

Deputy Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Rear Admiral Ali Fadavi Said Thanks to High Power and Strength Of the Iranian Armed Forces, the U.S. Does Not Dare to Confront Iran

IRAN NEWS

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Some Western States Stoked Riots, Terrorist Attacks in Country

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran has strongly condemned "some Western states" for stoking riots and acts of violence in the country through inciting public emotions, calling their instrumental use of human rights "disgraceful."

The comments were made on Thursday by Iran's Deputy Vice President for Women and Family Affairs Khadijeh Karimi, who was addressing a United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC) on the recent riots in the Islamic Republic.

The meeting was called by a group of HRC members led by Germany and Iceland, who sought an investigation into alleged rights abuses during the handling of the riots in Iran.

Riots broke out in Iran on September 16 after a young Iranian woman, identified as Mahsa Amini died. The 22-year-old fainted at a police station in the capital, Tehran, and was later pronounced dead at a hospital. An official report by Iran's Legal Medicine Organization said that Amini's controversial death was caused by an illness rather than alleged blows to the head or other vital body organs.

The rioters have been going on a rampage across the country, attacking security officers, resorting to vandalism against public property, and desecrating religious sanctities.

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Iran Defeat Wales to Keep Hopes Alive for Next Round



IRAN NEWS SPORTS DESK

TEHRAN - Iran claimed a famous 2-0 victory over 10-man Wales on Friday as Carlos Queiroz's men scored two goals deep into added time to keep their World Cup campaign alive.

The Iran players, who sang the national anthem before kick-off, sent their thousands of supporters at the Ahmad Bin Ali Stadium delirious by beating a European team at a World Cup for the first time.

Wales goalkeeper Wayne Hennessey became the first player to be sent off in the Qatar tournament for clattering into Mehdi Taremi late in the game.

Iran, who had earlier twice struck the woodwork, finally broke the deadlock in the 98th minute through substitute Rouzbeh Cheshmi's powerful drive.

Ramin Rezaian clipped in a second on the counter-attack three minutes later.

Iran, who would have been eliminated with a defeat, instead climbed to second in Group B behind England, against whom they had lost 6-2 in their opening game.

Wales tumbled to the bottom of the group and will have to defeat neighbours England in their final match next week to have any chance of reaching the knockout phase in their first World Cup since 1958.

Wales manager Rob Page elected to start striker Kieffer Moore after his impressive appearance as a substitute against the USA.

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Iran, EU Trade Up Over 30% In January-September

BRUSSELS (Dispatches) - Figures by European Union's statistics agency Eurostat show that trade between the bloc and Iran rose significantly in the nine months to September despite continued restrictions imposed by the United States on Iran's trade ties with the rest of the world.

Eurostat figures published in a Thursday report by the IRIB News showed that Iran-EU trade in January-September had reached a total of \$3.947 billion, up more than 30% from the same period last year.

Imports by 27 EU countries from Iran rose by 28% over the nine months to September against the same period in 2021 to reach \$799 million, showed the figures.

They showed that EU exports to Iran also rose 31% over the same period to top \$3.148 billion.

EU's imports from Iran in September reached a total of \$72 million, up from \$68 million reported in September 2021.

Exports by EU countries to Iran rose from \$308 million reported in September last year to \$472 million in the same month this year.

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Iran Strongly Condemns UNHRC Resolution as Politically-Motivated

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Foreign Ministry has vehemently condemned the meeting and resolution of the United Nations Human Rights Council, noting that "multifaceted political goals" are behind these anti-Iranian measures.

In a statement late on Thursday, the ministry blasted the measure of a few Western countries in "imposing" an anti-Iranian resolution to the UN Human Rights Council earlier that day.

"It is a source of regret that the UNHRC is being misused by few countries to pursue their short-term interests," read the statement.

"Undoubtedly, the measure adopted by the German regime and other founders of the UNHRC special meeting was a historic mistake originated from multifaceted political goals," it highlighted.

The meeting was convened at the request of Germany and Iceland to discuss alleged human rights violations in Iran during the handling of recent foreign-backed riots in the country.

During the Thursday session, the council members adopted an anti-Iranian resolution, calling for the establishment of an international fact-finding mission to probe Iran's response to the protests.

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IRGC Chief Says No Assassination Act Will Go Unanswered

TEHRAN (PressTV) - The chief commander of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) warns enemies that no act of assassination against the elite force will go unanswered, days after the IRGC blamed Israel for the martyrdom of one of its members in Syria.

Major General Hossein Salami made the remarks while speaking to Fars news agency on Thursday on the sidelines of the funeral procession of Colonel Davoud Ja'fari, a senior member of the IRGC Aerospace Division who lost his life in a terrorist bombing near the Syrian capital city of Damascus on Tuesday.

Ja'fari, who served as a military advisor in the war-ravaged Arab country, was killed when a bomb planted by Israeli agents on the side of a road near Damascus went off.

He said Iran would take revenge for every single assassination "at an appropriate time and place," but the level of each act of revenge will be different.

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Goharzamin Co. Feted With Medal of Merit, National Value Creation Award

In a ceremony held in the presence of over 55 industrial and mining companies, Goharzamin Iron Ore Company was honored by receiving the plaque of honor and medal of merit and national value creating. According to the public relations of Goharzamin Iron Ore Company, the third national conference on the Quality Excellence Award was held at IRIB's Conference Hall. Over 55 industrial and mining companies were present in the ceremony where the achievements and honors of Goharzamin Iron Ore Company were introduced and the medal of merit and national value creating was presented to this company.



According to reports in the conference, Mohammad Reza Khezripoor, a member of board of directors and deputy on management development and human resources of Goharzamin Company, as well as the manager of systems and methods of the company Mr. Naeem Zeidabadinejad were present and they received the awards on behalf of the CEO of the company.

Counter-Terror Operations In N. Iraq Aim to Defend National Security

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Iran tells the United Nations that its operations against hostile separatist terror groups based in Iraq's semi-autonomous Kurdistan region aim to defend the country's national security, reaffirming the call for the central Iraqi government to shoulder its responsibility to maintain effective control over its entire territory and internationally-recognized borders.

"Iran has no choice but to exercise its inherent right to self-defense under international law in order to safeguard its national security and defend its people," wrote the Islamic Republic's mission to the UN in letters to members of the world body's Security Council.

The country, it added, "has recently launched necessary and proportionate military operations against terrorist groups' bases in the Iraqi Kurdistan region, which was meticulously planned and precisely targeted on terrorist locations."

It added that Iran has for years been a target of terrorist groups based in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region, which have recently intensified their activities by illicitly transferring a huge quantity of weapons into Iran to arm their affiliates.

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Supreme Leader's to Address to Basij Forces

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei's address to members of the Iranian voluntary military force, known as Basij, will be broadcast live on state TV and on the internet on Saturday, November 26.

Scores of Basij forces will attend the speech by Ayatollah Khamenei which will be held this coming Saturday at 9.30 a.m. at Tehran's Imam Khomeini Hosseinieh.

Nearly five million more Basij forces from across Iran will participate virtually in the gathering which will be held to mark Basij Week in Iran.

Iran Exports Continued Despite Unilateral Sanctions

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - President Ebrahim Raisi said that the foes looked for halting Iran's trade and exports with threats and imposing sanctions, but Iran's oil and non-oil exports did not halt for a moment.

At a local meeting in Eslam-Shahr in the southwest of the capital, President Raisi said that today the country is making progress in various economic, manufacturing, and social fields with the efforts of the people and youth of the Islamic Republic of Iran, despite enemies and ill-wisher's threat and sanctions.

Referring to the successes of Iranian youths in the scientific arenas of the world, President Raisi highlighted that Iran's youths have reached good progress in the nuclear and defense industries, science plus technology, and Nano despite sanctions. The enemies wanted to stop Iran's trade and exports through sanctions and threats, but Iran's oil and non-oil exports were not halted for a moment, he underlined.

Earlier, President Raisi said that Iran's number one spot in the health sector of the region and number 15 spot globally is a sign of progress and prosperity of the country. He added that it is not tolerable for the enemies that a country that is under the pressure of tough sanctions produces 95 percent of its needed medicine.

The President stated, "I ask all of you people and officials to work in a transformative movement and a different and jihadist work to serve the people, the progress of the country, create social vitality, promote social participation and increase social capital".

Following his field visits to the cities of Tehran province, Raisi attended the meeting of the administrative council of Eslamshahr city, and said, "Our trip to Eslamshahr should have been done earlier, but this did not mean that the work here has stopped, because good steps are being taken".

The President described the people of Eslamshahr as pious and loyal to the values of the Islamic Revolution and added, "1,000 martyrs and a large number of veterans that the people of this region have dedicated to the Islamic Revolution are proof of the truth of this claim".



Raisi considered maintaining the spirit of self-sacrifice and cohesion as one of the main issues of Eslamshahr and other regions of the country and stated, "Cultural assets are one of our greatest assets, and the flagbearers of paying attention to this asset are respected Imams, cultural officials, teachers, professors, cultural institutions and families".

The President clarified, "Our martyrs, who are educated in this culture, are the basis of our power and authority, and today the path of power creation is followed by these people and young people who are willing to accept responsibility and take risks in accordance with the culture of self-sacrifice. Young people who do not leave the field in any way when facing the enemy".

Raisi pointed out, "The most important component of power in the system and the country is the youth and this culture, and the reason why the enemies did not succeed in these 43 years despite all the conspiracies, is the presence of the people whose presence is based on the field of culture, beliefs, thought and It is the people's motivation and we should try to keep this thought and motivation and improve it".

Emphasizing that in the face of the attack on the culture and beliefs of the Iranian nation, the cultural border guards must take care and protect the cultural assets of the nation, and said, "These border guards must know the tricks of the enemy, both in the field of defense and attack".

Referring to the Supreme Leader of the Revolution's interpretation of this attack as cultural invasion, and added, "If the cultural border guards had taken the necessary care at the same time, they warned schools and universities, cultural centers and scientific and cultural centers were doing their great duty to protect the culture and beliefs of the society against the invasion of outsiders, today we would not witness some problems".

FM Slams U.S., Europe's Counterproductive Approach to Recent Riots

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian on Thursday criticized the unconstructive approach of the U.S. and some European countries to the recent riots in Iran.

Amirabdollahian made the remarks in a phone conversation with his Emirati counterpart Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan where the two sides discussed the latest developments in bilateral and international issues.

Amirabdollahian said that Iran is interested in developing and bolstering ties with neighboring countries, including the UAE.

