

Foreign Ministry Spokesman Nasser Kanaani Said That the Navy's 86th Flotilla Showcased The Technological, Industrial, Scientific and Sea Power of the Islamic Republic of Iran

IRAN NEWS

The Deputy Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Of Iran Announced the Items Iran And Russia Agreed on, on the Sideline of the Russia-Islamic World: Kazan Forum Event in Kazan

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Afghan Gov't Says Committed to Further Cooperation With Iran

KABUL (Dispatches) - The ruling Taliban government in Afghanistan has expressed its commitment to further cooperation with Tehran in different fields amid a dispute over Afghanistan's violation of Iran's water rights from the Hirmand River.

The Afghan Defense Ministry issued a statement on Saturday, after a meeting between Afghan officials and an Iranian military delegation, headed by Deputy Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces Brigadier General Bahram Hosseini Motlagh, in Kabul.

Hosseini Motlagh's Afghan counterpart, Mali Khan Sadiq welcomed the Iranian delegation and pointed to the good cooperation and relations between the two neighboring countries, the statement read.

Sadiq said the Afghan government has always sought good relations with the Islamic Republic and is committed to further cooperation in various fields.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed border issues and stressed enhancing joint cooperation and resolving problems through dialogue and relevant authorities, the statement added.

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Iran Annual Inflation Rate Rises 1.8%

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's annual inflation rate rose 1.8% to 47.6% in the calendar month to late April.

Figures by the Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) show the country's annual inflation rate rose by 1.8% to 47.6% in the calendar month to late April.

SCI figures published yesterday showed that Iran's consumer price index (CPI) had reached 180.5 in March, up 3.7% from the previous month and 55.5% higher from the same figure reported in April 2022.

The figures showed that Iran's monthly CPI for food, beverages and tobacco had increased by 4% in April compared to March while services CPI increased by 3.5% month-on-month.

The SCI announced earlier this year that it had changed in baseline year for calculation of inflation rate from 2017 to 2021.

The annual inflation rate announced for the calendar month in April is one of the highest recorded in the country in three decades.

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Tehran, Moscow Exchange Trade in Russian Currency



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Vice-President of Iran-Russia Joint Chamber of Commerce says the trade exchange between Iran and Russia is in Russian currency rouble and their trade is growing fast.

Speaking to ILNA, Kambiz Mirkarimi pointed to the banking relation between Iran and Russia and said that inauguration of Russian bank office in Iran indeed facilitates offering services of Russia to Iranian traders and companies can comfortably get acquainted with the services that Russian banking system offers to its customers.

He then termed Bank Melli Iran as the active branch and said that the bank buys the forex of exporters and it has brokerage relation with all Russian banks and currently Iranian companies have no problem in working with Russia.

Mirkarimi went on to say that currently the trade exchanges between Tehran and Moscow are done in rouble, adding that rouble is approved by Iranian businessmen and it has reached to a relative stability and it has the least cost for both sides.

He went on to say that the free trade agreement between Iran and EAEU is the most important trade agreement and it has led to a leap in Iran's exports and it is predicted that by the yearend, the 96 to 97% trade tariffs would be zeroed but before it, some technical problems which have affected bilateral trade should be resolved.

On the inauguration of trade office in Russia, he said that infrastructures for trade between the two countries have been prepared but Iranian and Russian companies are unaware about their capabilities and therefore Iran Trade Promotion Organization should offer some services to traders and the launch of the trade office in Russia can give better services to Russian and Iranian traders.

He noted that banking problems to some extent have been resolved between Iran and Russia and urged Iranian companies to show more interests for trade with Russia especially in trade of Russian grain and wheat.

Mirkarimi avoided touching upon the agreements on energy between Tehran and Moscow and said that oil exports should express their views because they know the details of the agreements. He reiterated that the trade between Iran and Russia is the leap phase and government should increase its investment for broadening trade infrastructures.

Terror Outfit Linked With Mossad Disbanded

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iranian intelligence forces have busted a terror team affiliated with the Israeli Mossad spy agency in the western part of the country, Intelligence Minister Esmail Khatib says.

Khatib said at a ceremony in the capital Tehran on Sunday that the terrorists had sneaked across the border into western Iran from Iraq's semi-autonomous Kurdistan region.

"Given the cooperation of the new Iraqi administration [led by Prime Minister Mohammed Shia' al-Sudani] and the assurances offered, we wish to see our western borders secure and clear of any security incident," he said.

"We remind the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) of its responsibilities in this regard," he added.

Khatib made clear that Iranian military and security forces will not hesitate to deliver a powerful and crushing response to any destabilizing act against the country's border regions.

Earlier this week, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) intelligence forces disbanded a terror network affiliated with Daesh Khorasan (Daesh-K) in Iran's southern province of Fars.

The IRGC Intelligence Department, in cooperation with Fajr Intelligence Organization of Fars Province, spotted and busted the operational and media network of Daesh-K, an offshoot of the Daesh Takfiri terrorist group in Afghanistan and captured its main element in the province.

The ringleader, who was being monitored by IRGC forces for four years, was in charge of recruiting extremist elements in a number of Iranian provinces, including Tehran.

Elsewhere in his Sunday remarks, Khatib said more than 200 anti-Iran media outlets, 35 think tanks, and dozens of intelligence services were actively involved in foreign-sponsored riots that broke out in some parts of the country.

Foreign-backed riots erupted in Iran in mid-September after the death of 22-year-old Iranian woman Mahsa Amini, who fainted at a police station in the capital Tehran and was pronounced dead three days later at the hospital.

Iran's intelligence community has said several countries, including the United States and the United Kingdom, have used their spy and propaganda apparatuses to provoke violent riots in the country.

ViewPoint

By: Hamid Reza Naghashian

Iran Navy Source of Pride for Nation, Region

The Islamic Republic of Iran has witnessed and registered many achievements since its foundation in 1979 as the number of its achievements is on the rise and one of the fields that Iran has seen amazing progress is in its Navy so that it has turned into one of the strongest navies in the region and even in the world and it has sent a warning to the West and especially to the U.S. who deploys their warships in the region.

On Friday, Iranian media reported the he "successful" return of the Iranian Navy's 86th flotilla of warships to the territorial waters after a round-the-world voyage. It was a historic mission by the Iranian flotilla which has angered enemies.

The Iranian Navy's flotilla, comprised of domestically-manufactured Dena destroyer and Makran forward base ship, entered the territorial waters of the Islamic Republic of Iran on May 17, after sailing 63,000 kilometers of sea routes over eight months and a circumnavigation of the globe in 360 degrees.

The 86th naval fleet set sail on a mission around the world from Iran's southern port city of Bandar Abbas on September 20, 2022.

Reacting to this achievement, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei felicitated this achievement and in his message said: I congratulate the courageous forces of the 86th flotilla of warships of the Islamic Republic of Iran Army on their great and successful voyage. Beloved! Welcome home; Good luck, Ayatollah Khamenei said.

Meanwhile the Iranian Navy announced plans to deploy one of its flotilla of warships to the Antarctic for the first time ever "in the near future."

The deployment of Iranian warships to the Antarctic was apparently one of the main goals of a recent mission by the 86th flotilla, which returned to the country a few days ago after a round-the-world voyage, Iran's Tasnim news agency said.

The naval fleet, comprised of domestically-manufactured Dena destroyer and Makran forward base ship, entered the territorial waters of the Islamic Republic of Iran on Wednesday, after sailing 63,000 kilometers of sea routes over eight months and a circumnavigation of the globe in 360 degrees.

The 86th flotilla broke the record for the distance an Iranian flotilla has ever sailed in international waters and crossed the Strait of Magellan — the nearest region to the South Pole — during its mission, a main purpose of which was to test the strength of the steel hull of the Dena destroyer in cold waters.

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So-Called Defenders of Women's Rights Seek To Misuse Them

TEHRAN (IRNA) - President Ebrahim Raisi says those who claim they are advocating women's rights, seeking to misuse the female citizens.

President Raisi made the remarks on Sunday, when he was addressing a gathering on the occasion of the National Girl's Day at the Tehran Book Garden.

Nowadays, many people claim to defend women's rights, but in practice they seek to use them as instrument, he pointed out. But our Islamic system and culture recognize the true status of women and it is committed to realizing their value and position, he further noted.

The chief executive went on to say I am very happy that today, despite the remarkable social progress of girls in Iran's Islamic system; in such gatherings and ceremonies, the girls demand the improvement of their vocational training at schools and also consolidation of independent and self-reliant spirit.

Raisi also called on the Iranian girls to enhance their capabilities and try hard to improve human, ethical, and divine values during their lifetime to be capable of playing a more effective role in the development and progress of the Islamic country.

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Tehran Not to Compromise On Hirmand Water Right

TEHRAN (MNA) - Stressing the full implementation of the agreement on Hirmand water right, the Iranian Parliament Speaker said that Tehran will not compromise on this vital issue.

The complete and accurate implementation of the agreement on the Hirmand conflict guarantees the mutual interests of Iran and Afghanistan, the Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf in the parliament's open session on Sunday. There will be no compromise on this vital issue, he stressed.

"I would like the Afghan authorities to respond constructively to the positive will of the Islamic Republic of Iran in this regard and to prevent the occurrence of a serious problem between two countries," Qalibaf said, referring to the sufficient water reserves in Afghanistan.

Earlier on Friday, President Raisi warned the rulers in Afghanistan not to violate the water rights of the Iranians in the southeast country from Hirmand, stressing the government is determined to defend the nation's rights wherever it is.

Terrorist Attack In Saravan Against Iran, Pakistan Interests

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN – Foreign Ministry Spokesman Nasser Kanaani says terrorist attack in Saravan, after the presence of a high-ranking Pakistani delegation at the opening ceremony of joint border market projects with Iran, is an action against the two countries' interests.

Law Enforcement Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran (FARAJA) in a statement on Sunday announced that last night, the attempt of terrorists to enter the country from the border of Pakistan was met with the resistance of the brave border guards in Saravan.

Unfortunately, six of the border guards were martyred during the armed clashes with terrorists, the statement added, saying that one was also injured critically.

Nasser Kanaani on Sunday strongly condemned the brutal terrorist attack in Saravan County.

Referring to the recent presence of a high-ranking Pakistani delegation headed by the Prime Minister of Pakistan at the opening ceremony of the joint border market projects, Kan'ani stated that the terrorist attack is a purposeful action against the



security and interests of the two countries so that they do not allow the joint border to be the border of friendship and cooperation and be beneficial for the people of the two countries economically.

"While condemning the evil act, the Islamic Republic of Iran expects the Pakistani government to implement the agreements between the two countries to suppress terrorist groups as soon as possible and to try to improve the security of the common borders," the Iranian senior diplomat said.

"The aim of these terrorist groups is definitely to disrupt the security of the common borders and the security of the people living on the borders of the two countries, and Iran, as in the past, once again emphasizes its efforts to expand security in the region and develop cooperation," Kanaani added.

