

Iran's Greco-Roman wrestlers become runner-up at world championships

championshipsTeheran (ISNA) - Iran's Greco-Roman wrestlers with gaining 102 points win the runner-up title at the 2023 Belgrade World Championships. Winning one gold, one silver and three bronze medals, and gaining a total of 102 points, the Iranian Greco-Roman wrestling team stood in second place in the world. Amin Mirzadeh won a gold medal in the 130 kg heavyweight division, Alireza Mohammadi won a silver medal in the weight of 82 kg division, Pooya Dadmarz in the 55 kg, Mohammad Reza Geraei in the 77 kg weight and Mohammad Hadi Saravi in 97 kg weight won bronze medals.

IRAN NEWS

Solyanka Port, Iran's Strategic Base in INSTC

IRAN NEW ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Solyanka Port is Iran's strategic base in the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), Iranian director of Solyanka Port said, adding that the port is a safe and reliable route for the supply of basic goods and commodities between Iran and Russia. Dariush Jamali put the amount of investment made by the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL), in addition to the initial purchasing of 53 percent of shares of the port, at \$10 million since 2022.

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Tehran-Jakarta Trade Volume Stands at \$1b

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK



TEHRAN - The annual trade between Iran and Indonesia currently stands at about \$1 billion, announced Rouhollah Dehqani-Firouzabadi, the vice president for science and technology. Speaking at a ceremony held by the Indonesian Embassy in Tehran to celebrate the 78th anniversary of the country's Independence Day, the official said both countries are seeking to deepen cooperation in political, economic, commercial, energy, scientific, technological, cultural, military and security areas. Pointing to friendly political relations between Tehran and Jakarta, Dehqani-Firouzabadi noted that the two sides are taking initiatives to pave the ground to enhance bilateral relations. "The clear example of this political relation is the recent visit of President Raisi to Indonesia and meeting his counterpart, which marks a turning point in bilateral relations and the beginning of a new chapter in ties between our two nations," the official noted. He said that the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Indonesia are seeking to deepen cooperation in various political, economic, commercial, energy, scientific, technological, cultural, military and security areas. Speaking at the ceremony, Indonesian Ambassador to Tehran Ronny Prasetyo Yuliantoro said Indonesia and Iran have shared deep-rooted historical and cultural ties that have evolved into a dynamic partnership encompassing various sectors such as trade, culture, education, and people-to-people exchanges. "Government-to-government cooperation remains an essential component of our bilateral relationship," the envoy noted. "We have actively engaged in diplomatic discussions to address various challenges and opportunities based on mutual respect and understanding."

60% Uranium Enrichment Just a Response to Europeans' Lack of Commitment to JCPOA

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK



TEHRAN - President Ebrahim Raisi says Iran's uranium enrichment to the purity level of 60% was in response to the lack of commitment by the European parties to the 2015 nuclear agreement. Raisi made the statement in an interview with the CNN's Fareed Zakaria on the sidelines of the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. "In the beginning, we were not seeking 60% levels of enrichment. They (European states) trampled upon their commitments," the Iranian president said. "What the Islamic Republic of Iran did was in response to a breaking of commitment of the signatories to the (2015) agreement." Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami announced in June that enriching uranium to the said purity level was in accordance with a December 2020 parliamentary law - the Strategic Action Plan to Counter Sanctions. The law was passed with the purpose of removing anti-Iran sanctions as well as the production of radiopharmaceuticals and detectors, among other aims. In the interview, Raisi categorically rejected the country's enrichment of uranium to near weapons-grade levels, saying, "It was officially announced that the action that we intend to take is not intended to reach nuclear weapons of any type or a military dimension of any type, but it is... a response for the lack of commitment demonstrated by the Europeans." He also reiterated Tehran's long-standing conviction that the Islamic Republic does not plan to acquire a nuclear bomb. In the interview with CNN, Raisi said the U.S.-mediated efforts to normalize Israeli relations with Persian Gulf Arab states, including Saudi Arabia, "will see no success." President Biden declared on July 28 that a deal for Israel and Saudi Arabia to normalize relations may be on the horizon following National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan's talks with Saudi officials in Jeddah. In order to sign a deal with Israel, Riyadh publicly asked Tel Aviv to implement the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative to establish a Palestinian state first.

