

Referring to the Cancellation of Sepahan's Match Against Al-Ittihad (Saudi Arabia) in Isfahan, Iran FM Said the Relations Between Riyadh and Tehran Are Moving in the Right Direction, and Sports Should Not Become a Political Means From Both Sides

IRAN NEWS

Oil Minister Says the Newly-Discovered Oil and Gas Fields Include the Cheshm-e-Shoor Gas Field in Khorasan Razavi Province, Ilkan or Irkan Oil Field in Golestan Province, and Tangu and Gonaveh Oil Fields in Bushehr Province

VOL. XXIX, No. 7829 TEHRAN Price 50,000 Rials

www.irannewsdaily.com

THURSDAY OCTOBER 5, 2023 - MEHR 13, 1402

New FZ at Border With Iraqi Kurdistan Region to Be Launched Soon



TEHRAN (Dispatches) - The Secretary of Iran's Free Zones High Council announced that the Baneh-Marivan Free Zone located on the border with Iraq's Kurdistan Region is going to be opened in the coming weeks. As the Iranian Free Zones News Agency (Freana) reported, Hojatollah Abdolmaleki made the announcement in a press conference on the sidelines of Iran's exclusive exhibition in Sulaymaniyah, Kurdistan region. "The establishment of this free zone will play a special role in the development of cooperation between Iran and Kurdistan," Abdolmaleki said. Stating that the Baneh-Marivan Free Zone has been legally approved and the members of the board of directors have also been elected by the cabinet, Abdolmaleki added: "This zone is an opportunity for boosting joint economic activities between Iran and Iraq, and businessmen and economic operators of the region can benefit from the potentials of this free zone." The exclusive exhibition of Iranian products kicked off in Sulaymaniyah of Iraqi Kurdistan on Tuesday. The opening ceremony of the exhibition was attended by senior officials from both sides including Abdolmaleki, the secretary general of the Iran-Iraq Joint Chamber of Commerce, the Iranian envoy in Sulaymaniyah, and the head of the Union of Exporters and Importers of the Kurdistan Region.

Iran Has No Nuclear Activity Without IAEA Supervision



TEHRAN (MNA) - The head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami says that no nuclear activity is conducted in Iran which the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) does not supervise. Speaking on the sidelines of the cabinet meeting on Wednesday, Eslami said that the IAEA has 127 verified inspectors in Iran, and those who have been expelled have not come to Iran for years. Back in September, the International Atomic Energy Agency said that Iran had withdrawn accreditation from several inspectors, a move Tehran described as retaliation for "political abuses" by the United States, France, Germany, and Britain. "On the other hand, this number is nothing compared to the number of IAEA's official inspectors (in Iran)," Eslami stressed, adding that bolder Iran's move is only aimed at serving the West's political and psychological purposes. He went on to say that the reason behind the expulsion of the IAEA inspectors was their harsh political behavior. In response to the claim made by Director General of IAEA Rafael Grossi against Iran, Foreign Ministry Spokesman Nasser Kan'ani said that the United States and the three European parties to a 2015 nuclear agreement have abused the UN nuclear watchdog with the purpose of achieving their own political objectives. Earlier in September, IAEA's Board of Governors issued a Western-sponsored statement that accused Iran of non-compliance with its safeguards commitments. The document, signed by 62 member states of the agency, called upon Iran to take steps to address outstanding safeguards issues and provide the IAEA with information concerning its new nuclear facilities. Saying that Iran follows its own programs according to IAEA's regulations, Eslami added that Iran does not have any activity that the Agency does not supervise and is not aware of. Once the sanctions are lifted, Iran will also implement all the provisions of the JCPOA, he concluded.

Iran's Tea Leaves Production Up 42%



RASHT (IRNA) - The head of the Tea Organization of Iran has said that production of green tea leaves in Gilan and Mazandaran provinces, both located in northern Iran, has increased by 42% this year compared to the same period last year. Habib Jahansaz said that such the increase has been unprecedented. He added that appropriate pricing policies for green leaves by Iran's economy council - a 60% increase this year and 58% and 38% in the last two years - are among the reasons for the boosting the production of tea leaves in the country. Providing facilities for the cultivation and the return of 2,000 hectares of tea gardens to the production cycle and timely rains are among other reasons for the increase in green tea leaves production this year, he noted. During three stages, 133,180 metric tons of green tea leaves were harvested in Gilan and Mazandaran provinces and purchased by 169 factories, he said.