Top Iranian, Chinese Universities Ink MoU on Cooperation

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Allameh Tabataba'i University and China's Beijing International Studies University signed a memorandum of understanding on Sunday to develop joint educational and research cooperation.

Accompanied by a delegation, secretary of the CPC BISU Committee Chang Yu met with Abdullah Motamedi, the president of Allameh Tabataba'i University, to develop joint educational and research cooperation.

During the meeting, Motamedi pointed to the cooperation between the Chinese embassy and Allameh Tabataba'i University, saying that a part of the central library and document center of this university has been allotted to Chinese books for professors and students.

Change, for his part, introduced BISU and its capacities, saying it is one of the most prominent universities in China in the field of foreign languages, tourism, economy, trade, communication and commerce.

He said 29 languages are taught in the university and due to the importance of Farsi, there is a need to exchange professors and students between the two countries.

Top Officials Agree To Give More Freedom of Action to CBI



TEHRAN (MNA) – The heads of three power branches of the Iranian government which form the Supreme Council For Economic Coordination agreed in their Saturday meeting to give more freedom of action to Central Bank to control the forex market.

President Ebrahim Raeisi, Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf and Judiciary Chief Gholmhossein Mohseni-Ejei held a meeting on Saturday afternoon in continuation of their previous meeting on the freedom of action of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) to being under more control the foreign currency market.

This was their eighty-sixth meeting which is held within the framework of the Supreme Economic Coordination Council.

In today's meeting, it was decided to increase CBI freedom of action with the aim of creating economic stability and preserving the value of the local currency, the rial.

Reducing the surpluses value tax on some imported commodities and basic goods was one of the other approvals of today's meeting of the council.

CBI officials and other economic official were also present in the meeting.

The council was formed at the order of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei to tackle the impact of the sanctions, re-imposed by the previous Donald Trump administration after its illegal withdrawal from the nuclear deal known as the JCPOA in May 2018.

Navy Flotilla Accomplished Round-the-World Mission Despite Sanctions

TEHRAN (PressTV) - The chief of staff of the Iranian Armed Forces says the country's 86th naval flotilla concluded its historic voyage on the high seas to mark an outstanding achievement despite Western-led sanctions against the Islamic Republic.

Major General Mohammad Hossein Baqeri made the remarks on Sunday as he addressed the official homecoming ceremony of the flotilla in the southern Iranian port city of Bandar Abbas.

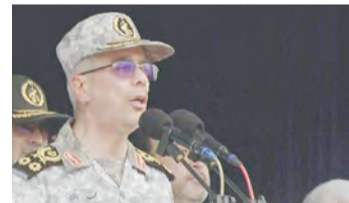
He said the flotilla, comprising domestically-manufactured Dena destroyer and Makran forward base ship, is a source of pride for the Iranian nation and a landmark accomplishment in the history of the country's naval missions.

"Maritime prowess is among the most significant factors of our country's military might," Baqeri said. "We do not lack anything to achieve such an ideal, and are gifted with homegrown industries [and expertise] for that purpose. Our courageous commanders and marines undertake naval missions valiantly and fearlessly."

The top general said the unprecedented move of the Iranian Navy in carrying out this difficult mission ushers in a new era for the Iranian Armed Forces, adding that, "The 86th flotilla of the Navy fulfilled a historic mission... Even major countries in the world do not have the courage to undertake such a [formidable] task. He noted that the Iranian Navy, reliant on the Dena destroyer and Makran forward base ship, went on the mission at the peak of sanctions.

"Our forces sailed through a precarious route. Through faith, devotion and patriotism, our forces pulled off such an achievement," the top general said, stressing that dignity can only be preserved through the path of power.

Commander of the Islamic Republic of Iran Navy Rear Admiral Shahram Irani speaks as he addresses the official homecoming ceremony of the country's 86th naval flotilla following a historic voyage on the high seas, in the port city of Bandar Abbas, southern Iran, on May 21,



2023. (Photo by Fars news agency) Commander of the Islamic Republic of Iran Navy Rear Admiral Shahram Irani also said his force, through its deployment to the high seas and conclusion of the lengthy naval mission, has established and expanded its strategic depth, foresight in maritime prowess, and regional identity and influence.

Irani said Iranian marines, under Commander-in-Chief of the Iranian Armed Forces Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, managed for the first time ever to employ modern technologies and know-how to

convey the message of peace and friendship. The naval forces onboard Dena and Makran showed up on the high seas to declare that the Islamic Republic is impervious to isolation and sanctions, and it continues to tread the path of sustainable development through the promotion of interactions with world nations, the navy chief added.

Irani also said that Iranian marines pulled off a scientific, political and cultural achievement. He argued that the great sailing mission of the Iranian Navy's 86th flotilla also confirmed that the US-led liberal world order has been replaced by a multi-polar world order, with new alliances being formed and emerging powers beginning to display their might.

"Iran, with the discourse of resistance and mottos of peace and friendship, is passing through this transition period and properly placing itself in the new order. This is a sign of the waning power and hegemony of the US," he remarked.

Tehran, Moscow Urged to Expand Bilateral Transportation

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Gholam Hossein Shafei said that Iran and Russia have to expand their transportation infrastructures along with enhancement of bilateral trade.

Shafei made the remarks during an Iran-Russia trade dialogue meeting held on the sidelines of Russia-Islamic World Forum 2023 in Kazan, Tatarstan.

He said that expert studies suggest that Iran will be one of the most important growing economies in the Middle East region.

Iran, as a significant OPEC member, will play a key role in meeting energy needs of the world, Shafei said.

Being on the route of North-South and East-West transit corridors has made the world's major commercial highways pass through Iran or near Iran, he added.

"Having water and land borders with 15 countries, Iran is regarded as a safe, short and cheap route providing access not only to the domestic market of Iran, but also to the 400-million market of the region."

Shafei said that Iran and Russia are experiencing a new phase of relations as the annual trade between the two countries is estimated to grow to \$40 billion in five years.

Watermelon Tops Iran's List of Agri-Food Exports in April

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Watermelon topped the list of Iranian agri-food exports in the first month of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-April 20) with some \$46.54 million worth of sales, according to a report released by Iran's Ministry of Agriculture-Jihad (MAJ).

An MAJ report published showed that Iran had exported over 801,000 metric tons (mt) of agricultural and food products worth \$438.6m over the month to late April.

The export figure is a 19.48% decline in volume terms and a 2.81% rise in value terms compared with the same period last year, said the report.

The list of top agri-food products exported from Iran in the months to late April included tomatoes with \$49.78m, milk powder with \$30.03m, eggs with \$26.55m, and apples with \$16.96m.

Watermelon on top of Iran's list of agri-food exports

In terms of weight, watermelon topped the list with 221,690 mt, followed by tomato with 108,350 mt, apples with 37,850 mt, Persian melons with 35,230 mt, and dates with 29,480 mt, said the report.

13th Iran Int'l Stone Exhibition to Kick Off on May 29

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – The 13th Iran International Stone Exhibition dubbed "Iran Stone Expo" is set to be held at the Shahr-e Aftab International Exhibition site here in Thrane from May 29 to June 02.

Head of the Iran Stone Association Bahram Shakouri said in a news conference on Saturday afternoon that the exhibition will be held with the participation of 110 Iranian companies along with companies from five other countries including China, India, Italy, Turkey and Greece.

The exhibitors will showcase their latest products and achievements in three main groups of mineral equipment and machinery, consumables and processing mines on a land area as large as 12,000 square meters.

He put the number of mining and mineral processing units in the country at more than 6,000, saying they have generated employment opportunities for about 600,000 job-seeking people.

Between 10 to 11 million tons of decorative stones are annually extracted in the country on average, he underlined.

Iran earns between \$300 and \$350 million foreign currency annually as a result of the export of quality decorated stone, Shakhouri concluded.

Tehran, Hanoi Sign MoU To Bolster Security Ties



TEHRAN (IRNA) - Minister of Interior Ahmad Vahidi and General To Lam, the minister of public security of Vietnam, have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on combating cybercrime, organized crime, and drug trafficking.

"An agreement has been signed on economic, political, science and technology, and especially security issues, including organized crime, drug trafficking, and cybercrime," Vahidi said on Saturday at a press conference after meeting with visiting General To Lam.

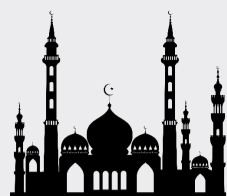
He said the Vietnamese official was in Tehran as part of a plan to expand relations between Iran and Vietnam on all fronts. "Iran and Vietnam have good relations, and the perspectives of the two countries are close to each other, and they pay attention to each other's interests," the minister stated.

Vahidi further emphasized that the latest agreement would mark "a better future for the relations between the two countries." Meanwhile later Iranian, and Vietnamese officials signed two memoranda of understanding (MoUs) in the field of extraditing convicts.

Addressing the signing ceremony, Iran's Justice Minister Amin Hossein Rahimi said that the MoUs were signed by Iran and Vietnam on Sunday.

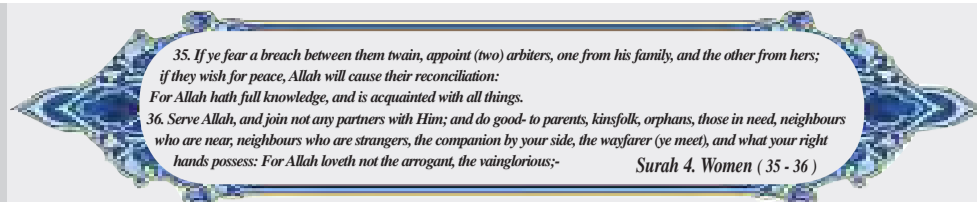
Meanwhile, General To Lam, the minister of public security of Vietnam expressed happiness on his visit to Iran, saying that the meeting was held on the eve of the 50th anniversary of bilateral relations. He added that the MoUs will bring about increasing cooperation on human rights.

The legal cooperation agreement will be signed soon between the two countries, the purpose of which is to increase public order and stability in the two countries, he stated.



PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	12:01
■ Evening (Maghreb)	19:27
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	03:13
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	04:54



South Pars Oil Layer 2nd Development Phase Begins

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – The executive operations for the second phase of South Pars Oil Layer's development project officially began in a ceremony held on Saturday, the last day of the 27th Iran International Oil, Gas, Refining and Petrochemical Exhibition (Iran Oil Show 2023).

The ceremony was attended by Head of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) Mohsen Khojasteh-Mehr, Head of Pars Oil and Gas Company (POGC) Mohammad-Hossein Motejali, and Vice Chairman of the Parliament's Energy Committee Mousa Ahmadi, Shana reported.

The deal for the implementation of the second phase of the South Pars Oil Layer's development project was signed between Iranian Offshore Engineering and Construction Company (IOEC) and a renowned foreign company back in March 2022.

The \$500-million deal, prepared based on the Oil Ministry's new model of upstream contracts, was signed on March 16 in a ceremony attended by senior officials including Oil Minister Javad Oji and Mohsen Khojasteh-Mehr.

