

Health Ministry Announced on Saturday That the Number of Deaths From the Coronavirus Pandemic in Iran Increased to **144,625** With Five **More** Iranians Killed by the Virus Over the Past 24 Hours

# IRAN NEWS

Russia's Permanent Representative To the Vienna-Based International Organizations Mikhail Ulyanov Described the Recent Resolution Initiated by the U.S. and the E3 In the IAEA as Untimely

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## Gov't Records Lowest Expenditure in West Asia

TEHRAN (MNA) - International Monetary Fund (IMF), in a recent ranking of the world's governments based on the ratio of their expenditure to gross domestic product (GDP), has put Iran in sixth place among 188 countries reviewed.

The fund has estimated the ratio of the Iranian government's expenditure to the country's GDP in 2022 at 12.517 percent.

Based on the IMF data, the Iranian government has had the lowest expenditure among the West Asian nations in 2022.

According to the fund, the world's lowest-spending government in 2022 has been Haiti. The ratio of the total expenses of the Haitian government to the country's gross domestic product in 2022 has been estimated as 10.293 percent.

The governments of Turkmenistan, Sudan, Ethiopia, and Equatorial Guinea are ranked second to fifth respectively.

Among the countries of West Asia, Iran is said to have the least spending government in 2022. Saudi Arabia, which is ranked 65th in the world, is the second least spending government in West Asia. The ratio of Saudi government expenditure to the country's gross domestic product has been announced as 26.858 percent. Qatar has ranked third with 27.63 percent. **See Page 7**

## Iran to Respond to IAEA Resolution

TEHRAN (MNA) - Saying that Iran will adhere to its international laws and obligations, Iran's top diplomat stressed that the country will take reciprocal action against the recent IAEA anti-Iranian resolution.

Hossein Amirabdollahian made the remarks on Saturday in a joint press conference with his Omani counterpart Sayyid Badr al-Busaidi in Tehran.

Referring to his meeting with Sayyid Badr al-Busaidi, the Iranian foreign minister said that they have discussed the latest agreements reached between the heads of the two countries of Iran and Oman.

Noting that Tehran-Muscat relations are based on friendship, the Iranian foreign minister expressed satisfaction with the volume of economic and trade cooperation between the two countries.

"We believe that the countries of the region have the ability to maintain peace and security in the region. We consider the presence of foreign military forces in the region as a threat to the peace and stability of the region. We believe that foreign military forces have become a threat in the Persian Gulf region and the Sea of Oman and to the energy security in the region. Currently, a large number of unmanned vessels belonging to foreign countries are traveling in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman," Amirabdollahian cited. **See Page 7**

## Iran's Progress, Prosperity Unbearable for Arrogant Powers



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN – Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei says arrogant powers are disgruntled by Iran's scientific advances as tremendous progress being achieved by the Islamic Republic is consigning liberal democracy propagated by the West to history.

Ayatollah Khamenei made the remarks in a speech he delivered during a Saturday meeting with a group of people from the central Iranian city of Isfahan in the capital Tehran on Saturday.

"Westerners could loot the entire world for more than two centuries through the discourse of liberal democracy. They made interventions, claiming there was no freedom in one place or there did not exist democracy somewhere else. They plundered the national assets and resources of the country as a result," he said.

"Poor Europe became rich at the expense of many rich countries like India and China. Iran was not directly colonized, but they did everything they could here," the Leader pointed out.

Ayatollah Khamenei said, "Afghanistan is an example just before your own eyes. Americans came and committed crimes in Afghanistan for 20 years. They perpetrated all forms of criminal acts, brought the same government that had overthrown back to power, and withdrew in a humiliating manner."

He went on to hail the Islamic Republic of Iran as the establishment which has rejected the idea of liberal democracy, given its nation an identity, awakened and empowered them, and stood up against Western schools of thought.

Ayatollah Khamenei further noted that West's enmity towards Iran is rooted in the fact that the Islamic Republic continues to make progress, and the whole world acknowledges such advancement – something which the West cannot stand.

"Should we have not made any progress, did not show up a strong presence in the region, our voice had faltered in the face of America and its arrogance and we were ready to accept its bullying, the ongoing pressures would have been much less," the Leader of the Islamic Revolution added.

Ayatollah Khamenei also pointed out that the bids against Iran have been much greater anytime that the Islamic Republic has vociferously opposed its enemies.

The Leader also stressed that Washington has always been at the forefront of the anti-Iran campaign and its European allies are standing behind it.

Ayatollah Khamenei stated that all US presidents, including Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton and Barack Obama, have gone up against Iran in the years following the victory of the 1979 Islamic Revolution, and have relied on the support of the Israeli regime and certain regimes in the region to accomplish their so-called goals.

"Despite all such attempts, enemies have failed on the whole. Of course they have posed problems, such as sanctions, assassination of nuclear scientists, application of various political and security ploys, and even bribed some people inside the country to speak out against the Islamic establishment. But they could not stop the Iranian nation from progressing ahead," the Leader stressed.

Pointing to the enemy's extensive media facilities such as satellite networks, virtual space and mercenary TV channels for shattering people's hopes, the Leader said, "Despite all these attempts, fortunately, hope and movement towards progress in the country is alive."

Ayatollah Khamenei stressed that, "The enemy is trying to make not only the people and the youths, but also the officials lose hope, and unfortunately, the enemy has an internal extension that they are also trying to instill hopelessness and despair by using newspapers and cyberspace."

Touching upon some instances of progress and forward movements in Iran in recent weeks, the Leader recounted Iranian scientists' new method to treat leukemia, localization of one of the oil and gas extraction equipment, opening of a railway line in a part of Sistan and Baluchistan Province, which is an important part of the North-South railway, opening several factories, setting up the first offshore refinery, operating 6 power plants, unveiling one of the largest telescopes in the world, launching a satellite-carrying rocket and unveiling a new rocket.

Ayatollah Khamenei said such achievements were obtained at a time that the enemy was trying to prevent this forward-heading movement with riots.

## Ireland to Press Ahead With Iran Embassy Reopening

DUBLIN (Dispatches) - The Irish Government will press ahead with the reopening of Ireland's embassy in Tehran, despite "longstanding concerns" over recent developments in the country.

Republic of Ireland Foreign Affairs Minister Simon Coveney announced the reopening of the embassy in the Irish capital in 2021, which would see the facility reopen in 2023, some 12 years after it was shut.

However, the recent unrests in Iran has sparked calls from Government representatives to stop the reopening. Speaking to The Irish Examiner on Friday, Mr Coveney said that opening the embassy is "not a reward".

"We are more than concerned at the increasing body of evidence now that Iran has supplied weapons to Russia that are now used to target civilians," he said. **See Page 7**

## ViewPoint

By: Hamid Reza Naghashian

## U.S. Continues "War of Baseless Claims"

The U.S., once so-called world big power, is really on verge of the collapse in all aspects and this country has started a blame game or better to say war of baseless claim against the countries which do not follow this country.

Washington administrations for years have resorted to baseless accusations against the countries which do not follow their path and the Islamic Republic of Iran has been one of the main targets of Washington in the war of baseless claims

In recent decades the U.S. has pursued some conflicts in different parts of the world and especially in the Middle East by resorting to some baseless claims which have even not been verified and confirmed by their own officials and experts.

We have not forgotten the Persian Gulf War which was triggered by the baseless accusation of the U.S. against Iraq as the Americans had accused Baghdad regime of having weapons of mass destruction. The American forces waged the war despite the UN opposition and since then no weapons of mass destruction have been found in Iraq and everybody realized that it was just a pretext for launching attack on Iraq for the dominance of the U.S. over Iraq and in the region.

Then after the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001, the Americans could find new pretexts and claims for their unilateral actions either militarily or financially against the countries and individuals while the U.S. is still considered by many as the mastermind behind this suicidal terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York.

There are many such baseless claims by the U.S. against the countries and all of them have been proved to be baseless after a while.

This tactic of war of baseless claim against the Islamic Republic of Iran has been intensified in recent years and each time by some funny accusation, and wherever any terrorist attack or freedom-seeking act happens, the U.S. immediately attributes it to Iran.

In recent weeks the U.S. had intensified claim that Iran provides Russia with attacking drones while this claim has not been fully confirmed even by the Washington and it is just an assumption. Now Washington has raised another claim against Tehran and has accused Tehran of supplying explosives to Yemeni forces.

The US Navy claimed on Tuesday that Coast Guard ship USCGC John Scheuerman and guided-missile destroyer USS The Sullivans stopped a traditional wooden sailing vessel, known as a dhow, in the Sea of Oman on November 8. **See Page 7**

## Iran Calls on Int'l Community to Condemn Terrorist Incidents

TEHRAN (MNA) In reaction to the recent terrorist attacks in the country, the Iranian Foreign Ministry in a statement called on the international community and forums to condemn terrorist incidents in Iran to prevent further violence.

"In recent days, the noble nation of Iran and the international community witnessed the criminal actions of a group of merciless terrorists against innocent citizens and defenders of the security of Iran in the cities of Izeh, Isfahan and Mashhad. Unfortunately, a number of our dear compatriots, among them innocent women and children, were martyred or injured in these terrorist attacks," the statement read.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran also strongly condemned these sinister terrorist attacks and expressed its condolences to the people of Iran, especially the bereaved families of the martyrs, and prays to the Almighty God for the speedy recovery of the injured.

"Undoubtedly, the deliberate silence of the foreign promoters of chaos and violence in Iran in the face of the most obvious terrorist operations in several Iranian cities has no consequence other than encouraging the terrorists and strengthening terrorism in the world," the statement added. **See Page 7**

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## Iran-Oman Brotherly, Cordial Ties To Further Deepen Relations

TEHRAN (MNA) - President Ebrahim Raisi said that the brotherly, close, and historical ties of Iran and Oman will further reinforce bilateral relations in the future.

Raisi, in a message on the occasion of the Arab country's National Day, congratulated the Omani people and Sultan of Oman Haitham bin Tariq.

In the congratulatory message, Iran's President said that the brotherly, intimate, and historical ties with Oman will further strengthen bilateral relations in the future. November 18 is marked in Oman as National Day to celebrate the birth anniversary of Sultan Qaboos bin Said al Said who governed Oman from 1970 to 2020. The National Day is also called Qaboos's Birthday.

