Iranian Medicine SINAMPHOLEISH,
Which Was Produced With the Help
Of Nanotechnology for the Treatment
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Centers Across the Country



Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Strongly Condemned the Killing Of Palestinian Toddler at the Hands of Israeli Occupation Forces, Calling for an Independent International Investigation Into the Heinous Crime

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Cruel Sanctions Against

Iran Doomed to Failure

THURSDAY JUNE 8, 2023 - KHORDAD 18, 1402

DOMESTIC

Iran to Hold
Exhibition on Latest
Nuclear Achievements
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Efforts Underway to

Turn Iran Into Gas Hub

STIC

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SPORTS

Miami Heat Battle
To Take Game 2 of
NBA Finals
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President to Visit Three Latin American Nations

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - President Ebrahim Raisi is set to visit three Latin American nations next week to boost political, economic and scientific relations.

Heading a high-ranking delegation, Raisi will set off for Venezuela, Nicaragua and Cuba on Sunday in line with his administration's policy of expanding ties with friendly countries. During his Latin American tour, several documents will be signed between Iran and the three states to strengthen cooperation in various fields.

The president will also sit down with Iranian and local tradesmen and economic actors.

Iran has close ties with many Latin American countries in different domains and seeks to further deepen its relations with those nations. Back in February, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian made an official visit to two Latin American countries of Nicaragua and Venezuela.

Last June, Iran and Venezuela signed a 20-year partnership agreement aimed at bolstering bilateral cooperation in various fields during Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro's visit to Tehran.

The partnership agreement includes cooperation in the fields of science, technology, agriculture, oil and gas, petrochemicals, tourism as well as culture.

Riyadh Officially Reopened

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - The Islamic Republic of Iran has reopened

its embassy in Saudi Arabia's capital Riyadh, according

The Al-Arabiya news channel said in a report on

Tuesday that Iran had reopened its embassy in Riyadh.

Earlier on Monday, Iranian Foreign Ministry

Spokesman Nasser Kanaani had said that the Islamic

Republic would officially reopen its embassy in

Riyadh, the Iranian Consulate General in Jeddah, and

the country's Permanent Mission to the Organization of

Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on Tuesday and Wednesday.

The movement is taking place a few months after Tehran and

The reopening of Iranian diplomatic missions in

Saudi Arabia ahead of the annual Hajj pilgrimage in

the country will facilitate rendering consular services

Riyadh agreed to restore their diplomatic relations after seven

years as part of a rapprochement deal brokered by China.

Iran Embassy in

to reports by local media.

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - An Iranian army commander says the enemies' cruel sanctions against Iran are doomed to failure and have had no impact on the work of the country's experts so far, as their resolve will render the sanctions ineffectual.

Second Brigadier General Massoud Jafari, commander of Shahid Lashgari Air Base of the Iranian Army's Air Force in Mehrabad, said on Tuesday that his forces have succeeded in making significant progress in various fields, including overhaul of aircraft and different flight parts.

"The cruel sanctions of the sworn enemies of the Islamic Iran against the country's defense and military industries, particularly the Army's Air Force, have never been effective in the face of the will of our experts," he said.

These sanctions have never been able to disrupt the Armed Forces' activities, he added.

The commander noted that experts at the air base have managed to carry out great moves, including the overhaul of damaged flying objects.

Jafari also renewed his forces' allegiance with Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei to stand firm in the face of the enemies.

Iranian experts have made giant strides in boosting the country's defense power by producing various

equipment, including different types of drones.

Iranian officials have repeatedly warned that the country will not hesitate to strengthen its military capabilities, including its missile power, which are entirely meant for defense, saying the Islamic Republic's defense

capabilities will be never subject to negotiations.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has repeatedly called for efforts to maintain and boost Iran's defense capabilities, hitting back at the enemies for disputing the country's missile program.

and boost Iran's defense capabilities, hitting back at the enemies for disputing the country's missile program. On Tuesday, the administration of U.S. President Joe Biden once again slapped a new round of sanctions on more than a dozen individuals and entities in Iran, China and Hong Kong over what it claimed to be supplying

the Islamic Republic's ballistic missile program.

The US Treasury Department announced in a statement on Tuesday that the fresh sanctions targeted a network of seven individuals and six entities in Iran, China, and Hong Kong as part of Washington's so-called pressure campaign against Tehran.

"This network conducted transactions and facilitated the procurement of sensitive and critical parts and technology for key actors in Iran's ballistic missile development, including Iran's Ministry of Defense and Armed Forces Logistics," the Treasury Department claimed in the statement.

The sanctions-hit companies include Beijing Shiny Nights Technology Development, Qingdao Zhongrongtong Trade Development, Hong Kong Ke.Do International Trade Co, Lingoe Process Engineering Limited and Zhejiang Qingji Ind. Co.

The US Treasury also imposed sanctions on Iran's defense attaché in Beijing, Davoud Damghani, claiming that he coordinated purchasing of Chinese supplies for Iran's defense industry.

The sanctions, which ban US firms and individuals and companies from doing business with those placed on the blacklist, come as China and Iran signed a 25-year cooperation agreement in March 2021 to strengthen their long-standing economic and political alliance.



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Pakistan Turns to Barter Trade With Iran, Russia and Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) - Pakistan has approved barter trade with Iran, Afghanistan, and Russia to stabilize its economy and reduce the country's dependence on dollar trade.

According to the Ministry of Commerce, the Barter Trade Mechanism will allow public and private entities to engage in Business to Business (B2B) trade with all three countries. "Trade of goods under a B2B BT [barter trade] arrangement shall be allowed on the principle of import followed by export. The export would be made to the extent of the value of imported goods, subject to the tolerance mechanism provided hereinafter for any exigency," the notification said.

By engaging in barter trade with Iran and Russia, Pakistan can access goods and services it needs without having to depend on the U.S. dollar for transactions. That could increase Pakistan's overall volume of trade with regional countries by providing a more efficient way to exchange goods and services without relying on cash transactions. Furthermore, it will enable Pakistan to eliminate barriers resulting from a lack of banking relationships with Iran and Russia. This is especially important since Islamabad plans to shift a large part of its oil imports to Russia.

Smuggling across Pakistan's borders with Iran and Afghanistan is going on at a massive scale. Much foreign exchange is lost to this illegal trade. Reports indicate that smuggled Iranian oil has captured 25-30 percent of Pakistan's diesel market.

See Page 7

YewPoint



Fattah, Just a Simple Sign of Iran's Amazing Progress

On Tuesday, the Islamic of Republic of Iran once again unveiled another sign of its series of achievements and this time it put on display one of its amazing achievements in the military sector by unveiling a hypersonic missile which angered the enemies and especially the West.

The Fattah (Conqueror) hypersonic missile was unveiled at a ceremony in Tehran on Tuesday in the presence of Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi, General Salami and Commander of the commander of the IRGC Aerospace Force, Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh, as well as a number of Iran's high-ranking military officials.

The hypersonic missile has a range of 1,400 kilometers, hits speeds of 13-15 Mach and can breach and destroy all anti-missile shields. The precision-guided missile also features excellent maneuverability and stealth ability to pass through radar systems.

With a solid fuel propulsion system and a second-stage movable nozzle, the missile has the ability to reach very high speeds and perform various maneuvers in and out of the Earth's atmosphere in order to overcome all types of air defense systems.

In recent years, the Islamic Republic of Iran has unveiled many achievements but its achievements in the military sector have been noticed considerably by the enemies rather than its achievements in other fields.

The chief commander of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) lauded the country's remarkable progress in defense missile industry, saying the elite force has acquired the know-how to diversify military systems in various sectors.

Major General Hossein Salami made the remarks on Tuesday on the sidelines of the unveiling ceremony of "Fattah" hypersonic missile manufactured by the IRGC's Aerospace Force.

Salami underlined that Iran's leaps and advances in the defense sector, including the missile and drone industries, have been made with the use of advanced technology such as artificial intelligence and technical capabilities in manufacturing sensitive and high-tech components.

"We have acquired the knowledge and technology of diversifying various types of systems ... in different sectors, including the Fattah missile, which is a hypersonic maneuverable missile that can easily change its plan of movement in space and pass through the anti-missile systems," the IRGC's chief commander said.

See Page 7

WB Predicts Iran's 2.2% Economic Growth in 2023

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – The World Bank (WB) predicted that Iran's economy will register a 2.2 percent growth in 2023 in spite of sanctions imposed against the country.

In its latest report entitled "Prospects of World Economy", the World Bank warned that anti-inflationary policies of the central banks in the world in 2023 will considerably reduce the economic growth of countries this year.

This international body has anticipated that the average economic growth of countries will reduce from 3.1 percent in 2022 to 2.1 percent in 2023 as a result of contractionary monetary policies of countries.

Thereupon, the World Bank has decreased its predicted figures of economic growth of many countries in 2023. Inflation will still remain a problem in the global economy but it is expected that the price of goods will improve with reduced demand.

The reduced economic growth in the world in 2023 will relate to the drop of economic activities in the developed countries. However, the World Bank, in its evaluation of the economic situation in Iran, expects that Iran will experience a 2.2 percent economic growth in 2023, which is equal to the average economic growth of the Middle East and North African (MENA) countries.

Nuclear Technology Staff to Meet With Supreme Leader

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei will meet a group of managers and workers of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) soon.

The announcement was made by AEOI Chief Mohammad Eslami on Tuesday.

Eslami said that an exhibition on the latest achievements of the nuclear technology will also be held in the presence of the Supreme Leader.

taught in some 18 Chinese universities.

account on Wednesday.

Chinese universities.

he added.

Farsi Taught in

18 Chinese Universities

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Chinese Ambassador to Iran Chang Hua says that the Persian language is presently

It is a pleasure that the Chinese language is taught in five Iranian universities and that Farsi is also taught in 18 Chinese universities, Chang wrote on his Twitter

Earlier in an interview with IRNA, Iran cultural

attaché in China Abbas Ali Vafaie said that the Persian language and literature courses as well as

seven centers of Iranian studies are active in over 18

Some universities teach Farsi not as a major but as a

course for oriental studies and Persian language studies,

Iran to Hold Exhibition on **Latest Nuclear Achievements**

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - An exhibition of Iran's latest nuclear achievements will be held on the sidelines of the meeting of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution with Iranian nuclear staff, the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran said.

A group of Iranian nuclear staff will convene a meeting with the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Mohammad Eslami said on Wednesday,

Referring to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei's support for new nuclear technologies, Eslami added, "Fortunately, in the past decades, Iran's nuclear technology has witnessed increasing and speedy progress."



In this sincere meeting, Iranian nuclear staff will benefit from the wise guidelines of the Leader in order to achieve the goals of the AEOI's 20-year comprehensive strategic document as much as possible.

Iran's latest nuclear and industrial achievements will be showcased in an exhibition on the sidelines of this meeting, Eslami said.

Talks Over Hirmand's **Water Rights Continues**

TEHRAN (IP)- The head of Iran's Department of Environment said that consultations for Iran's share of the water from the Hirmand River are ongoing.