Under the framework of the development contract, which has been finalized for a 20-year period, the contractor is obliged to provide all the necessary financial resources to implement the project, including direct capital costs, indirect costs, and operating costs.

Based on the deal, the project description includes upgrading and modifying the existing processing vessel and platform, overhauling existing wells, digging



new wells including production and water injection and assessment wells, construction of oil discharge and loading system, and strengthening the existing water injection system.

During the implementation of this contract, while updating the reservoir models using new data analysis, new wells will be drilled using horizontal drilling technology and also, a new unloading and loading system will replace the existing one.

According to Khojasteh-Mehr, due to the special situation of the oil layer, ordinary vertical drilling methods cannot be used for drilling wells in this field so using the new horizontal drilling technology by the foreign contractor will also be a step toward transferring this technology into the country.

South Pars Oil Layer, which holds about 900 million barrels of oil, is located in southern Iran in the Persian Gulf waters, where the Islamic Republic shares the giant South Pars gas field with Qatar.

The field is the northeastern extension of Al-Shaheen oil field in Qatar. The Iranian portion of the field is located at 67 meters of water depth.

New Appointment at IDRO

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Deputy Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade and Head of Industrial Development and Renovation Organization (IDRO) in a decree appointed Mohammad Hossein Saber as his deputy on planning and development.



Mr. Ali Nabavi in his decree appointed Saber as the head of planning and development of IDRO and in the decree he has emphasized study and preparation, proposing plans and macro strategies in the fields of the group's targets with participation of other deputies and managers of the organization and called for reviewing and improving organizational process and systems as well as reviewing ways of attracting, preserving and boosting human resources.

Saber is also a member of board of directors of IDRO and has Ph.D. in technology management.

CEO of NIORDC Visits EORC Pavilion at Iran Oil Show



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

ISFAHAN - The CEO of National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company (NIORDC) visited the pavilion of Esfahan Petro Refining Holding (EORC) during the Iran Oil Show 2023 which ended on Saturday and during his visit hailed the shift in the approach of EORC to project-centered one than production-centered.

Eng. Salari expressed his satisfaction over the actions of Esfahan Petro Refining Holding especially during the recent year and said that the shift in the approach of the company from the production-centered to production-centered is appreciable and these projects should come on stream based on the priority.

He then pointed to rejuvenating the human forces in EORC and said that this action has strengthened the knowledge-based and technological activities in EORC which has led to keep its specialized human forces in the country and it should be used as a model for other refineries in the country.

Salari then pointed to defining 400 projects in EORC for broadening value chain and noted that in this line it is necessary to develop LPG conservation reservoirs due to the rise in production of this product.

He then pointed to the provision of water for the refinery and later added that all should create real branding in oil industry and with the current process in EORC, it can happen.

Salari also called for indigenization for the equipment which has been seriously taken into consideration by EORC and expressed hope this would happen very soon.

Then the CEO of EORC Dr. Mohsen Ghadiri, for his part, said that such exhibitions can provide the ground for more interactions and said that the presence of over 200 foreign companies in the exhibition is a strong point which should be used. He noted that in the past one year and half EORC has taken actions in different fields like in production and human force and those actions have led to the rise in productivity.

He added that the launch of 6 subsidiary companies as the executive arms will help EORC to fulfill its 1405 (Iranian calendar year), adding that EORC has on its agenda broadening value chain and prevention of crude sales and with the highest profits, it wants to please its share-holders.

Iran to Add 12 New Petrochem Complexes By Yearend

SHANA (Tehran) - Iran will add 12 new petrochemical complexes in the current Iranian calendar year (to end March 19, 2024), National Petrochemical Company (NPC) managing director said here on Saturday.



Today, nine agreements and nine memorandums of understanding (MoUs) were signed with local companies while we were dependent on foreign firms in early years after the victory of the Islamic Revolution, Morteza Shahmirzaei said at a press conference held at the 27th Iran International Oil, Gas, Refining and Petrochemical Exhibition, also known as Iran Oil Show 2023.

Upon launching the new plans, 12 new petrochemical complexes will be added to the country, he said, adding, "Hoveizeh Gas Refinery of the Persian Gulf came on stream last month."

All petrochemical industry investors as well as all local technological experts and manufacturers need to help complete unfinished projects, he noted, adding, "Thus, the National Petrochemical Company tries to gain self-sufficiency and provide goods and equipment needed in the industry by local manufacturers."

Iranian scientists and experts are capable of gaining self-sufficiency in petrochemical industry, Shahmirzaei emphasized, saying, "NPC has planned to become self-sufficient in catalyst production by the end of the incumbent administration, and in manufacturing goods and equipment in at least next five to six years. We need to focus on indigenizing technical know-how."

Iran Exports 500 Tons of Quality Honey to China: Official

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Iran exported 500 tons of high-quality honey to China last Iranian calendar year of 1401 (ended March 20, 2023), an official said.

Touraj Saremi, who implements the Iran Beekeeping Development Project, made the comment on the sidelines of the First National Conference on Honey Bee and Related Industries and stated that Iran ranks third in the world in producing honey.

According to the statistics, over 94,000 beekeepers produced 136,000 tons of quality honey in the country last year (March 21, 2022 to March 20, 2023), he said, adding, "It is predicted that beekeepers of the country would produce 140,000 tons of honey in the current year.

Measures have been taken in the current year to export quality honey to China and other countries, Saremi added.

Monthly Export to Africa Exceeds \$31.4m

TEHRAN (MNA)- Iran exported 71,087 tons of non-oil products valued at \$31,481,234 to the African countries in the first month of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-April 20), the vice president of Iran and Africa Merchants Club Ruhollah Latifi said.

According to Latifi, steel, and iron products accounted for the biggest share of Iran's exports to its 23 African trade partners, comprising 51.5 percent of the total exports, IRNA reported.

During the mentioned month, Iran exported 29,602 tons of iron products worth \$16,201,162 to Africa, the official said.

Urea fertilizer, food products, bitumen, chemical and plastic products, industrial machinery, flooring, sulfur, motorcycle tires, bentonite, white cement, plaster, medicine, toys, and glass containers were also among the other goods exported to the African continent in the said period.

During the first month of the current year, Iran also imported 4,329 tons of goods worth \$5,879,482 from nine African countries, registering a 98 percent growth compared to the same period last year.

Latifi named Ghana, South Africa, Tanzania, Kenya, and Sudan, as the main export destinations for Iranian products while, South Africa, Congo, Ghana, Kenya, and Tanzania were the first five countries exporting goods to Iran in the period under review.

In total, the Islamic Republic and Africa traded 75,407 tons of commodities worth \$37.36 million in the mentioned month.

Latifi, who is the former spokesman of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), previously said that following the 13th government's policy of multilateralism and attention to new markets, especially in Asia and Africa, Iran's business relations with African countries have been on the path of growth.

The former Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) Alireza Peyman-Pak has also said the country is taking the necessary steps to increase annual trade exchanges with African countries to \$5 billion by the Iranian calendar year 1404 (begins in March 2025).

Peyman-Pak said the trade with the mentioned countries is expected to reach \$2.5 billion by the end of the current Iranian calendar year.

Iran Cooperative Sector Expected to Increase Investment in Mauritania

TEHRAN – Iran's new ambassador to Mauritania with presence in the 84th agriculture and food industries commission meeting of Iran Chamber of Cooperative (ICC) explained the economic capacities of this African country and said that small economy of Mauritania is a good climate for investment and increasing trade exchanges for economic activists in the field of agriculture.

Speaking in this meeting, Iran's new Ambassador to Mauritanian Mr. Javad Abu pointed to the geographical location of Mauritania and said that the most important field that Iran should focus on it is fishery. He went on

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK



to say that in this country some 2,000 aquatic fishing is done and 90% of them are exported and this is a good field for investment in this field.

He noted that in this country there are over 30m livestock but the country has no certain plan for it and Iranians can enter it. He reiterated that people of Mauritanian welcome investment and they expect more foreign investment.

Abu then pointed to other fields for cooperation between Iran and Mauritania and reiterated that it is expected Iran's cooperative sector would increase its investment in the field of agriculture in Mauritania.

Second Step of Nochad in Developing Ecosystem of Innovation

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – After unveiling the innovation center of Chadormalu Mining and Industrial Company (Nochad) at science and technology park exhibition of Yazd Province and 13th conference and exhibition on steel and iron ore industry outlook in Tehran, this center in its second step seeks design and developing ecosystem of technology and innovation at Chadormalu Company.

In a brainstorm meeting for developing operational process of Nochad (Nochad stands for Innovation and Chadormalu in Persian), deputy head of Chadormalu Dr. Askarzadeh pointed to the necessity for using all existing capacities of the country to strengthen scientific body and coordination among related active groups in the field of knowledge-based with Nochad and said that identifying innovators and ideators in

the scientific and academic centers, knowledge-based companies and creative industrialists paves the way for attracting and using the potential capacities in line with production leap and development ecosystem.

He recommended that with activating the secretariat of Nochad and the database for registering ideas, suggestions and proposals, the ground for identifying and attracting innovative ideas in Chadormalu Company is paved.

The goal behind the launch of this center in Chadormalu Company has been study of problems and existing challenges in the steel and mining industry through innovation and ideation. Supporting knowledge-based companies and offering services to the applicants in this field, improving organizational dynamism and empowerment based on innovation for resolving the problems of the company are of the other goals behind the launch of this center.



Guatemala Court Suspends Presidential Contender's Candidacy

GUATEMALA (Dispatches) - A court in Guatemala provisionally suspended the presidential candidacy of businessman Carlos Pineda, a leading contender for the country's top job in elections slated for next month.

Three magistrates in an extraordinary session ruled Pineda's participation was "on hold" after they accepted a challenge presented by leaders of the Cambio party, a political group to which the candidate previously belonged.

According to the complaint, Citizen Prosperity, Pineda's current party, committed a series of infractions during a candidate proclamation assembly in November 2022.



F-18 Fighter Jet Accident At Zaragoza Airbase

BARCELONA (dispatches) - An F-18 fighter jet crashed at an airbase in the Spanish city of Zaragoza but the pilot ejected successfully, the Spanish defense ministry said Saturday.

The aircraft landed within the perimeter of the base, the defense ministry said on Twitter.

The base, which lies about 10 miles (16 kilometers) outside the city, belongs to the Spanish Air and Space Force. Videos posted on social media showed a plane in flames falling towards the ground.

The pilot was already in hospital and his life was not in danger, the air force said.

Spain's public news agency EFE said the F-18 was training for a flying exhibition when the incident occurred.



Air Strikes Shake Khartoum, Qatar Embassy Attacked



KHARTOUM (Dispatches) - Air strikes and artillery exchanges shook the Sudanese capital and armed men ransacked the Qatari embassy as the country's warring generals kept up their struggle for control.

Khartoum residents told AFP that heavy fighting raged despite repeated international calls for a humanitarian truce. The area around the state television building in Khartoum's sister city Omdurman was one of the sites bombarded, witnesses said.