## President Terms Councils Key Pillars of Decision-Making

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN – President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi stated that the city and village councils have a special place in the constitution and stated, “To strengthen the republic system and the principle of paying attention to the will, desire and participation of the people in decision-making, the constitution has introduced council of cities and villages as one of the important pillars of decision-making”.

Speaking on Saturday morning at the 11th session of the Supreme Council of Provinces, Raisi stated that Islamic council of city and village has a special place in the constitution, and said, “To strengthen the republic system and the principle of paying attention to the will, desire and participation of the people in decision-making, the constitution has introduced council of cities and villages as one of the important pillars of decision-making”.

Pointing out that the Islamic councils of city and village are the pillars of the constitution and the interpretation of the pillar in the constitution has an important meaning, the President added, “Also, the role of the councils is in implementing social and economic justice at all levels and fighting poverty, corruption and discrimination”.

Raisi emphasized that the opinions of the councils, as a position representing the people, should be taken into account in the way of budgeting of the village, city or province, and stated, “The council is not the authority that approves the budget, but it is the authority that declares the opinion on the budget and can express an opinion about the budget of the province or city”.

The President mentioned the implementation of justice based on consideration of the document of spatial planning as one of the other important goals of the activities of the councils in the country, and said, “One of the important goals of the councils is the implementation of justice. First of all, it is the government that is obliged to implement justice, and in the Popular Administration we consider ourselves obliged to implement justice, but the councils must also follow the implementation of justice”.

The President considered the opinions of the councils regarding the budget important and clarified, “The opinion of the councils from this point of view can be of great help



to the government in drafting and to the parliament in approving the budget bill”.

Emphasizing that council members should follow the rule of morality and justice in the region they represent, the President said, “These are important ideals and goals that are mentioned in the constitution in some way and council members should always seek to deal with discrimination and corruption and the implementation of justice”.

Ayatollah Raisi added, “The enemy has put a lot of obstacles in the way and has restricted and sanctioned our specialists in every area where they entered. The enemy has even prevented the supply of medicine needed by our patients. We have such an enemy that in the forty-three years that have passed since the revolution, it has always been trying to plot and sedition against our revolution and system”.

The President stated, “The enemy wanted to stop the train of progress of Islamic Iran and we also wanted this train to move fast. This is a battle of wills. The enemy tried their best to realize their will, but they saw that, contrary to their wishes and efforts, Iran's oil exports reached the pre-sanctions levels”.

Raisi pointed out that the Popular Administration tried in two ways to remove and neutralize the sanctions, and said, “The Popular Administration took fundamental steps to increase exports, complete half-finished projects, and implement pending laws and projects, such as the licensing system, which has been pending in the country for 13 years”.

The President added, “The enemy tried to stop or slow down the movement of the government, but according to the interpretation of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution, the enemy saw that the country is progressing all-round, and the government does not rely on outsiders and does not wait for their smiles and frowns”.

Emphasizing that despite the wishes of the enemy and thanks to the pure blood of the martyrs and the efforts of those who serve day and night in this country, we can see the future clearly.

## Enemies' Recent Plots in Khuzestan Province Failed

TEHRAN (PressTV) - First Vice President Mohammad Mokhber says the plots hatched by enemies in the recent incidents in the southwestern province of Khuzestan have proven to be a failure.

“The incident that took place in Izeh was a terrorist incident and we hope that its perpetrators will be arrested soon and decisive action will be taken in dealing with them,” Mokhber said in a session on Friday to address the issues of Khuzestan.

He added that people in Khuzestan would never stop their support for the Islamic establishment and this is the main reason behind the enemies' failure in this province.

According to Mokhber, the Iranian administration is determined to solve the existing problems in Khuzestan and has made good decisions in this regard.

Seven people, including a child and a woman, lost their lives and ten more were wounded after two gunmen started shooting at people in the center of the city located in Khuzestan province on Wednesday.

Head of Khuzestan's court of justice Ali Dehqani said that the three major elements of the terrorist attack have been detained.

Dehqani said efforts are being made to identify and arrest the other elements involved in the heinous crime.

Security officials in Khuzestan Province said that two gunmen on motorbikes started shooting at people and law enforcement officers in the center of the town, using war weapons.

## Exports of Mining Products Exceed \$6.6b in 7 Months

TEHRAN (MNA) – A total of 25.55 million tons of minerals and mining industry products worth \$6.66 billion were exported in the first seven months of the current Iranian year.

New data released by the Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization show that a total of 25.55 million tons of minerals and mining industry products worth \$6.66 billion were exported in the first seven months of the current Iranian year (March 21-Oct. 22), to register a 6% decline in tonnage and a 1% decline in value compared with the similar period of last year.

Steel manufacturing chain products (iron ore, semi-finished and finished steel) topped the list of exports in terms of value with an aggregate of \$3.14 billion, followed by copper and related products worth \$848.2 million and aluminum products worth \$660 million, Financial Tribune reported.

In terms of tonnage, cement and clinker topped the list with 7.48 million tons. The steel category came next with 5.6 million tons and was followed by pellet with 2.22 million tons.

## Iran-Hungary Trade Grows by 55%

TEHRAN (IP) - Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance announced a 55% growth in trade between Iran and Hungary.

The protocol document of the third session of the joint commission for economic cooperation between Iran and Hungary was signed by the Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance of Iran, Ehsan Khandouzi, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Hungary, Peter Siarto.

Khandouzi has traveled to Budapest to participate in the third joint commission of Iran and Hungary.

The two sides noted the 55% growth of trade exchanges between Iran and Hungary, between the second and third meetings of the Joint Economic Cooperation Commission.

Also, in the agriculture field, the two countries had important agreements, and it was decided to sign three cooperation documents in agriculture, animal health and plant quarantine in the near future.

In the field of student exchange, according to Hungary's previous agreements, it had agreed to grant 100 scholarships to Iranian students, and so far, more than 600 students have applied.

Ehsan Khandouzi had gone to Budapest to participate in the third joint commission of Iran and Hungary.

## FAO Reports Double-Digit Growth In Iran Wheat Output

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Figures by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) show production of wheat rose significantly in Iran in the agricultural year of 2022.

Figures published in FAO's global food outlook report showed that Iran produced around 13 million metric tons (mt) of wheat in 2022, up 25% from last year.

The report said increased output enabled Iran to cut back on its wheat imports bill as shipments dropped 37% to 5 million mt this year.

Iran's wheat storage also surged to 8.5 million mt this agricultural year, said the report, adding that wheat has accounted for nearly 77% of Iran's total grains storage in 2022.

FAO figures showed that Iran's total grains output increased by 16% in 2022 to reach 19.5 million mt.

## 2.3m Tons of Commodities Traded On IME Last Week

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) last week witnessed trade of 2,338,802 tons of commodities with a total trading value of more than \$665m on its physical market.



According to a report by the IME's International Affairs and PR, the exchange saw on its metals and minerals trading floor trade of 1,908,000 tons of commodities valued at nearly \$424m.

On this floor the IME sold 1,143,881 tons of cement, 311,000 tons of iron ore, 341,191 tons of steel, 98,000 tons of sponge iron, 8,300 tons of zinc, 7,385 tons of aluminum, 12,898 tons of copper, 200 tons of molybdenum concentrate, 104 kg of gold bars and 678 vehicles.

Furthermore, the IME witnessed on both domestic and export rings of its oil and petrochemical trading floor 412,926 tons of commodities worth more than \$234m.

Commodities traded on this floor included 91,618 tons of polymeric products, 118,000 tons of vacuum bottom, 71,000 tons of lube cut, 35,325 tons of chemicals, 123 tons of sulfur, 200 tons of argon, 6,254 tons of base oil, 200 tons of insulation and 77,188 tons of bitumen.

The IME also traded within the same week 17,335 tons of commodities on its side market.

## Iranian Nation's Rights Violated By U.S. Sanctions on IRIB, Press TV

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani has condemned Washington's recent decision to introduce sanctions targeting the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) and Press TV as a violation of the rights of the Iranian nation.

Taking to Twitter, the Kanaani said the sanctions come while anti-Iran “terrorist media outlets” are free to foment chaos inside Iran through their propaganda campaign.

“Allowing terrorist networks and media outlets to make mischief against the Iranian nation and sanctioning IRIB and Press TV to block Iran's views from being conveyed to the world is the continuation of the American administration's blatant violation of the Iranian nation's rights,” Kanaani wrote in a post in Persian.

“There is no end to America's crimes against independent nations and governments,” he added.

Analyzed as efforts aimed at muzzling free speech and alternative views, the sanctions on Iranian media came amid Press TV's coverage of the recent violent riots and its confrontation with fake narratives fostered by Western media.

The sanctions, imposed by US Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), target IRIB chief Peyman Jebeli, head of IRIB World Service and the CEO of English-language Press TV television news network Ahmad Norouzi, IRIB Vice Director General Mohsen Barmahani, Director of Press TV's Programs Department Yousef Pour-Anvari, as well as IRIB senior correspondents Ali Rezvani and Ameneh Sadat Zabihpour.

IRIB's World Service in general, and Press TV in particular, have played a remarkable role as the counterweight to Western propagandist media for years, demolishing and debunking their lop-sided and unfair coverage of Iran and the region.

Press TV continues to challenge Western narratives and provide cutting-edge journalism based on truth and fairness.

First Announcement

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Items	Material Description	Quantity
01	CASING, API GRADE L-80, SEAMLESS "VAM", "N.VAM" OR "SEC" THREAD, RANGE 3 (MAX LEN :40.5 FT) AS PER API 5CT/ISO11960 SIZE (OD), WEIGHT (PPF), AS SPECIFIED MARKING: COLD DIE STAMPED IN ACCORDANCE WITH API 5CT NOTE: LEVEL OF INSPECTION: 1 (L.O.I:1) "QCP/MPS DOCUMENTS ARE ESSENTIAL TO REVIEW & CONFIRM" "ITP DOCUMENTS IS ESSENTIAL FOR TECHNICAL EVALUATION" 01- 7IN. 29 PPF DRIFT: 6.125"	5000 LE

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tender are requested to send their "Intention To Participate" letter via fax to the following number along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form no.2, available at: [www.nisoc.ir](http://www.nisoc.ir), not later than 14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded.

