

Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Said That the IRGC and the Army Navy Forces' Synergy Has Brought About Unrivalled Combat Power for The Country and Frustrated All the So-Called Superpowers

# IRAN NEWS

Commander of IRGC Aerospace Force Brigadier General Amirali Hajizadeh in an Exhibition of the Capacities of the IRGC Aerospace Force Said Iran Is Capable Enough To Disable the Missile Defense Shield of the Enemies

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## Tehran Rules Out Cooperation With UNHRC Fact-Finding Mission

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's Foreign Ministry says Tehran will not cooperate with the so-called fact-finding mission created after a UN Human Rights Council resolution, engineered by Germany, to probe claims of human rights abuses during the recent riots, stressing that Iran has already formed a national fact-finding committee to look into the events.

Spokesman Nasser Kanaani made the remarks at a press briefing in the Iranian capital of Tehran on Monday as he showed up with a chemical mask in the presser, which alluded to Germany's support for Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein during the 1980-1988 Iraqi imposed war on Iran and supply of chemical warfare by Berlin to the deposed Ba'ath regime.

Kanaani noted that Iran, within the framework of its national responsibilities, has set up a national committee comprising of experts, lawyers, official and non-official representatives, is performing its national and general duties, and is undertaking in-depth investigations.

He also condemned the hasty employment of human rights mechanisms and instrumental use of them against independent states, emphasizing that such an approach will not provide any help for the advancement of human rights. **See Page 7**

## Iran Trade With ECO States Top \$9.7b In 7 Months

TEHRAN (MNA) - Iran's exports to ECO members stood at 10.07 million tons worth \$5.74 billion during the seven months ending Oct. 22, registering a 42.24% and 4.69% decline in terms of weight and value YOY, respectively.

Trade between Iran and the Economic Cooperation Organization's member states reached 12.63 million tons worth \$9.75 billion during the current fiscal year's first seven months (March 21-Oct. 22), registering a 37.85% decline in terms of weight, but a 5.71% growth in terms of value year-on-year, data released by the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration show.

Turkey was Iran's main trade partner among the countries under review with 6.35 million tons worth \$6.29 billion. It was followed by Pakistan with 2.2 million tons worth \$1.26 billion and Afghanistan with 1.92 million tons worth \$955.06 million, Financial Tribune reported.

Iran's exports to ECO members reached 10.07 million tons (down 42.24%) worth \$5.74 billion (down 4.69%) during March 21-Oct. 22. Imports hit 2.56 million tons (down 11.34%) worth \$4.01 billion (up 25.33%).

## Leader Urges Iran's Constant Naval Presence in Int'l Waters



### IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei stressed the need for the Iranian Navy to bolster and maintain its presence in international waters.

A number of commanders and officials of Iran's Navy met with Ayatollah Khamenei, the commander-in-chief of the Iranian Armed Forces, on Monday on the occasion of Navy Day.

In the gathering, the Leader emphasized the need for the Navy to boost its combat capabilities and defense equipment and to continue navigation in remote and international waters.

Ayatollah Khamenei also noted that stronger relations between the Armed Forces and the administration and other branches of power will result in understanding, cooperation and progress.

Pointing to the history of maritime activities in Iran that have conveyed the Islamic and Iranian culture and civilization to other parts of the world, the Leader stated, "With such a history and the long sea coasts in the north and particularly the south of Iran, the culture of using the opportunities of the sea has been ignored in Iran, whereas it should turn into the public culture of people."

Ayatollah Khamenei further highlighted the importance of creating a culture in this regard and developing a public understanding of the sea as a fundamental infrastructure, saying, "The issue of development of the Makran coasts has been mooted in the past few years and the administrations also welcomed it, but a significant progress in this field requires culture-creating."

The Leader also pointed to the effective role of artistic products, such as animations, in publicizing the diverse opportunities available in the sea, noting that the presentation of capacities for Iran's sea-based progress in the military and civil sectors will generate public enthusiasm for grasping those opportunities.

Earlier yesterday, the Chief Commander of the Iranian Navy urged the removal of terrorism supporters from the region thanks to synergy, consensus, and convergence among regional states.

On the occasion of Iran's Navy Day, the Chief Commander of Iran's Army Rear Admiral Shahram Irani emphasized the Islamic Republic of Iran expects that the countries of the region will reach a synergy by relying on their capabilities and by expelling the notorious countries that are on the path of terrorism in the name of providing security, fully take the control of the security of the region in their hands.

Irani said about the importance of honoring Navy Day and its continuous presence in the seas that each organization has been dedicated a day according to the type of activity it has had involved with and the peak point it has reached, and this day is remembered every year.

Regarding the message conveyed by Iran, Russia, and China's joint naval drill Rear Admiral Irani added that the Iranian Navy, which is active in the international arena, should have relations with countries.

Rear Admiral Irani stated that maritime and defense diplomacy are one of the levels of our relations. Holding drills are done in the form of joint hybrid drills with countries that respect each other and are very close regarding training, technology, and equipment.

Rear Admiral Irani said about the significance and message of the presence of the Iranian Navy in the northern Indian Ocean and other strategic maritime areas: "The Strategic Navy of the Islamic Republic of Iran has a serious presence in the northern Indian Ocean as a special international region and of global significance due to the amount of movement of vessels, the presence of civilian vessels, and especially as a golden triangle of the maritime and sea-based economy; in order to establish shipping security and prioritize the security of civilian vessels of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the commercial, oil tanker, and fisheries fields."

The commander of the Iranian Navy stated that the message of our presence in the waters is that we stand on our own feet and independently establish this security for our shipping line. Still, besides this, it is a great honor for the strategic Navy of the Islamic Republic of Iran that the countries of the region and other shipping lines of the world also benefit from this security.

In the end, the Chief Commander of the Iranian Navy said the role and contribution of the Iranian Navy in establishing maritime security is a special one due to its independent functioning, so it has always won the attention of the United Nations and international organizations, and we have received letters of appreciation.

## Kazakhstan Seeks Share of Booming Russia-Iran Cargo Traffic

ALMATY (Dispatches) - Kazakhstan wants to handle greater volumes of cargo moving between Russia and Iran, a senior Kazakh official said on Monday, an increasingly important trade route as Russia's isolation over its invasion of Ukraine grows.

Iran, also targeted by Western sanctions over its nuclear program, has become a key ally for Russia, providing it both with much-needed goods such as military drones, and with access to Gulf ports from which Russian goods can reach Asia. Kazakhstan, a former Soviet republic, has distanced itself from Moscow politically, but Russia remains its biggest trading partner and Deputy Prime Minister Serik Zhumangarin said Astana was keen to boost its transit role in the so-called North-South corridor between Russia and Iran. **See Page 7**

## Iran Signs \$300m MoU for Exports of Cars to Russia

TEHRAN (PressTV) - A \$300 million memorandum of understanding has been signed for the export of cars to Russia, the president of the Association of Homogeneous Powertrain Industries and Parts Manufacturers says.

So far, 1,000 Iran-made cars have been exported to Venezuela, with more shipments planned in the future given the popularity of automobiles built in Iran, Mohammadreza Najafi-Manesh said on Monday.

"Russia and Venezuela are two good markets for Iranian car exports, and if the export conditions are met, we can find a suitable position in terms of car exports," he said.

Najafi-Manesh touched on Iran's exports of cars to Armenia and Azerbaijan before, saying they show domestically produced cars are of good quality, but for the development of exports, efforts should be made to improve it further.

Iran Khodro, the Middle East's leading automaker, is eyeing Russia's large market which the Europeans have abandoned amid the raging Ukraine conflict, an official said in August.

The company's first exports to Russia occurred notably between 2007 and 2009. Some Iran-made automotive components such as engine cooling systems, suspension and casting parts have been exported to the Russian market in recent years. **See Page 7**

## Iran Foreign Trade Reaches Nearly \$70b

TEHRAN (IP) - The spokesperson of Iranian customs says the country's foreign trade reached 69 billion and 484 million dollars by 20 November 2022, with a 10% increase.

Morteza Emadi, the spokesperson of Iranian customs, said: "Out of the country's total foreign trade, 37 billion and 116 million dollars have been allocated to imports and 32 billion and 368 million dollars to exports."

Regarding the changes in the value of the country's exports and imports in the first 8 months of the current Iranian year (from March 20 to November 20), the spokesman of the Iranian Customs said: "During the period, the value of non-oil exports increased by 4.4% and the value of imports increased by 15.25%."

Emadi added: "During the 8 months, non-oil exports were more than 70 million tons and imports were more than 23 million tons."

The spokesman of the customs said: "China, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, Turkey and India were the main destinations of Iran's exports."

## Iraqis File Lawsuit Over Assassination of Gen. Soleimani, PMU Deputy Head

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) - A number of Iraqi citizens have filed a lawsuit against former US president, Donald Trump, former secretary of state, Mike Pompeo, former U.S. ambassador to Baghdad and some previous Iraqi officials over the assassination of top Iranian anti-terror commander Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani and his Iraqi trenchmate Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis in a drone strike near Baghdad airport more than two years ago.

On Sunday, a total of 78 plaintiffs took the legal action against former US Republican president, his top diplomat, former US ambassador to Baghdad Matthew H. Tueller, former Iraqi prime minister, Mustafa al-Kadhimi, and former director of the National Operations Center Dhia al-Musawi, registering their case at the Federal Court of Appeal in the capital Baghdad.

Among the complainants is Muhammad Hassan Jaafar, a brother of Muhandis.

Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani, commander of the Quds Force of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, the second-in-command of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), and their companions were assassinated in a US drone strike authorized by Trump near Baghdad International Airport on January 3, 2020. **See Page 7**



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# President, Qatari Emir Confer on Bilateral Ties

TEHRAN (MNA) –President Ebrahim Raisi and Emir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani held a phone talk on Sunday night.

During the phone call, the Iranian President congratulated Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani on the kickstart of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, and praised the good organization, expressing his best wishes to the participating teams in the tournament.

The phone call also touched on the bilateral relations and aspects of promoting them in various areas of cooperation, in addition to the most prominent developments of common concern, Qatar News Agency reported.