Iran Army Drone Keeps U.S. Warship Under Surveillance for 24 Hours in Indian Ocean

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK



TEHRAN - An Iranian Army drone has managed to keep an American warship under surveillance for around 24 hours in the Indian Ocean. Reporting on Tuesday, Iran's Fars News Agency said that the Ababil (Flock of Birds)-V drone had managed to conduct the operation against an American Arleigh Burke-class destroyer in the northern part of the body of water. The aircraft reportedly took off from a base located on the southern Iranian island of Jask before heading to conduct the surveillance mission against the US vessel. The Ababil-class unmanned aerial vehicle is hard to detect by reconnaissance apparatuses since its body is capable of absorbing radar signals. The aircraft can carry up to six surgical strike missiles with highly explosive warheads. Ababil-5 is among the aircraft that are currently being deployed by the Army as part of a countrywide drone drill. The maneuvers are underway featuring hundreds of sophisticated reconnaissance and combat drones. This is not the first time Iranian drones have managed to retrieve accurate images and footage of seaborne American military assets. In April 2021, Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) released strikingly precise and close footage of an American aircraft carrier captured by the elite force's drones during an overflight of the vessel in the Persian Gulf. The video recorded by an apparently four-strong drone squadron, provided real-time and remarkably close details of every warplane as well as other military aircraft and equipment that had been deployed on the carrier's deck. Testifying before the US Congress that year, the head of the United States Central Command, General Kenneth McKenzie said Iran's widespread use of drones meant that the US was operating without complete air superiority for the first time since the Korean War. In 2019, Iranian media outlets released high-quality and close-up footage that showed an Ababil-III surveillance drone belonging to the Corps flying over the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower aircraft carrier in the Persian Gulf.

Iran Urges Decisive, Wise Action Against Acts of Islamophobia



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian has urged Islamic scholars across the global Muslim community to take "decisive and wise" action to confront acts of Islamophobia around the world. The top diplomat made the remarks in Tehran on Tuesday, meeting with Mustapha Sano, the visiting secretary-general of the International Islamic Fiqh (Jurisprudence) Academy (IIFA) of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Amir-Abdollahian proposed consultation and coordination among the scholars in question toward confrontation against "insidious and profane" measures that have been targeting the Islamic sanctities and values. He announced the Islamic Republic's readiness to cooperate with the IIFA in this regard. Several cities across the Netherlands, Sweden, and Denmark have witnessed instances of desecration of the Holy Qur'an since the beginning of the year. The blasphemous gestures, all of which have taken place with the go-ahead given by the countries' respective governments and amid protection provided by their security forces, have opened the floodgates of protest across the Muslim world. For his part, the OIC official pointed to the Islamic Republic's "important and influential" role across the Muslim world. He thanked the country for its "valuable efforts" towards reinforcing unity across the international Muslim community and the convergence of various Islamic faiths. Sano presented the Iranian foreign minister with a report on the IIFA's activities and welcomed a stronger presence on the part of Iranian scholars and thinkers in the academy's programs.

Iran Developing Pars-2 Satellite



TEHRAN (IRNA) - Head of the Iranian Space Agency Hassan Salariyeh says the process of building the Pars-2 satellite has started in cooperation between Iran Electronics Industries and the Iranian Space Research Center. "Since the beginning of this year, we have announced and started the development of several micro- and mini-satellites," Salariyeh said at a press conference on Wednesday, marking the beginning of the national Space Week. "The development of Pars-2 and Pars-3 satellites has started in cooperation with Iran Electronics Industries and Iranian Space Research Center," he said, explaining that the development of the Pars-3 satellite is in the preliminary design phase. The remarks came a week after Iran successfully launched Nour-3 imaging satellite into orbit, as the country moves ahead with plans to expand the use of satellites for research and management activities.

National Currencies Drive 90% of Iran-Russia Trade Transactions

MOSCOW (IRNA) - The share of national currencies in commercial transactions between Russia and Iran has increased to 90 percent, according to the head of Russia's Federation Council Committee on the Budget and Financial Markets. Speaking at a meeting with the head members of the Iranian Parliament's Planning, Budget and Research Committee in Moscow on Tuesday, Anatoly Artamonov said the two countries settle their mutual payments using national currencies. The use of national currencies in bilateral trade is the result of an agreement between the governors of the central banks of Iran and Russia in the wake of the determination of the leaders of the two countries, he said. The Russian senator added that a secure channel for the exchange of financial information between the two countries has also been established. Tehran and Moscow have been increasingly moving away from the US dollar, using their national currencies - Iran's rial and Russia's ruble - to conduct mutual settlements.

Iran Praises 3+3 as Effective Mechanism for Resolving Issues in Caucasus Region

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's foreign minister has underlined the sovereignty and territorial integrity of regional countries, supporting the 3+3 format as an effective mechanism for resolving disputes in the Caucasus region without foreign interference. Hossein Amir-Abdollahian made the remark in a meeting with Armen Grigoryan, the secretary of the National Security Council of Armenia, in Tehran on Tuesday as the two discussed the latest developments in the region and the 3+3 cooperation format, which includes the three South Caucasus countries of Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan plus Russia, Turkey, and Iran. Amir-Abdollahian underscored the Islamic Republic's principled and unchanging policy to safeguard international borders and territorial integrity of regional countries. The top Iranian diplomat emphasized the need to resolve regional issues through cooperation among countries of the region, calling the 3+3 format an "effective mechanism to resolve regional issues without interference of foreign powers." Amir-Abdollahian also expressed Iran's readiness to send humanitarian aid to the internally-displaced people in Nagorno-Karabakh, a landlocked disputed region in Caucasus that lies within Azerbaijan's borders. The region has always been internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan though it is mostly populated by ethnic Armenians, who have resisted Azerbaijan's sovereignty over the territory. Last month, Azerbaijan launched an operation to seize control of the breakaway territory and end a three-decade-old conflict. The operation ended on September 20, after the Azerbaijani military routed Armenian forces in 24 hours and made the separatists agree to lay down weapons,