The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 175,753/36 EURO or 48,000,000,000 RIAL, in favor of NISOC.

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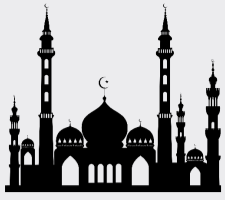
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## PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	11:50
■ Evening (Maghreb)	17:14
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	05:18
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:46

32. "And make him share my task:

33. "That we may celebrate Thy praise without stint,

Surah 20. Ta-ha (32 - 33)

## Attention on Barter Trade, Transport to Boost Iran-Pakistan Trade

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

**TEHRAN -** The head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) considered the attention to barter trade and transit as the basis for the expansion of economic relations between Iran and Pakistan.

Gholam-Hossein Shafei made the remarks in a meeting with Muhammad Sheryar Khan, the Pakistani consul-general in Mashhad.

He also underlined the significant cultural and historical commonalities of Iran and Pakistan, as well as the opportunity of transit cooperation between the two countries with Russia.

Emphasizing the need to develop Iran-Pakistan trade relations and especially the implementation of agreements related to barter trade, the ICCIMA head said: "The economies of Iran and Pakistan complement each other due to the proximity of the two countries, and they have significant capacities for cooperation in this field, the use of which will lead to a jump in bilateral trade."

"During the past two years, the government has taken new measures to develop economic relations with Pakistan, and efforts in the field of preferential trade and moving towards free trade have been put on the agenda. However, there are still problems in the implementation of these programs and economic interactions have not been realized as they should have been", Shafei further noted.

The Pakistani Consul General Muhammad Sheryar Khan, for his part, said, "I believe that the bilateral economic, political and cultural relations between the two countries are getting stronger and strengthening these relations as much as possible



should be a priority for both sides. In this regard, we are ready to pursue any matters at the Pakistani consulate in Mashhad."

Touching upon the problems regarding the transportation and challenges drivers facing, Sheryar stipulated that Pakistan truck drivers have problems for getting Iran visas, expressing hope that during the upcoming talks, both countries could find solutions for the problems of drivers and on the whole the transportation.

He pointed to the importance of the presence of Pakistani traders in economic exhibitions in Mashhad or any part of Iran and noted that presence in such events will boost economic interactions between the traders of the two states and urged Iran Chamber of Commerce to send information and invitations for those exhibitions at least two months before the start of the events.

As announced by the spokesman of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), Iran has exported commodities worth \$704 million to Pakistan during the first seven months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-October 22).

Morteza Emadi put the weight of exported goods at 1.6 million tons, and named petroleum gases, oil bitumen, industrial dry milk, liquefied natural gas and liquefied butane as the major exported products.

## Russian Delegation Visits Shahid Beheshti Port of Chabahar



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

**TEHRAN -** Manager of Lotus Astrakhan Special Economic Zone of Russia paid a visit to Shahid Beheshti Port of Chabahar Port to review investment opportunities and facilities of Chabahar Port.

According to the public relations of General Administration of Ports and Maritime Affairs of Sistan and Baluchistan, a Russian delegation comprised of manager of Lotus Astrakhan Special Economic Zone and representative of Russia's Duma paid a visit to Chabahar Port to study infrastructures and facilities of Chabahar.

The delegation visited infrastructures of the developmental project at Shahid Beheshti Port of Chabahar for studying transit of Russian goods from India and Southeast Asia, and in meeting with director general of Sistan and Baluchistan Ports and Maritime Department Mr. Qasem Asgari Nasab, they reviewed advantages and opportunities of Chabahar Port and role of Chabahar belt in the North-South Corridor.

In the meeting, the director of Ports and Maritime Department pointed to the created infrastructures, discounts and incentives for owners of the goods and investors in the port, adding that there is no restriction for hosting big vessels and offering infrastructural services at Chabahar Port.

Asgari Nasab then pointed to the services which are offered to the domestic and foreign investors in this port.

Meanwhile Sergei Miloshkin, Managing Director of Lotus Astrakhan Special Economic Zone of Russia, said that Chabahar Port is a very important port in the goods transportation system which can be used for the transit of goods to Russia and Central Asian states.

## ESCO to Provide Rails for Mashhad Urban Trains

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

**ISFAHAN -** The CEO of Esfahan Steel Company (ESCO) Mr. Iraj Rokhsati and Mayor of Mashhad Seyed Abdollah Arjaee signed a document on cooperation for providing national rails for the Mashhad urban train racks.

In the ceremony which was held in the municipality of Mashhad, Eng. Rokhsati pointed to the trend of steel production in Iran and said that before the victory of the Islamic Revolution, the amount of steel production in Iran was just 500,000 tons and the amount has increased to around 30m tons after the revolution.

He added that ESCO by providing rails for the big projects of Islamic Republic of Iran Railways has helped development of railway fleet, noting that ESCO owns the technology of manufacturing different rails for metro trains, and with receiving orders from officials of metro companies in cities it can provide the required amount of rails by them in the shortest time possible and deliver it to them.

Rokhsati added that rail basket of this company will be completed very soon, adding that



He reiterated that developing the urban train system can resolve major part of citizens. Arjaee reiterated that ESCO with its production has been source of pride for any Iranian for long time and he believes in the capabilities of ESCO as the company will make Mashhad Municipality needless of imports from other countries.

very soon rail switch which is required by the national rail transport will be provided to the customers with high standards and good quality.

He went on to say that production growth and the average steel production in the country has appropriate acceleration and ESCO with producing 12 new products are moving towards producing special and value increasing products and to this end, without any doubt it relies on the capabilities of its staff.

Then Mayor of Mashhad Mr. Arjaee said that the rails produced by ESCO have high quality with lower prices comparing to its foreign rivals, adding that providing rails is one of the important issues in developing Mashhad's urban train system that production of rails by ESCO has resolved this problem.

## Development in Copper Industry, Economic Boom Requires Efforts of Elites



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

**TEHRAN -** The CEO of National Iranian Copper Industries Company (NICICO) in meeting with elites of university students of Kerman Province said that there are good opportunities for developing copper industry to earn more forex and urged the elites to enter this industry and flourish national economy.

Dr. Ali Rostami said that in the field of copper, the country has discovered 7% of its copper reserves, adding that regarding recent discoveries and efforts of his colleagues in the copper group, it has reached 19b tons of mineral material and the company can definitely use the existing opportunities and it should try hard for new discoveries and mineral reserves.

He noted that most of copper reserves is in Kerman and Azarbaijan provinces, adding that copper mines have also been discovered in Yazd and Sistan and Bauchestan provinces and extraction operation is underway there. He reiterated that attention of investors should be directed on focusing on the field of exploration.

He noted that last year, some 130,000 meters of drilling was held in the field of exploration and it has increased to 200,000 meters this year. He added that 45 new drilling machines have been purchased and six of them have been installed and on the whole a great job has been done in exploration.

Rostami noted that the launch of two reference laboratories in the copper industry is underway that one is in Kerman and the other in Azarbaijan and they will be inaugurated on the eve of the Islamic Revolution Victory anniversary festivities in February.

He invited Basijis, academics and graduates in the field of mines to cooperation and said that NICICO welcomes arrival of experts and skillful Basijis to this field, noting that for increasing discovery from 7% to 15%, capacities should be multiplied to reach the goal. He also said that production and extraction capabilities of NICICO should become four-fold.

## NIOC Mulling €30m Oil Megaprojects

**TEHRAN (Shana) --** The Director of Research and Technology of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) said the company has defined 10 oil and gas megaprojects with a total value of €30 million and Rls. 1,500 billion.

According to NIOC, Mahdia Motahari said: "With the approval of the NIOC Board of Directors, a list of 14 strategic items required by the oil industry have been prepared based on the product management of NIOC, and the related licensing rounds will be held in the near future."

He added: "This list can generate a turnover of several hundred million dollars inside the country and be effective in the formation of knowledge-based and technological companies."

The Director of Research and Technology of NIOC announced the definition of 10 megaprojects in the field of oil and gas exploration in the company, and said: "These projects are worth €30 million and Rls. 1,500 billion and will effectively contribute to job creation and technology development in the country."

Motahari further underlined the cooperation between the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology and NIOC as an effective step in improving the scientific level in the country, and said: "About 80% of the research projects assigned to the Ministry of Science concern the projects of the oil industry."

According to him, in addition, effective measures have been taken by NIOC in the field of supporting students, including the approval of the company's board of directors to grant scholarships to doctoral students.

## MSC Expanding Supporting Umbrella Over Knowledge-Based Companies

ISFAHAN - The CEO of IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

Mobarakeh Steel Technology and Innovation Support and Development (MSTID) touched upon the actions of this company for developing environment, technology and innovation and said that MSTID has done good jobs since the beginning of the year in different fields for developing environment, technology and innovation in the country.

Yahya Palizdar said that in the field of developing the infrastructure either in terms of physical infrastructures or in terms of developing financial tools, the company has done good actions. He added that in the field of developing the physical infrastructures, the 3,000-meter Mobarakeh Steel Company ecosystem development is one of the important actions of the company this year, and it is predicted that in the next stage, this amount of



infrastructures will increase to 10,000 meters.

He pointed to the other earmarked credits like 20b tomans for supporting the research and technology fund of Isfahan and the money will be used in support of environment, technology and innovation of Isfahan Province.

He then pointed to the good actions of the company in the field of accelerators in the field of Isfahan Province and it is to be launched by the yearend.

Palizdar stipulated that since the beginning of the year, MSTID has invested in three knowledge-based companies and by the yearend, investment on 10 more companies will be put on the agenda. He reiterated that the company is also to support the activities of at least 40 knowledge-based companies.

## Good News for Big Family of Khorasan Steel Co.

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

**TEHRAN -** The CEO of Khorasan Steel Complex Company (KSC) announced good news for his colleagues in the company and the big family of Khorasan Steel Company.

Kasra Ghafoori said that since the beginning of the current year due to the round-the-clock efforts of his colleagues in the company, some records and growth have been set in four production units of the company and it has led to successes in growth in providing raw materials, production and sales and the company has taken some actions to boost the spirit of personnel and boosting excellence and favorable development in the human resources of the company through reviewing the organizational chart and job classification.