He announced Tehran's readiness to hold a joint meeting of businessmen from Iran and the UAE.

Referring to the counterproductive approach of the US and some European countries to the recent riots in Iran, Amirabdollahian strongly criticized them for the political and instrumental abuses of international institutions such as human rights.

Sultan Al Nahyan, for his part, called for stable and active relations between Iran and the UAE.

He expressed his country's readiness to hold joint commission meetings plus the committee of businessmen of Iran and the UAE as well as enhance mutual ties.

Stressing the need for human rights institutions not to follow a political approach, he called for the restoration of the nuclear deal and the elimination of technical disputes in this regard, calling it in the interests of all sides.

More Than 29,000 Unauthorized Weapons Discovered in Iran

TEHRAN (IP) - The Law Enforcement Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran spokesperson announced the discovery of more than 29,000 unauthorized weapons of defense and shotguns in the country since the beginning of this year.

According to Iran Press, Brigadier General Mahdi Hajian, said regarding the amount of smuggled weapons and ammunition detected in Iran this year, stated: "Since 2018, after the riots of the same year, the discovery of arms and ammunition smuggled in the country has increased significantly, and for this reason, the anti-arms and ammunition smuggling headquarter was established in the Islamic Republic of Iran's police command."

Emphasizing that with the investigations conducted, it has been found out that weapons and ammunition were smuggled through the northwestern, western, and southern borders of the country, he stated: Based on the obtained statistics as well as operational information that our colleagues have gained throughout the country, especially the border guard command of the Islamic Republic of Iran, since the beginning of this year (march 21, 2022) to November 21 of this year, more than 29,000 unauthorized shotguns weapons and defensive weapons have been discovered, which shows an 11% increase compared to the same period last year.

Hajian also stated: Of course, the number of discoveries has increased significantly since June of this year (discovery of 9,000 combat weapons and more than 7,000 melee weapons made by some countries, especially criminal America), hence the meetings with the police of neighboring countries in order to prevent arms and ammunition smuggling and Thank God, we also achieved good results.

He said: A large number of these people who were active in gangs in the country were arrested and handed over to judicial authorities.

This senior police official stated that most of the weapons and ammunition are imported into the country from the borders of West Azarbaijan, Kermanshah, Kurdistan, and the southern provinces, and noted that during the last two months (this year) thanks to the information of his colleagues, 8,000 combat and hunting weapons were discovered, and the people who intended to bring weapons and ammunition into the country illegally were arrested and handed over to the judicial authorities.

Top Rights Official Urges Germany to End Deceptive Policies



TEHRAN (IRNA) - Secretary of the Islamic Republic of Iran's High Council for Human Rights Kazem Gharibabadi on Thursday called on Germany to end what he called its deceptive policies on human rights.

Gharibabadi also denounced the Special Session of the UN Human Rights Council on Iran held in Geneva on the same day, terming it a "deceptive and fraudulent" move against the country. The session followed a request made by Germany and Iceland on November 11.

Gharibabadi, who also serves as Iran's deputy judiciary chief for international affairs, made the reactions on his twitter page.

"FM of German regime made a deceptive statement before the HRC today. Germany is the very country that equipped Saddam's regime with chemical weapons, thereby killing over 13,000 Iranian citizens and injuring 100,000, including women and children in Kurdish city of Sardasht," his first tweet said.

"German regime which still violates human rights of Iranians through inhumane unilateral sanctions and its dark record as an accomplice in assassination of Gen. Soleimani, should end its deceptive and forgery policy in the field of human rights."

"While the rights of Iranians have widely been violated by the US, UK, Germany and France due to the imposition of UCMS and provision of support to, and hosting of terrorists who assassinated 17,000 innocent Iranians, holding a special session on Iran, is deceptive and fraudulent."

Enemy Seeks to Disrupt Iranian Gov't Services to People

TEHRAN (MNA) - The enemy is seeking to disrupt the rendering of services to Iranian people, the Passive Defense Organization chief said.

Brigadier General Gholamreza Jalali said on Wednesday that improving the communications infrastructure in order to offer better services to the people of the country is the most important objective pursued by government officials in the country.

Turning to the recent cyberattack launched by enemies against vital infrastructure of the country, he said that these attacks have increased the significance of paying more attention to the security of cyberspace in the country.

He evaluated the measures taken in boosting the security of the country in the field of cyberspace 'positive' and said that more giant steps are needed to be taken in this field.

Jalali then referred to the significance of the continued operation of infrastructures of the country in the face of threats and added that a strategic plan was provided by the Organization in order to protect the vital infrastructures of the country against external threats.

IRGC to Boost Ground Forces in Western Borders

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Commander of Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Ground Force Brigadier General Mohammad Pakpour has announced that the Islamic Republic would enhance armored units and special forces in western and northwestern border areas.

Pakpour said on Friday that the move will be carried out in line with preventing infiltration of terrorist teams affiliated to separatist groups deployed in Iraq's northern areas.

According to the commander, following recent provocations by anti-Iran thugs and terrorist groups in northwestern of the country, the IRGC Ground Force will enhance their military presence in border areas of western and northwestern Iran in order to avoid

smuggling of weapons into the Islamic country.

He also noted that the armed forces will make use of cooperation and coordination with patriot locals living in border areas in order to stand against elements trying to insecure the country.

The commander said that the armored units and special forces of the Ground Forces of the IRGC are being dispatched to the northwestern and western provinces at present.

The IRGC Ground Force launched a fresh round of missile and drone attacks on the headquarter of Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (PDKI) and the Komala Party in Iraq's Kurdistan Region in the early hours of Monday.

Iran, Namibia FMs Discuss Mutual Ties

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian and his Namibian counterpart on Thursday discussed over the phone cooperation between their countries in different fields including politics, science, and economy.

Amirabdollahian expressed satisfaction with the existing good ties between the two sides, saying he hopes that bilateral cooperation will further increase in fields such as agriculture, technology and science.

He also thanked Namibia for its support of the Palestinian people and their cause.

The Namibian Foreign Minister, Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, said on her part that grounds for cooperation between the southern African country and Iran are numerous.

She welcomed the further expansion of ties with Iran, expressing hope that she can visit the country in the future.

Spokesman Rejects Biden's Claim of Support for Iranian Women

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Foreign Ministry Spokesman Nasser Kanaani on Thursday rejected the US president's claim of supporting Iranian women at a time when the country is faced with Washington's so-called maximum pressure campaign.

In a tweet, Kanaani said that the president of a regime, which has done all it can in its hostility and brutality against the Iranian nation and has not even spared "butterfly children" (children with rare skin disease) in its economic terrorism against Iran, is claiming that he

"stands with the women of Iran."

"Had Iranian women and mothers been excluded from your sanctions against Iran?" the spokesman further said in his tweet.

On Wednesday, U.S. President Joe Biden issued a statement on the occasion of International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

In the statement, Biden expressed support for the Iranian women "who are facing down violence and oppression to demand their human rights and fundamental freedoms."

Tehran Rebukes British FM for Supporting Anti-Iran War Room

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani has rebuked British Foreign Minister James Cleverly for supporting an "anti-Iran war room" by making "fraudulent slogans" on foreign-backed riots in the country.

In a Twitter post, Kanaani reacted to remarks made by Cleverly on Tuesday after British police sent armed forces to protect offices of the Saudi-funded Persian-language "Iran International" channel in London against what they claimed to be "threats from Iran".

"It is incredibly important that people feel able to speak openly and honestly about what is going on in Iran," the top British diplomat told Saudi-owned Asharq al-Awsat newspaper.

The Foreign Ministry spokesperson noted that the network that the UK is hosting and supporting is actually "propagating terror and violence" in Iran.

Addressing the British official, Kanaani added: "By such fraudulent slogans, you're supporting the anti-Iran war room."



PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	11:51
■ Evening (Maghreb)	17:12
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	05:23
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:52

41. "And I have prepared thee for Myself (for service)".

42. "Go, thou and thy brother, with My Signs, and slacken not, either of you, in keeping Me in remembrance.

Surah 20. Ta-ha (41 - 42)

India, Iran Agree on Continued Cooperation On Chabahar Port

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Iran and India agreed on Thursday on continued cooperation for the development of the Shahid Beheshti terminal of the Chabahar port.

The issue came up for discussion during the Foreign Office Consultations between an Iranian delegation led by Deputy Foreign Minister Ali Bagheri Kani and an Indian delegation led by Foreign Secretary Vinay Mohan Kwatra.

"During the delegation-level talks, both sides discussed the entire gamut of bilateral relations, including political, economic, cultural and consular engagement," according to a statement issued by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

Meanwhile Bagheri said Iran is ready to fulfil the energy needs of India. "Both countries enjoy different types of cooperation in the economic sphere. They are partners and complete each other --- their economies are complementary. Iran enjoys huge energy resources and thus it can provide energy supplies to India and help contribute to its energy security. India, on the other hand, is a major provider of food staples. It can contribute to the food security of Iran," Bagheri said. Prior to U.S. sanctions on Iran's oil, Iran was significantly one of the major suppliers of oil to India. The Indian government stopped oil imports from Iran in 2019.

India-Iran commercial ties were traditionally dominated by the Indian import of Iranian crude oil. In 2018-19 India imported \$12.11 billion worth of crude oil from Iran. However, following the end of the Significant Reduction Exemption (SRE) period on May 2, 2019, India has suspended importing crude from Iran. The bilateral trade during 2019-20 was \$4.77 billion, a decrease of 71.99 per cent as compared to the trade of \$17.03 billion from 2018-19.

Stressing the historical ties between the two countries the Iranian minister said that close cooperation between Iran and India would strengthen the infrastructures for multilateralism in the international system.

"There are different areas of cooperation between Tehran and Delhi in order to engage in economic cooperation. Apart from the bilateral economic cooperation, we can hold extensive cooperation in terms of helping the other countries, especially in our region," Bagheri said.

In light of the fall of the Afghanistan government and the ongoing Russia-Ukraine crisis, the minister said that both India and Iran can play an active role in regional cooperation with their neighbors in the central, south and west Asian regions.

"Both economies enjoy economic and technological capacities. They can help countries in the region. In particular, Afghanistan after the pullout of US and NATO forces from the country," he said.

He also berated the US and other Western powers for imposing sanctions on three major oil suppliers Iran, Russia, and Venezuela. "By these actions, they have played a key role in destabilising the energy security of the world."

Iran India's relations with Iran are unique and



historic. Iran is an important partner and a close neighbor. Last year, there was an intensification in bilateral engagement. EAM visited Tehran twice and held constructive meetings with the Iranian leadership.