The power struggle between regular army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and his former deputy turned rival Mohamed Hamdan Daglo, who heads the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), erupted into fighting on April 15.

The conflict has killed hundreds of people, most of them civilians, and displaced more than one million.

The United Nations has warned of a fast-deteriorating humanitarian situation in Africa's third-largest country, where one in three people already relied on aid before the war.

On Friday, Burhan sacked Daglo, giving his title of vice president of the ruling Sovereign Council to former rebel leader Malik Agar, and appointed three allies to top jobs in the military.

A former rebel leader who signed a peace deal with Khartoum authorities in 2020, Agar said in a statement Saturday he was determined to try to "end the war" and press for negotiations.

He also addressed Daglo directly saying "Sudan's stability can only be re-established by a professional and unified army".

The integration of the RSF into the regular armed forces has been the main bone of contention between Daglo and Burhan.

The force, which traces its origins to the notorious Janjaweed militia recruited in the early 2000s to crush a rebellion by ethnic minority groups in Darfur, is highly mobile but has a reputation for being ill-disciplined.

Its fighters have been accused of widespread break-ins and looting, including at diplomatic missions and aid group offices.

On Saturday, Qatar's embassy was the latest diplomatic mission to be attacked, drawing condemnation from Doha.

"The State of Qatar condemned in the strongest terms the irregular armed forces' storming and vandalising its embassy building in Khartoum," the foreign ministry said.

"The embassy staff had previously been evacuated and... none of the diplomats or embassy staff were subjected to any harm," the ministry said.

It renewed calls for "an immediate halt to the fighting in Sudan, exercising maximum restraint... and sparing civilians the consequences of the fighting".

Qatar did not specifically identify Daglo's RSF as responsible but a statement from the pro-Burhan authorities put the blame squarely on the paramilitaries.

The embassies of Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Turkey have also come under attack in recent weeks.

Saturday's attack came a day after Arab leaders meeting at a summit in Saudi Arabia urged Sudan's feuding generals to halt the fighting.

There have been multiple failed truce efforts since the fighting started, and representatives of both sides have been holding talks in Saudi Arabia.

Asked about those talks, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan said on Friday that the focus was "on reaching a truce that allows Sudanese civilians to take a breather".

Wagner Group Claims Control of Bakhmut; Ukraine Denies



KYIV (Dispatches) - The head of the Russian private army Wagner claimed Saturday that his forces have taken control of the city of Bakhmut after the longest and most grinding battle of the Russia-Ukraine war, but Ukrainian defense officials denied it.

In a video posted on Telegram, Wagner head Yevgeny Prigozhin said the city came under complete Russian control at about midday Saturday. He spoke flanked by about half a dozen fighters, with ruined buildings in the background and explosions heard in the distance.

However, after the video appeared, Ukrainian deputy defense minister Hanna Maliar said heavy fighting was continuing. "The situation is critical," she said. "As of now, our defenders, control certain industrial and infrastructure facilities in this area."

G7 Urges China to Play by the Rules Citing Economic Coercion

HIROSHIMA (Dispatches) - The Group of Seven has pledged to work together to counter economic coercion amid a "disturbing rise" in countries weaponising trade.

In a statement on economic security released on the second day of the G7 summit in Japan, the club of wealthy democracies said they would boost resilience "by reducing vulnerabilities and countering malign practices that exploit and reinforce them".

Western officials have become increasingly vocal about China's use of trade restrictions in political disputes, although the G7 statement released on Saturday afternoon did not mention the country by name.

"The world has encountered a disturbing rise in incidents of economic coercion that seek to exploit economic vulnerabilities and dependencies and undermine the foreign and domestic policies and positions of G7 members as well as partners around the world," the G7 leaders said.

"We will work together to ensure that attempts to weaponise economic dependencies by forcing G7 members and our partners, including small economies, to comply and conform will fail and face consequences."

China's use of punitive trade measures has been among the closely watched topics at the G7 summit, amid calls for coordinated action to push back against Beijing.

Japan, South Korea, Australia and Lithuania have all been hit with trade restrictions in recent years following disputes with Beijing on issues ranging from the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic to Taiwan.

In a communique released later on Saturday, the G7 leaders outlined a strategy for dealing with China specifically.

"We are not decoupling or turning inwards. At the same time, we recognise that economic resilience requires de-risking and diversifying," the communique said. "A growing China that plays by international rules would be of global interest."

Taiwan President Vows to Maintain Status Quo With China

TAIPEI (Dispatches) - Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen vowed to maintain peace and stability across the island.

Under Tsai's two terms as president, the self-ruled island has seen stepped-up warplanes and sea incursions from China -- which claims Taiwan as its territory to be claimed one day, by force if necessary.

Tsai -- who rejects that Taiwan is a part of China -- said that during her tenure, residents have shown the world "Taiwan's determination to defend itself".

"In the face of China's civil attacks and military threats, the people of Taiwan are calm and not aggressive, rational and not provocative," she said Saturday, the final day of her seventh year in office.

"War is not an option, and neither party can unilaterally change the status quo in a non-peaceful manner," she said. "We will not be provocative, aggressive and we will definitely not yield under pressure."

Tsai's speech comes as Taiwan gears up for its next presidential election, to be held in January 2024. The poll is widely viewed as a referendum on Tsai's handling of Taiwan's relations with China -- which has refused to meet her ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) for talks because it views her as a separatist.

Due to the democratic island's term limits, 66-year-old Tsai will not be standing for election.

The DPP has named Vice President William Lai as its

presidential candidate. He has been far more outspoken about independence than Tsai, saying in January that he considers Taiwan to already be a "sovereign country".

He will be facing off with the popular mayor of New Taipei City, Hou Yu-ih. The 65-year-old former police chief was announced as the candidate for Taiwan's main opposition party Kuomintang (KMT) -- which traditionally favours warmer ties with China.

He hit back on Lai's earlier declaration that the next election is a choice "between democracy and authoritarianism". "I want to say to everyone -- William Lai is wrong," Hou said during a KMT party rally Saturday. He accused the vice president of trying to sow division in Taiwan through fearmongering.

"Freedom and democracy are already in our DNA... More than ever, we need to -- through dialogue and interaction -- find ways to lower chances of conflict and maintain stability in the region," he added. Hou had in the past said he opposed independence, as well as the "one country, two systems" arrangement under which Hong Kong is governed as part of China.

Beijing has proposed the arrangement for Taiwan, but a majority of the Taiwanese people have rejected the model -- particularly after China crushed political freedoms in Hong Kong despite promising a degree of autonomy to the finance hub. Beijing has said any move by Taiwan towards a formal declaration of independence would prompt a military response.



Turks Abroad Begin Voting in Presidential Election Runoff



ISTANBUL (Dispatches) - Turkish citizens based abroad began voting in Turkey's presidential runoff election between the incumbent Tayyip Erdogan and his challenger Kemal Kilicdaroglu, who aims to bring an end to the president's two-decade rule.

The runoff election will be held in Turkey on May 28 after Erdogan fell just short of the 50% threshold needed to win the presidential vote outright last Sunday in what had been expected to be his greatest ever political challenge.

Some 3.4 million Turks are eligible to vote abroad, out of a total electorate of more than 64 million, and will cast their ballots from May 20-24.

State-owned Anadolu news agency said voting had started in countries across Asia and Europe. Germany is home to the world's largest Turkish diaspora, where there are some 1.5 million Turkish citizens eligible to vote.

In last Sunday's vote, Erdogan's ruling AK Party and its nationalist allies won a comfortable parliamentary majority.

Kilicdaroglu, candidate of a six-party opposition alliance, won 44.88% support in the presidential election, trailing Erdogan on 49.52% and confounding expectations in opinion polls that the challenger would come out ahead.

Attention is now focused on nationalist Sinan Ogan, the candidate who came third with 5.17% support. Any decision by him to support one of the two candidates in the runoff could potentially have a decisive role.

Kilicdaroglu's rhetoric has taken a nationalist turn after he trailed Erdogan in the first round of voting, saying that the government had allowed 10 million refugees into the country and that he would repatriate them all if he were elected.

He provided no evidence regarding the number of migrants. Turkey hosts the world's largest refugee population of around 4 million, according to official figures. Ogan had campaigned on sending back migrants, including some 3.6 million Syrians displaced by war to the south.

Erdogan says only he can ensure stability in Turkey, a NATO member state, as it grapples with a cost-of-living crisis, soaring inflation and the impact of devastating earthquakes in February.

Harrison Ford Retires As Indiana Jones



CANNES (Dispatches) - Artificial Intelligence may have been used to make Harrison Ford decades younger in parts of his final film as "Indiana Jones," but the 80-year-old actor said Friday he loved being older, and has no plans to slow down.

Ford, whose "Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny" premiered in Cannes on Thursday night, has vowed this will be his last adventure as the swashbuckling archaeologist after more than four decades in the role.

And Kathleen Kennedy, the president of Lucasfilm, which also produces the Star Wars franchise, gave a resounding "no" at a press conference when asked if AI technology would be used to keep Ford coming back to the role in the future.

An emotional Ford, who welled up several times reflecting on his long career and co-stars, and also cracked several jokes, said he was "real happy with age".

"I don't look back and say, 'I wish I was that guy again,' because I don't. I love being older, it was great to be young but, shitfire, I could be dead, I am just older."

And, he has no plan to slow down, confirming he would do another season of Western drama series "1923" as well as the comedy "Shrinking".

Ford first swung onto screens as the quick-witted and intrepid archaeologist with his trademark fedora and whip in "Raiders of the Lost Ark" in 1981, which was followed by two hugely popular sequels.

Though a fourth film in 2008 made a lot of money, it was widely panned.

An emotional Ford received a surprise honorary Palme d'Or ahead of the premiere of the fifth instalment. He is joined in the new adventure by Phoebe Waller-Bridge as his witty and more sprightly sidekick, with Mads Mikkelsen as a villainous Nazi scientist.

The movie sees him fighting Nazis from Manhattan to Sicily, but he struggled against critics who gave the film mixed reviews.

For some critics, the logic-defying scenes and rousing theme song provided solid sentimental fun.

"The finale is wildly silly and entertaining... (but) Indiana Jones still has a certain old-school class," said The Guardian.

Empire also enjoyed the ride, saying it remained true to its "fantasy" leanings, but that the "barmy finale... might divide audiences".

The Hollywood Reporter was less impressed with the "rinse-and-repeat formula of chases and gunfights" and "how glaringly fake so much of it looks".

Elsewhere at the world's leading film industry shindig, three of the 21 movies in the running for the top prize Palme D'Or were premiering Friday on a rain-drenched day on the French Riviera.

Meanwhile Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny" sees the archaeologist defy age with special effects and fight off Nazis from Manhattan to Sicily, but he struggled against critics in Cannes on Friday.

Ford, who has vowed this will be the last time he dons the famous fedora, showed a rare bit of emotion when the Cannes Film Festival presented him with an honorary Palme d'Or on stage the previous night ahead of the premiere.