He also hailed the board of directors for letting him honor 2560 personnel of the company and give them promotions due to their efforts.

He expressed hope by implementing some plans in the country, the company would see bright future in the future through boosting productivity and hardworking as the company is the biggest industry pole in east country.





# Saudi Crown Prince Immune From Khashoggi Suit



WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - The US government recommended that Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman was immune from legal action over the 2018 murder of a dissident journalist, according to court documents.

Prince Mohammed was named prime minister by royal decree in late September, sparking suggestions he was looking to skirt exposure in cases filed in foreign courts -- including a civil action brought in the US by Haticce Cengiz, fiancée of slain columnist Jamal Khashoggi.

The killing four years ago of Khashoggi, a Saudi insider-turned-critic, in the kingdom's Istanbul consulate temporarily turned Prince Mohammed -- widely known as MBS -- into a pariah in the West.

# 11 Killed in Iraq Gas Tank Explosion



SULAIMANIYAH (Dispatches) - Rescuers searched for more victims after a fuel tank explosion that killed at least 11 people and caused a house to collapse in northern Iraq, according to local authorities.

The blast in Sulaimaniyah occurred Thursday evening and left at least 11 dead and 13 injured, the city's emergency response chief Saman Nader told AFP.

He blamed the blast on "a gas leak from a tank".

Much of war-ravaged Iraq's infrastructure is dilapidated and tragedies are common. The country also suffers from poorly enforced safety standards, particularly in the transport and construction sectors.

# North Korea Fires Long-Range Missile Landing Near Japan



SEOUL (Dispatches) - North Korea test-fired an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) that Japanese officials said had sufficient range to reach the mainland of the United States and that landed just 200 kilometers (130 miles) off Japan.

The launch, reported by both South Korean and Japanese officials, comes a day after a smaller missile launch by the North and its warning of "fiercer military responses" to the U.S. boosting its regional security presence.

U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris and leaders of Japan, South Korea, Canada, Australia and New Zealand condemned the launch at an emergency meeting called on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit.

"We strongly condemn these actions and we again call for North Korea to stop further unlawful, destabilizing acts," Harris said during the meeting, convened to discuss the launch.

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida warned of further missile launches by the North and a possible nuclear test, the Japanese government said in a statement.

Harris is in Thailand for the APEC summit, amid heightened geopolitical tensions over the war in Ukraine and other flashpoints such as Taiwan and the Korean peninsula.

Friday's launch adds to a record-breaking year for North Korea's missile program, after it resumed testing ICBMs for the first time since 2017 and broke its self-imposed moratorium on long-range launches as denuclearisation talks stalled.

"Pyongyang is trying to disrupt international cooperation against it by escalating military tensions and suggesting it has the capability of holding American cities at risk of nuclear attack," said Leif-Eric Easley, a professor at Ewha University in Seoul.

North Korea's stepped-up development and testing of missiles also indicates that, despite its dire poverty and sanctions by the United Nations as well as the United States and other nations, it has faced few hurdles obtaining the technology and materials it needs for its missile program.

The South Korean military said that, in response to Friday's launch, South Korean F-35A fighters and U.S. F-16 jets flew in formation off the east coast of the Korean Peninsula and conducted a firing drill against targets that simulated North Korea's mobile missile launchers.

Japanese Defence Minister Yasukazu Hamada told reporters on Friday that the missile was capable of flying as far as 15,000 km, while Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno said it flew to an altitude of about 6,000 km with a range of 1,000 km, before landing in the sea roughly 200 kilometres west of Oshima-Oshima Island in Hokkaido.

South Korea's military projected that the missile reached an altitude of 6,100 km and flew 1,000 km at a maximum speed of Mach 22.

North Korea often conducts its tests on such "lofted" trajectories where the missile flies much higher into space but to a shorter distance than it would if fired on a normal trajectory. Misawa Air base, which hosts both Japanese and U.S. troops, briefly issued an order to seek cover, according to a post on the base's Facebook page.

Kishida said there had been no reports of damage but the North's repeated missile launches could not be tolerated.

South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol condemned the launch and called for stronger defence readiness and security cooperation with the United States and Japan.

# Macron Rejects Confrontation as He Relaunches Asia Strategy



BANGKOK (Dispatches) - French President Emmanuel Macron urged an end to "confrontation" as he relaunched his strategy for the Asia-Pacific region after a bitter row over a cancelled submarine contract with Australia.

In a speech on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit, Macron cast France as a balancing power in a region long dominated by the superpower tussle between China and the United States.

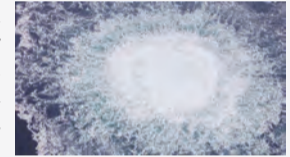
The APEC summit comes days after a high-stakes meeting between US President Joe Biden and Chinese leader Xi Jinping took some heat out of their escalating rivalry.

Tensions between Washington and Beijing have risen sharply in recent years over the future of self-governing Taiwan, human rights, trade and China's increasing assertiveness.

"We don't believe in hegemony, we don't believe in confrontation, we believe in stability," Macron said.

Regional powers including Paris -- which has overseas territories in the Indian and Pacific oceans, including Reunion, New Caledonia and French Polynesia -- should play a role, he said.

# Sweden Confirms Nord Stream Pipeline Sabotage



STOCKHOLM (Dispatches) - Swedish officials confirmed that the September blasts which destroyed sections of the Nord Stream pipelines carrying natural gas from Russia to Germany under the Baltic Sea were acts of sabotage.

"The analyses conducted found traces of explosives on several foreign objects" found at the sites of the blasts, prosecutor Mats Ljungqvist who is leading the preliminary investigation said in a statement.

Ljungqvist added that technical analyses were continuing in order to "draw more reliable conclusions regarding the incident."

Sweden's Prosecution Authority said that the "continued investigation will show if anyone can be formally suspected of a crime."

Four large gas leaks were discovered on Nord Stream's two pipelines off the Danish island of Bornholm at the end of September, with seismic institutes recording two underwater explosions just prior. Investigators had already said that preliminary inspections had reinforced suspicions of sabotage.

While the leaks were in international waters, two of them were in the Danish exclusive economic zone and two of them in Sweden's.

At the end of October, Nord Stream sent a Russian-flagged civilian vessel to inspect the damage in the Swedish zone.

The pipelines, which connect Russia to Germany, have been at the centre of geopolitical tensions as Russia cut gas supplies to Europe in suspected retaliation to Western sanctions over Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

Although the pipelines were not in operation when the leaks occurred, they both still contained gas which spewed up through the water and into the atmosphere.

Washington and Moscow have both denied any involvement and each has pointed the finger at the other.

# Russia Warms to U.S. Prisoner Swap for Arms Trader Bout

LONDON (Dispatches) - Russia said it hoped to clinch a prisoner swap with the United States to return convicted Russian arms trafficker Viktor Bout, known as the "Merchant of Death", in an exchange that would likely include U.S. basketball star Brittney Griner.

Amid the deadliest war in Europe since World War Two, Russia and the United States are exploring a deal that could see imprisoned Americans including Griner return to the United States in exchange for Bout.

"I want to hope that the prospect not only remains but is being strengthened, and that the moment will come when we will get a concrete agreement," Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov was quoted as saying by Interfax.

"The Americans are showing some external activity, we are working professionally through a special channel designed for this," Ryabkov said. "Viktor Bout is among those who are being discussed, and we certainly count on a positive result."

For the two former Cold War foes, now grappling with the gravest confrontation since the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, the exchange would mark one of the more extraordinary prisoner swaps in their history.

The distinctly upbeat remarks from Ryabkov, the foreign ministry's point man for the Americas and arms control, contrast with previous statements from Moscow

which have cautioned Washington against trying to engage in megaphone diplomacy over the prisoner swap.

The possible swap includes Griner, facing nine years behind bars in Russia after being convicted on drug charges, and Paul Whelan who is serving a 16-year sentence in Russia after being convicted of espionage charges that he denies.

Various dubbed "the merchant of death" and "the sanctions buster" for his ability to get around arms embargoes, Bout was one of the world's most wanted men prior to his 2008 arrest on multiple charges related to arms trafficking.

For almost two decades, Bout was one of the world's most notorious arms dealers, selling weaponry to rogue states, rebel groups and murderous warlords in Africa, Asia and South America.

But in 2008, Bout was snared in an elaborate U.S. sting. Bout was caught on camera agreeing to sell undercover U.S. agents posing as representatives of Colombia's leftist FARC guerrillas 100 surface-to-air missiles, which they would use to kill U.S. troops.

Shortly afterwards, he was arrested by Thai police.

Bout was tried on the charges related to FARC, which he denied, and in 2012 was convicted and sentenced by a court in Manhattan to 25 years in prison, the minimum sentence possible.

Ever since, the Russian state has been keen to get him back.



# Malaysia's Anwar Tries To Lock in Lead In Close Election Race



KUALA LUMPUR (Dispatches) - Anwar Ibrahim has ramped up campaigning this week to be Malaysia's prime minister, buoyed by polls putting the veteran opposition leader ahead in a closely fought contest.

Saturday's general election looked to be the Southeast Asian nation's tightest since independence in 1957, with opinion polls predicting a hung parliament as no party or coalition is expected to get the simple majority needed to form a government.

The coalition led by Anwar - who in 25 years has gone from the heir apparent of Malaysia's longest-serving leader to a prisoner convicted of sodomy to the country's leading opposition figure - is expected to win the most seats but fall short of a majority, polls and analysts say.

Rival alliances, including those run by Prime Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob and former premier Muhyiddin Yassin, could come together to clinch the required numbers and deny Anwar the top job.

The top issues for voters are the economic outlook, with growth expected to slow, and rising inflation. Many Malaysians are also frustrated with recent political instability that they think has taken politicians' focus away off economic development.

Anwar's Pakatan Harapan coalition is forecast to secure the largest share of votes at 35%, according to a survey by British research firm YouGov on Wednesday. The Perikatan alliance led by Muhyiddin is on course for 20% and Ismail's Barisan Nasional 17%, the survey showed.

Ismail's and Muhyiddin's alliances are part of the ruling coalition but contesting the election separately.