## President Urges University Teacher to Depict Achievements to Public

*IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK*

**TEHRAN – President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi yesterday stated, “The root of great progress is in universities, and basically, the enemy’s grudge against the university and the attempt to disrupt this important institution of the country also originates from this issue, therefore university professors are responsible for explaining the progress of the country for both students and the public”.**

Raisi visited the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology as the 9th destination of the Supervision Meetings on executive bodies, and received a report from the minister and the deputies about the details of the ministry’s one-year performance.

The President called efforts to promote science and its effectiveness in solving the country’s issues and problems as one of the most important tasks of the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology and added, “Today our country has a system of issues of challenges and problems of the people and society, the best reference for solving which is the university and the use of scientific and research capacities of students and professors”.

Raisi clarified, “If the university provides solutions based on the needs of the society, and students and professors implement the solutions, many of the country’s problems will be solved easily”.

The President added, “Sometimes some of the researches carried out, despite the scientific richness, do not reach the stage of implementation and do not solve the country’s problems”.

Raisi considered Iran’s 15th quantitative and qualitative rank in the world’s scientific production as a proud achievement for the country and emphasized the necessity of redoubled efforts to improve this rank.

The President continued while reminding the very important issue of “increasing productivity” in proportion to the costs and stated, “The best people to measure the productivity of the ministry and universities are the directors of the Ministry of Science”.

Raisi said, “The membership of more than 80,000 people as faculty in the country’s universities is a very high and significant number, but more important than that is their role in solving the country’s problems and advancing the government’s goals in the development of the country”.

The President also emphasized the need for “science-based management and decision-making” cantered on the Ministry of Science and added, “Saying that the



university is the think tank of the government is not a slogan or a compliment. And in this regard, a transformational approach and perspective, transformation in processes and institutional transformation is a prerequisite for the realization of this very important goal of the government”.

The inclusion of “internship and skill training units” in university courses was another important recommendation of the President to the Ministry of Science, in which he stated, “Training and practical skill training of students in various industrial, agricultural and medical fields is one of the necessities of today’s universities, because our scientists, in addition to speaking and writing skills, should master the skills in action and execution”.

Raisi further pointed out the importance of attracting managers and professors who believe in the progress of science and development of the country by looking at the domestic capacities of the country and clarified, “We do not have any restrictions in the field of benefiting from the experience of other countries, but we will not accept others’ prescriptions easily, rather we believe that prescriptions should be carefully reviewed by domestic experts and decisions should be made according to national interests”.

He also called establishing the development fund of the Ministry of Science with the aim of encouraging and supporting researchers, turning student-sending institutions into foreign student recruitment institutions, significant increase in science and technology parks and knowledge-based companies as valuable and effective measures of the Ministry of Science.

The President added, “The roots of the country’s great progress, from the defense industry to the nuclear industry and science and technology, are in the universities, and basically, the enemy’s hatred of the university and the attempt to disrupt this important institution of the country also originates from this issue, so university professors are responsible for explaining the progress of the country to both students and the general public”.

## Draft Law on Legal Demonstrations in Iran Prepared

TEHRAN (IRNA) - A draft law on instructions for holding lawful demonstrations and gatherings has been prepared by the Ministry of Interior of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Head of the Article 10 of the law on how political parties and groups operate Abdollah Moradi pointed to the initiation of the eighth round of activities of the House of Parties of Iran, noting that the draft law is scheduled to be reviewed by the House of Parties of Iran as well.

The officials from the Ministry of Interior and representatives from the House of Parties have held a positive meeting in this respect, Moradi said.

The contributors in the session also discussed the administration of President Ebrahim Raisi’s attitude to political vitality, he noted, adding that parties and factions presented their problems and activities as well.

Moradi described the House of Parties as one of the most political entities in the social community, arguing that the draft law on gatherings and demonstrations, which has been compiled at the Interior Ministry, will be presented to the House of Parties in order to review the draft as an advisory wing with the aim of organizing the right to protest by the use of a political union and that the capacity of the House of Parties would be utilized to this end.

The legal regulations for holding lawful gatherings have been provided in the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, but there has not been any executive instruction for the law, he noted.

The representatives of the Interior Ministry and the House of Parties have underlined that political parties can hold their general assemblies, he said, adding that the ministry is prepared to help hold such assemblies.

## U.S. Knows Iran Maintained Stability in SW Asia

TEHRAN (MNA) –A member of Iranian Parliament’s Social Security and Foreign Policy Commission said that the US officials know that Iran, as the most powerful country in the region, has maintained the stability in Southwest Asian region.

Pointing to the recent salient achievements made in the defense and aerospace fields of the country, Mahmoud Abbaszadeh Meshkini said that Iran had made considerable defense achievements at the global level in terms of software and hardware and these measures will result in ensuring the security of the country.

Stating that country’s eye-catching achievements in the defense and aerospace fields guarantee the Establishment’s internal and external security, the lawmaker added that Iran has currently made significant progress in the defense field which cannot be compared to the eight years of Sacred Defense (Iraqi imposed war against Iran in 1980-1988) in a way that the country is now exporting the world’s most sophisticated drones to other countries.

The US authorities know that Iran is the most powerful country in the region which has managed to maintain the anchor of stability in the Southwest Asian region, he said, reiterating that they also know that no stability will exist in the West Asian region in

absence of the Islamic Republic of Iran and this is the unique achievements of the Islamic Establishment in the defense field in the global arena.

## German Envoy Summoned Over Interventionist Remarks

TEHRAN (MNA) – The Ambassador of Germany to Tehran was summoned to the Iranian Foreign Ministry following the repetition of the interventionist, baseless and unfounded remarks of German authorities.

Following Germany’s initiative to hold a special meeting of the UN Human Rights Council regarding the recent developments in Iran and repeating the baseless and interventionist statements of the German authorities, the German envoy to Tehran Hans-Udo Muzel was summoned to the Iranian Foreign Ministry on Monday.

During the meeting, the Islamic Republic of Iran’s strong protest against the interventionist and baseless statements of the German authorities was conveyed to the envoy of Germany.

Also, the German ambassador was told that the recent resolution of the special meeting of the Human Rights Council is a wrong move taken based on a completely political and instrumental approach to human rights, and it is fundamentally dismissed.

Iran will not cooperate with any mechanism defined on its basis, Iran’s Foreign Ministry added.

The cooperation of Germany and other European countries with the unilateral U.S. sanctions, which has caused gross violations of the human rights of the Iranian people, makes these countries lack any authority and competence to raise human rights claims, the ministry said.

The German envoy, for his part, stated that he will convey the protest of Iranian authorities to his respective country as soon as possible.

## Iran, Kuwait Form Parliamentary Friendship Group

TEHRAN (IP) - The new ambassador of Kuwait to Iran announced the formation of a parliamentary friendship group between Kuwait and Iran in the new parliament of the country in the near future.

“Ebrahim Rezaei,” the head of the Iran-Kuwait parliamentary friendship group in Iran’s parliament, met on Sunday with Badr Abdullah al-Munikh,” the new ambassador of Kuwait to Tehran.

Rezaei expressed hope for positive and important developments in the relations between the two countries and said: “At the status quo, the two neighboring friendly and brotherly countries will try to improve relations between them in all dimensions, including parliamentary relations.”

The head of the Iran-Kuwait Parliamentary Friendship Group in the parliament added: “Normalizing relations with the Zionist regime will not only help the security of the region, but also lead to the development of insecurity.”

Rezaei also said: “The people of the region will not welcome normalization of ties with the Zionist regime.”

The new ambassador of Kuwait in Tehran, also in the meeting, referring to the important role and position of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the region, said: “Relations between Iran and Kuwait are historical, long-standing and strong, and this capacity can be used to further develop and expand the ties between the two countries.”

The ambassador of Kuwait to Tehran, while expressing his country’s desire and interest in developing relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran, especially in the commercial and economic dimension, said: “The volume of trade relations between the two countries was an acceptable figure in the past, and we hope to return to that level and even higher with joint efforts.”

## Enemy Was after Designing Iran Color Revolution

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Secretary of Expediency Council said that in the country’s recent events the enemy had assumed conditions were ripe for the outbreak of a revolution in Iran, so relying on previous experience of color revolutions in some counties, let us have one in Iran, but the Iranian nation said a big no to them.

Mohammad-Baqer Zolqard who was speaking at a memorial ceremony for the martyrs of Gian city of Hamedan province on Sunday, referring to the martyrdom of Major General Qassem Soelimani, said, “To become a martyr, you need to be born a martyr, and Martyr Soleimani was truly a living martyr even before his martyrdom, which is living a blessed life, thinking blessedly, and acting fully blessed.

“The secretary of the Expediency Council in the commutation ceremony praised the mobilization of Basij and the Basiji forces, elaborating on the unique role played by Basij in the tough years of the Sacred Defense (against the invading army of Saddam Hussain) as well as their role in the preservation of security, construction and development of the country, the cultural field, generating awareness, and dismantling the hatched plots and seditions of the enemies.

“The Basij forces did all those in defense of the Iranian nation, severely punished the occupiers in the course of the Sacred Defense, and is ready side by side the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, so that no force or superpower dares encounter Iran militarily directly,” he added.

He said that the western oppression system, led by the United States, has always received severe blows from the Iranian nation throughout the years after the Islamic Revolution, and now, quite desperately and helplessly, has resorted to the hooligans and criminals, cheap men and women with deviated personalities, and the leftovers of the wretched and defeated anti-revolutionary grouplets here and there, by artificially blowing life in their corpses to attend the scene of rioting.

## Gas Compressor Unit of Abadan Refinery Becomes Operational

ABADAN (IRNA) - Iranian experts have succeeded in putting into operation a gas compressor unit of the Abadan Oil Refining Company after an eight-year hiatus, an official said.

Hakim Ghayyem, Head of planning and control of the maintenance of the Abadan Oil Refining Company, told reporters on Monday that restarting the gas compressor of Unit 100 was delayed eight years due to cruel sanctions and procedural problems, but domestic engineers have succeeded in putting it into operation.