On the sidelines of the cabinet session on Wednesday, Ali Salajegheh, expressed hope that the talks over Iran's share of Hirmand water will continue and the problem will be tackled through diplomacy.

Regarding the water reserves of the Kamal Khan dam in Afghanistan, he said that according to Iranian experts, there is water in the dam.

He added that the Taliban must comply with international laws in the case of Hirmand water right.

Earlier, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi warned the rulers in Afghanistan to not violate the water rights of the Iranian people in the southeast country from Hirmand, stressing the administration is determined to defend the nation's rights wherever it is.

Any Prisoner Swap Should Be Done According to Law



TEHRAN (IP) - The Judiciary Spokesman said that any prisoner or convict exchange requires the existence of a law, so part of the matter is related to the judiciary branch, and the rest is diplomatic issues.

Massoud Setayeshi in his press conference on June 7, 2023, stated: The extradition of criminals, and transfer of convicts is in accordance with the legal standards and agreements of countries.

He clarified: Asadullah Asadi was transferred to the country, which was in accordance with the laws of the parliament of Belgium and Iran.

Judiciary Spokesman said: I emphasize that we condemn the commission of any attribution of a crime to Asadi.

In addition, regarding the latest situation of the case of robbery from the safe deposit box of the "Bank Melli" (Iran National Bank), he said: The contents of the file are 14 thousand pages, with 28 defendants and they are charged with compliance in robbery, acquisition of illegal property and money laundering.

currently signed 40 international agreements.

Source Speculates on Iran-Saudi Nuclear Cooperation

TEHRAN (Tasnim) - Iran's Nour News raised the possibility of cooperation in the nuclear industry between Iran and Saudi Arabia, as the two regional heavyweights have recently buried the hatchet after years of strained relations.

"Despite Zionists' opposition to Saudi Arabia's nuclear advancement, cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear technologies and transfer of experiences under supervision of IAEA, can be one of the main axes in the bilateral relations between Tehran and Riyadh," Nour News, affiliated with Iran's Supreme National Security Council, said in a post on its Twitter account on Tuesday. After several days of intensive negotiations hosted by China, Iran and Saudi Arabia clinched a deal on March 10 to restore diplomatic relations and reopen embassies and missions after seven years of estrangement.

The two regional powers have underscored the need to respect each other's national sovereignty and refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of one another.

Iran, Russia Consult Parliamentary Affairs

MOSCOW (IP) - The members of the parliamentary delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran met with the representatives of the Russian Duma.

According to the Iran Press news agency from Moscow, the Iranian parliamentary delegation met with Russian legislators in Duma on Wednesday and discussed strengthening parliamentary diplomacy with the aim of expanding mutual cooperation.

During their trip to Moscow, the representatives of the Islamic Consultative Assembly (Iranian Parliament), in addition

FM Meets Bruneian Counterpart in Tehran

TEHRAN (MNA) - Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian received his Bruneian counterpart Dato Erywan Pehin Yusof on Wednesday at the venue of the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Heading a high-ranking delegation, Dato Erywan Pehin Yusof, Minister for Foreign Affairs II of Brunei Darussalam has paid a visit to Tehran at the invitation of the Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian.

On Wednesday, the Bruneian delegation held a meeting with Iranian top diplomat and a number of Iranian foreign ministry officials.

The agenda of the talks is the development of interactions and cooperation between Iran and Brunei and the examination of the most important regional and international issues.

to talking with the heads of the specialized committees of the Russian Duma, are also supposed to meet and consult with the senior officials of the Russian Federation Council.

Investigating ways to develop parliamentary relations, strengthening cooperation between the specialized committees of the Duma and the Council of the Russian Federation with the commissions of the Islamic Council of Iran, and helping the two parliaments to increase the level of relations in all fields, especially economic, have been the most important points of consultation between the parliamentary delegations of Iran and Russia.

Hakim Hails Iran Assistance to Iraq in Fighting Terrorism

TEHRAN (MNA) - In a meeting with the Head of the Iranian Islamic seminaries Ayatollah Alireza Arafi, the leader of Iraq's National Wisdom Movement Sayyid Ammar al-Hakim hailed Iran's support to Iraq in fighting against terrorism.

During the meeting held in Baghdad, Hakim stressed that the cooperation between Iran and Iraq will be beneficial to the Islamic nations. The two sides also discussed other issues including the developments in Iraq and the progress achieved in the country in the political, social, cultural, economic, and security arenas.

Referring to the outstanding stability established in Iraq, Hakim appreciated the efforts of the Iraqi Top Shia Cleric Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, as well as Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units (PMU) and other security services, in freeing the country's soil from terrorism.

He also called for taking effective steps against dangerous social problems including addiction and divorce.

Iran Deterrent Power **Guarantees Regional Security**

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iran's deterrent power is a guarantor of security and sustainable peace in the region, according to Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian.

The development of friendly relations and constructive partnership with neighbors will continue seriously, Amirabdollahian tweeted.

Iran's deterrent power is the guarantor of stable security and peace in the region, the Iranian foreign minister added.

Amirabdollahian's remarks came one day after the unveiling of a hypersonic by Iranian IRGC Aero Space.

The Iranian foreign minister pointed out that continuation of cooperation based on dignity diplomacy in foreign relations concurrent with the strengthening of military and defense power signals a bright future for Iran.

The IRGC'S Aerospace Force unveiled a homegrown hypersonic missile named Fattah on Tuesday.

IRGC's hypersonic missile has a range of 1,400 kilometers, hits speeds of Mach 13-15 and can intercept and destroy all anti-missile shields.

Foreign Students Population in Shiraz University Up Tenfold

SHIRAZ (IRNA) - The head of Shiraz University for international scientific cooperation says that over 400 foreign students have studied at the university this academic year which shows a tenfold growth compared with the same Abolfazl Jokar said that most of the foreign students are from neighboring states, West Asia, Eastern Europe,

Most of these students are studying in long-term post-graduate courses – master's degree and PhD. Shiraz University has very strong relations with the scientific centers of the world, he said adding that it has

These MoUs have been signed for exchanging professors and students, doing joint research, and participating in educational and research projects.

TEHRAN (IP) - According to the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Flyone Armenia, flights from Tehran to Yerevan are carried out on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. The duration of this flight is ninety minutes.

Aram Ananian, the chairman of the board of directors of Fly One explained the process of flights between Iran and Armenia in a press conference at the Armenian embassy on Wednesday.

While referring to the start of flights to Tehran from yesterday, Ananian said: Direct flights from Yerevan to Tehran have been warmly received.

He added: Flights to Tehran are of special importance for us and it is considered as a kind of strategic development.

Pointing to the efforts of the Embassy of the Republic of Armenia and the ambassador himself in this regard, he said: "Bringing culture and civilization closer together and promoting the tourism industry are among the achievements of these flights.'

Ananian added: Fly one's air fleet consists of Airbus 319 planes. All planes are new and have the highest security standards.

The Chairman of the Board of Directors of Fly One Company in response to the question of the Iran Press reporter regarding the possibility of this flight from other cities of Iran said: In the long-term goals of Fly One Company, apart from Tehran, other cities such as Isfahan, Tabriz, and Kish Island are also investigated.

Tehran, Yerevan Flights Face Warm Welcome, ICCIMA Ready for Tourism Agreement With ECO Secretariat

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

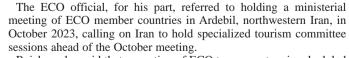
TEHRAN - Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA) stands ready to sign an agreement with the ECO secretariat on tourism cooperation, according to Niloofar Assadi, the caretaker of ICCIMA International Affairs.

Assadi, the caretaker of the international affairs of Iran Chamber of

Commerce. Industries. Mines. and Agriculture (center right) and Rajabov, Director for Tourism of the ECO Secretariat meet in Tehran.

Assadi made the remarks during a meeting in Tehran on Tuesday with Jasur Rajabov, Director for Tourism of the ECO Secretariat.

She also said that Iran Chamber of Commerce will host a meeting of ECO Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ECO-CCI) in the near future.



Rajabov also said that a meeting of ECO tour operators is scheduled to be held on July 3 which will focus on solving the problems on the way of money transfer, visa issuance and transportation in this region.

The participants will also discuss offering tourist packages and charter flights between ECO tourist destinations, he said.

Speaking in the meantime, Sama Farkhondeh Nejad, the director of Europe Department of ICCIMA International Affairs, called for further cooperation in exchange of information, and holding seasonal meetings as well as B2B meetings between the private sectors and tourism actors of ECO member countries.



Tomorrow's Sunrise

03:02 04:48 57. But those who believe and do deeds of righteousness, We shall soon admit to Gardens, with rivers flowing beneath, their eternal home: Therein shall they have companions pure and holy: We shall admit them to shades, cool and ever deepening.
58. Allah doth command you to render back your Trusts to those to whom they are due;
And when ye judge between man and man, that ye judge with justice: Verily how excellent is the teaching which He giveth you!
For Allah is He Who heareth and seeth all things.

Surah 4. Women (57 - 58)

Efforts Underway to Turn Iran Into Gas Hub

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Given that Iran holds the second rank in the world in terms of gas reserves, the oil minister said, the country is trying to have a gas hub in Assalouyeh region, Bushehr province, in cooperation with Russia, Turkmenistan and Qatar.

Speaking on the sidelines of the Cabinet meeting on Wednesday, Iranian Oil Minister Javad Owji pointed out that Iran completely settled its dues to the Republic of Turkmenistan over the past 20 months for importing gas from this country.

The ministry will follow up on its share of gas trade with neighboring countries vehemently, he emphasized.

Effective steps were taken in the current administration of President Ebrahim Raisi in the oil, gas and petrochemical fields, the most important of which is related to the launch of extraterritorial and offshore refineries in the Latin American region and Venezuela in line with using capacities for processing crude oil, preventing the crude selling of oil and also creating high added value, Owji highlighted.

He further noted that his ministry will make its utmost efforts to construct such refineries in different countries.

Iran holds the second largest gas reserves in the world, he said, reiterating that the



Oil Ministry is trying to create a gas hub in Assalouyeh region in cooperation with Russia, Turkmenistan and Qatar.

Owji also said that the country will continue to increase its trade with neighboring countries.

Iran's share in importing, transiting, and swapping gas in the region is growing, said the minister, continuing, "The 13th (incumbent) administration has paid the debt Iran owed to Turkmenistan for importing gas in the previous governments."

Asked why Iran, as the world's second-largest holder of gas reserves, imports gas, Owji said, "Russia is the largest holder of gas reserves in the world and statistics show it has outlined plans for its transit and swap share. Iran is also trying to do so and has so far achieved desired results."

"This field cannot be sanctioned and the world needs it, and the construction of such refineries will continue in different countries," he concluded.

Russia Encouraged To Invest in Iran's Petchem Sector

TEHRAN (MNA) - Head of Iran's National Petrochemical Company (NPC) said that many Russian companies are interested in investing in the downstream petrochemical industries in Iran, and different and attractive investment packages have been prepared and introduced in this field.

Making the remarks on the sidelines of RosPlast Exhibition in Moscow, Morteza Shah-Mirzaei said the National Petrochemical Company is mainly interested in cooperation with Russian companies for exchanging technical and engineering services, technology transfer and the export of catalysts needed by Russia's petrochemical industry.