The fifth outing has Ford joined by Phoebe Waller-Bridge as his witty and more sprightly sidekick, with Mads Mikkelsen as a villainous Nazi scientist.

But the reviews overnight were mixed.

For some critics swept up in nostalgia, the logic-defying scenes and rousing theme song provided solid sentimental fun.

Hundreds of Millions of Life Years Lost To Pandemic



GENEVA (Dispatches) - Nearly 337 million life years were lost in the two first years of the COVID-19 pandemic, as millions of people died prematurely, the World Health Organization said.

The UN health agency's annual world statistics report also showed a swelling threat from non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as heart disease, cancer and diabetes.

The most dramatic finding, based on data up to 2022, was the estimate of how many years of life COVID had taken, WHO said.

The pandemic has wreaked global devastation and officially killed nearly seven million people, with the true figure believed to be closer to 20 million.

The WHO report lays bare how the virus itself and the broader impact of the crisis abruptly cut short the lives of millions of people.

While the WHO officially registered 5.4 million COVID deaths in 2020 and 2021, its excess mortality data shows around 14.9 million people actually likely died due to the crisis over that period.

Even more striking, perhaps, it said the statistics show that during those two years alone, COVID resulted in the loss globally of 336.8 million years that otherwise would have been lived.

"It's like losing 22 years of life for every excess death," Samira Asma, WHO's assistant chief for data and analytics, told reporters ahead of the launch.

Off-track" Significant inequities underpin the distribution of COVID-19 cases and deaths, as well as access to vaccinations," the report said.

The WHO warned that the pandemic had helped throw off-track many health-related indicators that had been improving for years.

During the first two decades of the century, the world saw significant improvements in maternal and child health, with deaths falling by one-third and one-half respectively.

The incidence of infectious diseases like HIV, tuberculosis and malaria also declined significantly, as did the risk of premature death from NCDs. Global life expectancy rose from 67 years in 2000 to 73 in 2019.

But after the pandemic hit, existing inequalities in access to high-quality health care, routine immunizations and financial protection deepened, among other things sending the long improving trends on malaria and TB in the opposite direction.

'Stark message' And while the world still enjoys health progress overall, the share of deaths caused each year by NCDs has grown, the study showed. In 2000, around 61 percent of global deaths annually were linked to NCDs. By 2019, almost 74 percent were.

"If this trend continues, NCDs are projected to account for about 86 per cent of the 90 million annual deaths by mid-century," WHO said in a statement.

"The report sends a stark message on the threat of noncommunicable diseases, which take an immense and increasing toll," WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said.

The findings, he said, show the need for "a substantial increase in investments in health and health systems to get back on track towards the Sustainable Development Goals."

NCD deaths were increasing despite a reduction in exposure to many health risks, including tobacco use, alcohol consumption and unsafe water and sanitation, WHO said.

Exposure to other risks like air pollution however remained high, it said. The report warned in particular that the prevalence of obesity was growing with no sign of reversal.

Why Does My Hair Hurt? | HealthNews

LONDON (Dispatches) - Hair serves a vital role in our appearance, protecting our scalp skin, and thermoregulation. Because of the importance of hair, it is crucial to discover the cause of hair pain immediately and treat it promptly. Scalp sensitivity is a common and treatable problem. Read on to learn what causes scalp sensitivity, how to treat it, and what to do to prevent it.

Hair does not have nerves and cannot transmit pain.

If your hair hurts, it is due to scalp sensitivity.

Internal medical problems, skin-related medical issues, or improper haircare practices can cause scalp sensitivity.

The treatment for scalp sensitivity involves treating the underlying cause.

Why does my hair hurt?

Hair is composed mainly of the protein keratin. Skin cells manufacture keratin from amino acid building blocks. Hair is not alive and does not contain any nerves or blood vessels. Because it does not have nerves, hair cannot transmit pain. So any pain that occurs from moving your hair is caused by nerves in your scalp skin. This scalp sensitivity can manifest from various causes and may present as pain, itching, burning, tingling, or stinging.

Causes of scalp sensitivity

Various medical issues and the overall care of your hair and scalp cause scalp sensitivity. You may be able to determine the root cause of your scalp sensitivity if there are visible signs. However, if there are no visible signs, you may need help from your doctor.

Internal medical issues

Internal medical issues, such as headaches, autoimmune conditions, and stress, may cause scalp pain and sensitivity. Migraine headaches are probably the most common internal medical cause of scalp sensitivity.

Skin-related problems

Skin-related problems account for the vast majority of scalp sensitivity cases. These problems are visible on the skin, making them easier to diagnose. Patients may present with flaking, rashes, sores, redness, and hair loss.

Here are some common skin-related causes of scalp sensitivity:

- *Inflammatory conditions. Psoriasis, seborrheic dermatitis, allergic or irritant contact dermatitis, and lichen planus.
- *Autoimmune. Lupus and alopecia areata.
- *Infectious causes. Bacterial folliculitis, tinea capitis (fungal infection), and shingles.



- *Sunburn. Sun exposure can cause peeling and sensitivity.
- *Traction alopecia. Prolonged pulling on the hair can lead to sensitivity and hair loss.

Hair care practices

The overall care of your hair plays a significant role in scalp sensitivity. If you use harsh products and dangerous tools, you can damage your hair and scalp skin. The better you care for your hair, the less likely you are to develop problems. If you can limit your exposure to these or eliminate them, it will benefit your scalp.

Here are some common hair care causes:

- *Heat tools. Hairdryers, curling irons, and straighteners.
- *Harsh products. Straightening treatments, perms, and hair dye.
- *Vigorous hair brushing. Using the wrong type of hairbrush or brushing hair when wet.

What chemicals cause scalp sensitivity?

Check the product labels on your shampoo, conditioner, hairspray, and any other products you use on your hair to ensure you are not using harsh chemicals. Even if you are not allergic to these chemicals, they can irritate your skin, leading to scalp sensitivity.

You want to avoid certain chemicals, such as:

Parabens, Fragrances, Alcohol, Sulfates, Phthalates and Formaldehyde

How to diagnose scalp sensitivity

If you experience scalp sensitivity and you cannot determine the cause, you must see your doctor immediately. Prompt treatment of

the issue will prevent permanent scalp damage and hair loss. Your doctor will perform a history and physical exam to aid in diagnosis. If your doctor cannot determine the cause based on those findings, he or she may order blood work or perform a skin biopsy.

Treatment of scalp sensitivity

The treatment of scalp sensitivity depends on the cause. Medications are available to treat internal medical problems, such as headaches and autoimmune conditions. If it is stress-related, you should try yoga, meditation, or engaging in activities with friends to help alleviate stress.

Dermatologic causes of scalp sensitivity are often treated with over-the-counter and prescription medications, depending on the underlying cause. For example, inflammatory skin conditions causing scalp sensitivity usually require long-term medical treatment to keep them under control. If scalp sensitivity

is related to contact dermatitis, it is important to investigate and determine the causative ingredient and avoid future use.

Prompt treatment of infectious causes is crucial to prevent infecting others. Proper sun protection, such as hats and sunscreen, can prevent scalp sunburns. If you experience traction alopecia, you must reform your haircare practices. Do not wear tight ponytails or buns that pull on the hair. If you must put your hair up, use loose ponytails and buns and do it less frequently.

If hair care practices cause your scalp sensitivity, you must change them to prevent further damage and hair loss. Proper hair and scalp care can prevent many causes of scalp sensitivity. Treat your hair gently and with the utmost care to avoid damaging it. Avoid heat tools and harsh products or tools when possible.

Follow these simple rules:

- *Limit heat. If you must use heat tools, use them less frequently or on the lowest settings.
- *Air dry. If you use a hair dryer, keep it as far away from your hair as possible.
- *Reduce the dye. Color your hair less frequently or use semi-permanent colors.
- *Avoid brushing when wet. If you have curly or wavy hair, only use a special brush designed for wet hair.
- *Go natural. Perm or straighten your hair less frequently.

Scalp sensitivity is a common problem that can have a significant impact on a patient's quality of life. Just brushing or styling your hair can cause pain. The good news is that after your doctor diagnoses the root cause of your scalp sensitivity, they can begin treatment to help you feel better quickly.

China Will Resolutely Curb Large Fluctuations in Exchange Rate

BEIJING (Dispatches) - China will resolutely curb large fluctuations in the exchange rate and study the strengthening of self-regulation of dollar deposits, the central bank said.

The comment comes after the yuan dropped to multi-month lows and breached the closely watched 7-per-dollar level, pressured by a sputtering economic recovery, low yields and the U.S. dollar's broad rally.

The country's central bank and forex regulator will jointly guide expectations, correct pro-cyclical and one-sided behaviour when necessary, and curb speculation, the People's Bank of China said in a statement.

China will strengthen self-discipline management of U.S. dollar deposit businesses, improve currency hedging services for firms and reduce the cost of hedging for small and medium-sized firms, the bank said.



Record Inflows Lift Turkey's FX-Protected Lira Scheme to \$120b

ANKARA (Dispatches) - Turkey's government-backed scheme that seeks to encourage the conversion of foreign currency by safeguarding Turkish lira deposits from depreciation saw a record inflow in the week prior to last Sunday's elections, according to data from the country's banking watchdog.

The scheme, unveiled in late 2021 and known by its acronym KKM, seeks to keep dollarization at bay by encouraging people to keep their savings in lira through guarantees to compensate for losses from the decline against hard currencies. The volume of deposits under the scheme reached about TL 2.35 trillion (nearly \$120 billion) in the week to May 12, marking a new record, according to the Banking Regulation and Supervision Agency's (BDDK) weekly data.

It marked the 18th consecutive weekly increase. The overall volume is up from \$88.8 billion recorded at the end of March.

Households have seen foreign exchange as a tool to shield themselves from a volatility in lira and a soaring inflation.

The data showed that the overall amount rose by a whopping TL 144 billion in the week ending May 12, marking the highest weekly increase ever. In the month and a half prior to presidential and parliamentary elections, the scheme saw an inflow of \$31.1 billion, the data showed. Last Sunday's vote saw President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's People's Alliance secure a majority in Parliament. The presidential race is headed for a May 28 runoff that will see Erdoğan again face opposition rival Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu.

The first run saw Erdoğan secure just under the 50% threshold needed to win outright and giving him the lead over Kılıçdaroğlu, the chair of the main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) and joint candidate of the six-party opposition Nation Alliance. The lira declined 44% in 2021 and lost some 29% versus the U.S. dollar in 2022. The currency fell some 1% this week after held mostly stable this year.

Meanwhile, the increases in KKM followed a regulation that removed the scheme's maximum interest rate limit for domestic individual investors.

The regulation still stipulates that the interest rate offered to lira deposits as part of the scheme cannot be below the current policy rate of the Central Bank of the Republic of Türkiye (CBRT), currently standing at 8.5%, but the upper limit has been removed.

Foreign exchange deposits held by households have dropped by \$3.4 billion to \$185 billion, according to CBRT data.