Thanks to the re-inauguration of the project, the Abadan Oil Refining Company will receive more feedstock for petrochemicals as much as 85 tons per day, Ghayem said, noting that the daily production of PVC will increase from 85 tons to 180 tons.

The project will also help collect a notable amount of flue gases, he said, noting that it will decrease emission of polluting gases from the refinery.

The implementation of the repairing project proves that the Iranian experts are capable of doing big jobs amid the sanction pressures, he said, adding that the oil specialists are determined to nullify sanctions.

The Abadan Oil Refining Company turns 400 barrels per day of heavy crude oil into oil products. Light Naphtha, Heavy Naphtha, AW 410, Crude oil (Lubcat), Vacuum Baton, Pentane, Mulch, Kerosene, Bhutan - Butene, Ethane and propane, Granular sulfur, Propylene and Lump sulfur are among the products of the Abadan Oil Refining Company.

After the discovery of crude oil in Masjed Soleiman in 1909, the construction of Abadan Refinery began in 1910 and it initiated operation in 1912 with the capacity of 2500 bpd as the first oil refinery in the West Asia region.





## PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	11:52
■ Evening (Maghreb)	17:11
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	05:26
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:54

47. "So go ye both to him, and say, 'Verily we are apostles sent by thy Lord: Send forth, therefore, the Children of Israel with us, and afflict them not: with a Sign, indeed, have we come from thy Lord! and peace to all who follow guidance!'"

Surah 20. Ta-ha (47)

# No Banana Imports From Israel

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

**TEHRAN – Vice-President of Iran Fruit Union refuted claims that Iran has imported banana from Israel and said that this claim is like one to say that Iran has exported pineapple to some countries.**

Speaking to ILNA, Sadreddin Niavarani refuted the allegations that Iran has imported banana from Israel and said main investors of a company in the Philippines may be Israelis and if it is proved, Iranian traders should stop trade with that company immediately.

He said that Israel is not a banana producer and Iranian traders do not have license for trade with Israel even through intermediary. He added that such a claim of importing banana from Israel is baseless because Iran imports it from the Philippines and in case it is proved that the investors of the Filipino company are Zionists, Iranian traders will immediately stop trade with it. He noted that some American apparel brands after removal of sanctions could not enter Iran's market because their investors were Israelis.

Niavarani added that Iran is currently exporting over 250 tons of fruits daily to Qatar by air and sea and expressed hope the World Cup market would be a good consuming market for Iranian products and admitted that this market is temporary because Qatar's population is 3m and increase in the amount of fruit exports to Qatar is because of the visitors to this country during the World Cup as the population has reached 3m.

He also said that imposing tariffs for export of tomato and onion has halted export of these products.



He added that export to Russia's market is like the past and no pick-up is seen and China's doors have not opened yet for Iranian traders.

Meanwhile Secretary of Iran's Dried Fruit Exporters Association said that Iran's dried fruits exports has declined to below one billion dollars due to recent decisions in the country.

The annual dried fruits export of Iran was around \$3b that it has unfortunately fallen under one billion dollars.

Zeinnoddin Hashemi said that the reason behind the decline in the export of dried fruits is uncompetitiveness of the final cost of Iran's products in the export markets.

He also blamed the decision for imposing 0.5% tariff for water which is used for the products and said that it has increased the final cost.

He went on to say that despite competitiveness advantages of Iran's dried fruits in exporting markets its share is declining in the world and countries like the U.S. and Turkey have expanded their markets and unfortunately they are replacing Iranian products.

## Smart Planning for Repeating Record-Breaking in HOSCO

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – The CEO of Hormozgan Steel Company (HOSCO) in an interview said that the company has set four new records for monthly production since the beginning of the year due to smart, calculated and precise planning and expressed hope these record-breakings would continue until materialization of nominal capacity and even above it.



Ataollah Maroufkhani felicitated the staff and related persons the new record in the company as HOSCO produced 154,567 tons of products in last Iranian month of Aban. He said that smart and precise planning for setting such a record had been carried out since months ago.

He reiterated that power cut in the summer was a big hurdle for HOSCO in materializing the increase in production but with removing the power restriction at the end of the summer, the company accelerated production and normalized the condition, adding that the company immediately set records in three consecutive months for monthly production.

He then pointed to the 125,000-ton capacity of HOSCO in each month and noted that production over the nominal capacity means the personnel of the company have achieved all technical and scientific aspects of steel production with using continuous casting machine, and with using all existing capabilities they materialized production over the monthly nominal capacity.

Maroufkhani then highlighted major actions of the company for improving the production and reducing energy consumption.

He expressed hope in the upcoming months the energy restrictions would not turn into a hurdle in way of production and the company would repeat records and reach the nominal production capacity which is the most important goals of the company this year.

## New Record-Breaking In Arfa Steel Co.

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Arfa Iron and steel Company with producing 86118 tons of steel ingot set a new record for monthly production in the Iranian calendar month of Aban while the company by producing 3426 tons of steel ingot on November 12 set another record for daily production as the company celebrated its brilliant monthly and daily performance since its first day of activities.



According to reports, Arafa Iron and Steel Company following its brilliant performance in month of Aban could set new records for daily and monthly production as the company produced 86118 tons of steel ingot in the month and 3426 tons of steel ingot on November.

The public relations of the company felicitated this achievement to all staff of the company and related persons and expressed hope this fast move towards excellence and increasing production would continue through empathy and correct planning.

## Iran Ready to Engage in Iraq Oil, Gas Projects



TEHRAN (MNA) – The CEO of the Iranian Gas Engineering and Development Company (IGEDC) announced Iran's readiness to participate in Iraq's oil and gas projects.

Reza Noshadi stated that Iran owns the largest gas network in the world and gas consumption in Iran is 65% of the European Union. "The huge investment of the National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC) in the development of the sixth nationwide gas pipeline from Asaluyeh to the export bases in Naftshahr and Shalamchah proved that Iran is determined to expand its relations with its neighbor, Iraq. Despite this, we witnessed that most of the Iranian companies were stopped behind the gates of Iraq and could not use their talent and strength in the industrial development of the neighboring country as it should be."

He described the presence of the current capable Iranian companies in Iraq's oil and gas industry as insufficient, and stated, "As we have had good success in the field of building power plants and hospitals in Iraq, it is expected that similar developments in the field of oil and gas will also be realized."

Emphasizing Iran's declaration of voluntary readiness to implement oil and gas projects in Iraq, he demanded that the Iraqi authorities provide the means to realize this, the IGEDC CEO said, "The oil industry alone can double the current volume of Iran-Iraq trade."

## Iran Expects Shrimp Exports to China to Jump in Coming Months

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran expects its shrimp exports to China to jump in the months left before the end of the calendar year to March.

Head of Iran Fisheries Organization Hossein Hosseini said on Sunday that Iran will ramp up shrimp exports to China once prices in the East Asian country improve.

Hosseini said China had purchased more than 32,000 metric tons (mt) of shrimp from Iran in the calendar year to March, adding that the figure had accounted for more than 56% of Iran's total shrimp output over the period.

"We hope shrimp exports to China could experience a significant rise in the current (calendar) year," he was quoted as saying by the ILNA news agency.

The official said other customers of Iranian shrimp shipments in the current calendar year included Russia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Oman.

He said Iran plans to increase its annual shrimp exports to 160,000 mt by 2025, adding that output had topped 68,000 mt in the eight months to late November.

Iran has been encouraging increased exports of food and farming products in recent years in a bid to diversify its economy away from crude revenues.

Experts say the policy has clearly paid off as exports have helped Iran offset the impacts of US sanctions targeting its oil exports.

## Export From Knowledge-Based Firms Rises 90%

TEHRAN (MNA) - Iranian knowledge-based companies managed to export \$43.172 million worth of products in the first seven months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-October 22) to register a 90-percent increase year on year, IRIB reported.

Alireza Moghadasi, head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), put the weight of the exported products at 14,975 tons.

According to the official, the country's knowledge-based companies, which are listed as Authorized Economic Operators (AEO), traded 52,939 tons of commodities valued at \$249.337 million with other countries in the mentioned seven months.

Moghadasi noted that there are currently 64 knowledge-based companies listed as AEO in the country, of which 33 companies are active in the field of exports and 54 companies are mostly importers.

Knowledge-based companies also imported 37,964 tons of goods worth \$206.165 million in the said period, he added.

As previously reported, Iranian banking system paid 584.4 trillion rials (about \$2.03 billion) of facilities to 1,404 knowledge-based companies in the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22), registering a 100.2 percent rise compared to the same period last year.

Bank Mellat accounted for the biggest share of the paid facilities with 102.2 trillion rials (about \$354 million), followed by Tejarat Bank with 85 trillion rials (about \$295 million) of offered facilities.

The law for promoting and supporting knowledge-based companies was approved by the Majlis (Iranian parliament) in 2010, paving the way for a jumpstart in the march toward scientific progress.

## Coal Activists Urged to Move on Course of Development

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

ISFAHAN - Deputy Managing Director for Purchases Affairs of Esfahan Steel Company (ESCO) urged Iran Coal Association to move in direction of development by resolving current problems.

Mohammad Jafar Salehi said that Iran Coal Association should answer to these problems and say what it has done with the 50 to 60% marginal profits that it has earned in recent years as the steelmakers face with coal problem and these problems have led to decline in coal production in the country.

Reacting to a question that Iran has turned into a biggest importer of coal, Salehi said that importing coal is a media hype as the media announce the total amount and value of imports of coal and coke, noting that so far production of coal in the country has not exceeded 1.8m tons of concentrate.

He added that the total mechanized extraction from the mines is in Tabas, adding that in Tabas the total mechanized extraction is between 600,000 to 700,000 tons of coal concentrate and other 1.1m tons is produced in a semi-mechanized or traditional method. He reiterated that statistics regarding the amount of coal imports is not correct, adding that ESCO which is one of the biggest coal importer has only imported 30% of its needs in the worst condition and in the favorable condition has been 25%.

On the dollar-value of imported coal by ESCO, Salehi said that the company has imported \$475m tons of coal in the first half as we consider the average price of the coal receiving it at Imam port at \$350, the company has imported 1.357m tons and it is not essentially logical.