"With the investigations carried out, Russia can now export some of its surplus petrochemical products such as styrene and polypropylene to the Iranian market, and in return import technical and engineering services, especially in the field of technology and catalysts, from our country," Shah-Mirzaei noted.

Stating that Iran's long-term strategy and diplomacy is to strengthen bilateral cooperation and partnership with neighboring and friendly countries in the oil, gas, and petrochemical industry, he said: "Iran's rich oil and gas reserves, proximity to open waters, easy access to export markets such as India, China, East Asian countries and African countries, the existence of specialized workforce, localization of technology, production of goods and equipment needed by the industry, and low finished price are among the advantages of foreign investment in Iran."

He put Iran's current nominal petrochemical capacity at over 92 million tons per year, emphasizing that with NPC's strategic planning for the industry development, especially in the south of the country and along the shores of the Persian Gulf and the Oman Sea, as well as in the new phases of the two hubs of Asalouyeh and Mahshahr, this sector is expected to grow more rapidly.

Over 630,000 Tons of Steel Ingots Exported in a Month

TEHRAN (MNA) - Iran exported 631,000 tons of steel ingots in the first month of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-April 20).

As reported, the figure shows 5,000 tons decline as compared to the export in the first month of the previous year. As previously announced by the Iranian Steel Producers Association (ISPA), the country exported 7.372 million tons of steel ingots in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20).

The country's steel ingot export fell four percent in 1401, as compared to 1400 when the figure was 7.678 million tons.

The World Steel Association (WSA) in its latest report announced that Iran is ranked eighth among the world's top steel-producing countries in April, rising one place in the list of the world's top steel-makers.

The latest report released by the WSA shows that Iran's crude steel output has increased 5.9 percent in the mentioned month while the global average growth rate stood at -2.4 percent.

Based on the WSA data, Iran produced 3.1 million tons of crude steel in the mentioned month.

Meanwhile, the Islamic Republic produced 9.7 million tons of steel in the first four months of 2023, registering

a 0.1 percent growth compared to the same period in the previous year.

WSA report says that the world's 64 steel producers managed to produce 161.4 million tons of the commodity in

April, 2.4 percent less than the figure for the previous year's same period.

The steelmakers produced 622.7 million tons of steel in the first four months of this year, which indicates

a 13 percent drop compared to the same period last year.

According to the WSA report, China, India, Japan, the U.S., and Russia were the world's top steel

producers respectively.

Iran has maintained its place as the world's 10th biggest steel producer during the mentioned four months.

Iran has maintained its place as the world's 10th biggest steel producer during the mentioned four months, according to the WSA data.

Bostanabad-Khavaran Railway Inaugurated

TEHRAN (MNA) – Part of the 'Mianeh-Bostanabad-Tabriz' Railroad stretching from Bostanabad to Khavaran (near Tabriz) will be inaugurated this week.

The inauguration will take place during the visit of Iran's President to the East Azerbaijan Province, said Kheirollah Khademi, Iran Deputy Minister and CEO of Construction and Development of Transportation Infrastructures Company (CDTIC).

Bostanabad to Khavaran Railway is 44 km and has been constructed with 30,000 billion IRR credit.

Mianeh to Bostanabad Railway had been previously inaugurated in November 2019 in 6 parts with lengths of 132 km.

The Mianeh-Bostanabad-Tabriz Railway project is about 203 km and has 10 stations that decrease travel time from Tehran to Tabriz by 4 to 5 hours and 114 km distance compared to the road route.

Considering that the travel time from Tehran to Tabriz

is 8 hours by road and 12 hours by rail, passengers prefer the road route to the rail; however, by operation of this rail route, in addition to increasing the transport of goods and passengers by rail, environmental pollution will be reduced and transport productivity and safety will improve, Khademi added.

The project is also part of the southern corridor of the Trans-Asian Railway (TAR) as a project to create an integrated freight railway network across Europe and Asia. So, it is expected to increase the share of Iran in international transport.

This railway is the first railway which is built double-track from the beginning and also it can be electrified.

Moreover, the inter-city railroad is to be stretched to the city of Tabriz and would be interlinked with the underground and bus stations within the city.

The project is constructed by reliance on domestic technologies and has 6 km valley bridges (including Basmenj Bridges) and 7 km tunnels.

Gov't Urged to Remove Restriction on Saridon Mine

TEHRAN – The CEO of National Iranian Copper Industries Company (NICICO) says exploitation and launch of the Saridon Mine as one of Iran's biggest copper mines will start in the upcoming months in the 13th government.



The CEO of NICICO Dr. Ali Rostami in the meeting for reviewing the production and developmental projects of Sarcheshme Copper Complex of Rafsanjan, which was held in the presence of the deputy minister of industry, mine ad trade, said that in the field of exploration in the past 50 years only 75 of the lands have come under exploration and Iran ranks fifth in the world, expressing hope that with developing exploration activities Iran would move up in the ranking to the third and even second place.

Rostami noted that in the past two Iranian calendar years some 130,000 meters and 200,000 meters of copper exploration has been conducted in Iran with the cost of few thousand billions of dollars. He then pointed the main gateway of moving in the mining sector is exploration, adding that in this field, the respected government should help and support and he expects the government pave a green track for developing exploration activities.

He also said that in the past year over 15 exploration drilling machines as well as a mining reference laboratory unit have been launched in northwest of the country in collaboration with Tabriz University for developing exploration activities by NICICO.

He stressed that last year after 40 years of activities, the company could produce 300,000 tons of cathode and it tries to increase the copper cathode production to one million tons in five years.

Basic Development in Economic Structure Prerequisite of National Economic Development



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – The CEO of Mobarakeh Steel Company (MSC) in the opening ceremony of the International Exhibition of Financial Industries (Exchange, Bank & Insurance) said when they talk about economic development or according to the Supreme Leader talking about a developed Iran, we should consider the issue of economic development along with economic growth with fundamental changes.

Mohammad Yaser Tayyebnia said that economic growth beside qualitative indicators should include I economic development both in terms of quality and quantity like increase in the GDP. He added that the role of steel industry in many of those indicators is very essential and its first indicator is the GDP and today we see steel industry accounts for 5.5% of the GDP in the industry sector. He added that both developed countries and underdeveloped ones do not spare growth in the steel industry and countries like China and India which are distinguished in many qualitative indicators are very active in the steel industry.

Tayyebnia went on to say that steel industry is an important part of the GDP of different countries and it is also in our country. He added that the other indicator is trade indicator for example steel, equaling to 10.5m tons of steel, accounts for 14% of the national exports. He noted that national steel industry plans to export 20m tons per year and this target plays a focal role in materialization of non-oil economy.

Iran Makes Food Pest Control Machine Using Irradiation

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – A subsidiary of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran has unveiled a homegrown system that streamlines the pest control process in the food industry with the application of ionizing radiation.

Iran's Radiation Application Development Company has manufactured a 60-kilowatt industrial irradiation system for the pest control process in agricultural and post-harvest treatments, its CEO said.

Pejman Shirmardi said in a televised interview that the homegrown system uses ionizing radiation produced by a source, such as cobalt-60, to kill pests that may affect agricultural crops. The new industrial irradiation pest control machine can treat a broad range of products

and food stuff, such as cereals, grains, crops, medicinal herbs, dates, and figs, he said.

The CEO noted that the Iranian system will increase the shelf-life and storage capacity of agricultural products, raise the country's economic productivity, and improve health indices in the food industry.

Food irradiation is the process of exposing foodstuffs to gamma rays to kill bacteria that can cause food-borne disease, and to increase shelf-life. It has the same benefits as when food is heated, refrigerated, frozen, or treated with chemicals, but does not change the temperature or leave residues.

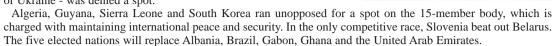
In all parts of the world, there is growing use of irradiation technology to preserve food. More than 60 countries worldwide have introduced regulations allowing the use of irradiation for food products including spices, grains, fruit, vegetables, and meat. It can replace potentially harmful chemical fumigants used to eliminate insects from

dried fruit and grain.

According to FAO, nuclear techniques help national authorities in over 50 countries to improve food safety by addressing the problem of harmful residues and contaminants in food products and to improve their traceability systems with stable instance applying

Five Nations Elected to U.N. Security Council

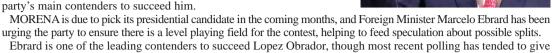
UNITED NATIONS (Dispatches) - The United Nations General Assembly elected Algeria, Guyana, Sierra Leone, Slovenia and South Korea to the U.N. Security Council on Tuesday for two-year terms starting on Jan. 1, 2024, while Belarus - allied with Russia in its invasion of Ukraine - was denied a spot.





Mexican President Urges Unity Among Ruling Party Contenders

MEXICO CITY (Dispatches) - Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador said he had sought to promote unity within the ruling National Regeneration Movement (MORENA) during a dinner attended by the





Ukraine War Zone Villagers Flee Floods After Dam Destroyed



KHERSON (Dispatches) - A torrent of water burst through a massive dam on the Dnipro River that separates Russian and Ukrainian forces in southern Ukraine, flooding a swathe of the war zone and forcing villagers to flee. Ukraine accused Russia of blowing up the Nova Kakhovka dam in a deliberate war crime. The Kremlin said it was Ukraine that had sabotaged the dam, to distract attention from the launch of a major counteroffensive Moscow says is faltering. Some Russian-installed officials said the dam had collapsed on its own.

Neither side offered immediate public evidence of who was to blame. The Geneva Conventions explicitly ban targeting dams in war because of the danger to civilians.

By mid-morning in the city of Kherson in Ukrainian government-controlled territory downstream from the dam, a pier on a tributary of the Dnipro had already been submerged.

Lidia Zubova, 67, waiting for a train out of the city after abandoning her inundated village of Antonivka, told Reuters: "Our local school and stadium downtown were flooded... The road was completely flooded, our bus got stuck."

Ukrainian police released video of an officer carrying an elderly woman to safety and others rescuing dogs in villages being evacuated as the waters rose. Interior Minister Ihor Klymenko accused Russia of shelling areas from where people were being evacuated and said two police officers were wounded.

On the Russian-controlled bank of the Dnipro, the Moscow-installed mayor of Nova Kakhovka said water levels had risen to 11 metres (36 feet). Residents reached by telephone there told Reuters that some had decided to stay despite being ordered out by occupying Russians. "They say they are ready to shoot without warning," said one man, Hlib, describing encounters with Russian troops. "If you come a metre closer than allowed, they immediately start yelling obscenities. We're still allowed to go to the store, but we don't know what orders will be given next." Yevheniya, a female resident, said the water was up to the knees of the Russian soldiers walking the main street in high

rubber boots. "If you try to go somewhere they don't allow, they immediately point their machine guns at you," she said. "More and more water is coming every hour. It's very dirty."

The Kazkova Dibrova zoo on the Russian-held riverbank was completely flooded and all 300 animals were dead, a representative said via the zoo's Facebook account. The small town of Oleshky, on the Russian-controlled bank of the Dnipro, was almost completely flooded, a Russian-appointed regional official said on Tuesday.