The two countries continued their engagement in the field of healthcare, and a meeting of the Joint Working Group (JWG) on Health was held in April 2021.

India gifted Covid-19 vaccines to Iran, for Afghan refugees sheltered there. Regional connectivity cooperation continued, including the development of Shahid Beheshti Terminal, Chabahar Port, along the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC).

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met with Bagheri and discussed bilateral cooperation and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Taking to Twitter, Jaishankar said, "Pleased to receive Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Bagheri Kani discussed our bilateral cooperation, regional issues, and JCPOA."

Indian exports to Iran between 2011-12 and 2019-20 have grown by 45.60 per cent. India's major exports to Iran include rice, tea, sugar, soya, medicines/pharmaceuticals, man-made staple fibres, electrical machinery, etc.

Major imports from Iran include inorganic/organic chemicals, fertilizers, cement clinkers, fruits and nuts, leather, etc. Both countries are negotiating a Preferential Trade Agreement, on which five rounds of talks have been held so far.

India is developing the 1st phase of Shahid Beheshti Port at Chabahar. The capacity of the port will reach 8.5 MT at the end of the first phase. During the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Tehran in May 2016, the contract on the Shahid Beheshti port of Chabahar was signed which, inter-alia, comprises an investment of \$85 million for procuring equipment for the port.

Direct Shipping Line to Venezuelan Ports to Be Launched

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – The CEO of the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Line Group (IRISL) announced plans of this company for the launch of direct lines for shipping goods between Iranian and Venezuelan ports.



Mohammad Reza Modarres Khiabani in a letter to Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) announced that IRISL has so far sent two tanker vessels for shipping fuel and oil products to Venezuela and revealed the participation of the IRISL in creating a marine bridge for transporting commercial goods between the two countries in line with the signing the Comprehensive 20-Year Strategic Cooperation Document of Iran and Venezuela.

He also announced that Golsan Ship will leave Iran's southern ports to Venezuela early December and according to the schedule, other vessels of the group are in line to be dispatched to Venezuela for transporting Iranian goods.

Modarres Khiabani reiterated that regular dispatch of oceangoing ships of the company for the long distance destinations like Venezuela needs full capacity cargo on those vessels, admitting that in case Iranian traders do not welcome trade exchange with Venezuela, continuation of dispatching ship for carrying Iranian goods to Venezuela by IRISL may come to an end.

He announced readiness of IRISL vessels for carrying goods of Iranian traders to Venezuela in late February.

Fast Move of HOSCO Towards Ascending Production Summits

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Hormozgan Steel Company (HOSCO) in the current Iranian calendar year 1401 has started its fast move towards ascending the summit of nominal capacity of 1.5m tons and it continues the path with strong determination and wise and logical planning of its managers and efforts who have removed all restrictions and hurdles to this end.



Iranian industrialists have had a bumpy road for continuing and developing their activities and implementing their plans and materialization of their goals ahead in the current year. Steel industries in this year have challenged with these challenges and activists of this scene have wrestled with different hurdles and restrictions on course to development of steel industry.

The review of performance of companies active in Iran's national steel industry shows that some steelmaking companies have had much more successful performance than their rivals and have shown serious determination for removing hurdles in way of production and implementation of developmental programs.

Hormozgan Steel Company has been one of these successful steelmaking companies and although it has faced many ups and downs in the first seven months of its performance, it has overcome hurdles and restrictions and has moved ahead with full speed to scale up summits of production.

HOSCO is deserved to be name the gem of steel industries in south of the country and it has turned into the third pole of national steelmaking.

The company, since its establishment almost a decade ago, has set target the nominal capacity of 1.5m tons for its production and the released data bespeaks of progress in the trend of production of the country and this will be materialized by the end of the year. According to the existing statistics, HOSCO has produced over 817,000 tons of steel slab in the first seven months of the current year and this amount of production shows over 7% growth comparing to the same period last year.

The company faced electricity shortage in this period and for this reason it fell behind in reaching the nominal production capacity and after the electricity shortage was resolved, the production in the company increased 150,000 tons and it produced 151,742 tons in September.

Record-breaking of the jewel of the steelmaking of southern country continued in the monthly production in the first month of autumn and HOSCO produced 153,233 tons of products and took a long stride in materializing nominal capacity and it seems by continuation of this trend, HOSCO will witness scaling up the summit of 1.5m ton production.

Some developmental projects of the company are moving ahead with full speed with investment over 10,000 tomans.

The company has sold over 389,000 tons of steel products in the domestic market and exported over 330,000 tons to different international markets as the volume of exports in the first seven months has grown by 11% comparing to the same period last year.

PGSOC Hosts 16th Quranic Competition For Labor Community of Hormozgan

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN – The 16th Quran competition special for labor community of Hormozgan Province was held Persian Gulf Star Oil Refinery in the presence of some cultural and Quranic officials of the province.

According to the public relations of Persian Gulf Star Oil Company, the 16th Quran competition special for the labor class of the province (workers and their families which include wife and children between 18 to 25 years old) was held to promote Islamic science and Quranic culture with support of PGSOC in five categories.

Addressing the ceremony, the CEO of Persian Gulf Star Oil Company Mr. Alireza Jafarpoor said that fuel supply for the country is underway with the round-the-clock efforts of the personnel of this group. He added that fuel shortage can make crisis and he prays God that the company has no problem for fuel supply of the country as Persian Gulf Star Oil Refinery provides almost 40% of the fuel of the country.

He deplored why many people have distanced themselves from the Holy Quran while this Holy Book is the remedy for human pains. He expressed hope that everybody can use the lessons of the Holy Quran.

At the end of the competition which was held with participation of 130 male and female contestants from the labor community of the province, the winners of each category were announced and the top ones qualified for the national level of the Quranic competition.



Huge Rise in Number of Trucks Passing Iran-Turkmenistan Border Crossing

TEHRAN (IFP) - Turkmenistan's trucks have started their traffic across the border with Iran after a 3-year hiatus due to the Covid pandemic.

The trucks entered Iran via the Sarakhs border crossing.

According to the acting governor of Sarakhas, this means that the economic relations between Iran and Turkmenistan has resumed after the end of the Covid pandemic.

Hassan Nourizadeh said the Turkmen government has canceled the 1.5 dollar duty on per ton kilometer of Iranian cargo through its territory.

He added that for the first time over the past 28 years, the Turkmen government has called

for an increase in the working hours of the Sarakhs border crossing. The acting governor of Sarakhas noted that the number of trucks crossing the Sarakhs border in September was 200 per day but in October, it reached 600.

Nourizadeh went on to say that over half of the trucks crossing through Sarakhs border are Iranian, and the rest come from other countries, including Turkey.

Iran has increased its trade with regional countries under the administration of President Ebrahim Raisi.

The president says the move is aimed at blunting the pressure of U.S. sanctions.

Jan-Sep Car Output Exceeds That of France, UK, Italy

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's car output in January-September exceeded that of major car manufacturing nations in Europe like France, UK and Italy, according to figures by the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association (ACEA).

ACEA figures covered in a Thursday report by Iran's Tasnim news agency showed that Iranian car manufacturers had churned out a total of 949,817 cars in the three quarters to September, up 31.2% from the same period last year.

Iran became the 10th largest producer of cars in the world in January-September, up three places from the global ranking reported by the ACEA in the same period in 2021.

Iran was responsible for 1.9% of a global car production of 49.817 million in the nine months to September, showed ACEA figures which indicated that the country's output had exceeded that of major car manufacturing nations like France, the United Kingdom and Italy.

Tehran, Sofia Hold Economic Cooperation Commission



TEHRAN (IP) - Iran and Bulgaria have held a preliminary meeting for the 20th Iran-Bulgaria joint commission to arrange the deal of the assembly.

The Managing Director of the Road and Urban Development Ministry for commercialization affairs, Amin Tarfa'a, and the Director of European Coordination and International Cooperation, Nadezhda Buhova, attended the meeting in Tehran.

Four specialized working groups attended the meeting to prepare a document for the cooperation commission.

The 19th joint summit of economic cooperation between Iran and Bulgaria was held in 2018. The 20th round of this summit is scheduled to be held in the near future.

Previously, in a phone talk with his Bulgarian counterpart Nikolay Milkov, Hossein Amirabdollahian exchanged views about mutual relations and some regional and international developments.

The two sides agreed that the two countries ties are good, and yet the 125th anniversary of Iran-Bulgaria diplomatic relations is an excellent opportunity for further comprehensive expansion.

Lebanon MPs Again Fail to Elect President

BEIRUT (Dispatches) - Lebanese lawmakers failed for a seventh time Thursday to elect a successor to former president Michel Aoun, even though the vacancy is hampering efforts to rescue the stricken economy.

Parliament is split between supporters of the powerful Iran-backed Hezbollah movement and its opponents, neither of whom have a clear majority.

Lawmaker Michel Moawad, who is seen as close to the United States, won the support of 42 of parliament's 128 MPs, but his tally fell well short of the required majority and was exceeded by the number of spoilt ballots cast by pro-Hezbollah lawmakers.