He reiterated that ESCO is authorized to import 540,000 tons of coal per year and it will not be able to import over 600,000 tons even it exceeds the import ceiling because the company has no budget for it.

Salehi once again said that the figures which are raised on imports of coal is not correct and it is just for distraction. He added that profit margin of coal producers was over 40% last year while the profit margin of ESCO was 6% and in such a condition this is the coal association and coal producers which should plan and spend for coal development.

He admitted that currently the domestic coal production cannot compete with the quality of international brands.

He urged for handing over issues like coal to experts in this field rather than remarks of others who just cause concern in the market by their remarks.



## Taliban Urge Iranian Investment in Afghanistan

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – The acting minister of commerce and industry of the Taliban invited Iranian business people to invest in Afghanistan.

In a meeting with a group of Iranian business people at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of Afghanistan in Kabul, Nooruddin Azizi asked the Iranians to make investments in Afghanistan.

Hailing Iran as a friend of Afghanistan, Azizi said the Taliban welcome all domestic and foreign investors with open arms and try to prepare the ground for their activities.

Highlighting the great investment opportunities in Afghanistan, as in the mining industry, the acting minister said the Taliban will cooperate with Iranian investors in various fields. In October 2021, delegations from Iran and the Taliban held extensive talks in Kabul and reached agreements on various subjects.



# Brazil School Shooting Toll Rises to Four

BRASILIA (Dispatches) - The death toll from a twin school shooting in Brazil rose to four after a teacher wounded in the attack by a 16-year-old shooter wearing Nazi symbols died from her injuries, officials said.

Authorities in the city of Aracruz, in Espirito Santo state, had said some of the around 10 wounded, including three teachers and a student, were in serious condition after the Friday attack that shocked the country, which has seen a rise in school shootings in recent years.

“Unfortunately, the tragedy of Aracruz has not yet ended,” said state Governor Renato Casagrande on Saturday.



# Obiang Wins Sixth Term In Equatorial Guinea

PARIS (AFP) - Confirmed for a sixth term as president, Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo has ruled oil-rich Equatorial Guinea since August 1979, overseeing a regime notorious for crushing dissent and fearing coups.

The 80-year-old’s 43 years in power are the longest of any leader alive in the world today, with the exception of monarchs. He seized power from Francisco Macias Nguema, who in 1968 had become Equatorial Guinea’s first president upon independence from Spain and later declared himself president for life. Macias -- Obiang’s uncle -- was executed by firing squad two months after the coup.



# Kim Vows North Korea to Have World’s Most Powerful Nuclear Force



SSEOUL (Dispatches) - North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said his country aimed to have the world’s most powerful nuclear force as he celebrated the launch of its newest intercontinental ballistic missile at a ceremony with his young daughter, state media reported.

Kim also handed promotions to more than 100 officials and scientists for their work on the Hwasong-17 -- dubbed the “monster missile” by analysts and believed to be capable of reaching the US mainland -- just days after Pyongyang test-fired it in one of its most powerful launches yet.

Hailing the new ICBM as “the world’s strongest strategic weapon”, Kim said North Korean scientists had made a “wonderful leap forward in the development of the technology of mounting nuclear warheads on ballistic missiles,” the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported.

Building the nuclear force to protect the dignity and sovereignty of the state and the people “is the greatest and most important revolutionary cause, and its ultimate goal is to possess the world’s most powerful strategic force, the absolute force unprecedented in the century,” Kim was quoted as saying in his order promoting the officials.

The leading officials and scientists had demonstrated to the world Pyongyang’s “goal of building the world’s strongest army”, he added.

The launching vehicle for the new Hwasong-17 ICBM was awarded the title of “DPRK Hero”, a separate KCNA report said, using the acronym for the North’s official name.

It “clearly proved before the world that the DPRK is a full-fledged nuclear power,” the report said, adding the North “fully demonstrated its might as the most powerful ICBM state”.

The UN Security Council has passed nearly a dozen resolutions imposing sanctions on North Korea over its nuclear and missile activity since 2006.

Attending a photo session on Saturday with officials and scientists who had contributed to the successful test-firing of the missile, Kim called for “limitless bolstering of the defence capabilities”, KCNA said in another report.

Kim exhorted the scientists and workers to “expand and bolster up the nuclear war deterrent of the country at an exceptionally rapid speed”.

The official Rodong Sinmun newspaper carried more than a dozen pictures of Kim at the photo session with his “beloved daughter”, who was revealed to the world for the first time at last week’s ICBM launch.

Until then, North Korean state media has never mentioned Kim’s children, and last week’s report was the first official confirmation that he had a daughter, experts said.

The photos showed the girl -- believed to be Kim’s second child named Ju Ae -- dressed in a black fur collar coat, linking arms with her father as they posed in front of the gigantic missile surrounded by uniformed soldiers.

The November 18 ICBM test was the latest in a record-breaking blitz of missile launches by Pyongyang, with officials and analysts in Seoul and Washington warning they could culminate in a seventh nuclear test by North Korea, which last tested an atomic device in 2017.

# Mexican President Masses Supporters To Show Political Muscle

MEXICO (Dispatches) - Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador and thousands of supporters took to the streets of the capital for a march seen as a show of political strength by the left-wing populist.

Amid cries of “it’s an honor to be with Obrador,” the president joined flag-waving crowds to personally lead a rally that comes as his allies warm up for the race to replace him in 2024.

The aim was to celebrate the government’s “transformation of Mexico” four years into his six-year term, Lopez Obrador, known by his initials AMLO, said ahead of the march.

“The president is not alone,” read a placard at the rally, while others vowed support for the government’s controversial electoral reform plan.

“I like the way AMLO governs, always doing everything for the most vulnerable,” said Alma Perez, a 35-year-old teacher who traveled from the southern state of Guerrero to join the march.



## Snow to Blanket Kyiv as Russian Attacks Target Power Supplies

KYIV (Dispatches) - Heavy snowfall is expected to hit Kyiv -- with temperatures dropping below freezing point day and night -- as millions of people still living in and around the Ukrainian capital struggle with little access to electricity and heat.

Snow is expected on Sunday in Kyiv, a city that had 2.8 million residents before the war, and will continue until midweek with temperatures forecast to stay below freezing.

Ukraine’s power grid operator Ukrenergo said on Saturday that electricity producers were able to cover only three-quarters of consumption needs, necessitating restrictions and blackouts across the country.

Sergey Kovalenko, chief operating officer of YASNO, which provides energy to the capital, said the situation in the city had improved but remained “quite difficult”. He indicated that residents should have at least four hours of power per day, and said those receiving less than that amount should contact his agency.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said six million people were without power across the country on Friday after the latest Russian bombardment left them without light, water or heat.

In a rare public spat involving Ukrainian leaders, Zelenskyy on Friday criticised the mayor of Kyiv for doing what he said was a poor job setting up emergency shelters to help those without power and heat after Russian attacks.

The United States has accused Russia of wanting to “freeze” Ukraine into submission since it has failed to triumph on the battlefield.

“President [Vladimir] Putin seems to have decided that if he can’t seize Ukraine by force, he will try to freeze it into submission,” US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said earlier this month.

Lopez Obrador “has done what no other president has done for the poor,” said Ramon Suarez, a 33-year-old electrician.

“He has some areas in which to improve such as security, but that’s not done overnight,” Suarez added.

Mariachi bands entertained the president’s supporters, who arrived on buses from around the country, many wearing purple, the color of his Morena party.

The rally comes two weeks after tens of thousands joined an opposition protest against the president’s proposed electoral reform.

Lopez Obrador wants to “show muscle,” said Fernando Dworak, a political analyst at the Mexican Autonomous Institute of Technology.

“It was a serious mistake by the opposition to believe that the president can be beaten on the streets,” he told AFP, referring to the November 13 anti-government protest.

Lopez Obrador, who enjoys an approval rating of nearly 60 percent, owes much of his popularity to his social welfare programs aimed at helping the elderly and disadvantaged Mexicans.

# Canada Launches New Indo-Pacific Strategy

OTTAWA (Dispatches) - Canada launched its long-awaited Indo-Pacific strategy, vowing more resources to deal with a “disruptive” China while working with the world’s second-biggest economy on climate change and trade issues.

The 26-page document outlined C\$2.6 billion (\$1.9 billion) spending, including to boost Canada’s military presence and cyber security in the region and tighten foreign investment rules to protect intellectual property and prevent Chinese state-owned enterprises from snapping up critical mineral supplies.

The blueprint is to deepen ties with a fast-growing region of 40 countries accounting for almost C\$50 trillion in economic activity. But the focus is on China, which is mentioned more than 50 times, at a moment when bilateral ties are frosty.

“China is an increasingly disruptive global power,” said the strategy. “China is looking to shape the international order into a more permissive environment for interests and values that increasingly depart from ours.”

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s Liberal government wants to diversify trade and economic ties that are overwhelmingly reliant on the United States. Official data for September show bilateral trade with China accounted for under 7% of the total, compared to 68% for the United States.

The strategy highlighted Beijing’s “foreign interference and increasingly coercive treatment of other countries.

“Our approach ... is shaped by a realistic and clear-eyed assessment of today’s China. In areas of profound disagreement, we will challenge China,” it said.

Tensions soared in late 2018 after Canadian police detained a Huawei Technologies executive and Beijing subsequently arrested two Canadians on spying charges. All three were released last year, but relations remain sour.

Earlier this month Canada ordered three Chinese companies to divest their investments in Canadian critical minerals, citing national security.

The document, in a section mentioning China, said Ottawa would review and update legislation enabling it to act “decisively when investments from state-owned enterprises and other foreign entities threaten our national security, including our critical minerals supply chains.”

The document recognized the significant opportunities for Canadian exporters and said co-operation with Beijing was necessary to address some of the “world’s existential pressures,” including climate change, global health and nuclear proliferation.

Goldy Hyder, CEO of the Business Council of Canada, said it is important that the government converts “aspirations to actions and actions into accomplishments.”

The document said Canada would boost its naval presence in the region and “increase our military engagement and intelligence capacity as a means of mitigating coercive behavior and threats to regional security.”