"Evacuation ... is possible only using special equipment," Andrei Alexeyenko, chairman of the Russianappointed government of Ukraine's Kherson province, said on Telegram.

The dam supplies water to a wide area of southern Ukrainian farmland, including the Russian-occupied Crimean peninsula, as well as cooling the Russianheld Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant.

The vast reservoir behind the dam is one of the main geographic features of southern Ukraine, 240 km (150 miles) long and up to 23 km (14 miles) wide.

An expanse of countryside lies in the flood plain below, with low-lying villages on the Russian-held southern bank particularly vulnerable.

Ukraine and Russia have both asked the U.N. Security Council to meet to discuss the dam. Ukraine accused Russia of an "ecological and technological act of terrorism", while Russia described it as an "act of sabotage carried out by Ukraine", according to the requests seen by Reuters.

The dam's destruction raised fears of a new humanitarian disaster in the centre of the war zone and transformed front lines just as Ukraine prepares a long-awaited counteroffensive to drive Russian troops from its territory.



Mexico City Mayor Claudia Sheinbaum a slight edge in the race.

arrested 11 protesters, AFP journalists said, during a march in Nairobi against a new finance bill that critics say will pile more economic hardship on ordinary people.

The proposed legislation calls for new or increased taxes on a wide range of items including fuel and food as well as beauty products, crypto currencies and social media influencers.

Police fired several volleys of tear gas and arrested 11 people, bundling them into a police truck, to try to disperse the demonstration. AFP journalists at the scene said.

"Down down finance bill," chanted protesters as a group of about 100 marched towards parliament, which resumed on Tuesday after a recess and is expected to debate the legislation this week.

"They want to kill us with hunger."

The demonstrations -- which the organizers said had been notified to the police -- have been dubbed

Clashes Between Sudan's Warring Factions Intensify

KHARTOUM (Dispatches) - Sudan's warring military factions clashed by air and on the ground in the country's capital, as increased violence and spreading lawlessness added to the misery of residents already struggling with limited food and medicine.

Fighting between the army and paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, now in its eighth week, has killed hundreds of civilians, and driven 400,000 across borders and more than 1.2 million out of the capital and other cities.

Saudi Arabia and the United States had brokered talks that had led to imperfectly-observed ceasefires with the aim of providing humanitarian assistance. But talks collapsed last week and while delegations remain in Jeddah no direct talks have been announced.

The fighting has inflicting heavy damage on the capital where the remaining residents are at the mercy of battles, air strikes and looting.

Artillery and air strikes continued overnight, with residents in southern and eastern Khartoum and northern Bahri reporting hearing sounds of artillery and gun clashes on Tuesday morning.

Overnight, the two forces clashed in the streets of the city of Omdurman, around the army's key Engineers Corps base. The army, which tends to prefer air strikes to ground fighting was able to maintain its positions around the base but could not push back the RSF, which controls most of the rest of the city.

"Our neighborhood has become a war zone. There are fierce clashes and strikes all around us because our house is next to the Engineers' Corps," said 45-year-old Jawahir Mohamed. "We are scared of dying but we are also scared of leaving our house and being burgled," she added.

Looters, some of whom Khartoum residents and neighborhood committees say belong to the RSF, have pillaged neighborhoods across the capital, stealing cars, breaking open safes, and occupying homes.

Aid groups have struggled to provide extensive assistance to Khartoum residents, who face electricity and water shortages as well as dwindling supplies in shops and pharmacies.

'sita sita" (six six) as they were held on the sixth day of the sixth month.

Marchers waved placards reading "Will more taxation lead to low cost of living" and "Poverty is man-made".

"We are witnessing some chaos which is not right. We are being chased but we are fighting for our rights," said one of the protesters, Rodgers Obogi, a 23-year-old unemployed man.

"We are demonstrating to express our frustrations, people need money, that money is being taxed twice."

Amnesty Kenya called for the unconditional release of the 11 arrested, saying the right to protest, "express oneself, and participate in public discourse is sacred under our Constitution and international law".

Kenyan activist Boniface Mwangi denounced the arrests, writing on Twitter that "sending police to arrest peaceful protesters for exercising their right to be heard is dictatorial behaviour".

The intervention also drew rare public criticism from a senior civil servant.

French Pension Plan Protesters Briefly Storm Summer Olympics HQ

PARIS (Dispatches) - French anti-pension reform protesters stormed the headquarters of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games as trade unions made a last-gasp attempt to pressure lawmakers into reversing President Emmanuel Macron's raising of the retirement age.

BFM television broadcast images of several dozen hardleft CGT trade union militants briefly occupying the building in Aubervilliers, northern Paris, as marches got under way in towns and cities across France.

"There was no violence and no damage," a Games spokesperson told Reuters.

Trade unions have fought Macron's move to make the French work longer since mid-January, with rolling strikes and protests that have at times descended into violence on the fringes.

Macron says it was necessary to lift the legal retirement age by two years to 64 to plug a widening pension deficit. However, trade unions say the money can be found elsewhere, such as by taxing the wealthy more.

The new pension law is already on the statute books and after months of rare unity among the biggest trade unions, there are now divisions over where to focus energies.

"This will be the last protest of this kind over the pension matter," Lauren Berger, head of the reform-minded CFDT trade union, said ahead of the protest in Paris.

Sophie Binet, leader of the CGT, said her union would battle on. Even so, she acknowledged that turnout was set to fall on previous rounds.

"There's a lot of anger but also fatigue," Binet said, adding that strikers had felt the pinch on their wallets.

Between 400,000 and 600,000 people were expected to join the protests, authorities said, which would be down from more than a million who took part at the height of the pension protests earlier this year.

Some protesters have threatened to disrupt next summer's Olympics if Macron does not back down. Banners reading "No retirement, No Olympics" were visible in Paris.

Some 11,000 police were deployed, including 4,000 in Paris, on Tuesday. Fuel deliveries were blocked from eaving TotalEnergies' Donges site, near Nantes in western France where riot police clashed with black-clad protesters.

Disruption to rail travel was light. The civil aviation authority asked airlines to cancel a third of flights out of Paris-Orly, the capital's number two airport, and a walk out by some air traffic control staff forced some overflight cancellations.

"Again today we've had to cancel some 400 flights because of French ATC strikes. The majority of these flights are overflights and not going to France," Ryanair CEO Michael O'Leary tweeted.



Kuwait Holds Another Election Mired in Gridlock KUWAIT CITY (Dispatches) - Voters in Kuwait were casting ballots for a third time in as many years, with little hope of ending

a prolonged gridlock

between the ruling family and assertive lawmakers after the judiciary dissolved the legislature earlier this year.

Kuwait is alone among Persian Gulf Arab countries in having a democratically elected assembly that exerts some checks on the ruling family. But in recent years, the political system has been paralyzed by infighting and unable to enact even basic reforms.

"People on the ground are not very optimistic right now about change, and that's why you see this frustration and probably a low voter turnout and low number of people running," said Dania Thafer, executive director at the Persian Gulf International Forum, a Washington-based think-tank.

"We need to bridge the gap and people can talk to each other and reach a consensus for the interest of Kuwait," said Badr Al-Turaiji, one of the thousands who braved the searing heat to cast his vote.

The last election, held a mere eight months ago, delivered a mandate for change, bringing 27 new lawmakers into the 50-member assembly, including conservative Islamists and two women. Some had served in earlier parliaments.

But in March, Kuwait's Constitutional Court annulled the decree dissolving the previous parliament, which was elected in 2020, effectively restoring it. A few weeks later, the ruling Al Sabah family dissolved that parliament for a second time, setting up this week's vote.

Kristin Diwan, senior resident scholar at the Persian Gulf States Institute in Washington, says the turmoil partly stems from divisions within the ruling family following the death in 2020 of Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah, a veteran diplomat who had ruled the country for nearly 15 years.

The 91-year-old was succeeded by his ailing half-brother, Sheikh Nawaf Al Ahmad Al Sabah, with Crown Prince Sheikh Meshal Al Ahmed Al Jaber Al Sabah assuming day to day rule. Both are in their 80s, and the line of succession after Sheikh Meshal is unclear. Another member of the royal family, Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al Sabah, the current emir's son, was appointed prime minister in 2022 but has recently emerged as a lightning rod of criticism.

Fax Machines and Cash-Only Stores: Japan Struggles to Go Digital

TOKYO (Dispatches) - Ryuichi Ueki, like most restaurant owners he knows, only accepts cash.

The fifth-generation owner of Asahi, a ramen restaurant in Tokyo's historic Asakusa district, Ueki does not want to pay credit card fees or bother getting to grips with digital payment platforms such as Apple Pay and LINE Pay.

"I do have some customers who ask to pay with a credit card, saying they don't have cash. I tell them to go to the convenience store to get out money from the ATM," Ueki, whose restaurant first opened its doors in 1914, told Al Jazeera.

Despite the growing popularity of cashless payment worldwide, Ueki has no plans to change anytime soon.

"It's not necessary because we are comfortable with what we have," Ueki said, explaining that things have been done the same way at his family-run business since "old times".

"If I think about it, it's kind of weird but I never thought about it," he added

Ueki's preference is typical among his countrymen.

While cashless payments in Japan more than doubled over the last decade – hitting 36 percent in 2022, according to the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry – the proportion lags far behind regional peers such as South Korea and Singapore, where most transactions are cash-free.

Japan's enduring love of cash is just one example of the East Asian giant's sluggishness when it comes to the digital economy.

Japan, immortalized in the Western imagination as a futuristic society due to sci-fi classics such as Blade Runner and Akira, continues to be a world leader in high-tech fields such as robotics.

Yet the world's third-largest economy, in many other ways, remains firmly stuck in the past.

Many Japanese government services are not still accessible online and rely on paper forms or a visit to a local government office. Fax machines are often used at workplaces instead of email, while physical seals known as "hanko" are preferred over digital signatures. Japan's Digital Agency, the government body responsible for leading the country's digital transformation, has estimated that 1,900 intergovernmental procedures rely on antiquated storage technology such as CDs, mini-disks and floppy disks.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, a local official in Yamaguchi Prefecture made news after he sent a floppy disk containing citizens' information to a local bank to distribute relief payments, resulting in a mix-up that saw one resident incorrectly receive a lump sum of 46.3 million yen (\$331,000).



In the latest World Digital Competitiveness Ranking published by the Institute for Management Development, Japan ranked 29th out of 63 economies, trailing Singapore, South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan and China. Martin Schulz, chief policy economist at IT services firm Fujitsu, said Japan's dependence on ageing systems was in part due to its success at achieving world-class efficiency using analogue technology.

"When your train systems work like clockwork on the second, to replace them with a digital system that would achieve that, but would have enormous transfer costs without significant additional gains – the calculation is very different than when you have a rather messy system where you say now I need to clean it up," Schulz, who is also an adviser to the Japanese government, told Al Jazeera.

Japan's government has long recognised the need to tackle the country's digital laggard status, which threatens to undermine efforts to boost productivity and revive the \$4.9 trillion economy, which is smaller today than it was after the bursting of a large asset bubble in the early 1990s.