Iran Constantly Receiving Positive Messages From U.S.



TEHRAN (MNA) - Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian says that Tehran is constantly receiving positive messages from Washington but it makes judgments based on the Americans' actions. In an interview before leaving New York for Tehran, the top Iranian diplomat cited that he has discussed the issue of JCPOA revival with his Omani counterpart. Any plan and initiative that secures the interests of the Iranian nation, respects Tehran's red lines, and leads to the removal of sanctions and the return of all parties to their obligations, can be considered by Tehran, he said.

Dubbing the implementation of the recent agreement between Tehran and Washington last week a positive event, the Iranian foreign minister added, "Naturally, the exchange of messages between the two parties is not a new issue, but we have to see what will happen in the coming weeks." "We will continue our efforts to lift the sanctions through diplomacy and negotiation," he continued, adding that Iran will never tolerate the US' hypocritical behavior. The positive approach and constructive measures of other parties is an important issue in reaching an agreement, he underlined. He went on to say that the Sultan of Oman's initiative is in the framework of a method to accelerate and help all parties return to their commitments in the JCPOA, and it does not mean that the initiative holds a new design or text. Multilateral diplomatic efforts to revive the JCPOA have been stalled since August 2022, with Iran blaming the United States for refusing to remove the sanctions that the nuclear deal had lifted and also failing to guarantee that it will not leave the deal again.



Economic Growth at 7.9% in y/y in H1

TEHRAN (IRNA) - According to a new report by the Statistical Center of Iran (SCI), the country's economy grew by 7.9% in the first three months of the Iranian calendar year (March 21 to June 21) compared to the same period in 2022. The latest SCI report which was published on Monday showed that Iran's gross domestic product (GDP) rose to 2,144 trillion rials in the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-June 21). The data showed that Iran's GDP without oil had increased to 1,818 trillion rials in the same period, up 6.1% from the June quarter of 2022. The SCI said Iran's agriculture sector had contracted by 4.6% while industry and mining sector grew by 7.3% and the services sector reported an expansion of 9.3% over the quarter to late June.



IRGC Develops Water Landing Drone Capable of Carrying Bombs, Missiles

TEHRAN (PressTV) - The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy experts have developed unmanned aerial vehicles capable of landing on water and carrying missiles and bombs, according to the commander. Rear Admiral Ali Reza Tangsiri said on Sunday that the combat drones are also capable of taking off from water. "The IRGC Navy has also produced hybrid drones that have two separate engines for launch and propulsion," he added. These drones can perform patrol and reconnaissance operations for up to 15 hours, Tangsiri stated, noting that they will join the IRGC Navy's fleet in the near future. Last month, the IRGC Navy took delivery of sophisticated homegrown missile systems, unmanned aerial vehicles, and armament featuring state-of-the-art technologies suitable for electronic warfare. Various types of reconnaissance and combat drones, as well as different types of armored command and logistics vehicles, surveillance systems, and electronic warfare systems, were among the new homegrown armament. The IRGC Navy also took delivery of different types of cruise missile launcher trucks, radar and command systems, and several hundred cruise and ballistic missiles with ranges between 300 and 1,000 kilometers. Iranian military experts and engineers have in recent years made remarkable breakthroughs in manufacturing a broad range of indigenous equipment, making the armed forces self-sufficient.