# Kremlin Defends Russian-Led Security Alliance After Armenia Criticism

MOSCOW (dispatches) - Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said attempts to break up a Russian-led security alliance had always existed and would continue to do so, but insisted that the alliance remained in high demand following criticism this week from Armenia.

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan called into question the effectiveness of the six-nation Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) at a summit this week.

Armenia requested assistance from the organization in September, but received only a promise to send observers. Pashinyan contrasted that with the alliance’s rapid decision in January to send troops to CSTO member Kazakhstan to help President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev survive a wave of unrest.

“There have always been attempts to (bring about) the CSTO’s disintegration,” news agencies quoted Peskov as saying in an interview broadcast on state television.

“But at least now we see that, despite all the difficulties, despite the possible contradictions even between member countries, this structure remains in high demand,” he said. “And it fully demonstrated its relevance and effectiveness, meaning the resolution of the situation in Kazakhstan.”

Kazakhstan’s Tokayev, who has openly defied major ally Russia over its actions in Ukraine, won re-election this month and was set to meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin in the Russian city of Orenburg yesterday.

Russia, the dominant player in the CSTO, risks losing influence in parts of the former Soviet Union that it has long seen as its sphere of influence, as the conflict in Ukraine drags into its 10th month.





## Experts Say Nature and Climate Can't Be Siloed

PARIS (Dispatches) - Experts and activists were hoping UN climate talks would end last week with a prominent mention of biodiversity in the final text. They walked away disappointed.

Some say delegates at the COP27 summit missed a key opportunity to acknowledge the connection between the twin climate and nature crises, which many believe have been treated separately for too long.

Failing to address both could mean not only further decimating Earth's life support systems, but also missing the key climate target of limiting warming to under 1.5 degrees Celsius, they warn.

"We're doomed if we don't solve climate, and we're doomed if we don't solve biodiversity," Basile van Havre, co-chair of the UN biodiversity negotiations, told AFP.

At the COP15 UN biodiversity talks next month, dozens of countries will meet to hammer out a new framework to protect animals and plants from destruction by humans.

The meeting comes as scientists warn that climate change and biodiversity damage could cause the world's sixth mass extinction event.

Such destruction of nature also risks worsening climate change.

The oceans have absorbed most of the excess heat created by humanity's greenhouse gas emissions and, along with forests, are important carbon sinks.

"(Nature) is up to a third of the climate solution. And it is a proven technology," Brian O'Donnell, director of Campaign for Nature, told AFP.

He said oceans in particular are unsung "superheroes", which have absorbed carbon and heat, at the cost of acidification and coral-killing heatwaves.

As the world warms, species and ecosystems can also play a crucial role in building resilience. Mangroves, for example, can protect against coastal erosion caused by rising seas linked to a warming planet.

Perhaps the most attention on the natural world at COP27 came during a visit by Brazil's president-elect Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, who will take office in January.

He has vowed to halt the rampant deforestation of the Amazon seen under incumbent Jair Bolsonaro and announced during the climate talks plans to create a ministry for indigenous people, custodians of the rainforest.

The crucial "30 by 30" biodiversity target also got a boost when a bloc of West African nations vowed to adhere to the goal of protecting 30 per cent of the natural world by 2030.

Biodiversity received a nod in the final COP27 text, including in a paragraph calling for "the urgent need to address, in a comprehensive and synergetic manner, the interlinked global crises of climate change and biodiversity loss".

But the upcoming COP15 meeting in Montreal — tasked with setting out an ambitious plan for humanity's relationship with nature for the coming decades — did not get the encouragement many were hoping for.

"It is a missed opportunity that COP15, taking place just in two weeks' time, did not get a highlight by COP27," Li Shuo, senior global policy adviser at Greenpeace East Asia, told AFP.

But he cautioned it "should not be a deal-breaker, this should not be the end of the world".

For Zoe Quiroz Cullen, head of climate and nature linkages at Fauna & Flora International, it was "deeply concerning" that the text "fails to recognise the crucial linkage to COP27's sister convention on nature," the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

"The twin climate and biodiversity crises are at risk from being considered and treated in silos," she told AFP.



## India's First Private Rocket Company Looks To Slash Satellite Costs

BENGALURU (Dispatches) - The startup behind India's first private space launch plans to put a satellite into orbit in 2023 and expects to be able to do so at half of the cost of established launch companies, the founders of Skyroot Aerospace told Reuters in an interview.

The Hyderabad-based company, backed by Singapore's sovereign wealth fund, GIC, says the \$68 million it has raised will fund its next two launches. Skyroot has been in contact with more than 400 potential customers, it says.

Thousands of small satellite launches are planned in coming years as companies build out networks to deliver broadband services like SpaceX's Starlink and to power applications like tracking supply chains or monitoring offshore oil rigs.

Skyroot faces both established and up-and-coming rocket launch rivals that also promise to bring down costs. In China, startup Galactic Energy put five satellites into orbit last week in its fourth successful launch.

In Japan, Space One, backed by Canon Electronics and IHI Corp, plans to launch 20 small rockets per year by the middle of the decade.

But Skyroot, which launched a test rocket last week, expects to cut the cost of a launch by 50% compared with current pricing for established competitors like Richard Branson's Virgin Orbit and California-based Rocket Lab USA Inc.

Pawan Chandana, one of Skyroot's two co-founders, told Reuters he expected a surge in demand for the company's launch services if it proves itself with launches set for next year.

"Most of these customers have been building constellations and will be launching them in the next five years," he said.

The Modi government's push to increase India's share of the global space launch market from just 1% has given investors confidence that Skyroot and other startups have government backing for their efforts, Skyroot says.

"Three or four months back when we were talking to investors, one of the biggest questions they asked was if the government was supporting us," Skyroot co-founder Bharath Daka told Reuters.

India opened the door to private space companies in 2020 with a regulatory overhaul and a new agency to boost private-sector launches.

Before that, companies could only act as contractors to the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), a government space agency with a reputation of its own for frugal engineering. The country's Mars mission in 2014 cost only \$74 million, less than the budget of the Hollywood space movie "Gravity".

Building on India's record for cost efficiency will be key, said Chandana. Skyroot, founded in 2018 when Chandana and Daka quit jobs at ISRO, has set a target to develop rockets for one-fifth of the current industry costs.

The Skyroot rocket that reached 89.5 kilometers altitude in last week's test launch used carbon-fibre components and 3D-printed parts, including the thrusters. That boosted efficiency by 30%, the company says, cutting weight and procurement costs, although it meant Skyroot engineers had to write the machine code for vendors who fabricated the rocket because few had experience working with carbon fibre.

With 3D printing, Skyroot believes it can build a new rocket in just two days as it works towards reusable rockets, a technology pioneered by SpaceX.



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## Spain's 2023 Budgets Based On Optimistic Economic Forecasts

MADRID (Dispatches) - The Spanish parliament approved the budgets for 2023. The government's starting point is real GDP growth of 2.1% in 2023, compared with our estimate for 1.0-1.5%. The IMF is forecasting 1.2% and the European Commission (EC) 1.0%. In addition, the government estimates an increase in tax revenues of around 6% next year, supported by a new tax on wealth and temporary taxes on the banks and energy firms, as well as a high level of Social Security contributions. In our view, this is very unlikely, given the fresh weakness in consumer and corporate confidence. It is likely that the growth in VAT and personal tax revenues loses impulse, hence the uncertainty over the forecasts for global fiscal revenues' growth, as the Bank of Spain has highlighted.



## World Economic Outlook for 2023 Increasingly Gloomy

LONDON (Dispatches) - The outlook for the global economy headed into 2023 has soured, according to a number of recent analyses, as the ongoing war in Ukraine continues to strain trade, particularly in Europe, and as markets await a fuller reopening of the Chinese economy following months of disruptive COVID-19 lockdowns.

In the United States, signs of a tightening job market and a slowdown in business activity fueled fears of a recession. Globally, inflation grew and business activity, especially in the eurozone and the United Kingdom, continued to shrink.

In an analysis released Thursday, the Institute of International Finance predicted a global economic growth rate of just 1.2% in 2023, a level on par with 2009, when the world was only beginning its emergence from the financial crisis.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) agrees with the pessimistic forecast. In a report issued this week, the organization's interim Chief Economist Alvaro Santos Pereira wrote, "We are currently facing a very difficult economic outlook. 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."

In the U.S., inflation and the Federal Reserve's efforts to combat it have been the dominant factors in most analyses of the current and future states of the economy.

The U.S. has been experiencing its highest levels of inflation in 40 years, with prices beginning to jump significantly in mid-2021. By the beginning of 2022, annualized rates were over 6%, and while fluctuating a bit, touched a high of 6.6% in October.

Beginning in March, the central bank's Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC), which sets base interest rates, has engaged in a dramatic series of increases, raising the benchmark rate from between 0.0% and 0.25% to between 3.75% and 4.0% today.

The idea behind the Fed's moves is to change consumers' incentives. By making the interest rates on savings more appealing, and the rates on borrowing less so, the central bank is working to reduce demand and thereby slow the rate of price increases.

In general, the Fed believes that an annual 2% rate of inflation is healthy and considers that its long-term target.

The Fed's goal is to get inflation under control without plunging the economy into a damaging recession. And while a number of economic signs indicate that efforts to slow demand might be working, the threat of a recession still looms.

Evidence released this week showed that business activity in the U.S. contracted for a fifth consecutive month as companies reacted to decreased consumer demand. Although the economy has continued to add jobs in recent months, applications for unemployment benefits are on the rise, suggesting a potential softening in the labor market.

The Federal Reserve this week released the minutes from the early November meeting of the FOMC. The minutes revealed a pessimistic view among the central bank's staff economists about the U.S. economy in the coming year. Among their findings was that they "viewed the possibility that the economy would enter a recession sometime over the next year as almost as likely as the baseline."

A "substantial majority" of the voting members of the committee indicated that they believe it is time to slow the rate of interest rate increases, suggesting that the FOMC will retreat from its recent 0.75% increases when it meets in December, perhaps raising rates by just 0.5%.