In a 2018 report, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry warned that Japan faced a "digital cliff" due to the failure of businesses to adopt digital systems, setting up firms to incur losses of up to 12 trillion yen (\$86.1bn) each year after 2025.

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has pledged to accelerate the country's digital transition, including by spending 5.7 trillion yen (\$42bn) to improve digital infrastructure in regional areas, where workforce shortages due to the country's ageing population are most keenly felt.

Retaining a position established by his predecessor Yoshihide Suga, Kishida also appointed a dedicated digital minister, Taro Kono, who has declared "war" on floppy disks and quipped sarcastically about his fax machine jamming despite living in a "remarkably advanced society".

For Japan, the pandemic was a wake-up call.

While other countries further down the path of digitisation had been able to use the crisis to explore new ways of doing business, Japan discovered that it had only been "laying the groundwork" for the digital era, according to Schulz.

Palm Oil Production Seen Surging In Malaysia as Workers Return



KUALA LUMPUR (Dispatches) - Palm oil supply in Malaysia is set to soar as a labor crunch eases in the world's second-biggest producer, paving the way for a bumper crop in the second half of the year, said a senior plantation executive.

The return of foreign workers to plantations has accelerated harvesting, while better oil extraction rates are improving crude palm oil production, said IOI Corp. Plantations Director Sudhakaran Nottath Bhaskaran. Good rainfall over the past two years is also boosting the formation of fresh fruit bunches, he said during a field visit to an IOI estate in Johor.

"Palm oil production is going to pick up speed from now onward until it reaches a peak around August to September," Sudhakaran said. "Crops are rapidly going up and we expect a very strong peak this year."

Malaysia produces more than 20% of the world's palm oil — used in consumer goods ranging from foods to cosmetics — but has struggled to bring back the overseas workers it normally relies on despite easing Covid movement curbs. The brighter outlook for production has helped put pressure on prices, which are trading around a 30-month low after soaring to a record last year.

Output in Peninsular Malaysia and Sabah, which together make up almost 80% of the country's total supply, may jump at least 25% in the second half of the year compared with the same period in 2022, Sudhakaran said. The rapid increase in yields is already evident, with total Malaysian production expected to climb by around 18% in May from a month earlier, he said.

The return of overseas workers is a welcome relief for the nation's palm oil plantation companies after the chronic labor shortages meant estates lost an estimated 20 billion ringgit (\$4.4 billion) last year.

What Type of Milk Is Best for You?

NEWYORK (Dispatches)
- In a bowl of cereal, in pancake batter, or as a finishing touch to creamy scrambled eggs... In 2021, global



milk consumption was estimated at 908 billion litres, with extreme national variations for average consumption. A staple food in many countries, the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organisation declared June 1 World Milk Day in 2001. While the day is designed to bring attention to the dairy sector, consumers' view of milk is undergoing a shift as many look to alternatives whether for personal or health-related reasons or environmental questions. Here's everything you need to know to choose the beverage that suits your values... and your taste!

What are we talking about when we talk about milk?

While within the EU the term milk is meant to be used only for "an animal product", designating "exclusively the normal mammary secretion obtained from one or more milkings," other jurisdictions, including the US, allow the word "milk" to be used for a plant-based product although it advises companies to make its plant origin clear on labelling. In everyday language, it's common to hear consumers refer to almond milk or oat milk.

What's the most environmentally friendly milk?

If one combined the world's 15 biggest meat and dairy companies, it would form the tenth largest greenhouse gas emitting nation, according to a report by the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy and the Changing Markets Foundation at the end of last year. At the other end of the scale, oat milk produces 80 per cent fewer greenhouse gas emissions than animal-based dairy products, according to a study by the University of Wageningen in the Netherlands. Water requirements are lower than for many other alternatives. Only 18 per cent of the water required for rice milk and 13 per cent of that needed for almond milk production is used.

Mystery of the Desert: The Lost Cities of the Nigerien Sahara

DJADO (Dispatches) - A long trek across the desert of north-eastern Niger brings the visitor to one of the most astonishing and rewarding sights in the Sahel: fortified villages of salt and clay perched on rocks with the Saharan sands laying siege below.

Generations of travellers have stood before the "ksars" of Djado, wondering at their crenelated walls, watchtowers, secretive passages and wells, all of them testifying to a skilled but unknown hand.

Who chose to build this outpost in a scorched and desolate region — and why they built it — are questions that have never been fully answered. And just as beguiling is why it was abandoned.

No archaeological dig or scientific dating has ever been undertaken to explain the mysteries. Djado lies in the Kawar oasis region 1,300 kilometres from the capital Niamey, near Niger's deeply troubled border with Libya.

Once a crossroads for caravans trading across the Sahara, Kawar today is a nexus for drug and arms trafficking. Its grim reputation deters all but the most determined traveller.

"There have been no foreign tourists since 2002", said Sidi Aba Laouel, the mayor of Chirfa, the commune where the Djado sites are located.

"When tourism was good, there was economic potential for the community."

A blessing of sorts occurred in 2014, when gold was discovered. It saw an influx of miners from across West Africa, bringing life and some economic respite, but also bandits who hole up in the mountains. Few of the newcomers seem interested to visit the ksars.

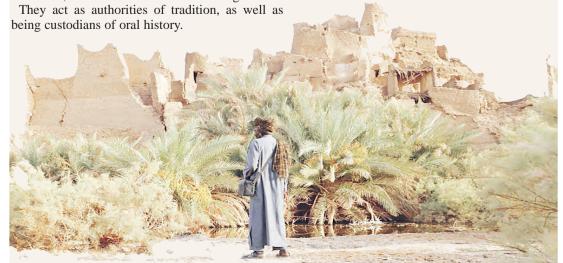
The mayor is careful when speaking about local history, acknowledging the many gaps in knowledge. He refers to old photocopies in his cupboard of a work by Albert le Rouvreur, a colonial-era French military officer stationed in Chirfa, who tried without success to shed light on the origins of the site.

The Sao, present in the region since antiquity, were the first known inhabitants in Kawar, and perhaps established the first fortifications. But the timeline of their settlement is hazy. Some of the ksars still standing have palm roofs, suggesting they were built later.

Between the 13th and the 15th centuries, the Kanuri people established themselves in the area. Their oasis civilisation was almost destroyed in the 18th and 19th centuries by successive waves of nomadic raiders — the Tuaregs, Arabs and finally the Toubou.

The arrival of the first Europeans in the early 20th century spelt the beginning of the end of the ksars as a defence against invaders. The French military took the area in 1923.

Today, the Kanuri and Toubou have widely intermingled but the region's traditional leaders, called the "mai", descend from the Kanuri lineage.



Simple Blood Test Can Detect Two Out of Three Cancers

LONDON (Dispatches) -Clinical trials by Britain's National Health Service of a U.S.-developed early cancer-detection blood test have found it can detect two out of three cancers.



The study in partnership with Oxford Cancer involving 6,000 people who had gone to their doctor with possible symptoms was to evaluate the multicancer blood test Galleri — which tests for more than 50 types of cancer — for future use in the NHS.

More than 47 of the 50 cancers Galleri tests for

More than 47 of the 50 cancers Galleri tests for covered are not currently screened for in Britain while providing a false positive rate of less than 1% with a single drawing of blood.

Of participants whose blood tests were positive, 75% did have cancer, while only 2.5% of those who tested negative actually turned out to have cancer. Subsequent tests using traditional techniques -- scans and biopsies -- confirmed cancers in 350 participants.

Galleri proved especially adept at spotting cancers that often go undetected in the early stages including head, neck and throat, bowel, lung, and cancer of the pancreas.

The test works by detecting tiny fragments of tumor DNA circulating in the blood providing the potential for existing screening programs and current tests to diagnose cancers much earlier when they can be treated more effectively.

As well as finding two-thirds of cancers the test, developed by Grail, a biotech company based in Menlo Park, Calif., identified the original site of the cancer in 85% of positive cases.

"The test was 85% accurate in detecting the source of the cancer -- and that can be really helpful because so many times it is not immediately obvious when you have got the patient in front of you what test is needed to see whether their symptoms are down to cancer," Oxford University Oncology Head and lead researcher Professor Mark Middleton told the BBC.

"With that prediction from the test, we can decide whether to order a scope or a scan and make sure we are giving the right test the first time."

France to Invest Nearly €3b in Semiconductor Factory

PARIS (Dispatches) - France is ploughing 2.9 billion euros (\$3.1 billion) of public money into a factory to make microchips, officials said on Monday, heating up a global race for the lucrative market.

Europe and the United States have both passed so-called Chips Acts to boost investment in the sector as fears grow that China could gain a stranglehold on global supply.

Chips, also known as semiconductors, are vital for every electronic device, from smartphones to electric cars, and control of supply chains has become a major priority for the world's biggest trading blocs. France's economy ministry said the state aid was the biggest subsidy it had offered since 2017.

> **Turkey Pledges to Rein In Prices as Inflation Cools**

ANKARA (Dispatches) - The annual inflation rate in Turkey slowed for a seventh straight month in May and fell under 40% for the first time in 16 months, official data showed Monday,

To Below 40%





Saudi Arabia's Icing on the Cake Oil **Cut Could Feed U.S. Producers**

LONDON (Dispatches) - Saudi Arabia has crafted a complex OPEC+ deal with a view to punishing investors that have bet on falling oil prices but could inadvertently lend long-term support to the rival U.S. energy industry, OPEC+ insiders and market watchers said. On Sunday, Saudi Arabia pledged to cut its oil output by 1 million barrels per day (bpd), or 10%, in July on top of existing output cuts from OPEC and its allies. With the new Saudi reduction, the group has agreed to take some 4.6 million bpd off the market in July, equivalent to 4.6% of global demand of 100 million bpd.

OPEC+ also agreed on Sunday to extend the group's existing supply cuts of 3.66 million bpd into 2024.

In response, oil prices rose nearly \$2 a barrel early on Monday to \$78 per barrel. Analysts said the gains are only the beginning and

the cuts will steadily deepen a global supply shortfall that could push prices towards \$100 a barrel.

"This market needs stabilization," Saudi Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman said on Sunday, calling his surprise decision to deepen Saudi production cuts "the icing

on the cake" for the deal. Prince Abdulaziz has repeatedly expressed anger and pledged to punish short-sellers of oil that bet on price falls. Prices had fallen in recent weeks to close to \$70 per barrel

from over \$130 a year ago when Russia invaded Ukraine. "The Saudi move was driven by the desire to deter shortsellers from pushing the price any lower," a source familiar with OPEC+ strategy said on condition of anonymity.

"The size of (the Saudi) reduction is credible and should at minimum limit the downside pressure on prices for the rest of the year," Natasha Kaneva at JP Morgan said. Unexpected price rises force short-sellers to close positions at a loss.

OPEC says it does not have any oil price target and its policy decisions are to prevent volatility by balancing supply

"(The cut) clearly reflects the angst and frustration amongst producers, particularly of Saudi Arabia, of sliding prices,'

Tamas Varga from PVM brokerage said, adding that Riyadh needs prices of \$80 per barrel to balance its budget, according to the IMF estimates. Previous cuts by the group have triggered heavy criticism from the

United States and other consuming nations that have accused it undermining the global economy by driving energy costs higher.