Algeria Sentences Scores to Death Over Forest Fire Lynching

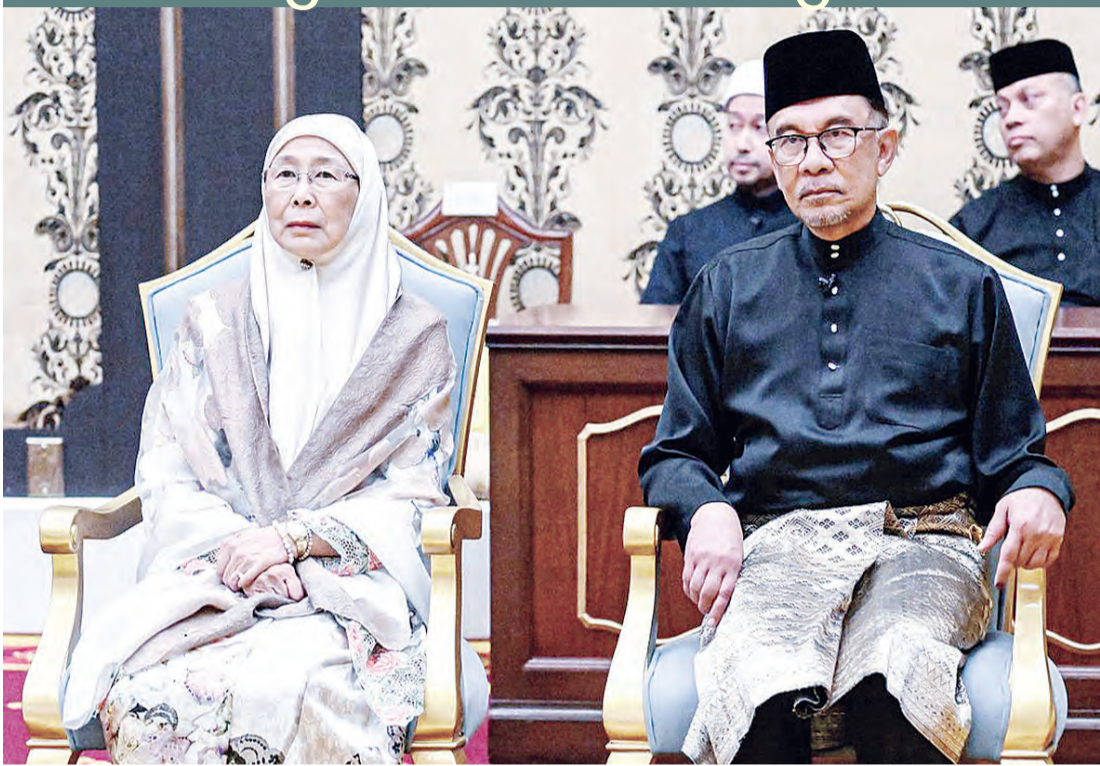
ALGIERS (Dispatches) - An Algerian court Thursday sentenced 49 people to death over the lynching of a man falsely accused of starting deadly forest fires during an extended heatwave last year, state media reported.

The North African country has, however, maintained a moratorium on carrying out death sentences since the last executions in 1993.

Onlookers had beaten 38-year-old Djamel Ben Ismail to death after he turned himself in at a police station in the Tizi Ouzou region.



Malaysia's Anwar Becomes PM, Ending Decades-Long Wait



KUALA LUMPUR (Dispatches) - Malaysia's Anwar Ibrahim was sworn in as prime minister on Thursday, capping a three-decade political journey from a protégé of veteran leader Mahathir Mohamad to protest leader, a prisoner convicted of sodomy and opposition leader.

Anwar, 75, vowed to fight corruption and to focus on the economy while also upholding Islam as the official religion of the multi-ethnic country and defending special rights of ethnic Malays.

"Thank God, because we have seen a change that has awaited the people of Malaysia," Anwar told reporters at a late-evening address, hours after he was sworn in by the king who appointed him after an inconclusive election.

"We will never compromise on good governance, the anti-corruption drive, judicial independence and the welfare of ordinary Malaysians," he said before leading chants of "Reformasi" - his rallying cry for reform during years of opposition. His appointment ends five days of unprecedented post-election crisis, but could usher in further instability with his rival, former Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin, challenging him to prove his majority in parliament.

Both men's coalitions failed to win a majority in a Saturday election, but Malaysia's constitutional monarch, King Al-Sultan Abdullah, appointed Anwar after speaking to several lawmakers.

Anwar takes over at a challenging time, with the economy slowing and the country divided after a tight election.

The campaign pitted Anwar's progressive, multi-ethnic coalition against Muhyiddin's mostly conservative ethnic-Malay, Muslim alliance.

Markets surged on the end of political deadlock. The ringgit currency posted its best day in two weeks and equities rose 3%.

Anwar had time and again been denied the premiership despite getting within striking distance over the years: he was deputy prime minister in the 1990s and the official prime minister-in-waiting in 2018.

In between, he spent nearly a decade in jail for sodomy and corruption in what he says were politically motivated charges aimed at ending his career.

The uncertainty over the election threatened to prolong political instability in the Southeast Asian country, which has had three prime ministers in as many years, and risks delaying policy decisions needed to foster economic recovery.

Anwar's supporters expressed hope that his government would avert a return to historic tensions between the ethnic Malay, Muslim majority and ethnic Chinese and Indian minorities.

"All we want is moderation for Malaysia, and Anwar represents that," said a communications manager in Kuala Lumpur, who asked to be identified by her surname Tang.

"We can't have a country that is divided by race and religion as that will set us back another 10 years."

Anwar's coalition, known as Pakatan Harapan, won the most seats in Saturday's vote with 82, while Muhyiddin's Perikatan Nasional bloc won 73. They needed 112 - a simple majority - to form a government.

Russian Forces in Kherson Alert As Ukraine Plans Next Move

KYIV (Dispatches) - After recapturing Kherson city, Ukraine kept Russian forces guessing about their next move, pinning down occupying troops in defensive positions and rendering them unavailable for offensive operations.

Some 30,000 Russian troops that withdrew from the west bank of the Dnieper river earlier this month were entrenching themselves in the Zaporizhia and Kherson regions during the 39th week of the war, deputy head of Ukrainian military intelligence Major-General Vadym Skibitskyi, told the Kyiv Post.

"[The Russians] are waiting for our liberation offensive, that's why they have created a defensive line in Kherson, another on the administrative border of [Kherson and] Crimea, and another in the northern Crimea region," Skibitskyi said.

"The enemy is on the defensive in the Zaporizhia direction," said Ukraine's general staff. "In the Kryvyi Rih and Kherson directions, the enemy is creating an echeloned defence system, improving fortification equipment and logistical support of advanced units, and not stopping artillery fire at the positions of our troops and settlements on the right bank of the Dnipro River."

In announcing the withdrawal from Kherson city on November 9, the Russian commander-in-chief of forces in Ukraine,

Alexander Surovkin, had said it would free up manpower to strengthen other fronts.

Russia has been prioritising the occupation of the Luhansk and Donetsk regions in the east, and Russian artillery fruitlessly pounded away at Ukrainian defenders there throughout the week.

Ukraine's general staff said that continued to be Russia's plan, but soldiers were resisting it.

"The command of the Russian occupying forces plans to redeploy separate units withdrawn during the retreat from the right bank of the Dnipro River in the Kherson oblast to continue hostilities in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. The mobilised persons, most of whom make up these formations, are very indignant at the prospects of the implementation of the mentioned plans," they said.

A possible further source of Russian restraint is that Ukraine has made no secret of its intention to take back Crimea, annexed by Russia in 2014.



EU Preparing New Russia Sanctions Package

HELSINKI (Dispatches) - The European Union is pressing ahead with a ninth sanctions package on Russia in response to Moscow's attack on Ukraine, European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen said during a visit to Finland.

"We are working hard to hit Russia where it hurts to blunt even further its capacity to wage war on Ukraine and I can announce today that we are working full speed on a ninth sanctions package," von der Leyen told a news conference.

"And I'm confident that we will very soon approve a global price cap on Russian oil with the G7 and other major partners. We will not rest until Ukraine has prevailed over Putin and his unlawful and barbaric war," she said.

Von der Leyen did not provide details of what measures a new round of EU sanctions could contain.

The union last month gave a final approval to its eighth batch of sanctions over the invasion, including more restrictions on trade in steel and tech products.

At a joint news conference with the prime ministers of Finland and Estonia, and the deputy prime minister of Sweden, von der Leyen said Russia's attacks on Ukrainian civilian infrastructure such as power supply amounted to war crimes.

"I also know our Ukrainian friends will overcome this strategy because they are strong and their cause is just and we, the EU, stand here by them in these very difficult times as long as it takes," she said.

The European Parliament on Wednesday designated Russia a state sponsor of terrorism, arguing that its military strikes on Ukrainian civilian targets such as energy infrastructure, hospitals, schools and shelters violated international law.

Russia denies deliberately targeting civilians in Ukraine but acknowledges a campaign of strikes against electric power and other infrastructure, which Moscow suggests are aimed at reducing Kyiv's ability to fight and pushing it to negotiate.

Brazil Election Court Throws out Bolsonaro Challenge, Fines Party

BRASILIA (Dispatches) - Brazil's top electoral authority on Wednesday threw out a challenge by President Jair Bolsonaro's party against his election defeat and fined it more than \$4 million for bringing the case "in bad faith."

The head of the Superior Electoral Tribunal (TSE), judge Alexandre de Moraes, ruled the far-right president's Liberal Party had presented "absolutely false" arguments in its case, which he said was aimed at "encouraging criminal and anti-democratic movements" by Bolsonaro supporters seeking to fight the election result.

The Liberal Party (PL) brought the case Tuesday, saying an auditing firm it hired had found "irreparable operating discrepancies" in around 280,000 electronic voting machines used in the October 30 runoff election, which Bolsonaro lost to veteran leftist Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

The PL called for electoral authorities to exclude all votes cast on five models of voting machine manufactured before 2020, alleging they gave a suspiciously large advantage of nearly five percentage points to Lula.

Party lawyer Marcelo Bessa said excluding those votes would change the election result, from a 1.8-percentage-point win for Lula to a 2.1-percentage-point win for Bolsonaro.

Moraes responded with a withering rejection, accusing the PL of seeking to fuel ongoing protests by Bolsonaro supporters who have blocked highways and rallied outside army barracks calling for a military intervention to keep the incumbent in power.

"There is a total lack of supporting evidence" in the PL's claim, Moraes said in a statement.

The case "is blatantly offensive to the democratic rule of law, and was brought recklessly, for the purpose of encouraging criminal and anti-democratic movements... responsible for grave threats and violence," he added.

He fined the PL's coalition 22.9 million reais (\$4.2 million), and ordered an investigation of party leader Valdemar da Costa Neto and the head of the firm behind the audit, the Legal Vote Institute.

Bolsonaro, who has regularly alleged Brazil's voting system is plagued by fraud -- without providing evidence -- was initially silent for nearly 48 hours after his defeat.

He then made a terse statement saying he would respect the constitution, but has not explicitly conceded defeat or congratulated Lula, who is due to be sworn in on January 1.



Indonesia Struggles to Get Aid to Quake Survivors

CIANJUR (Dispatches)

- Indonesian authorities struggled to get aid to thousands of people displaced by a deadly earthquake in western Java, as rain-triggered landslides and difficult mountainous terrain hampered the efforts of rescue teams.

Monday's 5.6-magnitude earthquake in the town of Cianjur, about 75 km (50 miles) south of the capital Jakarta, killed at least 272 people and left thousands sheltering in tents with scant medical and aid supplies.

Suharyanto, the disaster mitigation agency chief, said on Thursday many had not received aid and nearly 5,000 volunteers were deployed to help distribute water, instant food, tents and diapers.