Internationally, governments are facing a difficult challenge: supporting their citizens during a time when prices are rising dramatically, particularly for necessities like food and fuel, which have been deeply affected by the war in Ukraine.

According to the Institute of International Finance (IIF), while global growth will be low but net positive in 2023, specific areas will face declines. Chief among them is Europe, where the IIF forecasts a 2.0% decline in cumulative GDP.

To the extent that there are bright spots in the global economy in 2023, they are in areas such as Latin America and China.

Many countries of Latin America, where the export of raw materials, including timber, ore, and other major economic inputs drives many economies, global inflation has proved beneficial insofar as the prices for those goods have risen. The IIF report projects a 1.2% expansion in GDP across the region, even as much of the remainder of the world sees economic contraction.

China has suffered economically as a result of President Xi Jinping's "zero-COVID" strategy, which has forced massive lockdowns of whole cities and regions, with serious disruption to economic activity. The IFF and other organizations expect significant loosening in China's policy in the coming year, which will lead to economic growth of as much as 2.0% as the Chinese economy attempts to revive itself.

With the exception of Russia, which is still laboring under crushing sanctions related to its invasion of Ukraine, the United Kingdom faces the gloomiest outlook for the coming year of any of the world's largest economies.

With inflation running significantly ahead of other countries, annualized price increases are expected to touch 10% by the end of the year, before slowly moderating in 2023.

Among the G-7 countries, the U.K. is the only one in which economic output has not returned to pre-pandemic levels, and it is forecast to shrink further. The OECD projects that the British economy will decline in size by 0.3% in 2023 and will grow at only 0.2% in 2024.

## ECO Bank Announces Financial Assistance for Pakistan

ISTANBUL (Dispatches) - In a major development, the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Trade and Development Bank announced to provide financial assistance worth Rs35 billion (€150 million) to Pakistan.

The development came during a meeting between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and ECO Trade and Development Bank President Yalcin Yuksel in Istanbul.

Yuksel said the financial package will contribute to the flood relief efforts as well as financial support for the import of fuel. He maintained that overall financial assistance to Pakistan since the inception of the bank would touch approximately one billion dollars, after the disbursement of this committed amount.

Speaking on the occasion, PM Shehbaz thanked the ECO Trade and Development Bank and appreciated its important role in meeting the development-related pursuits of member countries.

He underlined that the provision of financial assistance by the ECO Bank at a time when Pakistan faces economic and environmental challenges is highly appreciated by the government and people of Pakistan.

The prime minister said that ECO Bank has been an important entity in the overall institutional framework of ECO member countries and its long-standing relations with Pakistan are commendable.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif stressed upon the Turkish companies to invest in Pakistan, as the infinite potential between the two brotherly countries should also be reflected in the bilateral trade and business.

Addressing a Turkey-Pakistan Business Council meeting, the prime minister said his government would no longer tolerate any snags and impediments in the way of investment from foreign investors, including the Turkish brothers. He reassured that his government would fully provide hassle and red tape free environment to Turkish investors.

He informed that during his meeting with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, it was conveyed that more Turkish companies were eager to come to Pakistan.

The prime minister said that it was regrettable that in the tenure of the past government, the Turkish companies that had invested in Pakistan were not given their due payments. Similar, was the case with the Turkish airlines operating in Pakistan.

The prime minister said such a lethargy and red tape were not acceptable to his government and the people of Pakistan as they had benefited from the Turkish investment and support.

He said to further promote their bilateral trade and business relations, work on "Trade and Goods Agreement" between the two brotherly countries would be expedited. He said that they had signed a MoU to enhance the bilateral trade volume up to \$5 billion in the next three years.

Turkey's annual trade stood around \$250 billion dollars and the trade between Pakistan and Turkey was hovering around one and a half billion dollars, which was peanuts while considering the immense potential, he added. The prime minister stressed that such a scenario did not reflect their exemplary brotherly ties and stressed upon fully exploring the indefinite potential on both sides.



## OPEC+ Meeting to Take Into Account Market Conditions

CAIRO (Dispatches) - The OPEC+ meeting in December will take into account the condition and balance of the market, Iraq's state news agency quoted Saadoun Mohsen, a senior official at the country's state oil marketer SOMO, as saying.

OPEC+'s October decision to reduce production by two million barrels per day (bpd) had played an important role in stabilizing global markets, Saadoun, who serves as Iraq's delegate to OPEC, said.

He said that the cut hadn't reduced Iraq's exports.

Iraq's current production represents 11 percent of the group's total output of 43 million bpd, he said, adding that Iraq expects a crude price range of at least \$85-95 next year.

OPEC+, which includes members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and its allies led by Russia, will hold its next meeting in Vienna on Dec. 4.

Oil markets are witnessing "severe fluctuations" due to the repercussions of the pandemic, a slowing global economy and the war in Ukraine, the Iraqi official said, making it harder to ensure price stability.



## India Needs to Drive High Economic Growth to Reduce Extreme Poverty

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - As the bottom 20 per cent of the Indian population is still poor, sound economic policies are required to drive a higher economic growth rate which will help reduce abject poverty in the country, said Former Finance Minister and Member of Parliament, P Chidambaram.

Releasing the book "Forks in the Road: My days at RBI and beyond," authored by former RBI Governor and economist C Rangarajan, Chidambaram raised doubts over the claims of poverty reduction in India to a single digit. "It is only when you go into rural India - remote villages that are cut off from trades and services, that you will find deep-seated poverty in many parts of the country. I have witnessed this poverty and that is why I am very skeptical when I see those very optimistic estimates that say poverty has been reduced. "I think the bottom 20 per cent of India is still poor and very unequal and they are left with very little hope," he added.

He pointed out that price stability plays an important part in the reduction of poverty. Inflation hurts the poor more than the rich. Food, education, and healthcare are compromised because of deep-seated poverty. We must quicken the path toward the eradication of abject poverty, he said.

Quoting data from Rangarajan's book, Chidambaram stated that the economic growth rates between 2004-05 and 2013-14 were much higher than the period since 2014-15. There is no reason why we should not aspire to achieve such growth rates. Sound policies through coordinated work of monetary authority and the government are needed to achieve high growth rates.

He also highlighted Rangarajan's caution on ICOR (incremental capital output ratio). "Dr. Rangarajan suspects that ICOR is at a higher rate. When it was about 4 and with an investment ratio of 32-35 per cent, we could achieve 8 per cent growth. While the investment ratio has fallen, it is perhaps the ICOR that has gone up that is recording a low growth rate.

N Vaghul, former Chairman of ICICI Bank, and Usha Thorat, former Deputy Governor of RBI, recalled the contributions of Rangarajan during the crisis period, while D Subba Rao, former RBI Governor discussed (over video conference mode) the role of Rangarajan in the formation of economic policies and reforms measures.



## Chinese Oil Giant Spends \$1.9b On 5% Stake of Huge Brazilian Oilfield



BEIJING (Dispatches) - China's oil and gas giant CNOOC has paid Brazil's Petrobras \$1.9 billion to buy 5% in the production sharing contract for the huge Buzios offshore oilfield, the Brazilian state oil firm said in a statement.

After the agreement, subject to approval from Brazil's ministry of energy and mines, comes into effect, Petrobras will hold 85% in the production sharing contract for Buzios, CNOOC's unit CNOOC Petroleum Brasil Ltda. (CPBL) will have 10%, and CNODC Brasil Petróleo e Gás Ltda (CNODC), will have 5%, the Brazilian firm said.

The Buzios oilfield in Brazil's prolific pre-salt Santos basin is the prized asset and largest oilfield of Petrobras and is expected to account for around one-third of the state firm's production in 2026, Petrobras said in its third-quarter results released earlier this month. Seven more development stages in various areas of Buzios are being planned through 2027.

Buzios produces more than 600,000 barrels of oil per day, and is expected to produce much more in the future as Petrobras is signing and plans to sign more deals for Floating Production Storage and Offloading (FPSO) units via which it is developing the deepwater field.

Brazil's oil and gas production hit a new record in October of 4.18 million barrels of oil equivalent per day on average (boepd), including 3.24 million barrels per day (bpd) of oil and 148.7 million cubic meters per day of natural gas, industry watchdog ANP said last week. Oil and gas production was 3.2% higher than the previous record set in September and 16% higher than in October 2021.

Brazil's production from the pre-salt layer rose by 4.75% in October 2022 compared to September 2022, to reach 3.14 million boepd, accounting for 75.18% of all oil and gas production in Brazil.

Brazil's incoming leftist government of President-elect Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva will not have an interventionist policy toward Petrobras, a member of the president-elect's transition said this week.



## “The Wastetown” Wins Award At Tallinn Film Festival

TEHRAN (MNA) – Directed by the Iranian filmmaker Ahmad Bahrami, “The Wastetown” won the award of Best Director at the Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival (PÖFF). The jury praised Bahrami’s work with the following words, “Using a sad and destroyed place, the director shows an archaic, universal drama akin to a Shakespearean tragedy. Additionally, the

performances of the actors are intriguing. One can never forget the metaphoric atmosphere with poetic imagery as if in a dream. This film is a celebration of cinema and art.” Ahmad Bahrami’s previous feature “The Wasteland” premiered in Venice, picking up three prizes in 2020, including the Orizzonti Best Film Award, before featuring in PÖFF’s Current Waves program that year.



# U.S. Bans Huawei, ZTE Equipment Sales

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - The Biden administration has banned approvals of new telecommunications equipment from China’s Huawei Technologies and ZTE because they pose “an unacceptable risk” to U.S. national security. The U.S. Federal Communications Commission said on Friday it had adopted the final rules, which also bar the sale or import of equipment made by Chinese surveillance equipment maker Dahua Technology Co, video surveillance firm Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology Co Ltd and telecoms firm Hytera Communications Corp Ltd. The move represents Washington’s latest crackdown on the Chinese tech giants amid fears that Beijing could use them to spy on Americans. “These new rules are an important part of our ongoing actions to protect the American people from national security threats involving telecommunications,” FCC Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel said in a statement. Huawei declined to comment. ZTE, Dahua, Hytera and the Chinese embassy in Washington did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Hikvision said in a statement that its products don’t threaten U.S. security. “This decision by the FCC will do nothing to protect U.S. national security, but will do a great deal to make it more harmful and more expensive for U.S. small businesses, local authorities, school districts, and individual consumers to protect themselves, their homes, businesses and property,” Hikvision said, adding that it will continue to serve U.S. customers “in full compliance” with U.S. regulations. Rosenworcel circulated the proposed measure, which effectively bars the firms from selling new equipment in the United States, to the other three commissioners for final approval last month. The FCC said in June 2021 it was considering banning all equipment authorizations for all companies on the covered list.