OPEC+ ministers have responded by saying they are defending their own interests and that they need to provide conditions for long-term investment in the oil and gas sector.

They also say piecemeal policies to shift to low carbon energy have discouraged investment and could lead to shortages in future supply before the world is ready to live without oil.

The United States was sanguine about the latest OPEC cuts. A White House official said on Sunday that the administration's focus was "not barrels" but prices for U.S. customers and that they had fallen significantly since last year.

So far this year, a weakening global economy, concern about the U.S. banking crisis, and a slow Chinese recovery from COVID-19 restrictions have capped oil prices.

driven by a temporary government measure offering free gas to households, offsetting price rises in other goods. Consumer prices rose by 39.6% from a year ago, the Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat)

data showed. It compared to 43.7% registered in April and marks a significant regress from the peak of over 85% in autumn 2022, before it started to ease as of November. The statistical authority last week said it would apply a "zero price" method for natural gas

in the consumer price index (CPI) calculations for May, a month in which President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan won reelection, extending his governance into a third decade. The government had pledged ahead of last month's elections that it would provide free gas

in May, and a monthly free 25 cubic meters until May 2024. The move is seen costing the government TL 40 billion (\$1.89 billion).

Erdoğan, starting a third term in office, has stressed the government's determination to safeguard households against high prices and said tackling inflation is a top priority.

His view was echoed by the newly appointed Vice President Cevdet Yılmaz, an orthodox economic manager who said Monday that the government would prioritize the fight against inflation, adding that they were "aware it will take time."

Month-over-month, consumer prices rose 0.04% in May, the TurkStat data showed.

The domestic producer price index was up 0.65% month-over-month for an annual rise of 40.76%. Clothing and shoe prices recorded the largest monthly increase with 9.85%, followed by

restaurant and hotel prices with 7.10% Housing prices, which include natural gas, dropped 13.79% on a monthly basis, and were

the only group to record a decline last month, lowering the overall monthly reading by 2.09 percentage points. The weight of natural gas in the inflation basket is 2.9%.

Core "C" inflation, which excludes energy, food, beverages and tobacco prices, rose 4.25% month-over-month, for an annual rise of 46.62%, up from 45.48% in April.

The government has urged monetary stimulus over the last several years, aiming to achieve price stability by slashing borrowing costs, boosting exports and flipping chronic current account deficits to surpluses.

In what analysts say could signal a departure from economic policies centered around low-interest rates, Erdoğan on Saturday named Mehmet Simsek, who is highly regarded by financial markets, as treasury and finance minister.

ECB May Need to Keep

Germany Launches \$53b Scheme to Help Stricken Industry Decarbonize

FRANKFURT (Dispatches) - Germany is launching a program that will make available tens of billions of euros for firms facing substantial energy costs, in a bid to help its challenged industrial sector fund a shift towards carbon-neutral production techniques.

The program, which according to sources will have a volume of around 50 billion euros (\$53.45 billion) over the next 15 years, comes as European industry faces pressure due to high costs for raw materials, energy and labor.

The money is to come from a so-called climate and transformations fund, being fed by proceeds from emissions trading and other sources, although the economy and finance ministries both pointed to ongoing talks over Germany's budget, suggesting details have yet to be hammered out.

It also aims to provide a counterweight to programs in other regions, most notably the United States, that could lure companies away from the continent by offering lavish subsidies and more favorable legislation. The so-called climate protection contracts are a major pillar of Germany's response to these challenges, hoping financial support can help makers of steel, cement, paper and chemicals to decarbonise their production.

"We are in a period of prolonged recession, in an extremely challenging period economically," Economy Minister Robert Habeck told journalists after outlining details of the scheme.

He said that while other parts of the world, ranging from the United States to Asia, were offering investment incentives, Germany was subject to stricter requirements when it comes to budget and keeping debt under control.

Air Travel to Soar Near Record in 2023

ISTANBUL (Dispatches) - Airlines will return to profit and fly a near-record 4.35 billion passengers this year, but the sector's post-pandemic recovery remains fragile, an industry group said.

The industry is forecast to post net profits totally \$9.8 billion in 2023, or double previous estimates, boosted by the end of China's Covid restrictions, according to the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

The association added that its 2022 losses were half as bad as previously estimated at \$3.6 billion.

"Airline financial performance in 2023 is beating expectations," IATA director general Willie Walsh said in a statement during the association's annual general meeting in Istanbul.

"Stronger profitability is supported by several positive developments. China lifted Covid-19 restrictions earlier in the year than anticipated," Walsh said.

While jet fuel prices remain high, they have moderated over the first half of the year, he added. Inflation surged worldwide as Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 sent energy costs soaring, but oil and natural gas prices have fallen since then.

"On the cost side, there is some relief," Walsh said.

"Economic uncertainties have not dampened the desire to travel, even as ticket prices absorbed elevated fuel costs," he added.

Airlines transported a record 4.54 billion people in 2019 before Covid brough travel to a standstill.

The industry lost \$137 billion when countries imposed lockdowns and closed borders in 2020.

The sector lost another \$42 billion in 2021 and was still in the red last year as China, a major market, continued to enforce Covid restrictions that were finally lifted in December.

The IATA said total revenues are expected to grow to \$803 billion this year, up almost 10 percent from 2022.

While the industry as a whole will turn a profit, Walsh noted that it would amount to just \$2.25 per passenger -- a net-profit margin of 1.2 percent.

The IATA, which represents around 300 airlines accounting for 83 percent of global air passenger traffic, said net profit will rise to \$11.5 billion for North American air carriers, \$5.1 billion for Europeans and \$2 billion for those from the Middle East.

But Asian, Latin American and African airlines will remain in the red.

Airlines will face a total fuel bill of \$215 billion this year, or \$98.5 per barrel, according to the IATA. This is down from the average

cost of \$135.6 in 2022.



FRANKFURT (Dispatches) - The European Central Bank still needs several more interest rate hikes to rein in inflation and it is not certain that rates could peak this summer, Bundesbank President Joachim Nagel said.

The ECB has raised rates at the fastest pace on record in the past year after inflation hit double-digit territory last autumn. Many policymakers argue that monetary tightening is in its final phase with the terminal rate now in sight.

Nagel's comments are among the most hawkish on the 26-member Governing Council and cast doubt on market bets that the deposit rate will peak at 3.75% in July before falling next year. "From today's perspective, several more rate hikes are still necessary," Nagel said in a speech. "For me, it is not certain that we will reach the interest rate peak in the summer.'

A rate hike on June 15 is considered a done deal while many policymakers have also said that a move in July is likely but few have ventured to discuss prospects beyond the summer break.

The problem is that underlying inflation appears to be stubbornly high, fuelled by rapid wage growth and robust demand for services, suggesting that getting price growth back to 2% by 2025 may be hard.

Although core inflation, which filters out volatile food and fuel prices, dipped more than expected in May, Nagel did not see this is as a significant change.

"Underlying pricing pressures are also far too high and so far show little sign of abating," he said. "We have to be even more persistent than the current inflation."

Once rates peak, they will have to stay steady until it is "beyond doubt" that price growth will fall back to the ECB's 2% target in the "near future," Nagel added.

Regarding growth in Germany, the euro zone's biggest economy, Nagel said he was cautiously optimistic, despite a recession early in the year. But several issues still threaten Germany's competitiveness and require attention, Nagel argued. The large global footprint of Germany's vast industrial sector keeps it exposed to trade tensions while high energy costs and a shrinking domestic labour market weaken the outlook, Nagel said.

Spotify to Cut 200 Staff Working With Podcasts

STOCKHOLM (Dispatches) - Swedish music streaming giant Spotify said it will cut some 200 positions, equaling two per cent of its workforce, as it slims down its internal podcast operations. The Sweden-based company said it had recently "embarked on the next phase of our podcast strategy," and was moving to

a "tailored approach optimized for each show and creator." "Doing so requires adapting; over the past few months, our senior leadership team has worked closely with HR to determine the optimal organization for this next chapter," Spotify said in a statement.

"As a result, we have made the difficult but necessary decision to make a strategic realignment of our group and reduce our global podcast vertical and other functions by approximately 200 people," it added, noting it represented about two per cent of Spotify's global workforce.

The streaming giant, which is listed on the New York stock exchange, announced in April it had passed 500 million monthly active users with 210 million paying subscribers.

The company also posted a first quarter operating loss of €156 million (RM765 million), compared to an operating loss of €6 million a year earlier.

The widened loss was, according to the company, attributed to a higher headcount compared to a year earlier and changes in social charges.

The platform has only occasionally posted a quarterly profit since its launch and has regularly posted annual losses, despite strong subscriber growth and having had a head start on its rivals such as Apple Music and Amazon Music.

In January, following similar moves by other tech industry giants, the streaming giant announced it was cutting around 600 jobs.

Spotify has also invested more than €1 billion into podcasting in recent years, but analysts say the company has yet to prove the investment is bearing fruit.

Satellite Images Show Troubled Lake Urmia Recovering Gradually

TEHRAN (IFP) - With the inauguration of the first phase of a water transfer system from Kani Sib Reservoir Dam to Urmia Lake in West Azerbaijan Province, northwestern Iran, the situation of the body of water, severely hit by drought, has witnessed a boost.

According to ISNA, the water system facilitates the transfer of 300 million cubic meters of water to the lake every year.

The construction of a 36-kilometer tunnel at a depth of 150 meters in Kani Sib was an important step toward the revival of Lake Urmia. ISNA said satellite images of Lake Urmia also show the water transfer plan has accelerated the recovery process of the lake. According to the latest statistics, the volume of water in the lake was recorded to be more than 1.9 million cubic meters by early June, up from 1.2 million in October 2022.



Crowded 2024 Republican Race Helps Clear Way for Trump's Nomination

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - A growing number of contenders for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination could clear the way for a Donald Trump victory while throwing up roadblocks for his main rival Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, party members and strategists said.

Republicans who fear Trump is too polarizing a figure to beat Democratic President Joe Biden in 2024 worry that if too many candidates jump into the party's contest, they will splinter the anti-Trump vote. That would allow the former president to clinch the nomination, just as he did in similar circumstances in 2016.

Former Vice President Mike Pence, former New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, and North Dakota Governor Doug Burgum are planning to enter the fray this week, bringing the number of challengers to front-runner Trump into the double digits.

Political analysts estimate that Trump can count on a diehard core of supporters, who make up at least a third of Republican voters, to help him secure his party's nomination.

DeSantis has been aggressively courting those voters, but few are expected to defect from Trump. If DeSantis has any hope of becoming the Republican nominee, political analysts said, he has to try to win over a significant chunk of the other roughly 70% of voters who are up for grabs.

DeSantis must compete with a raft of Republican rivals for those votes. To be sure, many of the candidates are long shots who barely register in opinion polls, but they can still hamper DeSantis' efforts to build the coalition he needs to take on Trump. "I'm very concerned that we appear to be making the same mistakes that we made

in 2016," said Larry Hogan, a popular former Republican governor of Maryland and a fierce critic of Trump.