Tehran Accuses UAE of Violating Int'l Law Over PG Trio Islands

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iran's permanent mission to the United Nations has dismissed as "baseless" claims by the United Arab Emirates over three Persian Gulf islands, saying such statements are a "flagrant violation of international law and the UN Charter." "Iran regards such groundless statements as violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of a member of the United Nations and a gross violation of international law and the United Nations Charter," the mission said on Sunday. The mission issued the statement in response to latest remarks by the UAE's Minister of State for International Cooperation Reem Al Hashimy, who renewed her country's demand that Iran should end "occupation" of the islands of Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb, and Abu Musa. Speaking at the 78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, Hashimy said the UAE will "continue to seek a resolution, either through direct negotiation or through the International Court of Justice. This has been our firm stance for decades." The Iranian diplomatic mission said it is regrettable that the Emirati representatives repeat such an unfounded claim about the three Iranian islands in the Persian Gulf in the General Assembly session every year. It added that the three islands have always been an integral part of the Iranian territory and will remain so. "Any claim contrary to this fact is invalid."

Private Sector Urged Not to Lose Iraqi Market

TEHRA - Yahya Al-e Eshaq, the chairman of Iran-Iraq Joint Chamber of Commerce, has called on the Iranian private sector not to lose the potentials of the Iraqi market. Speaking in an exclusive interview with Iran Chamber of Commerce Newsroom, Al-e Eshaq cautioned

that other rival countries are entering the Iraqi market and if Iran fails to act in a calculated way, it will lose the potentials of this market. He noted that Iraq has plans to invest as much as \$150 billion a year in their infrastructural projects within the next three years, adding that Iran

can have a 30 to 50 billion dollars share of this investment. Al-e Eshaq urged the Iranian private sector to invest in Iraq as he said 70% of the Iraqi constructional projects rely on imports. He also called on the private sector actors of Iran to take risks and make investments in the Iraqi

technical and engineering and tourism projects. The businessman also touched upon the problems hindering financial exchanges between Tehran and Baghdad, stressing that there are different solutions to these problems and the country has experts who can resolve the issue.

SYDNEY (Reuters) - Support for a referendum to constitutionally recognise Australia's Indigenous people slipped further, with the landmark proposal set to fail in a national vote roughly three weeks away, two opinion polls showed. Support for a "Voice to Parliament", an Indigenous committee to advise parliament on matters affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people, fell to 33%, down 15 points since May, the Australian Financial Review (AFR)/Freshwater poll showed. The 'No' vote had reached 50%. Despite the Anthony

Albanese-led Labor government's campaign drive to win undecided voters, opposition to the referendum rose three points to 56%, a Newspoll conducted for The Australian newspaper showed. Support dipped to 36% from 38% in the previous poll on Sept. 3. Altering the constitution requires a national referendum in Australia and only eight have passed since 1901 when the country was formed. The proposal must get a majority of votes nationwide and at least four of the six states must back the change.

Polls Show Australia Indigenous Referendum Support Slipping, Likely to Fail

EU Trade Chief Warns Businesses Questioning Future in China

BEIJING (Dispatches) - The EU's trade chief told Beijing on Monday that tough security laws and a more "politicised" business environment have left European companies struggling to understand their obligations and questioning their future in China. China's refusal to condemn ally Russia for its war in Ukraine also poses a "reputational risk" for the world's second-largest economy, Trade Commissioner Valdis Dombrovskis said in a speech at Beijing's Tsinghua University. He said transparency and openness were "a winning strategy in the long run", at a time when trade tensions between the European bloc and China are mounting. "China is navigating a challenging transition from an investment-led economy to a broad-based economy," he said. "For this it needs to remain open." Dombrovskis's four-day trip, which kicked off Saturday, follows a report by the EU Chamber of Commerce that showed business confidence was at one of its lowest levels in years. It also follows Brussels' decision to launch a probe into Beijing's electric car subsidies. The investigation could see the EU try to protect European carmakers by imposing punitive tariffs on vehicles it believes are unfairly sold at a