The KKM now accounts for an important part of the foreign exchange and lira deposits amounting to some \$531.8 billion. Bankers predict that KKM inflows will continue and approach \$10 billion every week and that the interest at current interest rates will continue to remain high.

An easing trend last year saw the Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey (CBRT) cut its key one-week repo rate by 500 basis points to counter an economic slowdown before it held it at 9% in December and January. It justified the cuts by saying financial conditions must remain supportive of maintaining the growth in industrial production.

Malaysia's Trade Growth Weaker in April 2023

KUALA LUMPUR (Dispatches) - Malaysia's trade growth fell by 14.5 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y) in April 2023 to RM198.0 billion amidst global economic uncertainties.

During the same month, the export value also decreased by 17.4 per cent y-o-y to RM105.4 billion, while the import value shrank 11.1 per cent y-o-y to RM92.6 billion, according to the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DoSM).

Chief statistician Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Uzir Mahidin said the decline in Malaysia's export performance was due to lower domestic exports.

"Domestic exports, which accounted for 76.3 per cent of total exports, slipped by 22.3 per cent y-o-y to RM80.4 billion. "Conversely, re-exports strengthened by 3.8 per cent y-o-y to RM25.0 billion," he said.

Meanwhile, imports in April 2023 also recorded an 11.1 per cent decline to RM92.6 billion from RM104.1 billion in April 2022. Total trade decreased 14.5 per cent y-o-y to RM198.0 billion from RM103.5 billion in April 2022, and the trade surplus declined 45.3 per cent y-o-y to RM12.8 billion.

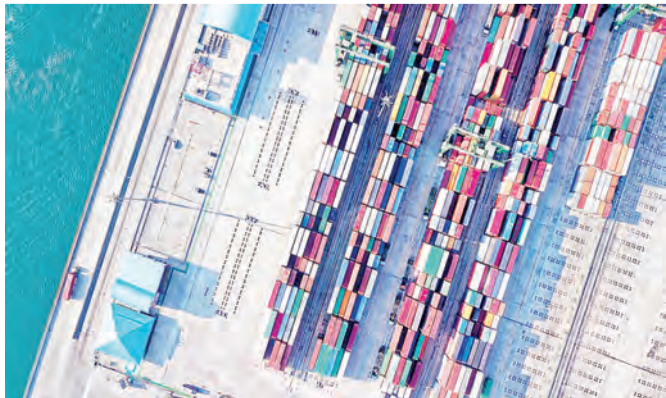
In terms of commodities, 191 out of 256 export groups and 167 out of 259 import groups showed a decrease in their performance compared to April 2022.

DoSM reported that the reduction in exports was mainly contributed by the European Union (-RM3.5 billion), followed by China (-RM3.4 billion), the United States (-RM3.1 billion), Taiwan (-RM1.9 billion), Japan (-RM1.6 billion), India (-RM1.5 billion), Vietnam (-RM1.4 billion) and Thailand (-RM1.3 billion).

Meanwhile, the contraction in imports was mainly attributed to the decline in imports from Indonesia (-RM3.0 billion), Japan (-RM2.1 billion), China (-RM1.7 billion), Taiwan (-RM1.4 billion) and the United States (-RM1.2 billion).

Mohd Uzir said the fall in exports was due to the decline in exports of electrical and electronic (E&E) products (-RM3.1 billion), palm oil and palm oil-based agricultural products (-RM2.6 billion); manufacture of metal (-RM2.5 billion), chemical and chemical products (-RM2.4 billion), palm oil-based manufactured products (-RM1.7 billion), rubber products (-RM1.6 billion) and machinery, equipment and parts (-RM1.4 billion).

Meanwhile, the contraction in imports was recorded in E&E products (-RM4.5 billion), crude petroleum (-RM1.9 billion), chemical and chemical products (-RM1.8 billion), metalliferous ores and metal scrap (-RM1.6 billion) and other mining (-RM836.7 million).



Oman Among Top LNG Exporters in the World

MUSCAT (Dispatches) - The Sultanate of Oman has emerged as among the top ten liquefied natural gas (LNG) exporters in the world, driven by a surge in demand for clean energy sources. The country's LNG exports reached a record high of 1.16 million metric tonnes (MT) in April 2023, an increase of 0.08 million metric tonnes in the previous month.

According to the monthly gas report of GEFC (Gas Exporting Countries Forum), the top ten LNG exporters in the world include the US, Qatar, Australia, Russia, Malaysia, Indonesia, Algeria, Nigeria, Oman and Trinidad and Tobago.

The report said that in April 2023, global LNG exports increased sharply by 6% (1.95 MT) y-o-y to 35.58 MT. Non-GEFC countries were the largest LNG exporter in April 2023, with a market share of 50.2%, representing an increase from 47.5% in April 2022. Oman is not a member of GEFC.

Oman's rise as a major LNG exporter can be attributed to the country's strategic location, abundant natural gas reserves and modern infrastructure. The country has invested heavily in developing its LNG industry over the past few years, with the aim of capitalising on the growing demand for clean energy in Asia and Europe.

One of the key factors that have contributed to Oman's success as an LNG exporter is its proximity to major markets such as China, Japan and South Korea. These countries are among the world's largest consumers of LNG, and Oman's location allows it to supply LNG to these markets at a competitive price. China remains the leading market of Oman crude exports. China remains the top destination of Oman crude.

China's Economy on "Strong Footing"

BEIJING (Dispatches) - China's economy is steadily recovering after the pandemic and remains strong, instilling confidence in its economic future, according to a United Nations economist.

The United Nations released a mid-year update of its World Economic Situation and Prospects 2023 report, which projected China's economy will grow 5.3 percent this year, up from the 4.8 percent forecast in January.

One factor behind the upward revision of China's growth is that there has been a strong rebound in retail sales that reflects strong household demand, Hamid Rashid, lead author of the mid-year report, told Xinhua in an interview.

Listing two other factors, he said that China's housing market has stabilized to a large extent. Unlike many other major economies, China has significant fiscal and monetary space available to support economic activities.

"The Chinese economy is on a very strong footing" compared to others, despite some downside risks, said Rashid, chief of the Global Economic Monitoring Branch, Economic Analysis and Policy Division at the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

He pointed out that one of the risks is weak external demand if countries such as the United States and Europe go into recession or a prolonged period of slow growth, which may affect China's growth beyond 2023.

"But the good news for China is that whenever you see that kind of downward pressure, the fiscal and monetary side can ... support it and to prop up economic activities," Rashid said.

The Chinese economy has been in excellent standing, and "we are confident about China's near-term economic prospects," he said.

He said that if the current policy mix is maintained and external conditions do not deter it further, "China will be able to maintain its growth trajectory."

China's economic recovery positively impacts many developing nations by increasing export demand. It is also good news for the countries that rely on Chinese tourism. Developed economies stand to benefit because China is a major importer of technology, said the economist.

As the second-largest economy in the world, China has been playing a constructive role in the global economy by being a multilateral player. He said that with China's recovery, international trade would likely recover faster.

Investment Banking Faultlines Trigger European Job Shake-Up

LONDON (Dispatches) - A dearth of deals, banking sector ructions and most recently the aftershocks of the demise of Credit Suisse have rapidly redrawn the European financial services industry jobs map this year.

One example is banks in the region opportunistically targeting high-flyers affected by the impending takeover of Switzerland's second-largest bank by its domestic rival UBS, headhunters say.

And on the other side of the equation, recruitment firms report receiving more resumes from finance staff concerned about being ousted by such new hires.

"Europe is lifting hiring freezes and, in some cases, finding that exceptional talent, once untouchable, is now recruitable," Jeanne Branthover, New York-based Managing Partner and Head of Financial Services Practice at DHR Global told Reuters.

"This is causing firms in Europe to re-evaluate their own people to determine if they measure up to the new standard of remarkable talent that has suddenly become available," she said.

Applications for financial services roles globally rose by 67% in the first quarter of 2023 against the same period last year, according to eFinancialCareers.

Recent high-profile moves include veteran Credit Suisse dealmaker William Mansfield, head of M&A in EMEA, who is joining Deutsche Bank, while his ex-colleague Cathal Deasy, took a role as co-head of investment banking at Barclays.

Such moves come as an extended lull in activity, including in initial public offerings (IPOs) and mergers, is dimming the outlook for revenue this year. Meanwhile, thousands of the UBS and Credit Suisse workforce await clarity over their futures. Media reports suggest UBS could axe up to 30% of roles across its enlarged operations. UBS declined to comment.

Samantha Pusey, head of bids and marketing at recruitment consultancy The Curve Group, said firms were carrying out skills gap analyses, identifying personnel needed to chase growth and pinpointing where current staff falls short relative to others now potentially up for grabs.

"What we're seeing is people at the Senior Director and Vice President level who probably weren't open to new opportunities are now entering and flooding the market," Pusey said.

Smaller financial firms are also expected to benefit from the rise in jobseekers, with some priced out of the hiring market in recent years by competitors with bigger pockets, said Darren Burns, Operations Director at Morgan McKinley.

"Over the last two years, substantial hiring needs against a skills shortage across the finance sector saw large firms paying over the odds for talented individuals, resulting in

Brazil's Economic Activity Rises 2.41% in Q1



BRASILIA (Dispatches) - Brazil's economic activity expanded by 2.41% in the first quarter, according to a central bank index released on Friday, but expectations point to a slowdown ahead.

The IBC-BR economic activity index, a key indicator of gross domestic product, fell 0.15% in March compared to February on a seasonally adjusted basis, less than the 0.3% decline forecast in a Reuters poll.

Compared to the same month in 2022, the index showed a growth of 5.46%, according to observed data.

A stronger-than-expected performance in agriculture, a resilient labor market, and a still solid performance in the services sector, which is the most representative of the Brazilian economy, have led economists to recently revise their 2023 GDP projections.

Analysts at Goldman Sachs said that going forward economic activity will benefit from fiscal stimulus and a favorable outlook for agriculture and food prices.

On the other hand, the fading impulse from economic reopening, high levels of household indebtedness, moderating job creation, soft consumer and business confidence are expected to generate headwinds for the Brazilian economy, they said, also highlighting a "turnaround in the credit cycle."

The official release of the first-quarter GDP data will be announced on June 1.

Finance Minister Fernando Haddad emphasized on Thursday that the economy had achieved a positive performance in the quarter, supporting an upward revision of this year's GDP forecast to 1.9%, matching earlier information reported by Reuters.

However, the outlook for the upcoming quarters continues to be one of deceleration amid the restrictive effects of high borrowing costs aimed at combating inflation. The central bank has maintained the interest rate unchanged at a 13.75% cycle-high since September.

Foreign Ministry to Adhere To Leader's Guidelines

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian has said that his ministry will continue to follow guidelines by Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei on an efficient foreign policy of the country.

Amirabdollahian shared a post on his twitter page on Saturday, hours after he along with a group of Iranian Foreign Ministry

officials and ambassadors to other countries met with the Supreme Leader in the capital Tehran.