Anwar, a former finance minister and deputy prime minister, has appeared at big rallies vowing to create political stability, heal divisions between the Muslim-majority Malays and other ethnic groups and restore the economy by bringing in jobs and investment.

"This election is not about changing the prime minister," Anwar said in an address on Thursday. "This election is the best chance to save the country and make sweeping changes to restore our beloved nation."



## NASA Launches Mega Moon Rocket, Ushering New Era of Exploration



MIAMI (Dispatches) - NASA launched the most powerful rocket ever built on a journey to the Moon today, in a spectacular blaze of light and sound that marked the start of the space agency's new flagship program, Artemis.

The 32-story tall Space Launch System (SLS) blasted off from the storied Kennedy Space Center in Florida at 01.47am (0647 GMT/2.47pm Malaysian time), producing a record 8.8 million pounds (39 meganewtons) of thrust. "What you have done today will inspire generations to come, thank you!" Charlie Blackwell-Thompson, Nasa's first female launch director, told cheering teammates.

Fixed to the rocket's top was the uncrewed Orion spaceship that will orbit Earth's nearest neighbour, in a test run for later flights that should see the first woman and first person of colour touch down on lunar soil by the mid-2020s.

America last sent astronauts to the Moon during the Apollo era, from 1969-1972.

This time it hopes to build a sustained presence — including a lunar space station — to help prepare for an eventual mission to Mars in the 2030s.

There were nervous moments as teams worked to overcome technical issues that ate into the two-hour launch window, which opened at 1.04am.

First, engineers were forced to pause the flow of liquid hydrogen into the core stage last night because of a valve leak, but a team sent to the launch pad resolved the issue after about an hour, by tightening loose bolts.

Later, the space agency reported that a radar site monitoring the rocket's flight path was experiencing problems due to a faulty ethernet switch, which had to be replaced.

It was third time lucky for Nasa after two previous launch attempts were canceled for technical reasons. Launch was also delayed due to weather setbacks, including Hurricane Ian that battered Florida in late September.

About 100,000 people were expected to have gathered along the coast to witness the historic event.

Todd Garland, 55, drove from Frankfurt, Kentucky to watch from Cocoa Beach.

Wearing an Artemis T-shirt, he told AFP tearfully: "This has been an experience I've looked forward to all my life. "My first memory is my mother waking me up at two-years-old to watch the Moon landing and I've always wanted to see a launch ever since, and now I have."

Kerry Warner, 59, a grandmother and semi-retired educator who lives in Florida, added the launch was "part of America and what America is all about."

The Orion crew capsule was lifted by two boosters and four powerful engines under the core stage, which detached after just a few minutes.

A final push from the upper stage will set the capsule on its way to the Moon, though it will take several days to reach its destination.

The upper stage will meanwhile release 10 cubesats to carry out science experiments, including one that will unfurl a sail powered by sunlight and perform asteroid reconnaissance work.

Rather than landing on the Moon, Orion will assume a distant orbit, venturing 40,000 miles (64,000 kilometres) beyond the far side — further than any other habitable spacecraft so far.

Finally, the spaceship will embark on the return leg of its journey. When passing through the atmosphere, the capsule's heat shield will need to withstand a temperature half as hot as the Sun's surface.

Though Orion isn't carrying humans this time, it has three sensor-equipped dummies on board to help gather safety data for future crew members.

## Climate Change Set To Increase Hunger In Africa



SHARM EL SHEIKH (Dispatches) - As COP27 delegates in Egypt debate planet-heating emissions, the climate crisis is exacerbating devastating hunger across several African nations and will worsen further without urgent action, the UN said.

"If drastic measures are not taken urgently, hunger will increase as climate change is felt everywhere, most intensely in vulnerable areas, such as Sudan," said Zitouni Ould-Dada, from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Sudan is among the East African nations facing "acute food insecurity", the Famine Early Warnings Systems Network warned earlier this month, highlighting the dire situation, especially in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia.

As the COP27 summit opened, a joint statement from over a dozen UN agencies and major charities warned the Horn of Africa was gripped by the "longest and most severe drought in recent history", warning that parts of Somalia are "projected to face famine".

Africa is home to some of the countries least responsible for carbon emissions but hardest hit by an onslaught of weather extremes.

Sudan, like many other countries on the continent, has been hit hard in recent years by erratic weather patterns -- harsh droughts and searing temperatures followed by torrential rains.

Around a third of the population, over 15 million people, will need aid next year, the highest level for over a decade, according to the World Food Program (WFP).

The climate summit in Egypt, billed as the "African COP", must be where the continent's food security is addressed, said Ould-Dada, deputy director of the FAO's Climate and Environment Division.

But despite the vast resources of the continent, many nations are reliant on importing food, Ould-Dada added. "It does not make sense for Africa to import 40 percent of its wheat from Russia and Ukraine when it itself is so rich in resources," he said, on the sidelines of the climate talks in Egypt's Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh.

"It takes political will to fight poverty and hunger globally."

The FAO recently agreed a \$10 million project with Sudan's forestry authority to help support farmers, including by protecting crucial gum arabic trees -- which provide a key ingredient for fizzy drinks -- to combat rapid desertification.

Sudan is already struggling with what experts and activists say is the result of shifting weather patterns: worsening conflicts over scarce land and water resources.

Though linking the heating planet to conflict is complex, the International Crisis Group calls climate change "a threat multiplier" that increases "food insecurity, water scarcity and resource competition, while disrupting livelihoods and spurring migration."

Sudan is the world's fifth most vulnerable country to the impacts of climate change, according to a 2020 ranking in the Global Adaptation Index, compiled by Notre Dame University in the United States.

Increasing demands on dwindling natural resources have fuelled inter-ethnic conflict in Sudan, including the 2003 war that erupted in the arid western region of Darfur.

While a peace deal for Darfur was struck in 2020 with key rebel groups, violence continues.

With agriculture and livestock accounting for 43 percent of employment and 30 percent of GDP, conflicts over livestock and access to water and land continue.

According to the UN, 800 people have been killed this year and more than 260,000 displaced in conflict across Sudan.



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## Indian Refiners Becoming Wary of Buying Russian Oil

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - Indian refiners are wary of buying Russia crude oil loading after December 5 when European Union sanctions take effect, pending clarity on the proposed G7 price cap mechanism, according to sources familiar with the refiners' crude purchase plans.

Chinese refiners have already begun slowing down Russian oil imports from next month. The Asian giants, who are two of the world's top three importers, had become Russia's biggest customers after the West shunned Russian oil after the outbreak of war in Ukraine.



## UK Faces Record Hit To Living Standards as Tax Hikes Loom



LONDON (Dispatches) - Britain faces a record hit to living standards this year as surging inflation erodes incomes, the country's budget forecasters warned, after finance minister Jeremy Hunt announced more pain, with tax rises now and spending cuts further ahead.

In a bid to restore Britain's fiscal reputation after the chaos caused by former Prime Minister Liz Truss's plans for sweeping tax cuts, Hunt outlined a budget program to save 55 billion pounds a year to fix the public finances.

Almost half the belt-tightening is due to come from tax increases, prompting some protests from within Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's ruling Conservative Party, which faces a national election within two years.

Already struggling to adjust to life outside the European Union, Britain's economy was suffering from high inflation and a slowing global economy even before Truss sent financial markets into convulsions. It is the only Group of Seven economy yet to recover its pre-COVID size and income growth was near-stagnant for a decade ahead of the pandemic.

The Office for Budget Responsibility said household disposable incomes would fall by 4.3% in the current financial year and by 2.8% in 2023/24, the sharpest declines in records dating back to the 1950s.

That two-year slump would wipe out all the growth in living standards over the eight years to 2022, the OBR said. Millions of Britons are already grappling with a cost of living crisis. Inflation was 11.1% in October, a 41-year high.

But Hunt said painful fiscal medicine was needed for Britain to maintain the recent return of calm to financial markets, even if most of the belt-tightening is delayed until past 2024, when the next national election is expected.

The OBR said the tax burden was on course to reach 37.1% of GDP in five years' time, its highest sustained level since World War Two, up from 33.1% in the 2019-20 tax year.

"Credibility cannot be taken for granted and yesterday's inflation figures show we must continue a relentless fight to bring it down, including an important commitment to rebuild the public finances," Hunt told parliament.

Hunt said the economy was already in recession and set to shrink next year as it struggles with inflation forecast to average 9.1% this year and 7.4% in 2023 before falling sharply. Sterling was down 1.1% against the dollar and 0.5% against the euro at 4:40 p.m. (1640 GMT), as investors assessed the scale of retrenchment, which looked more severe than anything planned by other big rich economies.

"The UK remains somewhat of a difficult place to judge right now," Marcus Brookes, chief investment officer at Quilter Investors, said. "We are not necessarily at the end of the train of bad news and with a prolonged recession priced in we may need to wait for a more sustained downward path of inflation."

Ratings agency Moody's, which last month warned it could downgrade Britain's credit rating after Truss's short but tumultuous spell as prime minister, said Hunt's plan was a "further step" towards fixing the public finances.

"However, the polarised domestic political environment and heightened policy unpredictability may undermine efforts to deliver on fiscal consolidation," Moody's senior credit officer Evan Wohlmann said.

Jacob Rees-Mogg, a leading minister under Truss, said he was "particularly concerned" about the tax rises. Other Conservative Party lawmakers supported the plan.

## Europe Sales Rose 14% in October

LONDON (Dispatches) - Auto sales in Europe rose for a third month in October as supply-chain issues eased, though there is growing concern that deteriorating economic conditions are beginning to put off buyers.

New-car registrations increased 14 percent to 910,753 vehicles last month in the EU, UK and EFTA markets, industry association ACEA said Thursday.

The industry returned to growth in August after 12 consecutive months of decline.

Volkswagen Group, the region's top-selling automaker, was the standout performer for the month, with a 40 percent jump from a year ago. No. 2 Stellantis saw sales drop by 1.8 percent while No. 3 Hyundai Group was down 4.9 percent.

While automakers are having a somewhat easier time securing semiconductors and other components that have been in short supply, the region's energy crisis is driving up costs and standing in the way of a more substantial recovery.