That came after a March 2021 designation of five Chinese companies on the so-called “covered list” as posing a threat to national security under a 2019 law aimed at protecting U.S. communications networks: Huawei, ZTE, Hytera Communications Corp Hikvision and Dahua. All four commissioners at the agency, including two Republicans and two Democrats, supported Friday’s move. The agency said it has authority to revoke prior authorizations, but declined to do so.

## EU Demands Rapid Fix From U.S. to Green Subsidy Law



BRUSSELS (Dispatches) - European Union ministers warned on Friday that time was running out to change Washington’s plans to grant consumer tax credits for U.S.-produced electric vehicles and other green products. The EU argues the \$430 billion Inflation Reduction Act, to take effect in January, could make the United States a world leader in the electric vehicle market at Europe’s expense. It wants an exception to be made for EU products, as has already been agreed for Canadian and Mexican goods. Czech industry and trade minister Jozef Sikela said all 27 EU members were concerned and agreed the issue needed to be resolved quickly. The two sides launched a joint taskforce in early November to address the issue. EU Trade Commissioner Valdis Dombrovskis told a news conference that he and EU tech chief Margrethe Vestager would assess progress when they meet U.S. counterparts at the U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council (TTC) on Dec. 5. “These are no easy discussions, but they must produce concrete solutions,” he said, adding that in the current geopolitical context, with Russia’s war in Ukraine, partners should build alliances in important sectors such as renewables and batteries. Some ministers earlier expressed hope for a solution by the Dec. 5 meeting, but Dombrovskis said the taskforce would need to continue its work beyond then. Dutch trade minister Liesje Schreinemacher said a fully fledged trade war was in no one’s interest. “We didn’t discuss a deadline, we need time to get out of this situation,” she said. Swedish counterpart Johan Forssell said the time frame was tight. “We cannot wait too long until we make a decision... So I think the need for action will be pretty soon,” he said. French minister Olivier Becht said the U.S. green transition should allow for fair competition, rather than breach World Trade Organization rules and trigger a subsidy race. The act could face a test at the WTO, although no member has yet brought a formal challenge. “Is there then a concrete course towards answering the EU’s wishes or will we unfortunately be falling short. And if we fall short, we will have to put other options on the table,” he said.

## Costa Rica Crocodiles Survive in Most Polluted River

TARCOLES (Dispatches) - In one of the most polluted rivers in Central America, a vulnerable crocodile species is thriving despite living in waters that have become a sewer for Costa Rica’s capital, experts say. Every day, trash and wastewater from San Jose households and factories flood into the Tarcoles River, which vomits tires and plastic into the surrounding mangroves. Nevertheless, some 2,000 American Crocodiles have adapted to life in the toxic river that bears witness to the country’s decades-long battle with waste management. “It is a super-contaminated area, but this has not affected the crocodile population,” said Ivan Sandoval, a biologist with the National University of Costa Rica. “The Tarcoles River is the most polluted river in Costa Rica, and one of the most contaminated in Central America. Heavy metals, nitrites, nitrates, and a large amount of human waste can be found,” added the crocodile expert. According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), there are only about 5,000 of the crocodile species -- found in 18 countries -- left in the world after decades of hunting and habitat loss. The organization lists the Crocodylus acutus as “vulnerable,” but says its numbers have increased in recent years. The Costa Rica population is “healthy and robust.” Indeed, the large reptiles -- basking in the sun and occasionally feeding on fish that come up the channel from the sea -- appear unphased by some 150 types of bacteria that Sandoval says have been detected in the river. He describes the carnivores as “living fossils” with the capacity to survive very tough conditions. “They haven’t had to change anything in millions of years, they are perfectly designed.” Sandoval said that since 1980, Costa Rica’s population of the crocodiles “are recovering,” and warns of the threat of tourist activities. The river’s crocodiles are a major draw for foreign visitors, who take boat tours to see the creatures up close.

## South Africa Dismisses West Sanctions on Iran

NOWSHAHR (IRNA) - South African Ambassador to Tehran Vika Mazwi Khumalo has underscored that his country does not accept the West’s sanctions on Iran because of their negative impact on trade interactions of the African country. The ambassador made the remarks on the sidelines of a visit to a power plant in Nowshahr city, Mazandaran province, on Monday, noting that the sanctions can affect trade exchanges and banking transactions between the Islamic Republic and other nations. Since the most South African companies are belonging to private sector and they have trade exchanges with the Western states, they are concerned about their ties with the West, he warned. On signing contracts between South Africa and Iran, he noted that the two sides have inked 23 memoranda



of understanding so far and that 18 out of the number have become operational. The MoUs are scheduled to be assessed in a joint commission next year, he said, adding that programming for Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi’s visit to South Africa is one of the issues, which should be discussed in the joint commission. According to the envoy, requirements of both countries especially Mazandaran province should be reviewed precisely. Iran enjoys various capacities in different sectors; so, South Africa is ready to expand cooperation with the country in particular with merchants from the northern province, he said. Some provincial officials, including governor general and head of ports organization, took part in the Monday meeting with the South African ambassador.

### Kazakhstan Seeks Share...

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Such shipments can either travel via the Caspian Sea or move by railway to the east of it through Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, Zhumangarin said at a meeting with Russian officials which presidents Vladimir Putin and Kassym-Jomart Tokayev attended via video link. “During the first nine months of this year, 80,000 tons of cargo have been shipped along this (eastern) route, which is an eightfold increase from last year, although the corridor’s capacity allows of 6 million tonnes of shipments (annually),” Zhumangarin said. Zhumangarin said reducing red tape and improving infrastructure could streamline cargo flows. Tokayev met Putin in Moscow on Monday in his first foreign trip since he secured a second term in a snap election on Nov. 20. Zhumangarin also said Kazakhstan was considering building a third railway crossing on its border with China. The move could be regarded as either positive or negative for Russia, depending on where the added volumes go. The Central Asian nation is in talks with the European Union about boosting its transit capacity as part of a project to divert China-Europe cargo traffic from Russia to the Caspian and the Caucasus.

### Tehran Rules Out...

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“The Islamic Republic of Iran will not engage in any cooperation, whatsoever, with the politicized committee established in the name of a fact-finding mission,” Kanaani said. Elsewhere in his remarks, the spokesman of Iran’s Foreign Ministry stated that Saddam’s regime did not have any reservations about use of chemical weapons during the imposed war on Iran, and many Western countries, particularly Germany, supplied the former Iraqi dictators with the deadly munitions. Kanaani underlined that several United Nations reports have pointed to the fact that German companies were supplying the former Iraqi regime with chemical weapons, and even the German news magazine, Der Spiegel, has identified Berlin as the main provider of weapons of mass destruction to then Baghdad government. On Thursday, the UN Human Rights Council convened a meeting 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. The inter-governmental body voted to establish an independent international fact-finding mission to investigate the purported abuses.

The anti-Iran resolution come as foreign-backed riots have hit some Iranian provinces since 22-year-old woman Mahsa Amini died at the hospital on September 16, three days after she collapsed at a police station. Kanaani also appeared on Monday with a chemical mask in his weekly press conference. It seems that his action is a reference to Germany’s support in the war imposed on Iran by Iraq during Saddam Hussein’s regime (1980-1988) and the provision of chemical weapons by the German government to the Saddam regime. Saddam Hussein’s regime had no obstacles in using weapons and chemical bombs against the Iranians during the war, he said, adding that the western governments, including the German government, gave the chemical substances to the Iraqi Baath regime, and many crimes were committed against the people of Iran and Iraq with these weapons and equipment. “The United Nations has clarified Germany’s role in arming Iraq with chemical substances, Germany has received 139 warnings from the United Nations regarding the sale of biological and chemical weapons,” Kanaani noted. He added, “The results of UN reports show that Germany has played an important role in this field, and DER Spiegel magazine has also written about this, and we have always witnessed violations of human rights and women’s rights in Germany.” In response to a question about the attack on the oil tanker of the Zionist regime, which the Zionists accused Iran of, he rejected these accusations and said that false accusations against Iran are the goal of the Zionist regime and its other allies and if Iran does something, it is brave enough to take responsibility for it.

### Iran Signs \$300m MoU...

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The Ukraine war has upended car production in Russia which is the eighth-largest automotive market in the world. Several global manufacturers have halted deliveries to Russia, while others have been forced to pause production due to a lack of parts. In May, Iran’s official news agency IRNA said a leading Russian automotive company had sounded out Iranian parts and equipment manufacturers on the possibility of supplying its production lines with required products. Master cylinder brake boosters, hydraulic anti-lock braking systems, ABS sensors, seat belts, airbags, alternators, air conditioners, oxygen sensors, thermostats and window lift systems are among the parts demanded by the Russian automaker, a member of the Iranian Auto Parts Manufacturers Association (IAMPAs) presiding board Hossein Bahrainian said then. Iran’s auto sector has started standing on its own feet after years of reliance on imported car kits which foreign companies stopped supplying when the US reimposed sanctions on the Islamic Republic in 2018.

### Iraqis File Lawsuit...

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Two days after the attack, Iraqi lawmakers approved a bill that required the government to end the presence of all foreign military forces led by the US in the country. Both commanders were highly revered across the Middle East because of their key role in fighting the Daesh Takfiri terrorist group in the region, particularly in Iraq and Syria. On January 8, 2020, the IRGC targeted the US-run Ain al-Asad base in Iraq’s western province of Anbar with a wave of missile attacks in retaliation for the assassination of Lt. Gen. Soleimani. According to the Pentagon, more than 100 American forces suffered “traumatic brain injuries” during the counterstrike on the base. The IRGC, however, says Washington uses the term to mask the number of the Americans who perished during the retaliation.