"Today, at the start of a meeting of ambassadors and heads of political, international and consular representative offices, we visited the Supreme Leader and received his deep views on foreign policy and international relations," the top diplomat said in his tweet.



Saudi Arabia, Russia May Cut Production, But Don't Expect Exports to Plunge

LONDON (OilPrice) - After releasing its impressive oil consumption data for March 2023, the latest production figures from the Joint Organisations Data Initiative (JODI) show that Saudi oil exports rose slightly from 7.45 million bpd to 7.52 million bpd in February. The data also shows a slight increase in Saudi production to 10.46 million bpd ahead of the surprise production cut, which was announced during the first week of April 2023.

Market watchers have kept a close eye on both Saudi and Russian production and export figures in April and May. According to shipping data from Petro-Logistics and Kpler, both Saudi Arabia and Russia ramped up exports in April 2023, just ahead of their production cut pledges, which went into effect on May 1st 2023.

Kpler pegs Saudi export in April at 7.58 million bpd, while Petrologistics said that Riyadh increased exports by 470,000 bpd, without mentioning an exact figure. The former does expect Saudi crude exports to fall during the month of May as a direct result of its production cuts.

Russian crude exports have not let up either, and according to the Financial Times, Russian total crude exports have been higher in April 2023 than during any month since its invasion of Ukraine. The FT pegs exports at 8.3 million bpd, or around 80,000 bpd more than in March 2023.

With the implementation of the additional 1.16 million bpd OPEC+ production cuts, output figures are expected to be lower in May/June 2023, but exports may not necessarily follow suit. This is particularly true for Russia, which has managed to reroute a huge number of barrels to buyers in Asia, and will not be willing to



surrender market share by significantly lowering exports.

However, some early signs show that Russia may actually have already cut production.

According to Kpler data, Russia's crude production (including condensates), is expected to fall 350,000 bpd in May compared to February production to hit 10.709 million bpd. The data and analytics company doesn't see a continued fall in Russian production for the rest of 2023, as demand from its main customer, China, is expected to further strengthen during the second half of the year. As such, Russian crude exports are not expected to taper off significantly as long as demand in Asia remains robust.

Iran Navy Source of...

FROM PAGE 1

Antarctica is one of the most important strategic regions in the world, with 30 countries having 70 active research centers there.

Immediately after this success, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) confirmed its forces have been monitoring the moves of the commanders of the U.S., British and French navies transiting the Strait of Hormuz aboard the USS Paul Hamilton warship.

Commander of the IRGC Navy's First Zone Brigadier General Abbas Gholamshahi said that drones and vessels had been engaged in a precision mission in that regard.

Gholamshahi said the IRGC Navy monitors the movement of vessels in the Strait of Hormuz and the Persian Gulf "round-the-clock."

The IRGC commander said patrol vessels and the IRGC Navy's Command Control Center in the Strait of Hormuz have in the past detected and monitored the American warship while entering the zone.

According to the Associated Press, IRGC forces riding speed boats stood by uncovered machine guns on their decks, while sailors aboard the Paul Hamilton similarly stood by loaded machine guns as others shot photographs and video of the vessels.

One can see how Iranian Navy forces show muscles to the enemies and Western forces in the region and specially in the international waters and with this show of power, it seems the Western forces do not dare to have any ill-intention against Iran or else they should wait for due responses from the Islamic Republic of Iran's forces as we have seen it in the past by seizing their ships and even their troops.

Iran's Navy has enjoyed great successes and progresses especially in recent years as it now builds warships and equips them with the sophisticated weapons and missiles so that it empowers the warships for any confrontation with enemies and this is really source of pride for Iranians for having such a powerful Navy forces which can rival with the most advanced Navies of the world and make the enemies confess Iran's power especially its Navy.

Of course with more missions in the international waters, Iran's Navy will gain more experience and it will be to the benefit of the region for having such a powerful Navy force which can restore peace and security especially in the Persian Gulf and therefore there will be no need to the presence of Western forces in the region.

So we see as long as the Navy and Army progress and become stronger, the country and even the region feel peace and security more than ever and Iran's Navy power is just small piece of the progresses of the Islamic Republic of Iran where everyday a new achievement is unveiled as it stuns the world, predominantly the enemies who just understand the language of force, and strong military force is a good response to void bullies of the West and soon all Western forces will have to leave the waters in the Middle East and Iranian Navy will be a good and safe replacement for them to secure real peace and security for the region and not just for milking the countries in the region.



Chances of World Reaching Net-Zero By 2050 Unlikely: Exxon



LONDON (Dispatches) - The likelihood of the world reaching net-zero carbon dioxide emissions by 2050 is remote, Exxon said in a U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission communication.

The IEA's 2050 Net Zero Emissions does not "meet the level of likelihood required to be considered in our financial statements," Exxon said, adding that the world is not on its way toward achieving net zero by 2050. Exxon also cautioned that cutting energy production to levels that fall below consumption would push energy prices higher, like in Europe.

The IEA has said that all new oil exploration would have to have stopped in 2021 in order to reach the 2050 target, and countries would have to ditch fossil fuels in favor of renewables.

"It is highly unlikely that society would accept the degradation in global standard of living required to permanently achieve a scenario like the IEA NZE," Exxon said, pointing out that by the IEA's own assessment, Net Zero 2050 is unlikely.

The statements were made in response to an Exxon shareholder proposal that would request a report on how much it would cost to abandon projects. The proposal is set to be voted on at the end of this month. "The requested report clearly would not provide new, decision-useful information," Exxon said.

The proposal is also asking for Exxon to evaluate the ramifications of a worst-case oil spill offshore Guyana.

Despite the pushback from Exxon on the shareholder proposal and the IEA's zeal for its Net Zero scenario, Exxon's CEO Darren Woods said in March that the company's Low Carbon business has the potential to outperform its legacy oil and natural gas business within a decade, generating hundreds of billions in revenues.

Nevertheless, ExxonMobil scrapped its 14-year-old algae biofuels project in the same month due to the project's lack of economic viability.

U.S., Taiwan Reach Deal on First Part of 21st Century Trade Pact

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - The U.S. and Taiwan reached agreement on the first part of their "21st Century" trade initiative, covering customs and border procedures, regulatory practices, and small business, the U.S. Trade Representative's office said.

After the initial agreement of the U.S.-Taiwan Initiative on 21st Century Trade is signed, negotiations will commence on other, more complicated trade areas including agriculture, digital trade, labor and environmental standards, state-owned enterprises, and non-market policies and practices, USTR said.

U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai said in a statement that the deal strengthens U.S.-Taiwan relations and demonstrates they can work together to advance trade priorities for their populations. "We look forward to continuing these negotiations and finalizing a robust and high-standard trade agreement that tackles 21st Century economic challenges," Tai said.

Taiwan's Office of Trade Negotiations in a statement called the agreement "historically significant" and said Taiwan aimed to finalize negotiations on all remaining issues by the end of the year. The pact is not expected to alter goods tariffs, but proponents say it will strengthen economic bonds between the U.S. and Taiwan, open the Chinese-claimed island to more U.S. exports, and increase Taiwan's ability to resist economic coercion from China. Democratically governed Taiwan strongly rejects China's sovereignty claims. China has reacted furiously to Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen's recent engagements with high-ranking U.S. politicians, including an April meeting with U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Kevin McCarthy. Announcement of the trade pact comes just ahead of planned meetings between China's commerce minister, Wang Wentao, and USTR Tai and U.S. Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo. The bilateral talks commenced last August, after the Biden administration excluded Taiwan from its larger pan-Asian trade initiative, the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework.

USTR said the text on customs and trade facilitation will reduce red tape for U.S. firms to export products to Taiwan, allowing for electronic filing of customs forms and online payment of duties and fees, cutting waiting times for vessels.

The texts on good regulatory practices and services regulation seek to streamline operating licenses for firms seeking to operate across borders and promote fair competition opportunities, USTR said.

The trade agency added that anti-corruption texts are based on those in the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement on trade and address money laundering, denial of entry for foreign public officials. The small- and medium-sized enterprises text aims to facilitate cross border investment and finance in the sector, USTR said.

Global Oil Demand Hit a Record High In March

LONDON (OilPrice) Rising demand in China and the United States sent global oil demand surging by 3 million barrels per day (bpd) in March compared to February and hitting the highest level on record, data from the Joint Organisations Data Initiative (JODI) showed.

Total product demand in China jumped by 1.6 million bpd month-on-month to 16.79 million bpd in March, showed the JODI data shared by the Riyadh-based International Energy Forum (IEF). The estimated Chinese demand was the third-highest level ever reported for the country in JODI.

China's crude imports also jumped by 1.37 million bpd to 12.35 million bpd, according to the data.

In the United States, total product demand rose to 21.77 million bpd, up by 1.77 million bpd month-on-month.

However, U.S. crude oil production declined by 257,000 bpd to 12.22 million bpd in March, but this was up by 525,000 bpd compared to year-ago levels.

While global oil demand hit a record, global crude oil production dropped by 500,000 bpd, due to declines in the U.S., China, Angola, Canada, and the UK, according to the JODI data, which compiles self-reported figures from the countries.

Five Iranian Border Guards

Martyred in Clash With Terrorists

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Five Iranian border guards have been martyred in clashes with armed terrorists and anti-Islamic Revolution groups in the country's southeastern province of Sistan and Baluchestan.

Local media reports said the fatalities occurred in the Maze-Sar area of the border region of Saravan, located near Pakistan, late on Saturday as the Iranian border security forces engaged in a fierce confrontation with the terrorists.

Earlier reports had put the death toll at six, but police announced on Sunday morning that one border guard, Reza Borji, was resuscitated in the hospital.

The attack was carried out by "a terrorist group which intended to infiltrate the country's border" but "fled to the other side of the border after the confrontation."

The deputy commander of the Iranian law enforcement forces and the head of border guards were reported to have visited the area to investigate the incident.

The border region of Saravan in Sistan and Baluchestan Province has over the past years been the scene of clashes between the Iranian security forces and terrorist groups and drug traffickers.

Last month, a senior Iranian police officer was killed in a terrorist attack in the southeastern province after unidentified assailants launched a surprise attack on him.

Colonel Alireza Shahraki, chief of the Iranian Police Criminal Investigation (CID) Department in Saravan, was fatally shot on April 30 after unknown gunmen sprayed bullets on his car in an early morning ambush at a crossroad.

Iran, Spain Ready to Hold Joint Scientific, Cultural Events

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Vice-rector for Internationalization Policy of University of Barcelona announced his readiness to hold a joint scientific seminar with Iran under the title of examining Iranian-Islamic and Spanish architectural potential.

Mohammad-Mehdi Ahmadi Iran's cultural attaché to Madrid held a meeting with Vice-rector for Internationalization Policy of University of Barcelona Raul Ramos on Saturday where he referred to the good cultural relations between Iran and Spain.