Distribution of aid was getting better as roadblocks eased, he said later on Thursday. Survivors, including the elderly and small children, huddled inside military tents set up some distance away from devastated villages, while others queued up to receive aid packets from volunteers.

In Sukamanah village, residents said they were having to ration food and were short of supplies for children, including medicines, diapers and milk. Ema Hermawati, wife of the village chief, said sanitation was lacking as trash started to pile up and there was no running water or portable toilets.

President Joko Widodo visited the site of the quake for a second time on Thursday and urged that aid distribution and rescue efforts continue as quickly as possible.

"The conditions are steep," he said of the rugged terrain, adding there was a shortage of tents and water. "It's still raining and there are still aftershocks. The ground is shaky, so caution is needed."

Indonesia's meteorology and geophysics agency said aftershocks are expected to stabilise within the next week, but warned of landslides and floods due to the rainy season.

With dozens still missing, rescuers used earth diggers and other heavy machinery to clear mud and debris in search of victims. Some areas that have been cut off by landslides could only be reached by helicopter.

Hopes of finding survivors were fading, officials said. Search efforts focussed on Cijedil village, where about 30 people were thought to be buried under a landslide. Joshua Banjarnahor of the national search and rescue agency, told reporters.



France, Germany, Italy Agree on Next-Generation Space Rockets

PARIS (Dispatches) - France, Germany and Italy, the three biggest contributors to the European Space Agency, said they have agreed to guarantee the future of the next-generation Ariane 6 and Vega-C rocket launcher systems.

The countries also reaffirmed a preference for European rockets, after the agency was forced to turn to U.S. firm SpaceX to launch two future scientific missions.

The ministers in charge of space for the ESA's 22 member states are meeting in Paris on Tuesday and Wednesday to determine the agency's funding for the next three years, with a 3.2-billion-euro (\$3.3-billion) plan for European space launchers high on the agenda.

"The public funding necessary to equilibrate the Ariane 6 and Vega-C institutional and commercial exploitation will be reviewed in order to take into account the evolution of market prices, institutional prices, economic conditions," said a joint ministerial statement from France's Bruno Le Maire, Germany's Robert Habeck and Italy's Adolfo Urso.

The ESA has had to scramble to find a way to get its missions into space after Russia withdrew its Soyuz rockets in response to European sanctions over Moscow's war in Ukraine earlier this year.

The agency has also been affected by delays to Ariane 6, which is planned to replace the successful Ariane 5.

The maiden flight of Ariane 6 was originally scheduled for 2020, but it has now been pushed to the end of 2023.

For Ariane 6 and the smaller Vega-C, "the allocation of funding will be commensurate to the commercial risks taken" to ensure their long-term competitiveness, the ministers said.

The three countries also proposed allowing the ESA to use European-made micro and mini launch systems -- which are currently being developed by Germany and France.

The final decision on a way forward would be agreed by December 2023, the statement said.

Daniel Neuenschwander, ESA's director of space transportation, told AFP that "we are very happy with this joint declaration because it makes it possible to create the conditions" to obtain the necessary funding for the launcher programs at the end of the council.

He also said the declaration means the countries recognize the "interdependence in the programs where they have joint interests," whether for the France-led Ariane 6, Italy-led Vega-C, or micro and mini launchers being promoted by Germany.

The ESA is asking its member states to contribute 18.5 billion euros to fund space programs over the next three years -- an increase of more than 25 percent from the previous amount.

At the opening of the council on Tuesday, ESA director-general Josef Aschbacher said "whatever science and technology we aim for can only flourish in a healthy economic environment".

Aschbacher told the ministers that their countries would derive huge economic benefits from fundings the ESA space programs.

While the space industry now represents around 340 billion euros, it would reach around one trillion euros by 2040, he said.

The budget decision, expected to be announced on Wednesday, comes amid rising competition from China and other nations, and well as from private companies such as SpaceX.

France's economy minister Le Maire called for Europe to "be united" in space.

"At the end of these discussions, there must be a single Europe, a single European space policy and unfailing unity in the face of Chinese ambitions and American ambitions," he said at the council meeting.

"There is a price for independence. If we want to be independent, we have to put money on the table."



Who Will Become History's First Parastronaut?

PARIS (Dispatches) - The first astronaut — or astronaut — with a physical disability could be announced as soon as today, according to the European Space Agency.

People with physical disabilities have previously been excluded from one of the most exclusive and demanding jobs on Earth — and beyond — due to strict selection requirements.

Guillaume Weerts, the ESA's head of space medicine, told AFP that the agency's "parastronaut project" required "a complete change in philosophy" about the concept of medical aptitude, which originally came from the military and the selection of fighter pilots.

After carrying out a feasibility study, the ESA said potential candidates could include people who have deficiencies in their lower limbs, whether from amputation or congenital defects.

Shorter people of up to 1.3 metres tall or those with different leg lengths were also eligible to apply.

The educational and psychological requirements for the candidates remained the same as for any other astronaut. Applications closed in June 2021. The ESA is expected to name between four to six new European astronauts — without disabilities — during its ministerial council in Paris.

While Weerts said the parastronaut project runs somewhat separately, "there is a real possibility that as part of the announcement one or more people with disabilities" will also be presented.

In the extremely precise world of space travel, even small alterations can become extremely complicated — and expensive.

For example, the existing systems are designed for people of a certain height, Weerts said.

"What does that mean for someone who is a shorter size? How can we make sure that person can just reach the buttons?"

The ESA plans to work with those who are selected to find the best way to overcome such potential challenges.

As a member of the selection panel, Weerts could not reveal details about particular candidates.

But he said "a really great group of people" had applied and worked their way through the selection process.

"We have encountered absolutely marvelous individuals," he said.

The process was an excellent "demonstration that disability is not a limitation", he added.

"It's really something that we all believe in," he said, adding that there was a high level of commitment to the project from ESA's partners.

So when could the first astronaut with a disability blast off?

"Space is not a business for people who are in a hurry," Weerts said.

The timeline is difficult to predict because "it really depends on what we encounter", he said, adding that plenty more work would be carried out once the ESA has selected its candidates.

But he did say that an astronaut with a disability could launch into space "potentially in the next 10 years".

Kamran Mallick, the chief executive of the charity Disability Rights UK, said the project was "incredibly exciting".

"Disabled people are excluded (from) large aspects of everything that we do in the world," he told AFP.

"If we are truly to explore the universe, we have to accept that we can't just have it solely for a particular group of individuals."

Mallick praised the ESA's plan to work with the astronauts to figure exactly what they need.

"I'm a wheelchair user, and it is far better that people ask me what works for me, what I would need, rather than making assumptions of what someone can or cannot do," he said.



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South Korea Looks to Spur Exports to Overcome Slump

SEOUL (Dispatches) - South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol said the government would aid companies with the promotion of exports to key regions like Southeast Asia to counter slowing economic growth.

South Korea's economy is facing strengthening headwinds as global demand cools and spending at home fades. "We have to overcome the kind of complex global crisis as one

facing us now through the promotion of exports," a media pool report quoted Yoon as saying at a meeting of top officials whose duties relate to exports. "Every government agency should provide full support (to private-sector companies)," he added.

The government did not set any specific export target at the meeting, but said in a statement that the country needs to explore opportunities in regions such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).



Battling Inflation Priority As Global Growth Slows

PARIS (Dispatches) - World economic growth is slowing due to decades-high inflation, the OECD said, calling for "essential" further monetary policy tightening and "more targeted" government support.

Global GDP is set to grow 3.1 percent this year -- nearly half the rate for last year, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development said.

The slide is due to continue next year, with global growth falling to 2.2 percent before rebounding "to a relatively modest 2.7 percent in 2024", the Paris-based organization said.

Amid the effects of Russia's war in Ukraine, "growth has lost momentum, high inflation is proving persistent, confidence has weakened, and uncertainty is high", it said in its latest forecasts.

"An end to the war and a just peace for Ukraine would be the most impactful way to improve the global economic outlook," OECD secretary general Mathias Cormann said during a press conference.

OECD chief economist Alvaro Santos Pereira said in the report that the global economy was "reeling from the largest energy crisis since the 1970s".

The energy shock has pushed inflation up "to levels not seen for many decades" and is hitting economic growth around the world, he added.

Inflation had already been on the rise before the conflict due to bottlenecks in the global supply chain after countries emerged from Covid lockdowns. But the OECD said that inflation was set to reach eight percent in the fourth quarter of this year in the Group of 20 top economies, falling to 5.5 percent in 2023 and 2024.

Cormann said that inflationary pressure was decreasing, but urged central banks to press on with interest rates hikes.

"We do expect inflation to gradually moderate as tighter monetary policy takes effect, demand and energy price pressures diminish over time and transport costs and delivery times continue to normalize," he told reporters.

However, he stressed there remained the possibility that "economic activity may become even weaker if energy prices rise further or if energy disruptions affect gas and electricity markets in Europe and Asia".

Fighting inflation is a "top policy priority", the OECD said, as soaring prices erode people's purchasing power worldwide.

"Our central scenario is not a global recession but a significant growth slowdown for the world economy in 2023, as well as still high, albeit declining, inflation in many countries," Santos Pereira said.

The OECD recommended tightening monetary policy in countries where price rises remained high.

It also advocated targeted support for families and firms to avoid exacerbating inflationary pressures, with energy costs "likely to remain high and volatile for some time".

"In these difficult and uncertain times, policy has once again a crucial role to play: further tightening of monetary policy is essential to fight inflation, and fiscal policy support should become more targeted and temporary," the OECD said.

IMF Forecasts Spain Growth Close to Zero at Turn of Year

MADRID (Dispatches) - The International Monetary Fund expects economic growth in Spain to slow in 2023 on higher prices and flagging demand before rebounding to pre-pandemic levels in 2024, it said in its country report.

Growth is expected to be weak in the coming quarters reflecting a plunge in consumer confidence due to a cost of living crisis and weak demand, the IMF said in its report. Activity will accelerate towards the end of the year, helped by European Union recovery fund spending and improved supply, it said.

"We do not forecast a technical recession, but growth will be close to 0% in the last quarter of this year and the first quarter of 2023," Dora Iakova, IMF mission chief for Spain, said in a call with journalists.

Although the IMF warned of many downside risks, notably from the impact of energy prices, it expects gross domestic product to grow 4.6% in 2022, up from its previous forecast of 4.3% in October, and slow to 1.2% in 2023, above the average of euro zone countries.

The improvement is attributed to the robust labour market and to an especially strong performance by tourism and other services.