lower price. China's commerce ministry has condemned the EU's "naked protectionism", and said the measures "will have a negative impact on China-EU economic and trade relations". On Monday, Dombrovskis insisted China remained an attractive investment opportunity for European businesses. "The EU and China both benefited immensely from being open to the world," he said, adding that "European companies still want to invest here -- but only if the conditions are right." Growing challenges for European business in China mean that "what many saw as a 'win-win' relationship in past decades could become a 'lose-lose' dynamic in the coming years", the commissioner said. A new foreign relations law aimed, in part, at combating foreign sanctions and a recent update to China's tough anti-spying regulations are of "great concern to our business community", Dombrovskis said. "Their ambiguity allows too much room for interpretation," he warned. "This means European companies struggle to understand their compliance obligations: a factor that significantly decreases business confidence and deters new investments in China." He also criticised China's refusal to condemn Russia's war in Ukraine, which he



said "is affecting the country's image, not only with European consumers, but also businesses". China has sought to position itself as a neutral party in the Ukraine conflict, while offering Moscow a vital diplomatic and financial lifeline as its international isolation deepens. Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Moscow in March, while Russian leader Vladimir Putin is due to visit China next month. "Territorial integrity has always been a key principle for China in international diplomacy. Russia's war is a blatant breach of this principle," Dombrovskis said. "So it's very difficult for us to understand China's stance on Russia's war against Ukraine, as it breaches China's own fundamental principles."

Philippines Condemns Chinese Floating Barrier in South China Sea

MANILA (Dispatches) - The Philippines accused China's coast guard of installing a "floating barrier" in a disputed area of the South China Sea, saying it prevented Filipinos from entering and fishing in the area. Manila's coast guard and Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources "strongly condemn" China's installation of the barrier in part of the Scarborough Shoal, Commodore Jay Tarriela, a coast guard spokesperson, posted on the X social media platform, formerly Twitter. The barrier blocking fishermen

from the shoal was depriving them of their fishing and livelihood activities, he said. "The (Philippine Coast Guard) will continue to work closely with all concerned government agencies to address these challenges, uphold our maritime rights and protect our maritime domains," Tarriela said. The Chinese embassy in Manila did not immediately reply to requests for comment. China claims 90% of the South China Sea, overlapping with the exclusive economic zones of Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, Indonesia and the Philippines. Beijing seized the Scarborough Shoal in 2012 and forced fishermen from the Philippines to travel further for smaller catches. Beijing allowed Filipino fishermen to return to the uninhabited

shoal when bilateral relations were improving markedly under then-President Rodrigo Duterte. But tension has mounted again since his successor, Ferdinand Marcos Jr, took office last year. Philippine coast guard and fisheries bureau personnel discovered the floating barrier, estimated at 300 m (1,000 feet) long, on a routine patrol on Friday near the shoal, locally known as Bajo de Masinloc, Tarriela said. Three Chinese coast guard rigid-hull inflatable boats and a Chinese maritime militia service boat installed the barrier when the Philippine vessel arrived, he said. Filipino fishermen say China typically installs such barriers when they monitor a large number of fishermen in the area, Tarriela said.



Evo Morales Announces Candidacy for 2025 Bolivia Presidential Elections

LA PAZ (Dispatches) - Former Bolivia President Evo Morales will stand in the South American country's elections in 2025, he said in a message on social media platform X, adding that he has been "obliged" by attacks against him. The announcement confirms a rift between Morales, one of Latin America's most prominent leftists, and Bolivia's sitting President Luis Arce, his former economy minister turned rival within the ruling MAS party. "Forced by the government's attacks ... I've decided to accept the requests of our members and of so many brothers and sisters who attend rallies throughout the country to be a candidate for the presidency of our beloved Bolivia," Morales said. Morales, an Indigenous former coca farmer who led Bolivia for nearly 14 years, departed under a cloud in November 2019 after he ran for an unprecedented fourth term in an election marred by allegations of fraud. Morales fled the country and claimed he was the victim of a right-wing "coup" that was backed by the United States. After an 11-month caretaker government, Arce won a landslide election victory in October 2020, paving the way for Morales to return home.