Ahmadi expressed hope that holding the scientific meeting in the future will provide more communication opportunities between the students of the two countries with the capabilities



and potential of architecture.

Ramos, for his part, said that holding this scientific seminar will introduce the architectural potential of the two countries to the students in a better way.

Ahmadi also held a meeting with Spain's new Casa Asia Director General Javier Parrondo during which he suggested that the week of Iranian films be held in Barcelona and Madrid, which was welcomed by the Spanish official.

Parrondo stated that, "We are honored working with Iran, which has a rich culture and civilization and Iranian films have shone in many international festivals, and when we look at history, we realize that Iran's culture is unparalleled in the world."

Denz Wins Second Stage at Giro d'Italia

ROME (Dispatches) - Bora Hansgrohe rider Nico Denz won his second stage in three days in the Giro d'Italia, edging a dramatic sprint in Cassano Magnago after a long breakaway in the rain.

In a photo finish, the German crossed the line barely half a wheel ahead of Canadian Derek Gee (Israel Premier Tech) in the 14th stage. French rider Bruno Armirail, meanwhile, took the leader's pink jersey from Geraint Thomas who crossed the line in the company of his team-mates, 21 minutes 16 seconds behind the stage winner.

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Spieth Avoids Dagger To Make Cut at PGA

ROCHESTER (Dispatches) - Jordan Spieth kept his hopes of completing a career Grand Slam at the PGA Championship alive after staging a clutch fightback to make the cut yesterday at Oak Hill.

The 29-year-old American, nursing an injured left wrist, fired a two-over par 72 to make the cut on the number at five-over 145 after 36 holes, 10 off the lead.

"Missing the cut would be such a dagger because I could have just taken the week off," Spieth said. "That's where your brain goes."

Man Utd, Newcastle on Brink of Sealing Top Four Places

LONDON (Dispatches) - Manchester United and Newcastle are on the brink of qualifying for next season's Champions League after Liverpool's 1-1 draw against Aston Villa, while Everton remain in relegation danger despite their dramatic 1-1 draw at Wolves.

United's 1-0 victory at Bournemouth, combined with Liverpool's failure to beat Villa, left Erik ten Hag's men and Newcastle within touching distance of ensuring Premier League top four finishes.

Fourth-placed United and Newcastle, in third, are both three points clear of fifth-placed Liverpool, who have only one game left.

Newcastle can seal their spot with a draw or win against Leicester on Monday or Chelsea on May 28.

United take their turn at securing the lucrative top four place against Chelsea on Thursday and Fulham next weekend.

Liverpool's final game of the season is against relegated Southampton, but although they have a superior goal difference to United if they finish level on points, they are likely to have to settle for a place in the Europa League.

At the Vitality Stadium, United took the lead in the ninth minute when Casemiro spun to meet Christian Eriksen's cross with an acrobatic bicycle kick from close-range.

United were unbeaten in their previous 134 league matches when leading at half-time and that remarkable sequence continued as they held firm after the interval.

At Anfield, Liverpool boss Jurgen Klopp was watching from the stands as he served a touchline ban following his recent rant about referee Paul Tierney.

Villa wasted a 22nd-minute penalty when Ollie Watkins fired wide after the striker was brought down by Ibrahima Konate.

Halep Asks Independent Court Hearing After Additional Doping Charge

PARIS (Dispatches) - Former world number one Simona Halep has asked to be judged by an independent tribunal after being charged with a further and separate breach of the Tennis Anti-Doping Program (TADP), by the International Tennis Integrity Agency (ITIA).

The 31-year-old former Wimbledon and French Open champion, has been provisionally suspended since October 2022 after testing positive for banned blood-booster roxadustat at the US Open last year.

Halep called on tennis's anti-doping body to allow her to clear her name, questioning the long delay in her doping hearing after being denied the right to be heard by an independent court.

"Not only has my name been soiled in the worst possible way, but I am facing a constant determination from the ITIA for a reason that I cannot understand, to prove my guilt while I haven't EVER even thought of taking any illicit substance," said the Romanian athlete in a statement on Twitter.

Halep, who has strongly denied knowingly taking the banned substance, said she has evidence to show that small amounts of the anaemia drug entered her system from a licensed supplement that was contaminated.

"I tried two times to have the opportunity to be judged by an Independent Tribunal but the ITIA has constantly found reasons to postpone.

"The only thing I hope for, at this point, is to have the possibility to finally access the independent and impartial judges in a Tribunal, that will give me the chance to prove my innocence," she added.

"I have full trust in justice and I look forward to finally being able to present my case at my hearing that is scheduled at the end of May, after several delays by the ITIA."

The additional charge relates to irregularities in Halep's Athlete Biological Passport (ABP), based on an assessment of her profile by an independent ABP Expert Panel.



And it was Brazilian forward Firmino who rescued a point with his close-range finish in stoppage-time.

Yerry Mina's last-gasp equaliser boosted Everton's hopes of avoiding playing in the second tier for the first time since 1954.

Sean Dyche's men fell behind after 34 minutes when Adama Traore's shot was pushed out to Hwang Hee-chan, who netted from close-range.

Mina bundled in Everton's leveller nine minutes into stoppage-time to leave the fourth bottom Toffees two points above the relegation zone.

Third bottom Leeds would go above Everton with a win at West Ham on Sunday, while second bottom Leicester would also leapfrog Dyche's team if they beat Newcastle on Monday.

Tottenham's season to forget hit a new low with a 3-1 home defeat against Brentford.

Ryan Mason's side took the lead through Harry Kane's 28th league goal this season, but a Bryan Mbeumo brace and Yoane Wissa's late strike left them floundering in eighth place.

Frustration has mounted throughout the final weeks of a troubled season for Tottenham and fans hung banners outside the stadium pointing the finger of blame at owners ENIC.

One banner changed the "E" in the 'ENIC OUT' slogan to a £ sign, while another had pictures of several of the club's departed managers, including this season's victims Antonio Conte and Cristian Stellini, labelling them as "innocent" while ENIC were described as "guilty".

In another sign of the angst at Tottenham's owners, fans sent black balloons floating down onto the pitch throughout the match while chairman Daniel Levy sat stone-faced in the directors' box.

Fulham and Crystal Palace shared a 2-2 draw at Craven Cottage.

Ancelotti To Stay at Real until 2024 - Ancelotti

MADRID (Dispatches) - Carlo Ancelotti ended any doubt about his immediate future by saying he will honor the last year of his contract with Real Madrid amid interest from Brazil.

Brazilian FA (CBF) president Ednaldo Rodrigues told Reuters in March that Ancelotti would be an obvious choice to fill the vacant national managerial position if he was available at the end of the European season.

After Real Madrid's humiliating 4-0 defeat by Manchester City in their Champions League semi-final on Wednesday, speculation grew that his job was under threat with Real also failing to win the LaLiga title as bitter rivals Barcelona clinched it with four games to spare.

"Everyone knows really well what my situation is: I have contract until the end of the 2024 season and I want to stay," Ancelotti told a news conference, clearly annoyed when asked about the Brazil interest yet again.

When a reporter asked if the club had assured him that he was staying, Ancelotti replied with an emphatic: "Yes!"

Real, however, have not made an official statement about Ancelotti's future.

President Florentino Perez gave a vague answer when asked about Ancelotti following Real's 2-1 victory in the Copa del Rey final.

Rune Rallies Past Ruud to Reach Rome Final



ROME (Dispatches) - Holger Rune fought from a set and a break down to book a place in the Italian Open final with a 6-7 (2/7), 6-4, 6-2 defeat of fourth seed Casper Ruud.

The 20-year-old Dane established Scandinavian superiority as he overhauled the Norwegian who played the Roland Garros final a year ago against Rafael Nadal and has two semi-finals in Rome.

Ruud lost for the first time in five meetings with his rival, with all of their matches being played on clay. Rune, who knocked out top seed Novak Djokovic in the quarter-finals, said that he relaxed when he thought all was lost on court.

"When I was down, I told myself I had nothing to lose, he would probably win," he said. "I told myself to play freely, play aggressive as it would likely be my last set."

"That was the key to the comeback - I'm super-happy."

Rune said his game has lifted at the best moments this week in the capital.

"I've played some of my best tennis in the last two matches. It's so difficult to play the top guys, I had to find my best tennis."

"I only found it at the end, that's how I was able to turn it around."

Ruud needed 69 minutes to win a grinding first set with the Norwegian dominating the tiebreaker to take the early lead after failing to convert on three break points in the sixth game.

Rune, occasionally something of a loose cannon for his outbursts of temper, began to unravel a bit in the second set with Ruud holding his nerve as the deadlock continued.

The youngster lost serve to trail 2-3 and suddenly called for the physio, who rubbed his right shoulder for the three-minute medical timeout.

But that pause may have turned the match around, with Rune suddenly coming to life as he levelled at a set apiece and ran away with the third to advance in a light drizzle.

Mason Denies Kane Was Saying Farewell to Spurs

LONDON (Dispatches) - Ryan Mason insisted Harry Kane was not saying farewell to Tottenham after the England captain waved to fans following Saturday's 3-1 defeat against Brentford.

Kane's brilliant free-kick put Tottenham ahead after eight minutes in north London as the striker reached 30 goals in all competitions this term.

But Brentford hit back to win as Bryan Mbeumo's double and Yoane Wissa's late goal left frustrated Tottenham fans chanting for chairman Daniel Levy to be axed.

Following Tottenham's final home game of a dismal campaign, the players did a lap of honour in front of a largely empty stadium.

Kane waved to the fans who had stayed in what was interpreted as a goodbye amid growing uncertainty over his future.

After he failed to engineer a move to Manchester City in 2021, Kane, who has one year left on his contract, has been linked with Bayern Munich, Paris Saint-Germain and Manchester United.

But interim boss Mason said: "He waves at the crowd every season. I remember sitting here two years ago and you guys were convinced he was leaving, saying the same thing."



Ten Hag Upbeat Over New United Deal For Rashford

LONDON (Dispatches) - Erik ten Hag believes Manchester United and Marcus Rashford will "find each other" in the quest to secure a new Manchester United contract for the England forward.

Rashford has only one year left on his deal at the club he has represented since the age of seven. The 25-year-old dismissed reports earlier this year he was demanding £500,000 per week to remain at Old Trafford but a resolution does not appear to be on the horizon.

Ten Hag, however, is keeping his cool, with the United manager telling a pre-match press conference ahead of this weekend's game at Bournemouth: "I know (it is taking time), but I don't talk about the process."

"This is not important at the moment for me or Rashy. For him, it is to get more goals this season and he is playing a wonderful season and the team is playing a wonderful season."

"We have to get into the Champions League and focus on that. Marcus wants to stay and we want him to stay, so I think we will find each other."

The uncertainty caused by the decision of the club's current owners, the US-based Glazer family, to launch a takeover process has added to the uncertainty surrounding the English giants' plans for the transfer window.

"We do our job in the background and we are working hard but, for now, it is about games, getting into the Champions League and the FA Cup," said Ten Hag.