## Smith Wins Australian PGA Championship

BRISBANE (Dispatches) - World number three and reigning British Open champion Cameron Smith overcame a final round challenge and electrical storms to win the Australian PGA Championships for a third time by three strokes.

The 29-year-old was back on home soil after three Covid-impacted years away, with his presence helping draw the biggest galleries to the Royal Queensland Golf Club in Brisbane since the 1980s.

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## Heavy Rain Washes Out India-New Zealand One Day Int'l

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - The second one day international between India and New Zealand was called off due to heavy rain with the Kiwi home side retaining their 1-0 lead in the three-match series.

Put into bat, India were 22 for no loss in 4.5 overs when rain forced the players off the ground for the first time. When action resumed at Seddon Park, Hamilton, the match had been reduced to a 29 overs a side.

# James Shines as Lakers Beat Spurs Again

LOS ANGELES (Dispatches) - LeBron James scored a season-high 39 points to lead six Los Angeles players in double figures as the Lakers beat the San Antonio Spurs for the second time in two days on Saturday, 143-138.

James, who scored 21 points but showed some rust in his return from a groin injury in Friday's win in San Antonio, effortlessly picked up the slack with star teammate Anthony Davis sidelined with a calf injury on the second night of the NBA back-to-back.

James, who pulled down 11 rebounds, was a perfect 10-for-10 from the free-throw line and drained seven of the Lakers' 17 three-pointers.

James, who was struggling from three-point range before injury sidelined him for five games, said he never doubted the shots would start to fall. He was just as pleased with the overall team effort.

The chemistry was on display late in the second quarter when James came up with a steal and lobbed a pass to Russell Westbrook in the corner only for Westbrook to toss up the ball for the onrushing James to slam home.

"I feel like we're getting better and better," James said of a Lakers team that has struggled in the early going this season.

"Early in the season we'd have lost a game like this," he said.

"I feel like we're definitely buying in to the extra pass. Guys are trusting their shots and not thinking about it — (we're) shooting from the perimeter with confidence and we're also still attacking the rim."

Dennis Schroder added 21 points and Lonnie Walker added 19. Westbrook added 11 points with seven rebounds and six assists in what proved a bruising encounter.

Westbrook was incensed when he took an elbow to the face from Zach Collins under the basket with two minutes left in the third quarter.

Westbrook jumped up, bleeding profusely, and charged toward Collins before James got his arms around Westbrook and, as they headed toward the bench, a held a towel to his forehead.

## Belgium Slip to Shock World Cup Defeat By Morocco

DOHA (Dispatches) - Morocco jeopardised Belgium's World Cup hopes as Abdelhamid Sabiri and Zakaria Aboukhmal's late goals secured a surprise 2-0 triumph in Doha.

Belgium, third in Russia four years ago, could have qualified for the last 16 with victory but instead produced another insipid display after their fortunate opening win over Canada.

Substitute Sabiri was the hero thanks to a 73rd-minute free-kick which Thibaut Courtois allowed to bounce in at his near post, before Aboukhmal grabbed a second in stoppage time.

The tens of thousands of Morocco supporters responded by cheering their team home at a raucous Al Thumama Stadium.

Morocco replace Belgium at the top of Goup F and know they will qualify for the knockout phase for the first time since 1986 if they can avoid defeat against Canada on Thursday.

Belgium, the world's second-ranked side, will have to beat 2018 runners-up Croatia to be sure of going through.

Roberto Martinez's ageing side have reached at least the quarter-finals of each of the past four major tournaments.

Belgium, whose captain Eden Hazard has admitted are not as good as in 2018, lacked spark and were made to pay by inspired opposition.

Morocco were dealt a blow after the national anthems when goalkeeper Yassine Bounou appeared to gesture he would not be able to play.

The experienced Munir El Kajoui was sent out in his place.

The Atlas Lions fans vastly outnumbered their Belgian counterparts and breathed a sigh of relief when the Europeans almost grabbed a fourth-minute lead.

Hazard played in Michy Batshuayi whose effort from a tight angle was kept out by Munir.

Belgium dominated the early exchanges but Morocco did manage a shot at goal when Hakim Ziyech fired over from distance.

# Lakers



Collins was ejected for a flagrant foul and Westbrook -- who went briefly to the locker room but returned to the game after it was determined he didn't need stitches -- was assessed a technical foul.

At 7-11, the Lakers are third from bottom in the Western Conference.

West leaders Phoenix improved to 13-6 with a 113-112 home victory over the Utah Jazz.

Deandre Ayton led the Suns with 29 points and 29 rebounds. Devin Booker connected on just eight of 27 shots on the way to 26 points for the Suns, who were without star point guard Chris Paul for a ninth straight game as he continues to battle a right heel injury.

Utah held a three-point lead going into the fourth quarter, but Phoenix forged a 99-93 lead with 6:23 to play and would not trail again.

The Jazz got within one point half a dozen times from there, but could get no closer.

In Toronto, the short-handed Raptors shook off a sluggish start to beat NBA scoring leader Luka Doncic and the Dallas Mavericks 105-100.

OG Anunoby scored 12 of his 26 points in the fourth quarter as the Raptors emerged with the win in a battle that came down to the wire.

Anunoby also put in a solid defensive effort on Doncic, who scored 24 points and nine assists but matched his season low with just 15 shot attempts.

"He's an amazing player," Doncic said of Anunoby. "I would say on both ends. I think He is the steals leader in the NBA, but offensively he got so much better. I'm impressed with his game he's an amazing player."

Fred VanVleet, back after missing one game because of illness, also scored 26 points for the Raptors, who were without Pascal Siakam, Scottie Barnes, Precious Achiuwa and Otto Porter Jr.



# Nadal Says World to Miss Federer

MADRID (Dispatches) - Rafael Nadal admitted that "a part of his life left" with Roger Federer when his great rival retired from tennis -- with both players left an emotional wreck on court after the Swiss played his last ever competitive match in September at the Laver Cup.

The two, who between them have won 42 Grand Slam singles titles, joined forces in a doubles match for Federer's swansong at the Laver Cup in London.

Following the conclusion of that match, images of both players weeping as they sat side-by-side during the post match ceremony went viral.

"Someone I have admired, who I have rivalled and also I have shared many beautiful things on and off the court was leaving," Nadal told reporters ahead of an exhibition match in Argentina.

"In that sense, all those moments, those feelings you have before playing a final of a Grand Slam, of an important tournament, everything that was in the air before those matches. It was different from other matches.

"You know you're not going to live that again and a part of my life left with him

(when he retired). It was also the emotion of saying goodbye to someone who has been so important to our sport."

The pair faced each other 40 times over the last two decades in one of sport's most enduring rivalries, with the Spaniard leading the head-to-head 24-16.

After suffering a number of injuries and ailments in recent years, Nadal's own future in the sport also remains up in the air even though he won the season's opening two majors.

He followed up his triumph at the Australian Open by capturing a record-extending 14th French Open title in June - even though he required multiple injections to numb the pain on his left foot.

An abdominal injury forced the 36-year-old Spaniard to withdraw from Wimbledon ahead of his semi-final showdown with Nick Kyrgios.

While he did not elaborate on his own retirement plans, Nadal said: "My time will come when it has to come.

"I'm quite prepared for my next life outside tennis.

"I don't think it's going to be a problem for me beyond what will be an adaptation to the changes. My life has things equally or more important than tennis."

Nadal is on an exhibition tour of South and Central America with Norwegian Casper Ruud.

## Auger-Aliassime Shines as Canada Win First Davis Cup Title

MALAGA (Dispatches) - Canada won their first Davis Cup title after Felix Auger-Aliassime beat Australia's Alex de Minaur 6-3 6-4 to give them an unassailable 2-0 lead in Malaga, Spain.

The world number six showed his prodigious talent once again as he produced 16 winners compared to five from his opponent and basked in the cheers of his compatriots as he struck a lethal forehand to clinch the title.

"The emotions are tough to describe. All of us here - we've dreamt of this moment," Auger-Aliassime said in a televised interview. "It's really a dream come true."

He had to fend off three break points early in the first set but found his rhythm in the eighth game, where he broke De Minaur with a mighty overhead smash, before sealing the final game with an ace.

Auger-Aliassime retained his poise in the second set as he defended two break points in the second game and he pumped his fist when he broke the Australian with a beautiful forehand winner in the third.

He fought back from 0-40 to hold serve in the sixth game and flopped to the ground as his team mates mobbed him after he clinched the trophy for the 2019 runners-up.

"We all developed as players individually, we got better and better over the years," said Auger-Aliassime, who a day earlier kept Canadian hopes alive when he beat Italian Lorenzo Musetti before joining Vasek Pospisil in a straight-sets doubles win over Matteo Berrettini and Fabio Fognini.

"We're more ready for these type of moments but it's never easy to pull through."



## Foden Clamor Puts Southgate Under Pressure at World Cup

DOHA (Dispatches) - Gareth Southgate's refusal to use Phil Foden during England's drab 0-0 draw against the United States has put renewed pressure on the Three Lions boss ahead of their decisive World Cup Group B clash against Wales.

With England labouring to prise open the well-drilled US defence at the Al Bayt Stadium on Friday, it was notable that Southgate turned to Jack Grealish and Marcus Rashford as his attacking changes.

For the second successive World Cup game, Manchester City playmaker Foden had started on the bench.

After a 19-minute cameo in the 6-2 win over Iran, he was left kicking his heels as an unused substitute as England fell flat against the US.

Foden has been frozen out by Southgate's preference for starting Mason Mount behind striker Harry Kane, with Bukayo Saka on the right side of the attack and Raheem Sterling on the left.

While there were only muted complaints from fans and pundits about the 22-year-old's exile when England crushed Iran, the spotlight on Southgate's decision was far harsher following a lethargic display in the US stalemate.

"For Phil Foden not to be playing is a real shame because he's a massive talent. He's our best player by a mile," former England defender Gary Neville said.

Wayne Rooney, England's record goalscorer, agrees with Neville that Foden should be part of the starting line-up.