Hogan seriously considered taking on Trump but decided earlier this year against

entering the race because he feared that a large field of contenders would only help the former president to repeat his 2016 victory, when he bested 17 major candidates. "It's better for us to have a smaller field with a strong candidate or two rather than 10 or more people who are failing to get attention, who are all in single digits," in

the opinion polls, Hogan said in an interview.

"The only one that benefits from that at this point in time appears to be Donald Trump," said Hogan, a moderate who wants the party to move on from Trump. "It's the definition of insanity continuing to do the same thing over and over again and

expecting a different result."
Still, right now it's essentially a two-man race.

Trump dominates the field among potential Republican primary voters with 49% support and DeSantis next with 19%. There is a yawning chasm between the frontrunners and the rest of the field: Pence has just 5% backing, while former South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley has 4%, according to the latest Reuters/Ipsos opinion poll conducted in May.

Others are barely registering at all. Christie has just 1% backing him, as does U.S.



Senator Tim Scott of South Carolina, while former Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson, who declared in April, has 0%.

A casual observer might ask why candidates with such low poll numbers are jumping into a race that already has a clear front-runner early on.

"Most get in because they truly think they have a chance of winning the nomination," said Oscar Brock, a Republican National Committee member from Tennessee.

Some know they cannot win, said John Feehery, a Republican strategist, but they might be angling for a cabinet position, or hoping to join the ticket of the eventual nominee as the vice presidential candidate, or simply looking for 15 minutes of fame to secure a book deal.

Long shots have also emerged from nowhere to win past nominating fights, Feehery noted, including Democrat Jimmy Carter in 1976 and Trump, who was polling at just 4% when he announced his candidacy in June 2015.

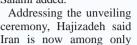
Many may have also decided to enter the 2024 race because of the perceived vulnerabilities of the two front runners, Feehery said. Trump faces potential indictments for withholding classified documents and seeking to overturn the results of the 2020 election, while DeSantis is trying to regain his footing after losing ground in opinion polls.

"These candidates who are striving to be the alternative see DeSantis continue to stumble and fumble. And they say, 'Well, why couldn't that be me?'" said Jason Miller, a senior Trump adviser.

Perhaps with an eye on the soon-to-expand field, DeSantis finally began punching back against Trump on the campaign trail last week after weathering an onslaught of attacks from his former ally for months.

Fattah, Just a...

"Such technology is very up-to-date and advanced and unknown to the modern world and to most countries" but our country's committed experts have achieved it, Salami added.



four countries that have the technology to manufacture hypersonic missiles.

Unlike other types of missiles, Fattah cannot be countered by any defense system, he said, adding that the hypersonic missile cannot be destroyed by any missile due to its movement in various directions and heights.

"Our activities in this field do not end with the manufacturing of this missile. We will continue this path so that no enemy even imagines attacking Iran," the IRGC commander asserted.

Hajizadeh further said that Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has supported and approved the missile activities, noting that Ayatollah Khamenei has chosen the name "Fattah", which translates to "the opener".

Meanwhile, Commander of the Iranian Army's Air Defense Force Brigadier General Alireza Sabahi-Fard on Monday announced plans to build a second version of the Bavar-373 (Belief-373) surface-to-air missile system.

"Good news will be published in the near future from the Iranian Army's Air Defense Force," Fars news agency quoted Sabahi-Fard as saying.

"The second version of the Bavar-373 [missile] system will be more advanced than the first version and will further increase our power in the field of air defense," he said.

These achievements secure the country against any probable attack by the enemies because now enemies are facing with a tough opponent and they know that in case they attack, they will face harsh retaliation and answer.

Back in November, the IRGC announced that it had developed a cutting-edge hypersonic ballistic missile capable of penetrating advanced missile interception systems and hit the targets.

The elite force declared that the ballistic missile, manufactured by Iranian experts, is very fast and able to maneuver both in the space and outer space, with military officials describing the development of the ballistic missile as a "great leap in the field of missiles."

Last month, Iran successfully test-launched its most advanced Khorramshahr-class ballistic missile, called Kheibar, a medium-range precision-guided missile that can carry a 1,500 kg warhead.

Despite being under sanctions for decades, Iran has become self-sufficient in designing and manufacturing different types of military equipment, including missiles.

Of course these achievements will never go unnoticed by the enemies and make them angry and after any unveiling of a new type of missile or any weapon, the U.S. and its allies impose some sanctions on those who are involved in Iran's missile, drone or military industries which are now among the world top four countries.

As the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution has repeatedly emphasized, the country should continue its progresses in all fields especially in military sector because it secures the country against ill-wishes and threats and Fattah is another tool in defending the country and making angry the enemies especially Israel and its ally the U.S. which have no good sleep at nights because of such amazing progresses.

Active Presence in Int'l Organizations Proves Failure of Bids to Isolate Iran

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian says Tehran's active presence in international organizations manifests the failure of attempts to isolate the Islamic Republic in the world.

"Iran's active presence in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, in the Eurasian Economic Union, and recently in BRICS, shows the global policy of isolating Iran has failed," Amirabdollahian said in an interview published on Tuesday.

"We strongly oppose unilateralism, and at the same time, make the most out of the existing opportunities within the framework of multilateralism," he said. "Moreover, Iran enjoys a principal status in the region geopolitically, geo-economically, and geo-strategically," he said.

The foreign minister further said that Iran lies on the major transit route linking the North to the South, and the East to the West, adding that other parties can benefit from developing their relations with Iran given the country's advantages and facilities.

Last week, Amirabdollahian made a two-day visit to Cape Town, South Africa, to attend a foreign ministers' meeting of BRICS group of emerging economies as well as a "Friends of BRICS" meeting.

Pakistan Turns to...

FROM PAGE 1

The smuggling of fertilizer, sugar, and wheat to Iran and Afghanistan has become another problem for Pakistan. The Afghan Taliban's ban on Pakistan's rupee as legal tender in Afghanistan has contributed to this smuggling problem, which has forced exporters to trade in dollars. By reducing the costs associated with traditional trade, the barter system can reduce smuggling. It could emerge as a more attractive option to traders in both countries.

To increase its exports, Pakistan needs to think creatively and explore alternative means of trading with regional countries like Iran and Russia.

This is especially important given Pakistan's current economic situation. The country is facing one of its most severe economic crises in recent years. With only a month's worth of import cover, Pakistan could be pushed into a situation where it will not have enough money to pay its debts or provide basic services to its citizens. This would have far-reaching implications on the economy and people's livelihoods.

The barter system will help strengthen Pakistan's economy by increasing its exports and reducing its dependence on the U.S. dollar. Over the years, Pakistani business groups and barter trade operators have underlined the importance of transacting in currencies of friendly countries and reducing reliance on the dollar. Easing Pakistan's dependence on the dollar could reduce its fiscal deficit and external debt incurred from international imports.

Analysts believe that the implementation of

Pakistan's decision on barter trade "in letter and spirit" could usher in a new era of regional integration. Dr. Zainab Ahmed, chairperson of the Department of International Relations at Lahore Garrison University, told The Diplomat that "barter trade would not only relieve this region of dependence on the dollar and export regulations but also promote people-to-people contacts that are crucial to regional economic integration."

Due to the deepening barter trade in the region, energy connectivity will also increase, resulting in economic integration, she said.

However, Ahmed cautioned Pakistan to tread carefully as the United States may not approve of economic integration involving Moscow and Tehran, two of Washington's key adversaries. Pakistan has been trying to build a gas pipeline with Iran for years, but so far, the U.S. has not responded positively to the request. This is mainly due to the sanctions imposed by Washington on Tehran. As a result, Pakistan has had to look for alternative sources of natural gas to meet its energy needs. However, these are more expensive options than importing Iranian gas via a pipeline.

In any case, barter trade with Iran, Russia, and Afghanistan is likely to have far-reaching implications for the Pakistani economy as well as its foreign policy in the long run. It remains to be seen how this move will affect other countries in the region, particularly those who may also be looking to increase their trade ties with Iran and Russia.

Iran Embassy in...

FROM PAGE 1

Iran's new ambassador to Saudi Arabia suggested that the countries of the region adopt a fresh perspective on the issue of regional security, one which is based on development rather than militarization.

Ali-Reza Enayati made the remarks to Iran's Arabic-language al-Alam television news network on Tuesday.

"Today, we are after more cooperation with each other and prioritize [the issue of] regional security based on [the concept of] development," the envoy said.

Security does not come by through either weapons or ammunition or military forces, Enayati asserted, calling militarization of the issue of security "a great mistake."

"In [its] new sense, security has to be based on economic, commercial, social, and cultural development," Enayati noted, saying the Islamic Republic welcomes such a vantage point. The envoy made the remarks following accreditation by Saudi Arabia as Iran's new ambassador to Riyadh.

Meanwhile Spokesman for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has said that the re-opening of Iran's embassy in Saudi Arabia is helpful for the region.

Stephane Dujarric in reply to a question at a daily press briefing whether the re-opening of the Iranian embassy in Saudi Arabia is a positive move in the region, said, "I think any time two countries, especially two countries with so much influence in that area -- in the Persian Gulf -- are engaged in open and constructive dialogue, it is helpful to the region," Xinhua reported.

Treatment Found To Reduce Progression of

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - A treatment that involves genetically modifying the body's own immune cells has been found to cut the risk of disease progression by 74 percent in people with a rare type of blood cancer, results showed Monday.

Rare Blood Cancer by 74%

Ciltacabtagene autoleucel -- also known by its trade name Carvykti -- was tested in a clinical trial involving 419 patients with multiple myeloma, whose disease was not responsive to the current frontline drug lenalidomide, a chemotherapy medicine.

"Lenalidomide has become a foundation of care for people with myeloma, but as its use has expanded, so has the number of patients whose disease will no longer respond to the treatment," said oncologist Oreofe Odejide at the American Society of Clinical Oncology's annual meeting where results were presented.

Ciltacabtagene autoleucel "delivers remarkably effective outcomes compared to patients' current options" and "can be used safely earlier in the treatment phase," added Odejide, an expert who was not part of the research.

Multiple myeloma affects a type of white blood cells called plasma cells, and can cause cascading harms to the bones, kidneys, and immune health.

It affects seven people out of 100,000 every year, according to the Cleveland Clinic, with 100,000 people impacted in the United States. There is currently no cure, though progression can be stopped for a long time.

Risk increases with age, with men more likely to be affected than women, and Black people at higher risk than other races. Not everyone requires immediate treatment and the disease may be monitored if it is slow growing.

In the new clinical trial, half the patients were randomly assigned ciltacabtagene autoleucel, while the other half received a cocktail of drugs that represents the current standard of care, including chemotherapy and steroids.

"After a median follow-up of 16 months, the researchers found that ciltacabtagene autoleucel reduced the risk of disease progression by 74 percent, compared with the standard-of-care treatments," a press statement said

Ciltacabtagene autoleucel is a type of chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) T-cell therapy, a newer form of treatment. CAR T-cell therapy involves removing the patient's disease fighting T cells, and genetically engineering them in a lab so they have specific proteins known as receptors that, once returned to the body, will seek out and destroy cancer cells.