India's Economic Growth to Decline to 5.9% in 2023

MUMBAI (Dispatches) - Wall Street brokerage Goldman Sachs said the Indian economy is projected to grow 5.9% in 2023, lower than 6.9% growth estimated this year. Holding a market weight stance for the equities on the back of two successive years of massive rally, Goldman Sachs also said that it expects the benchmark Nifty to reach 20,500 level by December 2023. This will imply a 12% price return, led by mid-teen earnings growth and a modest P/E (Price to Earnings) compression.

The brokerage does not have target for the benchmark Sensex.

For 2023, it has pegged the GDP growth at 5.9% compared to projected expansion of 6.9% in 2022.

According to the brokerage, growth is expected to be a tale of two halves, with a slower first half in 2023 as the reopening boost fades and monetary tightening weighs on domestic demand. In the second half, growth is likely to re-accelerate as global growth recovers, drag from net exports diminishes, and investment cycle picks up.

While stating that underlying inflation is sticky, the brokerage has forecast the headline CPI to decrease to 6.1% in 2023 from 6.8% in 2022 as active government intervention is likely to cap food inflation.

Given the negative real rates in the country, the brokerage said the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is expected to hike the repo rate by 50 basis points in the December policy and by another 35 basis points in February 2023 policy meetings. These actions would take the repo rate to 6.75 per cent by February next year.

EU Countries Spar Over 275 Euros/MWh Gas Cap Proposal

BRUSSELS (Dispatches) - The 27 European Union countries disagreed over a proposal by the bloc's executive to cap future gas prices at 275 euros per megawatt-hour (MWh), a plan that has swiftly drawn criticism from both backers and opponents.

After months of infighting in the bloc, the executive European Commission proposed the cap ahead of a meeting of EU energy ministers on Thursday on the bloc's latest emergency measures to alleviate an energy crisis as winter looms.

It would kick in if the front-month price on

the Dutch gas exchange Title Transfer Facility (TTF) exceeds 275 euros/MWh for two weeks and if, at the same time, the prices are 58 euros higher than a liquefied (LNG) global reference price for 10 consecutive trading days.

The proposal drew ridicule from proponents of a decisive market intervention to bring down runaway energy prices that last August hit all-time-highs as Russia cut supply following EU sanctions over Moscow's war against Ukraine.

Poland's Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki said the level put forward was "very high", while his Spanish counterpart said the proposal was "clearly not enough".

"We are not on the right path if this is the option," said Pedro Sanchez.

The Italian energy minister said the proposed cap was set too high and the semi-state Athens news agency quoted the Greek minister as saying his government wanted a cap of 150-200 euros.

Under conditions for triggering the cap proposed by the Commission, it would not have kicked in last August, which supporters of the solution said rendered it useless.

The TTF front-month contract was up since the Commission's proposal on Tuesday, trading at above 130 euros/MWh compared to a peak above 340 euros last August.

Eurointelligence consultancy said the Commission's proposed criteria meant the cap was "clearly designed not to be used: it is, in other words, not intended to actually cap prices."

There are as many as 15 EU countries demanding a solid cap. Among them Belgium, Poland, Italy and Greece threatened to block other energy measures up for approval on Thursday if the package does not contain an actionable plan to prevent excessive prices.

On the other side of the table, however, is a small but powerful camp led by the EU's biggest economy, Germany.

Together with the Netherlands, Sweden and Finland, they have argued a cap would push providers to sell elsewhere and cut incentives to bring down gas consumption.

China to Use Timely RRR Cuts to Keep Liquidity Ample

BEIJING (Dispatches) - China will use timely cuts in banks' reserve requirement ratio (RRR), alongside other monetary policy tools, to keep liquidity reasonably ample, state media quoted a cabinet meeting as saying.

Hurt by COVID-19 restrictions and a sharp property downturn, China's economy has been struggling to get back on its feet, even after a flurry of policy measures this year to spur domestic demand.

Economic activity in the fourth quarter "is crucial for full-year growth", according to the State Council meeting chaired by Premier Li Keqiang on Tuesday, adding that now was a "critical time" to consolidate the economy's stable foundation.

"We will use monetary policy tools such as cuts in the reserve requirement ratio in a timely and appropriate way to maintain reasonable and sufficient liquidity."

The People's Bank of China (PBOC) usually follows guidance from the cabinet, which oversees the world's second-largest economy and charts the fundamental course of China's policies.

The PBOC last cut the RRR - the amount of cash that banks must hold as reserves - by 25 basis points in April when commercial hub Shanghai entered a citywide lockdown.

"The central bank is expected to announce another RRR cut of 25 basis points - the same as in April - in the next few days," Wen Bin, chief economist at China Minsheng Bank, said in a research note.

The central bank has cut the RRR 13 times since 2018, slashing the average reserve ratio to about 8% from 15%, pumping about 10.8 trillion yuan (\$1.51 trillion) in liquidity into the economy, PBOC Governor Yi Gang said this week.



On Monday, the central bank kept its benchmark lending rates unchanged for the third straight month, as a weaker yuan and persistent capital outflows continued to limit Beijing's ability to ease monetary conditions to support the economy.

China's economy suffered a broad slowdown in October and a recent spike in COVID-19 cases has deepened concerns about its growth in the last quarter of 2022, amid an ailing property sector, a high jobless rate among young people and protracted coronavirus restrictions under Beijing's zero-COVID strategy.

China will keep its economic operations within a reasonable range and strive to achieve relatively good results, CCTV reported, adding that previous fiscal and financial policies were having an effect but still had great potential.

The cabinet will send officials to provinces this month to check the implementation of policy measures that have been rolled out this year, state media said.

German Inflation to Stay In Double Digits



FRANKFURT (Dispatches) - Inflation in Germany may well remain in double digits into next year despite the government's efforts to curb energy prices, the Bundesbank said.

With consumer prices in Germany rising by 11.6% last month, their fastest pace since the early 1950s, Berlin is trying to cap a surge in energy bills that mirrors an explosion in the market price for natural gas following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

But the Bundesbank said the effect of this so called "brake" on gas prices may not become immediately visible, and would only be temporary anyway.

"The inflation rate could stay in double digits also beyond the turn of the year," the German central bank said in its monthly report.

It added the first leg of the government's plan, which will see it foot gas bills in December, would bring relief to consumers but may not register in the official inflation calculation.

The second, more significant part of the plan, in which 80% of households' and small companies' gas consumption will be subsidised, may knock 1 percentage point off inflation.

But only while it lasts.

"As soon as the gas and electricity price brakes expire, the effect on the inflation rate will reverse," the Bundesbank said.

The Bundesbank, which is a vocal supporter of the European Central Bank's efforts to curb inflation via a steady diet of interest rate hikes, took some comfort from the latest wage deals in the German chemical and metal sectors.

Workers in those industries agreed to what will likely prove to be below-inflation pay increases in return for one-off compensation payments.

"From a macroeconomic perspective, it makes it easier to return to lower wage increases when the temporary components expire," the Bundesbank said.

Islamic Revolution Victory Changed Equation of Power in World

TEHRAN (Dispatches) - Tehran's provisional Friday prayers leader said that the Global Arrogance led by the United States does not want to see progress of the Islamic Republic of Iran on international stage.

Speaking during this week's Friday prayers sermon in Tehran, Hojatoleslam Mohammad Javad Haj Ali Akbari stated that the issue between Iran and the Global Arrogance is the issue of progress, so that enemies of the country do

not want the Islamic Republic of Iran to make progress.

Referring to the arrival of Basij Week which was established at the behest of founding father of the Islamic Revolution the late Imam Khomeini (RA), he hailed the effective participation of Basij volunteer forces in various cultural, social and political fields in line with safeguarding peace and security in the country.



U.S. Business Activity Weakens Further

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - U.S. business activity contracted for a fifth straight month in November as higher interest rates slowed demand but the downturn in euro zone business activity ebbed slightly as the world braces for a recession-hit year ahead, surveys showed.

S&P Global said its flash U.S. Composite PMI Output Index, which tracks the manufacturing and services sectors, fell to 46.3 this month from a final reading of 48.2 in October. A reading below 50 indicates contraction in the private sector.

Activity is slumping under the weight of the Federal Reserve's most aggressive interest rate-hiking cycle since the 1980s aimed at curbing inflation by dampening economic demand. By the U.S. central bank's preferred measure, inflation is still running at more than three times its 2% goal.

The flash composite new orders index dropped to 46.4, the lowest level in two and half years, from a final reading of 49.2 in October. Outside the initial wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, this was the worst reading since 2009.

"Companies are reporting increasing headwinds from the rising cost of living, tightening financial conditions - notably higher borrowing costs - and weakened demand across both home and export markets," said Chris Williamson, chief business economist at S&P Global Market Intelligence.

A Reuters poll of economists last week gave a 60% chance of a U.S. recession within a year and the Fed is primed for a 50 basis point hike at its next policy meeting in three weeks time as the battle to quash high inflation continues.

Meanwhile, the downturn in euro zone business activity eased slightly in November, offering a glimmer of hope the expected recession there may be shallower than feared, but consumers still cut spending amid a cost of living crisis.

There has been mounting evidence the bloc is entering a recession and in a Reuters poll published on Tuesday economists gave a 78% chance of one within a year.

S&P Global's flash Composite Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI), seen as a good gauge of overall economic health, nudged up to 47.8 from 47.3 in October, confounding expectations for a fall to 47.0 in a Reuters poll.

However, November is the fifth month the index has been below the 50 mark separating growth from contraction.

"Today's PMI data continue to show that the euro zone has entered a recession, with the surveys pointing to a milder contraction compared to previous recessions," said Paolo Grignani at Oxford Economics.

The downturn in German economic activity also eased in November, a sister survey showed, offering some hope an expected recession in Europe's largest economy could be milder than first feared.

But in France activity contracted for the first time since February 2021 as lower new orders weighed on the euro zone's second-biggest economy.

In Britain, outside the European Union, economic activity fell at close to its fastest pace in nearly two years in November, adding to signs of recession there.

Elsewhere in the reports, there were some glimmers of hope in the fight against inflation, even as evidence suggests a slowdown in price pressures will be gradual with wages remaining sticky for now.



In the United States, the survey's measure of prices paid by businesses for inputs slipped to 65.7, the lowest level since December 2020, from a final reading 67.0 in October. That reflected an easing in supply bottlenecks.

Businesses were also raising prices for their products at the slowest pace in just over two years, in part because of ebbing demand.