Last month's sales compared with an abysmal performance a year ago and were well below levels a few years back.

"Even with some improvement assumed next year, the market will remain far below what was considered normal operating volume pre-pandemic," LMC Automotive analysts wrote in a report last week.



Europe is bracing for a grim winter as double-digit inflation grips the region. Germany, the area's biggest economy, is expected to contract while France, Italy and Spain may expand only slightly. In the UK, where car sales are on course for the worst year since 1982, inflation hit a 41-year high last month.

Manufacturers in the region are starting to see signs consumers are taking pause, with Stellantis flagging a slight pullback in purchases. BMW similarly warned the region is on the back foot, with a leveling off in demand being more pronounced in northern European countries.

High-end luxury vehicles have been relatively resilient, and automakers are still benefiting from unfilled orders accumulated during the height of their supply-chain crises.

## China's Economy to Pick Up in H2 2023

BEIJING (Dispatches) - Goldman Sachs renewed its forecast regarding China's gross domestic product (GDP) growth, saying the country is likely to rebound by the second half of 2023 and into 2024, according to a Bloomberg report.

The report said the forecast was based on assumptions that the country is likely to begin reopening in April next year from strict coronavirus measures as part of Beijing's "zero-COVID policy."

Annualized quarter-on-quarter growth is expected to reach 10% in the June-September period next year from just 2% in the second quarter, Goldman's economists estimated. Accordingly, they expect to grow by 4.5% in 2023, rebounding from an expected 3% this year and to further expand by 5.3% in 2024.

"The Chinese economy is likely to display a distinct 'two halves' next year," the report stated, adding that the country is set to stay beneath full-year growth acceleration.

They also pointed out that China's growth is expected to experience a similar pattern of growth as other East Asian economies including South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong have seen this year.

These economies' real private consumption fell during the first quarter of their respective reopenings, yet was followed by a recovery in the second quarter as COVID-19 case numbers dropped and the fear factor faded away.

China's fiscal policy to stay accommodative in the first half of next year before normalizing in the following six months, when consumption and services are expected to "rebound sharply," according to Goldman Sachs.

## Default Risk Soars in Pakistan Amid Political Turmoil

KARACHI (dispatches) - The country's default risk as measured by five-year credit-default swaps (CDS) — insurance contracts that protect an investor against a default — rose sharply overnight amid political turmoil and uncertainty about talks with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The CDS soared to 75.5 percent on Wednesday from 56.2pc a day ago, according to data provided by research firm Arif Habib Limited.

Official sources in Washington said last week the schedule for talks between Pakistan and the IMF had been readjusted, but the negotiations are continuing. Media reports, however,

claimed that the talks that were scheduled to begin in early November had been postponed until the third week of this month.

According to these reports, the talks would resume after Pakistan fulfilled its pledge to adjust sales tax on petroleum products and took other measures required under a loan agreement revived earlier this year.

But official sources, who spoke to Dawn, had said the talks were rescheduled after last month's release of a World Bank report on flood damages in Pakistan.

Pakistan is scheduled to pay \$1 billion on Dec 5 against the maturity of five-year sukuk, or Islamic bonds. The finance minister has repeatedly assured for sukuk payment, but the international market is not ready to rely on assurances as the country's economy struggles to avoid default by borrowing more from the markets, donors, commercial banks and friendly countries.

The day-to-day increase in the CDS reflects a grave situation, making it increasingly difficult for the government to raise foreign exchange from markets either through bonds or commercial borrowings.

The country requires \$32bn to \$34bn this fiscal year to meet its foreign obligations.

Financial experts said the country still needed about \$23bn through the remaining fiscal year.

Pakistan is still in the IMF programme, which enables it to get inflows from the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.

Pakistan had promised the IMF to bring down the fiscal deficit by Rs1,500bn in the current fiscal year, but the situation is worsening as the deficit expanded in the first quarter.

The financial sector said the Fund was demanding new taxes to increase liquidity and avoid fiscal deficit expansion.

The government requires at least Rs800bn, which is only possible through new taxes, something that can be difficult for the government amid a faltering economy and political unrest.

## Saudi Aramco to Invest in \$7b Petchem Project in South Korea

SEOUL (Dispatches) - Saudi Aramco said it plans to invest in a \$7 billion project to produce petrochemicals from crude oil at its South Korean affiliate S-Oil Corp's refining complex in the port city of Ulsan.

The project, named Shaheen, is the Saudi company's biggest investment in South Korea and will mark the first commercial use of Aramco and Lummus technology to produce chemicals from crude, Aramco said in a statement.

The construction of the complex, to produce up to 3.2 million tons per year (tpy) of petrochemicals, will begin in 2023 and be completed by 2026, Aramco said. The chemicals-to-crude unit will have a capacity of 46,000 barrels per day while the capacity of the cracker unit is 1.8 million tpy.

Saudi Aramco owns more than 60% of S-Oil.

On completion of the project, S-Oil's chemical yield, by volume, could almost double to 25%, Aramco said.

Global petrochemical demand growth is "anticipated to accelerate, driven in part by rising consumption from Asia's emerging economies," Chief Executive Amin Nasser said in the statement, which coincided with Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's visit to South Korea on Thursday.

Asia's petrochemical sector has faced headwinds this year as slower demand from China forced cracker operators to cut output.

"Eventually demand continues to grow ... you will at some point need a wave of petchems to meet that demand," Armaan Ashraf, global head of NGLs at consultancy FGE, said.

The project provides an outlet for Saudi oil while improving S-Oil's long-term competitiveness as gasoline demand is expected to decline as electric vehicle use increases, analysts said.

"The Shaheen project will increase chemical yields while reducing operating costs, thus making it more competitive especially in a low-margin environment," Refinitiv analyst Chua Sok Peng said.

The companies first signed a memorandum of understanding in 2019 for the Ulsan project, which was then valued at \$6 billion.

## Ankara Top Choice as Arms Provider to Africa



ANKARA (Dispatches) - An exclusive report by Middle East Eye (MEE), released on November 16, has detailed the boost in Turkish arms sales to several African countries over the past few years, signifying Ankara's growing role as a leading weapons provider.

According to the report, Algeria is currently on the brink of signing an agreement with Turkey to purchase its Anka-10 drones, produced by Turkish Aerospace Industries (TAI). The North African country's regional rival, Morocco, reportedly also ordered a fleet of 13 Bayraktar TB2 drones in 2021.

Last year, Niger became the first overseas customer to order the Hurkus turboprop attack plane, also produced by TAI. Chad and Libya have ordered the aircraft as well, MEE reports, with Nigeria and Ethiopia also acquiring Turkish-made drones and patrol boats.

"Turkey's defense equipment exports to Africa are completely unprecedented in terms of quantity, quality, value, and reach ... This reality should not be separated from the rise of Ankara's influence in the continent and its strategy to strengthen the political, economic, and security ties with several African countries," Dr. Ali Bakir of the US-based Atlantic Council think-tank said.

Bakir also made the point that the lack of colonial history between Turkey and sub-Saharan Africa in particular makes Ankara's weapons sales to the continent attractive. Other factors include cheap prices, as well as the fact that Turkish weapons have been tried and battle-tested in a number of international conflicts, including the war in Syria and in Ukraine.

Reinforcing his comments, the Director of Strategy and Innovation at the Newline Institute, Nicholas Heras, told MEE that Turkey's defense industry "has a proven ability to produce weapons systems quickly, efficiently, and in bulk."

Heras added that Turkish arms and military equipment are appealing to African states, as they do not come with "human rights strings attached," or political conditions, as opposed to US arms, which make their way to countries within Washington's political sphere of influence.

On 28 October, Turkish defense company Baykar — the manufacturer of Ankara's Bayraktar drones — announced its plans to complete the construction of a drone manufacturing plant in Ukraine. A month earlier, Ankara delivered 20 drones to the UAE.

Other countries, including Malaysia and Indonesia, have expressed an interest in buying Turkish drones.



## IRGC Quds Force Commander Meets Iraqi Grand Mufti

TEHRAN (MNA) - The commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Quds Force on Friday met and held talks with the Grand Mufti of Iraq Mahdi bin Ahmed Al-Sumaidaie in Baghdad. The Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Baghdad Mohammad Kazem Al-e Sadegh was also present in the meeting of Brigadier General Esmail Ghaani and the Grand Mufti of Iraq.

Iraqi news sources on Tuesday afternoon reported that Brigadier General Esmail Ghaani has held meetings with the Iraqi president and prime minister in Baghdad. During the meeting with Iraq's President Abdul Latif Rashid, Brigadier General Esmail Ghaani stressed Iran's support for the new Iraqi government.



# Fixing Climate Trumps Economic Woes, Threat of War

SHARM EL SHEIKH (Dispatches) - Government action to curb global warming should be a top concern despite inflation, an energy crisis and nuclear saber-rattling by Russia, according to a YouGov survey in wealthy nations published exclusively by AFP. Carried out before the COP27 climate summit in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, the survey found that more than half of respondents in France, Britain, Italy, Spain, Germany and the United States said halting global warming should be a "key priority" regardless of the state of the economy. Thirty percent said it should be "paused" so other problems can be addressed. "This survey shows that there is far more common ground among the public when it comes to climate change and what to do about it, than what we often see on our TV screens and Twitter feeds," said Luke Tryl, British director for More in Common, a non-profit examining polarisation in society. But the survey also revealed differences in outlook between the six nations, which could suggest people in rich economies hit hardest by climate impacts see the issue as more urgent, compared to wealthy countries less afflicted. More than 60 percent of respondents in France, Spain and Italy said tackling global warming should not give way to other problems, but barely 40 percent held this view in Germany, Britain and the United States. Germany and Britain have seen episodes of flooding and extreme heat, but the Mediterranean Basin -- a climate change "hotspot" according to the UN's IPCC climate science advisory body -- has been hammered by heatwaves, droughts and wildfires, all of which are predicted to worsen. Two to three times as many respondents in each country said that climate change will cause "a large amount" of harm to the world in the future, compared to whether they personally will experience harm. That possibly reflects the extent to which people in rich countries are insulated from severe impacts. When respondents were asked whether they had already personally experienced weather events caused by climate change, 48 to 58 percent in Spain, Italy and France said they had, compared to 44, 38 and 36 percent in Britain, the United States and Germany, respectively. The United States was in several ways an outlier in the survey, which polled between 1,000 and 2,000 people in each country. Despite a crescendo of extreme weather measurably linked to warming in the United States -- including intense drought in the southwest, record wildfires in the northwest, flooding and drought in the midwest, and devastating hurricanes on the eastern seaboard -- barely half of Americans think that human activity has caused Earth's climate to change. That figure rises to an average of nearly 80 percent across the European nations, and to 84 and 88 percent, respectively, in Spain and Italy. Views in the United States on this question were evenly divided across age, gender and self-identified race, but skewed heavily according to political affiliation.