France to Pull Troops out of Niger Following Coup



PARIS (Dispatches) - France will pull its soldiers out of Niger following a July coup in the West African country, President Emmanuel Macron said, dealing a huge blow to French influence and counter-insurgency operations in the Sahel region. Macron said 1,500 troops would withdraw by the end of the year and that France, the former colonial power in Niger, refused to "be held hostage by the putschists". France's exit, which comes after weeks of pressure from the junta and popular demonstrations, is likely to exacerbate Western concerns over Russia's expanding influence in Africa. The Russian mercenary force Wagner already present in Niger's neighbour Mali. The French president has refused to recognise the junta as Niger's legitimate authority but said Paris would coordinate troop withdrawal with the coup leaders. "We will consult with the putschists because we want things to be orderly," Macron said in an interview with France's TF1 and France 2 television stations. France's ambassador was also being pulled out and would return to the country in the next few hours, Macron added. French influence over its former colonies has waned in West Africa in

recent years, just as popular vitriol has grown. Its forces have been kicked out of neighbouring Mali and Burkina Faso since coups in those countries, reducing its role in a region-wide fight against deadly Islamist insurgencies. Until the coup, Niger had remained a key security partner of France and the United States, which have used it as a base to fight an Islamist insurgency in West and Central Africa's wider Sahel region. France's military base in Niger's capital, Niamey, had become the epicentre of anti-French protests since the July 26 coup. Groups have regularly gathered on the street outside to call for the exit of troops stationed in the capital. On one Saturday this month, tens of thousands rallied against France, slitting the throat of a goat dressed in French colours and carrying coffins draped in French flags. Pro-coup demonstrators in Niamey have waved Russian flags, adding to Western countries' fears that Niger could follow Mali's lead and replace their troops with Wagner fighters. Before his death in a plane crash last month, Russian mercenary chief Yevgeny Prigozhin spoke in a social media clip of making Russia greater on all continents and Africa more free. Wagner's future has been unclear since his demise. Wagner is also active in Central African Republic and Libya. Western nations say it is also present in Sudan, though it denies this. Russian President Vladimir Putin has called for a return to constitutional order in Niger. French nuclear power plants source a small amount - less than 10% - of their uranium from Niger, with France's state-owned Orano operating a mine in Niger's north. Macron said he still regarded democratically elected President Mohammed Bazoum, currently held prisoner by the coup leaders, as Niger's legitimate leader and had informed him of his decision.

North Korea Says Cooperation With Russia Natural for Neighbors

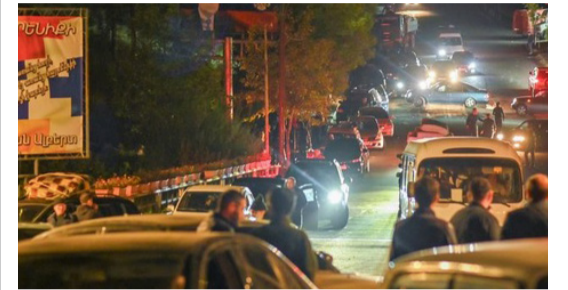
SEOUL (Dispatches) - North Korea slammed South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol for criticising its cooperation with Moscow following leader Kim Jong Un's Russia visit, saying it is "natural" and "normal" for neighbors to keep close relations. Yoon, speaking at the U.N. General Assembly last week, said that if Russia helped North Korea enhance its weapons programs in return for assistance for its war in Ukraine, it would be "a direct provocation." In a piece carried by KCNA news agency, the North denounced Yoon for "malignantly" slandering its friendly cooperation with Russia, and said Yoon was serving as a "loudspeaker" for the United States. "It is quite natural and normal for neighbouring countries to keep

close relations with each other, and there is no reason to call such practice to account," it said. Kim returned home last week from a week-long trip to Russia in which he and Russian President Vladimir Putin agreed to boost military and economic cooperation. U.S. and South Korean officials have expressed concern that Russia could be trying to acquire ammunition from the North to supplement its dwindling stocks for the war in Ukraine while Pyongyang seeks technological help for its nuclear and missile programs. Any activities assisting North Korea's weapons programs are banned under U.N. Security Council resolutions. "The foreign policy of the DPRK ... will not be tied to anything, and its friendly and cooperative relations with the close



neighbors will continue to grow stronger," the commentary said. DPRK is the initials of the North's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Nagorno-Karabakh's Armenians Start to Leave en Masse for Armenia