The survey's flash manufacturing PMI dropped to 47.6 this month, the lowest reading since May 2020 with new orders remaining subdued, but price pressures continued to abate as manufacturers signaled the first improvement in supplier performance since October 2019. Average input prices also increased at the softest rate in two years, but factories still faced challenges finding skilled labor.

The survey's flash services sector PMI decreased to 46.1 from 47.8 in October. Services businesses also reported weak demand and a moderation in input prices.

In the euro zone, there was a similar trend. New orders fell sharply again and there was a marked drop in price pressures with the output prices index falling to 63.7 from 66.1, its lowest reading since March 2021. Still, inflation in the region remains unacceptably high. It reached 10.6% last month, more than five times the ECB's 2% target, and the central bank is expected to add another 50 basis points to its deposit rate next month so any sign of an easing in price pressures will be welcomed by policymakers.

Activity in the bloc's dominant services industry declined again, with the headline index matching October's 20-month low of 48.6. Despite the ongoing slowdown firms did increase headcount, albeit at the weakest pace since March 2021.

Manufacturing activity, particularly hard hit by soaring energy prices and disrupted supply chains, also declined but at a slower pace. The main index rose to 47.3 from 46.4, above the Reuters poll estimate for 46.0.

Some Western States...

FROM PAGE 1

Referring to the thorough investigation launched following the death of Amini and a forensic report that denied any maltreatment of the Iranian woman by police and security officials, Iran's representative at the UN Human Rights Council said, "While investigations were underway, some Western countries incited public emotions and sentiments of people [in Iran] and stoked riots and terrorist attacks in the country.

Karimi then pointed to hatemongering efforts and spreading false rumors with the goal of fomenting violence by anti-Iran TV channels based in the UK and the US, adding, "West's interventions led to the killing and injuring of hundreds of Iranian police and security forces as well as destruction of thousands of public and private properties."

"The Islamic Republic of Iran regrets [the fact] that the Human Rights Council is being abused by a group of rogue states," Iran's representative said, describing the political use of human rights by these countries as disgraceful.

"This politically motivated move by Germany on the situation of human rights [in Iran] is an organized conspiracy that pursues hidden goals and will not lead anywhere," Karimi said.

She added, "While due to imposition of unilateral sanctions by the American regime and implementation of those sanctions by European countries, especially Germany, the UK, and France, the rights of the Iranian people have been extensively violated by these so-called champions of human rights, expressing concern about the situation of human rights in Iran and holding a special [HRC] session is nothing but deception and fraud."

"These countries lack the moral qualification to preach others and call for a special session on Iran," Karimi said.

Iran, EU...

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The rising trade between Iran and the EU has come despite continued restrictions on banking ties between Iranian and European businesses because of American sanctions on Iran.

Experts say US sanctions have caused a boom in Iranian trade ties with the rest of the world as the country has sought to rely less on oil revenues, which are the main subject of US bans, and to focus more on agriculture and manufacturing activities in the country. Petrochemicals as well as metals and mining products have accounted for a bulk of Iran's exports to other countries in recent years.

Record Number of Children Miss Measles Vaccine

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - A record high of nearly 40 million children around the world missed a measles vaccine dose in 2021, according to a new report that found immunization levels had failed to rebound from disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The research, which was jointly published by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said the decline was a major setback in eliminating the deadly disease.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus noted the irony in the fact that while vaccines against Covid were developed and deployed in record time, routine immunization programs were badly impacted, leaving millions at risk.

"Getting immunization programs back on track is absolutely critical. Behind every statistic in this report is a child at risk of a preventable disease," he said in a statement.

According to the report, 25 million children missed their first dose while 14.7 million missed their second.

IRGC Chief Says...

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Iran maintains an advisory mission in Syria at the request of Damascus with the aim of helping the war-torn Arab country get rid of the foreign-backed militants, who have been fighting against the democratically-elected Syrian government since 2011.

Salami added that Saudi Arabia begs for a ceasefire with Ansarullah. Salami called a divine inspiration on Imam Khomeini's blessed heart as the source of the formation of Basij.

"I believe that the idea of forming the great organization of Basij (voluntary force) was a divine inspiration on the blessed heart of the Late Imam Khomeini," he added.

The chief commander of the IRGC called the Basij the strong shield which could block the way for God's enemies and force them to run away.

He said the terrorists and hostile groups wanted to disturb the atmosphere of mental peace in the nations with separatist conspiracies and terrorist actions and propaganda.

Salami warned the states of the world that Iran will cut the hands of those who want to endanger national security.

Iran Defeat Wales to...

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The Bournemouth man's flick-on led to an early effort from Neco Williams that flew just over the crossbar. The Welsh carved out the first clear chance in the 12th minute as Moore stretched to volley Connor Roberts' cross, but goalkeeper Hossein Hosseini was able to parry his effort.

Iran thought they had taken the lead minutes later, although Ali Gholizadeh was clearly offside before he tapped in and the goal was ruled out by VAR.

A cagey game burst into life with a crazy 20-second spell shortly after half-time. Sardar Azmoun sped clear of the Welsh defense but saw his shot come back off the post.

The ball was recycled to Gholizadeh, who cut inside and curled an excellent strike from outside the box, which bounced away off the other upright, with Azmoun's follow-up saved by a floored Hennessey.

Iran suddenly looked like scoring every time they went forward and Ethan Ampadu had to make an excellent block to deny Taremi the opening goal.

Wales had Hennessey to thank for staying on level terms with 17 minutes left, as he stretched to tip Saeid Ezatolahi's low shot around the post.

The game opened up in the final minutes as both sides knew they likely needed more than a draw.

Iran were given a huge boost in their push for a winner when Hennessey recklessly charged out of his goal and crashed into Mehdi Taremi in the 86th minute.

Remarkably, Guatemalan referee Mario Escobar only initially booked the 'keeper, but that was corrected after a VAR review and Hennessey was dismissed.

Leicester's Danny Ward took his place and quickly saw Mehdi Torabi's effort fly past his post.

But an emotional day for Iran and their fans was given its crowning moments right at the death when Cheshmi hammered home from the edge of the box and Rezaeian raced clear to clip over Ward.

Counter-Terror Operations...

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According to the letter, the terrorists' operations resulted in a number of civilian casualties, vandalism, and destruction of public and private property.

It said Iran has shared "irrefutable evidence and credible information" with the central government in Iraq and authorities from the Kurdistan Region about the use of the Arab country's territory by terrorist and separatist groups to "plan, support, organize and carry out terrorist and subversive acts" against the Islamic Republic.

It noted that Iran has held several rounds of bilateral consultations and negotiations with officials from the Iraqi government and the authorities of the Iraqi Kurdistan Region, including a recent visit to Tehran last month by the advisor for Iraqi National Security.

During these talks, the letter said, Iran has requested the extradition of those who committed terrorist crimes and were convicted by Iranian courts, as well as the closure of the headquarters and training camps of such terrorist groups, and the disarming of their elements.

"Iran has also underlined the need of stationing Iraqi military forces along its borders. The Iraqi delegation agreed to the requests and also committed to developing a timeframe for

completing the disarmament of such terrorist groups," it emphasized. The mission expressed regret that no effective measures have been taken so far to fulfill such agreements and said Iran has persistently stated its willingness to implement the aforesaid agreements, but to no avail.

The mission voiced Iran's unwavering commitment to address this issue with Iraq through bilateral mechanisms as a part of its ongoing fight against terrorism.

The foreign ministers of the two countries have emphasized "respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq, the need to combat terrorism in accordance with international obligations, and the importance of bilateral cooperation in addressing the challenges posed by terrorist activities," it said.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran values highly the security and stability of Iraq and reiterates, once again, its commitment to the territorial integrity, unity, and sovereignty of the Republic of Iraq," the letter pointed out.

Since September 24, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) has frequently launched air raids against the positions of the terrorists, who are holed up in Iraqi Kurdistan seeking to ignite riots and unrest in Iran's western border cities.

Iran Strongly Condemns...

FROM PAGE 1

"Despite some protesters' resorting to violence and causing riots based on foreign-organized abuses, provocations, and interventions in the past two months and adoption of terrorist measures by few individuals and armed groups, defending forces of the country's security have dealt with rioters with maximum restraint as tens of police and security forces have been martyred and thousands more have sustained injuries," reads the statement.

The statement reminded that the activities of the Human Rights Council should be based on dialogue and aim to help governments to promote human rights, adding, "Despite many selective, unfair, and even biased behaviors of a group of countries in the council, Iran has always emphasized constructive participation and deeply believes that the international community members can only help promote human rights by dialogue, cooperation and exchange of experience."

"The German government and some other contributing Western countries to this resolution have made a strategic mistake based on wrong calculations and under the pressure of specific political lobbies and the fake news of some anti-Iranian media," noted the ministry, adding, "time will show that this political short-sightedness will be to their detriment."

Referring to Western-back media's provocation of terror and violence in Iran, the statement said the resolution passed in Geneva was a "direct result of using wrong information to pursue anti-Iranian goals in by few Western states."

According to the statement, Iranian authorities have shown maximum restraint towards arrested rioters, especially with regard to women, however, "the German regime and its aligned governments raised provocative and false claims about violation of human rights and the rights of women and children."

"The Islamic Republic of Iran was opposed to the special meeting and considered it inconsistent, abnormal, and unnecessary based on grounds for holding 34 previous special meetings about different countries and issues in the past years and hence, completely rejects the resolution passed in the meeting," added the statement.

Referring to the establishment of a specialized committee to investigate the death of Mahsa Amini and another one comprised of lawyers and independent representatives to study the recent developments in Iran, the Islamic Republic "considers the creation of any new mechanism for probing issues of the past two months as unnecessary and a violation of the country's national sovereignty and will not recognize the assigned mission," it concluded.

Matsuyama Withdraws From Hero World Challenge

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Former champion Hideki Matsuyama has withdrawn from next week's Tiger Woods-hosted Hero World Challenge in the Bahamas due to an injury, a tournament official said.

Japan's Matsuyama, who won the limited-field event in 2016, has suffered a number of injuries this year and most recently withdrew from the Houston Open 10 days ago citing a neck injury after opening his third round with a four-over-par 39.

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Woods Wins Player Impact Program

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Tiger Woods has won the PGA Tour's Player Impact Program (PIP) for a second consecutive year and with it the \$15 million bonus given to the winner, according to results obtained by Reuters.

Woods has played only nine rounds of golf across three majors in 2022 but remains the game's top draw as defined by the PIP, which measures a player's popularity based on five criteria like media mentions and broadcast exposure.