More than 80 percent of those voting for President Joe Biden in 2020 said global warming is manmade, versus only a quarter of those who voted for Donald Trump, who this week announced he would take another run at the White House in 2024. Across the board, people said political leaders were not doing enough to fix the climate, the survey showed. "There is a shared lack of confidence in their national government's ability to grip this crisis," Tryl said. Nearly 40 percent of respondents said government policies to reduce carbon emissions would have a "positive impact" in the long term, with only 14 percent saying such policies would improve things in the short-run. Some 90 percent of the total respondents said they believe the climate is changing, with the remainder saying is not, or they did not know. When asked, however, if they were confident their governments were "prepared to take the necessary action to stop climate change," two-thirds of respondents who do believe the climate is changing said "no" in European countries. In the United States it was 40 percent. "Politicians aren't necessarily keeping up," said Amiera Sawas, director of programmes and research at Climate Outreach in Britain, who works with survey data. By a wide margin, the number one reason given for taking action on climate change was to protect future generations, with between 40 and 50 percent giving that as a motive. Protecting habitats and species from further damage was the second most common answer. Following on the heels of COP27, a UN biodiversity summit tasked with laying down new targets for protecting nature will convene in Canada in early December.

## U.S. Continues "War of..."

FROM PAGE 1

It claimed that sailors discovered bags of ammonium perchlorate hidden inside what initially appeared to be a shipment of 100 tons of urea.

The forces further alleged that the amount of ammonium perchlorate discovered could fuel more than a dozen medium-range ballistic missiles that fighters for the popular Ansarullah resistance movement have used to target facilities inside Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in retaliatory strikes.

Iran categorically rejected the US Navy's claims that the country was trying to smuggle 70 tons of a missile fuel component hidden among bags of fertilizer aboard a ship bound for crisis-stricken Yemen.

In a statement on Thursday, the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations in New York dismissed the allegations as baseless, saying Tehran stands fully committed to the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2216, which imposes an arms embargo on Yemen.

Iran "has not taken any action against the resolution, and is actively cooperating with the sanctions committee formed to oversee the arms embargo," said the statement, adding that none of the accusations leveled against Iran about arms smuggling to Yemen have been substantiated.

The diplomatic mission further said that "Iran is doing its utmost to restore the truce agreement, and facilitate dialogue among Yemeni groups as soon as possible in order to establish peace and stability in Yemen."

Raising such baseless against Tehran is nothing new and Washington every now and then raises such a claim against Iran to put more pressure on Tehran and its officials for bowing down to its pressure.

In recent days, several politically-motivated resolutions and decisions have been taken against Tehran to increase pressure on this country and it seems the claim of US Navy on seizure of a ship carrying vessels to Yemen is considered as a "dessert for previous cooked meals" by Washington but the U.S. should know that the Islamic Republic of Iran has enough guts to declare what it does like the attack on the U.S. troops at its Ayn al Asad Airbase in Iraq or supporting Palestinians and destroying Israel and it does not need hiding it.

The Islamic Republic of Iran due to its successive progresses has turned into a thorn in the eyes of the U.S. and it does not give a damn on the U.S. baseless claims and Washington is better to stop this blame game and war of claim which is useless and time wasting for defeating Iran.



## Record Number of Canadians Using Food Banks

OTTAWA (Dispatches) - Food bank use is at an all-time high in Canada, with families facing a choice between paying rent or eating, the head of Food Banks Canada said. "This year, we are seeing a trend that we have not previously observed," the organization said in its "Hunger Count Report for 2022." "Despite the unemployment rate being at 5.3%, food banks visits are the highest they have ever been." The report provided a "snapshot" of usage that showed almost 1.5 million visits to food banks in March. That is an increase of 15% for the same period in 2021. The situation may be worse with not all visits being counted because the snapshot means not all food banks reported the number of visits. A Statistics Canada report released in July found that in 2021, 5.8 million Canadians lived in what is called food-insecure homes. "(These are people) who are going into work and having to say, 'Am I going to pay my rent this month or buy food for my kids?'" Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Food Banks Canada Kirstin Beardsley told CTVNews on Wednesday. "It's the human toll of being in a situation where you have to make a choice like that. It's really awful."

## Iran Ends Gas Odorant Monopoly of Foreigners

TEHRAN (Shana) -- The CEO of the Iranian Gas Engineering and Development Company (IGEDC) announced the end of the monopoly of foreign countries in the production of gas odorant. Reza Noshadi stated that Iran, relying on the knowledge of its talented specialists, ended the monopoly of foreign countries in the production of odorant and joined the club of technology owners of the production of this strategic item. "By increasing the production capacity of natural gas flavoring agent, in addition to meeting the domestic needs, the possibility of exporting and earning hard currency has been provided for the country," he said during a visit to the South Pars gas complex projects. In this visit, Ebrahim Esalati, the director of the refining projects of IGEDC, also explained the necessity of the project to build a odorizer production unit, and stated: "Odorant is the odorizer of natural gas and an indicator for detecting gas leaks in the gas outlet path at pressure reduction stations." He continued: "Until 2018, this item was purchased through imports, and due to the tightening of sanctions and the increase in the exchange rate, the country would have been faced with enormous problems had the item's production not been localized."

## Ireland to Press Ahead...

FROM PAGE 1

"And let's be very clear; civilians are not a casualty of war by mistake in Ukraine. They are deliberately being targeted by Russia across Ukrainian cities.

That is totally unacceptable and illegal, and needs to be called out. And if Iran is contributing to that by contributing weapons to those efforts, well then of course there needs to be a response and a consequence, he added.

"As regards the embassy, opening an embassy in a country is not a reward. We need to have embassies in countries that we disagree with, as well as countries that we have very close relationships with. So then we have a line of diplomatic communication to ensure that we can try to bring about change."

At last week's Fine Gael parliamentary party meeting, both senator Regina Doherty and Carlow-Kilkenny TD John Phelan raised their objections to the reopening. Ms Doherty told The Irish Examiner that the decision should be reversed.

"I gathered the decision to reopen was made many moons ago for other reasons, but I think what we've seen in the last number of months are major violations of human rights and of women's rights," she said.

A Department of Foreign Affairs spokesperson said that the embassy will reopen in 2023 as planned, but said that Ireland has concerns about the handling of the protests.

## Iran Calls on...

FROM PAGE 1

The Foreign Ministry's statement went on to say, "The terrorist operation in the cities of Izeh, Isfahan, and Mashhad, which happened after the recent similar attack on the pilgrims and worshippers of the Shah Cheragh holy shrine in Shiraz, is still a confirmation of how the enemies and opponents of the Islamic Republic and great nation of Iran hide their criminal nature behind the false mask of compassion for the people and children of this country."

Terrorism is condemned in any form, time and place, and therefore it is the duty of the world community and the international forums to condemn the recent terrorist acts in Iran, and not allow a safe haven to be created for the violent and extremist movements, it added.

"In this regard, the Islamic Republic of Iran, based on the standards of international law and in accordance with its laws and regulations, reserves its right to pursue legal and judicial acts of terrorism committed by terrorists and their supporting governments."

At least seven people were killed after terrorists opened fire at people and security forces at a crowded market in Izeh in the southwestern province of Khuzestan on Wednesday.

Three people were also killed and eight security forces injured during riots in Semirom in the central Iranian province of Isfahan.

Two security forces were also killed and two others wounded in the city of Malekshahr in Isfahan Province.

## Iran to Respond...

FROM PAGE 1

Referring to the recent terrorist attacks in Shiraz and Izeh, the Iranian foreign minister blamed the enemies of Iran for the occurrence of such incidents and said, "We condemn these incidents and consider them to be in line with the maximum pressure of the United States and three European countries against the Iranian people."

"We thank the constructive efforts of the Sultanate of Oman in helping to lift the unjust sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran. We appreciate Oman's efforts to reach the final steps of the agreement," he added.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Amirabdollahian pointed to the crisis in Yemen and called for establishing a ceasefire and lifting the blockade.

Lastly, Amirabdollahian turned to the recent resolution of the International Atomic Energy Agency against Iran and called the IAEA's action unconstructive.

He stressed that the U.S. drafted a resolution against Iran and once again abused the agency politically while two weeks ago an Iranian political and technical delegation traveled to Vienna and agreed on stronger cooperation between Iran and the IAEA and had a constructive meeting with IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi.

"We will take reciprocal and effective action while adhering to international law and obligations," the top Iranian diplomat emphasized. The Omani foreign minister, for his part, stressed that his country has always adopted the policy of good neighborliness and positive cooperation and supports all efforts to ensure security and peace in the region.

"We must cooperate to ensure the safety of shipping in the seas and in our region. Trade and economic movements will ultimately benefit our nations and serve our foreign partnerships and relations," he added.

The Omani top diplomat went on to say that Oman believes that the only way to solve problems and challenges is only through dialogue and understanding.

"We reject any acts of violence and terrorism and we must pursue the reasons for these acts of violence," Sayyid Badr al-Busaidi added.

## Gov't Records Lowest...

FROM PAGE 1

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

The report said that Iran's GDP based on purchasing power parity reached \$1.6 trillion in 2022, indicating an increase of \$150 billion from \$1.45 trillion in 2021.

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

IMF also saw Iran's current account balance increase by \$20.886 billion in 2022.

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



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## Argentina Forward Gonzalez out of World Cup

DOHA (Dispatches) - Argentina forward Nicolas Gonzalez suffered an injury in training on Thursday and is out of the World Cup, his country's football federation (AFA) said.  
The 24-year-old Fiorentina forward has been replaced by Angel Correa of Atletico Madrid.  
"In training today, Nicolas Gonzalez tore a muscle and has been withdrawn from the list for the World Cup," the AFA said in a statement.