STEPANAKERT (Reuters) - Ethnic Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh began a mass exodus by car on Sunday toward Armenia after Azerbaijan defeated the breakaway region's fighters in a conflict dating from the Soviet era. The Nagorno-Karabakh leadership told Reuters the region's 120,000 Armenians did not want to live as part of Azerbaijan for fear of persecution and ethnic cleansing. Those with fuel had started to drive down the Lachin corridor toward the border with Armenia, according to a Reuters reporter in the Karabakh capital known as Stepanakert by Armenia and Khankendi by Azerbaijan. An Armenian government statement said 1,050 people had crossed into Armenia from Nagorno-Karabakh as of 10 p.m. (1800 GMT) on Sunday. Reuters pictures showed dozens of cars driving out of the capital toward the corridor's mountainous curves. The Armenians of Karabakh, a territory internationally recognised as part of Azerbaijan but previously beyond its control, were forced into a ceasefire last week after a 24-hour military operation by the much-larger Azerbaijani military. Armenia and Azerbaijan have fought two wars over the enclave in 30 years -- with Azerbaijan gaining back swathes of territory in and around Nagorno-Karabakh in a six-week conflict in 2020. Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan, who backed the Azeris with weaponry in the 2020 conflict, was due on Monday to meet Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev in Nakhchivan -- a strip of Azeri territory nestled between Armenia, Iran and Turkey. Erdogan last week said he supported the aims of Azerbaijan's latest military operation but played no part in it. The Armenians are not accepting Azerbaijan's promise to guarantee their rights as the region is integrated. "Ninety-nine point nine percent prefer to leave our historic lands," David Babayan, an adviser to Samvel Shahramanyan, president of the self-styled Republic of Artsakh, told Reuters. "The fate of our poor people will go down in history as a disgrace and a shame for the Armenian people and for the whole civilised world," Babayan said. "Those responsible for our fate will one day have to answer before God for their sins." The Armenian leaders of Karabakh said that all those made homeless by the Azerbaijani military operation and wanting to leave would be escorted to Armenia by Russian peacekeepers. Reuters reporters near the village of Komidzor on the Armenian border saw some heavily laden cars pass into Armenia. Armenia said 377 refugees had arrived by Sunday evening. Armenia Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has faced calls to resign for failing to save Karabakh. In an address to the nation, he said some aid had arrived but a mass exodus looked inevitable. "If proper conditions are not created for the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh to live in their homes and there are no effective protection mechanisms against ethnic cleansing, the likelihood is rising that the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh will see exile from their homeland as the only way to save their lives and identity," he said, according to an official transcript. The situation could change the delicate balance of power in the South Caucasus region, a patchwork of ethnicities crisscrossed with oil and gas pipelines where Russia, the United States, Turkey and Iran vie for influence.

French Center-Right Keeps Control of Senate

PARIS (Reuters) - France's center-right Les Republicains (LR) party maintained its majority in the Senate after Sunday's vote, in which three senators from Marine Le Pen's far-right party were elected. "This senatorial renewal reinforces the senatorial majority of the right and the center and is a testimony of its territorial roots," Gerard Larcher, the leader of Les Republicains and president of the senate, said in a statement. The Senate is indirectly elected by France's mayors as well as regional, departmental and municipal councillors. Half of the Senate's 348 seats were being contested. Le Pen's Rassemblement National had been widely expected to make a new breakthrough in the Senate but the score of three wins was above expectations.