Tatum Leads Celtics Over Mavs

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - Jayson Tatum scored 37 points and grabbed 13 rebounds to spark the NBA-leading Boston Celtics to a 125-112 victory over visiting Dallas despite 42 points from Luka Doncic.

The Celtics, whose nine-game win streak was snapped Monday at Chicago, bounced back by dominating the Mavericks, improving to 7-1 in Boston and an NBA-best 14-4 overall. "I think we were locked in from the beginning," Tatum said. "Losing to Chicago made us regroup and refocus."

"We just knew they were a really talented team. Luka is the head of the snake. It was good to come home and get back in the win column."

It was Tatum's 10th career game with 35 points and 10 rebounds. He made 11-of-24 from the floor and 13-of-15 from the free throw line.

In a showdown of early season NBA Most Valuable Player candidates, league scoring leader Doncic countered with a game-high point total on 17-of-28 shooting and five-of-9 from the line. The Slovenian guard also had nine assists and eight rebounds.

"Everybody knows how talented and special he is," Tatum said. "He can do so many things on the court. He's somebody I respect and like competing against."

The Celtics led 70-49 at halftime and by double figures from late in the first quarter until Doncic sparked a late rally to pull Dallas within 114-105 with 3:43 remaining.

Al Horford answered with a 3-pointer to ignite a 10-2 Boston run and Dallas never came within 13 again.

The Sacramento Kings saw their seven-game win streak snapped as Trae Young scored 35 points to lead the host Atlanta Hawks to a 115-106 victory.

Domantas Sabonis had 15 points, 14 rebounds and seven assists to spark Sacramento (10-7). Clint Capela pulled down 14 rebounds for the Hawks (11-7).

Donovan Mitchell scored 34 points to lead the Cleveland Cavaliers over Portland 114-96 and stretch their win streak to four games.

The Cavs improved to 8-1 at home and 12-6 overall as Darius Garland had 24 points and 12 assists while Jarrett Allen added 24 points and 13 rebounds.

DeMar DeRozan scored 36 points and added eight assists to lead the Chicago Bulls over host Milwaukee 118-113, dropping the Bucks to 12-5 despite 36 points,



11 rebounds and seven assists from Giannis Antetokounmpo.

Karl-Anthony Towns had 23 points, 11 rebounds and eight assists while Rudy Gobert contributed 21 points and 16 rebounds in Minnesota's 115-101 victory at Indiana.

Myles Turner scored a game-high 31 points for the Pacers, whose five-game win streak ended.

Zion Williamson scored 32 points and grabbed 11 rebounds to power the New Orleans Pelicans to a 129-110 victory at San Antonio. He shot 14-of-18 from the floor and 4-of-8 from the free throw line.

The Brooklyn Nets, humbled by a loss Tuesday to a Philadelphia team lacking three top starters, bounced back by winning at Toronto 112-98.

Kyrie Irving scored 29 points, Ben Simmons and Nic Claxton each added 14 points and Kevin Durant had 12 points, seven rebounds and five assists for Brooklyn.

The Denver Nuggets rallied from 13 points down in the fourth quarter to win in overtime at Oklahoma City 131-126.

Nikola Jokic had a game-high 39 points plus 10 rebounds and nine assists for Denver and sank two clinching free throws with 8.3 seconds remaining in overtime.

Bruce Brown had a triple-double with 17 points, 13 rebounds and 10 assists for the Nuggets while Aaron Gordon had 30 points for Denver. Shai Gilgeous-Alexander led the Thunder with 31 points.

Terry Rozier scored 22 points and PJ Washington added 19 to spark the Charlotte Hornets over visiting Philadelphia 107-101.

At Miami, Kyle Lowry scored 28 points and Caleb Martin had 24 to power the host Heat over Washington 113-105. Kyle Kuzma had a game-high 33 points for the Wizards.



Uruguay Held by South Korea In Goalless Stalemate

AL RAYYAN (Dispatches) - Uruguay faltered in their World Cup opener against a lively and energetic South Korea after they were held to a 0-0 draw in Group H in a contest where both teams struggled to find the clinical edge.

Clear-cut chances were rare for either side at the Education City Stadium and although Uruguay created more goalscoring opportunities, neither team were able to register a shot on target.

Uruguay captain Diego Godin was denied by the woodwork while South Korea forward Hwang Ui-jo blasted over the bar with the goal at his mercy, leaving both teams to rue missed chances before group rivals Portugal and Ghana meet later on in the day.

Uruguay's first sight of goal came in the 19th minute through Federico Valverde, who connected with Jose Maria Gimenez's pass and took a touch before firing a half-volley towards goal, but his ambitious attempt went just over the bar.

The South Americans had begun to find their footing when South Korea, having been patient so far, disrupted their rhythm and launched a counter-attack from a Uruguay corner before the half-hour mark.

Son Heung-min picked up the ball on the left flank and cut inside, skipping past two Uruguay defenders before curling a right-footed effort towards goal, but left back Mathias Olivera was able to clear it away.

India Begin World Cup Preparation

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - India skipper Shikhar Dhawan views the one-day series against New Zealand as part of their preparation for the home World Cup next year but rival captain Kane Williamson preferred to stay in the present.

India were eliminated in the semi-finals of the 20-overs World Cup in Australia earlier this month but prevailed in the T20 series against New Zealand.

The importance of the three-match ODI series against New Zealand was not lost on Dhawan, who is leading an India side bereft of senior batters, including regular captain Rohit Sharma.

"It's a good exposure for the young boys to come and play in New Zealand and test their skills and characters in different conditions," Dhawan told reporters on the eve of the first ODI in Auckland on Friday.

"This is about preparing for the World Cup. The young boys have been doing well, which is great to watch. The World Cup is still far, but we have a fair idea about the players."

It is particularly an important year for Dhawan who plays only the 50-overs format for India though he has been appointed Punjab Kings captain for next year's Indian Premier League.

The left-handed opener, however, is at peace being a single-format international player. "I see it as blessing, because I get to do other stuff as well," the 36-year-old explained.

"I stay lot more fresh and feeling stronger than when I played all three formats."

For Williamson, the immediate target was to win the series against India.

"After a large volume of T20 cricket and the World Cup, naturally the focus shifts to the next one and that is the (global) ODI tournament," the 32-year-old said.

"(I'm) reluctant to call it preparation, it's very much focusing on the series at hand and the cricket we want to play."

"So focusing on what's in front of us but no doubt there's lot more one-day cricket coming up."



Croatia Send Spain Crashing in Davis Cup

MALAGA (Dispatches) - Marin Cilic led Croatia into the Davis Cup semi-finals, knocking out six-time champions Spain who were missing Carlos Alcaraz and Rafael Nadal, the world's two top-ranked players.

World number 17 Cilic, a former US Open champion, fought back to defeat 13th-ranked Pablo Carreno Busta 5-7, 6-3, 7-6 (7/5) as Croatia booked a semi-final clash against Australia.

Earlier Wednesday, Borna Coric had set the 2005 and 2018 champions on their way, defeating Roberto Bautista Agut 6-4, 7-6 (7/4).

Cilic, 34, who made his Davis Cup debut back in 2006, dropped the first set, gave up a break in the decider and was 1/4 down in the tiebreak before triumphing after three hours and 13 minutes on court.

His 20 aces helped alleviate the damage caused by 15 double faults as the 10,000-strong home crowd were stunned into silence by Croatia who were runners-up to Russia in the 2021 final.

Coric, the world number 26, fired 14 aces past his 21st-ranked rival who he had already defeated on his way to the Cincinnati Masters title in the summer.

Bautista Agut had been on a seven-match winning streak in the Davis Cup, a run stretching back to 2019.

Play was briefly halted when two environmental protesters dashed onto the court and attempted to tie themselves to the net before being wrestled to the floor and ejected from the arena by security staff.

"I just think in general I was playing very smart. When I needed to attack, I did attack. When I needed to make a defence, I was defensive," said Coric.

"I also mixed up the rhythm, as well, which is very important against him. I was just very pleased with my game, to be honest."

Glazer Era Is over as Man United Owners Consider Sale

LONDON (Dispatches) - Fans gathered outside Old Trafford said they hoped the Glazers' time as owners of Manchester United was coming to an end as a leading supporters group insisted the Red Devils' loyal followers must have a stake in any new share structure.

The US-based Glazer family said late Tuesday they were "exploring strategic alternatives", including a possible sale of the Premier League football giants.

Their announcement came just hours after it was confirmed United star player Cristiano Ronaldo was leaving with "immediate effect" following a television interview last week where, amid other criticisms, he said the Glazers "don't care about the club".

The Glazers have been unpopular with supporters ever since a £790 million (\$934 million) leveraged takeover in 2005 burdened the club with huge debts.

Frustration towards the Americans has only grown during a nine-year decline in results on the pitch, with the Red Devils failing to win the Premier League since the 2012/13 season - outstanding manager Alex Ferguson's final campaign before retirement.

A supporter who identified himself as Pat, a 23-year-old who works in a nearby pub, told AFP outside Old Trafford on Wednesday: "Working at the pub when they (United) play at home, all you hear in the pub is 'Glazers out, Glazers out'. The fans seem to just hate the Glazers. I think it is time for a change."

His comments were endorsed by Juan, a 32-year-old United supporter from Mexico.



Ronaldo Makes History as Portugal Edge Ghana 3-2

DOHA (Dispatches) - Portugal captain Cristiano Ronaldo shrugged off his bitter split with Manchester United to claim yet another record as he became the first player to score in five World Cups with a penalty to help steer his side to a nervy 3-2 win over Ghana.

The first-half of the Group H clash was forgettable apart from a couple of Ronaldo chances, but it burst into life after the interval as Portugal belatedly began their campaign.

Ronaldo, a free agent after his second stint at Old Trafford ended abruptly on Tuesday, thumped home a dubiously-awarded penalty in the 65th minute after an innocuous coming together with Mohammed Salisu saw the referee point to the spot.

Ghana did nothing in the first half apart from defend deeply but gave their noisy bank of fans in the 974 Stadium something to cheer when Andre Ayew equalized in the 73rd minute.

Joao Felix restored Portugal's lead five minutes later, however, and Bruno Fernandes then showed his class with a jinking run before sliding a pass to Rafael Leao to leave Ghana stunned.

Osman Bukari's 89th-minute headed reply set up an anxious ending for Portugal but they survived nine minutes of stoppage time to win their opening game of a World Cup for the first time in their last four appearances.