## Mane Ruled Out of World Cup

DOHA (Dispatches) - Senegal forward Sadio Mane has been ruled out of the World Cup in Qatar in a crushing blow to his team's chances after officials confirmed he would need surgery on a leg injury sustained in the run-up to the tournament.  
Mane had been a doubt for the west African side after injuring his right fibula playing for German club Bayern Munich.

# Benzema Named Best Player of Year

DUBAI (Dispatches) - Ballon d'Or winners Karim Benzema and Alexia Putellas won the Best Men's and Best Women's Player of the Year respectively at Dubai's Globe Soccer Awards, while Liverpool forward Mohamed Salah was named Fans' Player of the Year.  
Benzema fought off stiff competition from Erling Haaland and Salah to win his maiden Globe Soccer Best Men's player award.

The Frenchman, 34, captained Real Madrid to the club's 14th Champions League triumph last season, with a record-breaking 15 goals in 12 games on the way to the Paris final.

Two-time Ballon d'Or Feminin Putellas claimed a second-successive Globe Soccer Best Women's player award.

The 28-year-old Barcelona midfielder beat England's Beth Mead and 17-year-old Colombian Linda Caicedo, who came second, to the accolade.

The night's final award was handed to Salah, who won Fans' Player of the Year thanks to votes from viewers throughout the evening.

"You guys put more pressure on me now," Salah joked on stage after he received his award. "I think it's always great, the most important part of football is the fans, so to win the award voted by fans is something I'm grateful for."

Salah broke the record for the fastest hat-trick in the Champions League with his six-minute haul against Rangers at Ibrox in October.

The Egyptian is also Liverpool's eighth all-time goalscorer with 170 goals in 275 games, and revealed that breaking records is what motivates him on the pitch.

"Too much [attention on breaking records], honestly," Salah admitted. "I'm always focused to help the team to win games and trophies, that's the most important thing."

"But somehow also I keep looking for that, because it's something that motivates me all the time, and makes me want to give more."

Best Men's Club of the Year, Real Madrid enjoyed an incredibly successful year on the pitch, clinching a Champions League and La Liga double, and the accolades kept pouring in for Los Blancos.



Carlo Ancelotti picked up the Best Coach of the Year award ahead of Pep Guardiola and Jose Mourinho.

The Italian won the award for the first time since 2014 after he guided Real Madrid to a record-breaking Champions League, his second Globe Soccer award.

Manchester United and England record goalscorer Rooney retired in 2021, but Ibrahimovic is still playing, currently plying his trade at Serie A club AC Milan.

"The career is not finished, I have still to go," Ibrahimovic told the audience in Dubai. "A player's career is not based on the individual, but all the people that are involved in this, I want to thank them."

PSG defender Sergio Ramos, who spent 16 seasons at Real Madrid, was recognised as the best defender of all time.

The Spaniard, who won the FIFA World Cup with Spain in 2010, sandwiched in between two European Championships in 2008 and 2012, described receiving the award as "something incredible".

"This represents the work and for the sacrifices during my career," Ramos said. "Thanks Sevilla, Real Madrid, Paris Saint-Germain, and the national team."

"There is still so many challenges to reach," he added.

Newly appointed Aston Villa boss Unai Emery was presented with a coach career award.

The former PSG and Arsenal head coach has won four UEFA Europa League winners' medals, three at Sevilla and his latest at Villarreal in 2021.



TURIN (Dispatches) - American Taylor Fritz outlasted Felix Auger-Aliassime in three sets and Rafa Nadal avoided matching his worst ever losing sequence with a 7-5 7-5 victory over Norway's Casper Ruud in round-robin play at the ATP Finals.

In a clash of tournament debutantes neither Fritz nor Auger-Aliassime could make inroads on the other's serve but in the first set tiebreaker, the Canadian's normally solid backhand began to misfire and a forehand error put Fritz out ahead.

The players remained on serve in the second to bring about another breaker that Fritz appeared to have in hand while leading 4-2.

But an errant ball toss produced Fritz's first double fault and shifted momentum in favor of Auger-Aliassime, who pumped his fist after slapping a crosscourt winner to force a deciding set.

The key game of the match came with Fritz leading 3-2 in the third when he finally got his first looks at break points, converting his fourth opportunity when Auger-Aliassime pulled a forehand wide.

## Durant, O'Neale Push Nets Past Trail Blazers

LOS ANGELES (Dispatches) - Brooklyn's Royce O'Neale notched a triple-double that included the game-winning tip-in in the last second as the Nets beat the NBA's West-leading Trail Blazers 109-107 in Portland.

Kevin Durant led the Nets with 35 points. O'Neale scored 11 points with 10 rebounds and 11 assists and Ben Simmons scored 15 points with 13 rebounds for his first double-double since joining the Nets.

Yuta Watanabe added 20 points off the bench for the Nets, who finished out their four-game Western road swing at 2-2 and reportedly can look forward to the return of suspended Kyrie Irving when they host Memphis on Sunday.

Durant became the 19th NBA player to reach 26,000 career points, and the first since Michael Jordan in 1988-89 to begin the season with 13 straight 25-point games.

But when his turnaround jump shot with 2.2 seconds remaining and the teams tied at 107-107 didn't fall it was O'Neale to the rescue.

The Nets veteran tipped it in with seven-tenths of a second remaining to seal a hard-fought victory.

Watanabe's contribution included a three-pointer that put the Nets up by three going into the fourth quarter.

The Trail Blazers, led by 25 points from Damian Lillard, had taken a five-point lead with less than nine minutes remaining, but after they wasted a pair of possessions Durant put the Nets up 97-95.

Another Watanabe three-pointer put the Nets up 106-101 with 1:47 left but the Blazers kept battling, Jusuf Nurkic converting a three-point play to tie it up again at 107-107 with 6.5 seconds left.

"If a coach could draw up a game that ended with a win at the last moment, that was it," Nets coach Jacques Vaughn said. "We didn't panic. A group grows that way."

Vaughn said Japan's Watanabe was a prime example of the team's resolve.

"Yuta didn't have the best first half, but his teammates trusted him. He was the prime example of sticking with it."



# Brazil Will Only Pick Tite Successor in January

speculation in Brazil on who could be next.

But the CBF "is 100-per-cent focused on winning a sixth World Cup under Tite's command," it said in a statement.

CBF president Ednaldo Rodrigues, who took office in March, "has never spoken with any football director about the coaching job after the World Cup," it said.

RIO DE JANEIRO (Dispatches) - Brazil will only choose the next coach of their national team in January, the Brazilian Football Confederation (CBF) said Thursday, denying rumors of talks with the likes of Pep Guardiola to replace outgoing boss Tite.

Tite, who has coached the "Selecao" since 2016, has announced he will leave the post after the World Cup, leading to a flurry of

"Any news to the contrary is a lie," Rodrigues said in the statement.

"That issue will only be addressed in January."

The statement came after rumors this week that ex-national team coach Mano Menezes (2010-2012), currently at Brazilian league runners-up Internacional, could return to the job.

Other names floated include Dorival Junior, of Copa Libertadores champs Flamengo, and Manchester City boss Guardiola — though the latter would reportedly demand too high a price for the CBF.

Tite, 61, surprised the football world in February with the announcement he would leave the job after Qatar.

He has posted an impressive record since taking over from Dunga in 2016: 57 wins, 14 draws and five losses, winning the 2019 Copa America on home soil.

His Brazil side crashed out of the 2018 World Cup in the quarter-finals, losing to Belgium.

## Players Not Blind Or Deaf to Migrant Worker Issue

DOHA (dispatches) - Netherlands captain Virgil van Dijk said players were "not blind or deaf" to the concerns about migrant workers, whose treatment has been in the spotlight in the build-up to the World Cup in Qatar.

Van Dijk and the rest of the squad met around 20 workers at the end of Thursday's training session in Doha, signing autographs and playing small-sided games of football with them.

"It's something we all wanted as a group. That's why we started this process and it was good to meet each one of them and get to know them a little bit," said Van Dijk, the Dutch captain.

"You don't have lots of time but you have small conversations and it gives us the energy because they're so positive to meet us. For us it was exactly the same."

The build-up to the tournament in Qatar has been dominated by concerns over the Gulf state's treatment of the workers, women and the LGBTQ+ community.

Rights groups and media reports say thousands of workers may have died on the huge construction sites. The government calls the claims "outrageous and offensive", and says it is considering "legal" action to defend the country's name.

"Obviously we're not blind, we're not deaf," said Van Dijk.

"We see all the news outlets saying so many things about what's going on over here, so for us it's good to have our own opinion."

"We have to look ourselves and meet people. It's not easy because at the end of the day it's all about playing football. For us it was a big thing and a big point to meet them."

The Dutch football federation plans to auction the shirts the team will wear at the World Cup and use the proceeds "to improve the situation of migrant workers in Qatar".



## Infantino to Serve Another Four-Year Term

DOHA (dispatches) - FIFA President Gianni Infantino will serve another four-year term at the helm of world football's governing body after emerging as the only candidate for the next election in March.

Infantino, who has received widespread backing from confederations and national associations, was the only name submitted by the Wednesday deadline, FIFA said.

Infantino, 52, has campaigned hard over the last month, seeking individual endorsements from national associations, and significantly solidified his position.

He will be re-elected at the FIFA congress in Rwanda in March for a third term.

Infantino won the FIFA presidency in 2016 on an initial three-year term, replacing Sepp Blatter, and was re-elected in 2019.

He thanked more than 200 members associations who Fifa said had offered him their backing for another term as President.

"I would like simply, because again it's the first time I speak publicly today, to put on record my big thanks for the over 200 member associations of FIFA, all the six confederations who have supported me," Infantino said in a statement.

"I feel humbled and honoured to be able to serve the global football community for the next four years."

Infantino rose swiftly from his post as UEFA general secretary to one of the most powerful positions in world sport.

The Swiss official beat Asian Football Confederation President Sheikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa of Bahrain in the final round of that 2016 election after Jordan's Prince Ali Bin Al Hussein and Frenchman Jerome Champagne had been eliminated.