Seoane Appointed Borussia Moenchengladbach Coach

RANKFURT (Dispatches) - Gerardo Seoane has been appointed coach of Bundesliga side Borussia Moenchengladbach in place of Daniel Farke, the German club announced.

The 44-year-old Swiss manager, who was in charge of Bundesliga rivals Bayer Leverkusen until last October, has signed a contract until 2026.

"He's a young coach, but one with lots of experience. He plays the style of football we want to see here," said Roland Virkus, Gladbach's managing director for sport.

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Sevilla Extend Mendilibar's **Contract Till 2024**

CEVILLE (Dispatches) - Europa League champions Sevilla have extended coach Jose Luis Mendilibar's contract until June 2024, the Spanish side said Tuesday.

Mendilibar arrived in March on a short-term deal until the end of the season, aiming to help the team avoid relegation.

Mendilibar dragged Sevilla up the table to a 12th place finish and guided them to a record-extending seventh Europa League trophy.

SPORTS 8 IRAN NEWS **THURSDAY JUNE 8, 2023**

Miami Heat Battle to Take Game 2 of NBA Finals

 $M^{\rm IAMI}$ (Dispatches) - Duncan Robinson caught fire in the fourth quarter of Game 2 of the NBA Finals, tipping the Miami Heat over the line against Denver Nuggets and evening the series out 1-1 on the road. Robinson scored all 10 of his points in the fourth quarter but it was also about the evolution of his game that caught Denver out.

A couple of years ago, Miami Heat rewarded Robinson with a \$90 million contract. There are many facets to the game at NBA level, but Robinson was a master-of-one type of player – shooting the ball. Ask him to be a playmaker, or cut inside and finish at the rim and the 6'7 small forward would shrink in size. Last year, Miami took him off their rotation because most teams at this level figure out how to defend players with only one

This year in the playoffs, Robinson has shown that he isn't just a shooter. In the fourth quarter against Denver, he brought the Heat back into contention with two three-pointers. But it was the other four points that he scored, slashing towards the rim and finishing despite bigger Denver presence in the paint, that essentially allowed Miami to gain the lead early in the fourth quarter – a lead they never relinquished.

Lost in the Miami win was the optics of Denver centre Nikola Jokic's 41-point performance. The big man took advantage of his superior height over a Miami team that's built small, and scored on 16 of his 28 shot attempts, while also making seven of his eight free throws. But it was his four assists that caught the eye.

Jokic is unique in the sense that he is a seven-foot centre who can pass the ball, finish at the rim, and shoot enough threes to keep defenders honest. The 2022 NBA regular season MVP is almost quarterback-like in his ability to dictate the game. Miami brought down Jokic's assists in Game 2 – in fact the Serbian had more turnovers (5) than assists. In the regular season, Denver won three games but lost seven when Jokic had less than six assists. By making a defensive adjustment and bringing in Kevin Love into the starting lineup.

The change allowed Jimmy Butler, one of



game, Heat restricted Jokic into purely scoring and gave up 41 points, but negated his overall impact on the game.

Miami shot a staggering 48.6 percent from the three-point range. That barrage came thanks to a shooting clinic from Max Struss in the first quarter when the guard kept on downing three-pointer after three-pointer. At the end of the game, Struss went 4 out of 10 from three-point range, while his teammate Gabe Vincent shot 4 out of 6 from three as well. Miami's shooters came prepared in Game 2 after a poor Game 1 where the team shot a combined 33.3 percent from deep. In Game 1, both Caleb Martin and Struss had combined for 1-17 from the field – a poor shooting effort that allowed Denver to run away with that contest.

Miami were also far more successful in forcing fouls out of Denver, going to the line 20 times in Game 2, a far cry from the two attempts they managed from free throws. "We faced a lot of adversity during the season," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said after the game. "We handled it the right way where you are not making excuses about it, the injuries, the changing line-ups. Because of all that adversity and the 57 close games that happened, due to a lot of that, it hardened us. It steeled us, and we developed some grit, which is what we all want."



RIYADH (Dispatches) - Real Madrid's Ballon d'Or winner Karim Benzema has signed for Saudi Arabia's Al-Ittihad for three years starting next season, a source in the Jeddah-based club told AFP today.

"Benzema has signed a contract for his transfer to Al-Ittihad for a three-year period starting next season," the source said.

The announcement comes days after Real Madrid announced that the 35-yearold was leaving the club after 14 seasons, the day after coach Carlo Ancelotti had said there was "no doubt" Benzema's future was in the Spanish capital.

Benzema is in line to join Cristiano Ronaldo in the Gulf kingdom after the Portuguese five-time world player of the year moved to Al Nassr from Manchester United following last year's World Cup. Lionel Messi, who is leaving Paris

been linked to a move to Saudi Arabia. Senior officials from Saudi Arabia's Al Hilal have flown to France to try and seal a deal for Messi after the 35-yearold Argentinian played his last game for

PSG at the weekend.

Saint-Germain after two seasons, has also

Svitolina Accuses Sabalenka of **Inflaming Tensions**

PARIS (Dispatches) - Elina Svitolina accused Aryna Sabalenka of deliberately "inflaming" the tense stand-off between Ukraine and Belarus players at the French Open by staring her down at the net.

Sabalenka won their quarter-final 6-4, 6-4 and then approached the net in expectation of a handshake which Svitolina had already insisted she was not going to offer.

All Ukraine players refuse to shake hands with Russian and Belarusian rivals in protest at the ongoing war.

Svitolina was as good as her word, ignoring the world number two, who was leaning on the net, and calmly walked back to her chair.

Svitolina, however, was booed by the Court Philippe Chatrier crowd.

When asked if Sabalenka had inflamed the situation by standing at the net, Svitolina replied: "Yeah, I think so, unfortunately."

"I don't know why she was waiting, because my statements were clear enough about the handshake," added Svitolina, 28, who said she was not shocked by being jeered by a Paris crowd who had taken her to their hearts following her marriage to French player Gael Monfils.

"I was expecting that. Whoever in this situation loses, I guess, gets booed, so I was expecting that. It was not a surprise for me."

When she saw Sabalenka coming into the net on Tuesday, she thought: "What are you doing? I made my position clear." Sabalenka had defeated another Ukrainian Marta Kostyuk in the first round. Kostyuk also refused to shake hands and she too was booed.

"Maybe she's (Sabalenka) not on social media during the tournament, but it is pretty clear. She played Marta as well the first round. So is quite simple."

Svitolina said she and her compatriots will continue their stance in the grass court season which culminates in Wimbledon next month.

"I won't sell my country for the likes of people," she said.

Svitolina said Sabalenka should also be fined for refusing to attend two mandatory press conferences following her third and fourth round matches.

Miami's best defenders, to mark Jamal Murray, one of Jokic's best assist recipients. By choking Murray out of the

Djokovic Springs Into French Open Last Four

PARIS (Dispatches) - Novak Djokovic overcame a first-set blip to beat Russian Karen Khachanov 4-6 7-6(0) 6-2 6-4 and reach the French Open semi-finals, staying on course for a record-breaking 23rd men's singles Grand Slam title.

The twice Roland Garros champion could not find a weakness in the 11th-seeded Khachanov's serve at first, but once he took the second set tiebreak there was no looking back for the Serbian.

He will be closely watching the match between world number one Carlos Alcaraz and fifth seed Stefanos Tsitsipas, whose winner will be the last man standing between him and a seventh French Open final.

On a court Philippe Chatrier gradually being covered by the shade, the 36-year-old did not have a single break opportunity and looked a tad slow in the opening set, but his metronomic game eventually clicked and there was little Khachanov could do to top his opponent's march into the last four.

Khachanov stole Djokovic's serve to lead 3-2 and, although the world number three threatened in a 10-minute ninth game, the Russian held and went on to pocket the set. There were no break points in the second set but Khachanov started to struggle and paid

for his efforts, failing to score a point in the tiebreak as Djokovic levelled the contest. Djokovic got the early break thanks to a netcord in the third and stole Khachanov's serve again to move one set from victory with apparent ease.

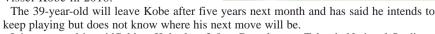
The Serbian broke again early in the fourth set, only to serve a double fault that allowed Khachanov to level for 4-4 and keep his slim hopes of an upset alive.

Coming back in the set cost Khachanov too much though and the Russian was broken to love in the following game, losing eight points in a row as Djokovic ended the contest with an ace.

Iniesta Enjoys Barcelona Send-Off In Japan

TOKYO (Dispatches) - Andres Iniesta ■ said it was "special" to face former club Barcelona in a friendly in Tokyo as he prepares to leave Japan and continue his illustrious playing career elsewhere.

Iniesta made over 600 appearances for Barcelona, winning the Champions League four times and claiming nine La Liga titles before joining Japan's Vissel Kobe in 2018.



Iniesta started in midfield as Kobe lost 2-0 to Barcelona at Tokyo's National Stadium, failing to get on the scoresheet but hitting the side-netting with a first-half shot.

He left the pitch in the 80th minute to warm applause before being given a hug on the touchline from Barcelona manager and former midfield partner Xavi. "Everything about it was great," said Iniesta.

"This game was about saying goodbye to the Japanese fans and paying my respects in giving back what they have given to me.

"I was able to achieve that so I'm very happy."

Iniesta and Xavi once ruled European football as Barcelona's midfield engine room and the two shared an emotional embrace as Iniesta left the pitch.

"Iniesta is now a veteran but he still showed in the game the quality he has," said Xavi. "For me he is always a fantastic player and someone who has been great for Spain and Barcelona."

The game kicked off less than 48 hours after Barcelona completed their domestic season, which saw them win the La Liga title 10 points ahead of Real Madrid.

Guardiola Warns Man City Against Champions League Final Arrogance

MANCHESTER (Dispatches) - Pep Guardiola has warned his Manchester City's stars that their confidence ahead of the Champions League final against Inter Milan cannot slip into arrogance as they aim to complete a historic treble.

Guardiola's men are one game away from becoming just the second side to win the Premier League, Champions League and

FA Cup in the same season. City are huge favorites for the clash in Istanbul on Saturday, having thrashed Bayern

Munich and Real Madrid on route to the final. By contrast, Inter finished a distant third in Serie A and enjoyed a less demanding passage

to the final as they beat Porto, Benfica and AC Milan. However, the Italians boast the richer European Cup heritage, with three triumphs to City's

none, and Guardiola has urged his team not to become complacent. "Of course we are confident, so optimistic, but at the same time I cannot deny the difficulties and qualities of the opponents," said Guardiola at City's pre-match

media day on Tuesday. "I have never done it and especially in the final of the Champions League."

City remain on course to match the treble achievement of Manchester United's class of 1998/99 by beating the Red Devils 2-1 in the FA Cup final on Saturday.

Guardiola said that was far better preparation for the Champions League final than their only previous appearance in the European showpiece two years when his side lost 1-0 against Chelsea in Porto.

But he insisted City's stunning form in the past four months will count for nothing when it comes to getting the job done at the Ataturk Stadium.