World Cup in Russia due to a knee ligament injury, long-serving Alves got emotional while celebrating what will be his third tournament with five-times world champions Brazil. "Today is day of victory and I'm very proud because four years ago my tears were due to sadness and today they are of happiness," Alves said in a video posted in his social media. "I can't please everyone, but what I can do is not fail those who trust my dedication and love to this sport and to wear my country's colors." After leaving Barcelona at the end of last season, Alves joined Mexican side Pumas UNAM. However, his last game for Pumas came in September in which he sustained a knee injury that has been troubling him since. He has been working on his recovery with the Barcelona academy medical and technical staff over the last few weeks. "We have been following his recovery from up close and all the data that we have from Barcelona doctors show that he is fit to play," Brazil team physician Fabio Mahseredjian told a news conference in Rio de Janeiro. Tite said Alves still had attributes to offer the team that were not just limited to his years of experience. "He adds technical and tactical aspects that are impressive, to be an organizer, an articulator," Tite said. "Sure, he is not a 60 to 70 meters player anymore, but he has other virtues."



UEFA Repeats Opposition To Super League

LONDON (Dispatches) - UEFA met with A22 Sports, the company backing a proposed European Super League (ESL), in Nyon and once again rejected the idea of a breakaway league, Europe's soccer governing body said. The meeting involved UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin and officials from Europe's top leagues as they met with A22 Sports' new CEO Bernd Reichart and its founders Anas Laghrari and John Hahn. Nasser Al-Khelaifi, European Club Association (ECA) Chairman and Paris St Germain President, also attended the meeting along with the CEOs of several clubs and representatives from supporters' associations. "In line with the unity of European football, UEFA and the participating football stakeholders once again unanimously rejected the rationale underpinning projects such as ESL during today's discussion," UEFA said in a statement. "The participants took note, with surprise, the claims of A22 Sports CEO that this company is not representing any clubs in any capacity, including the three clubs who continue to openly support the project." Real Madrid, Barcelona and Juventus were among 12 clubs to announce a breakaway Super League in April last year but, after a hostile reaction from across the game including fans and governments alike, the move promptly collapsed. All six English clubs -- Manchester City, Manchester United, Arsenal, Liverpool, Chelsea and Tottenham Hotspur -- plus Inter Milan, AC Milan and Atletico Madrid withdrew from the project.