under a Russian-mediated ceasefire. In the meeting, Amir-Abdollahian expressed his satisfaction with the growing trend of Iran-Armenia relations and expressed hope that the volume of trade between the two countries will increase to the targeted level of three billion dollars by expediting the implementation of joint agreements. The Iranian foreign minister also placed a premium on devising a comprehensive and long-term cooperation document to expand and deepen bilateral relations. Grigoryan, for his part, lauded the growing economic relations between the two countries and in line with the goals set by Tehran and Yerevan. The Armenian security chief expressed his gratitude for the principled positions of Iran in supporting the territorial integrity of Armenia and welcomed the 3+3 negotiation framework. "Armenia is determined to expand and deepen its relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran," Grigoryan said, adding, "It regards as important and constructive Iran's role in the developments in the South Caucasus and the establishment of lasting peace [in the region]." Earlier in the day, Armenia received more than 50 tons of humanitarian aid from Iran, including tents, blankets, food, heaters, sanitary packages and other basic needs for displaced people.



LICENCE HOLDER: SOKHAN GOSTAR INSTITUTE

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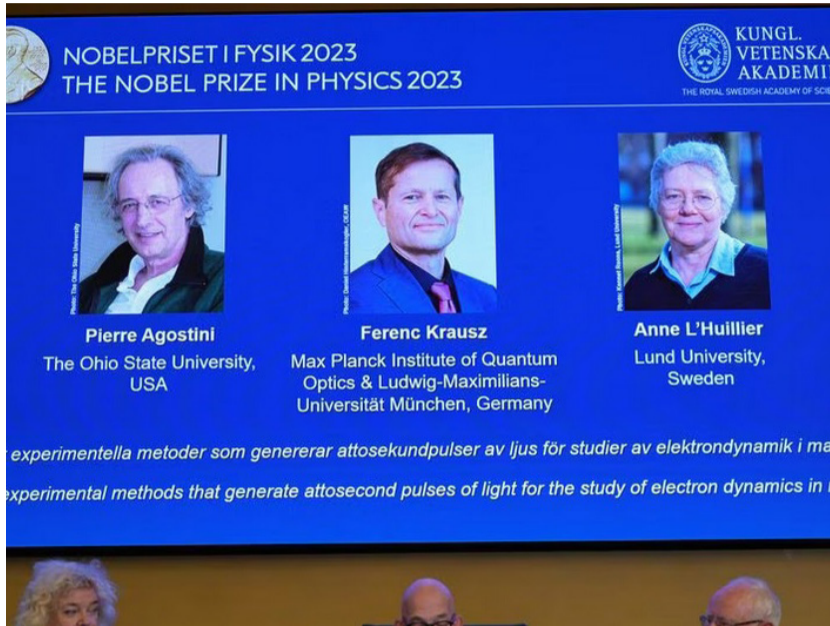
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 ISSN 1024-6053 P.O. Box: 15875-8551
 Address: No 13, Pajouhesh St., Golestan II St,

Golestan St. Marzadaran Blvd., Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
 Distributed by: Cities of Iran Cultural and Artistic Institute
 Managing Director: Fereydoon Taherpour Asl



Nobel Physics Prize Goes to Trio Who Lit Up Secrets of the Atom

STOCKHOLM (Dispatches) - Scientists Pierre Agostini, Ferenc Krausz and Anne L'Huillier won the 2023 Nobel Prize in Physics for creating ultra-short pulses of light that can give a snapshot of changes within atoms, potentially leading to better detection of disease. The prize-awarding academy said their studies had given humanity new tools for exploring the movement of electrons inside atoms and molecules, a phenomenon that was long thought impossible to trace. Changes in electrons occur in a few tenths of an attosecond, a unit so short that there are as many attoseconds in one second as there have been seconds since the birth of the universe. "The ability to generate attosecond pulses of light has opened the door on a tiny, extremely tiny, time scale and it's also opened the door to the world of electrons," said Eva Olsson, member of the Nobel Prize in Physics Selection Committee. There are potential applications of the findings in many different areas. In electronics, it is important to understand and control how electrons behave in a material. The field also holds promise in areas such as a new in-vitro diagnostic technique to detect characteristic molecular traces of diseases in blood samples, the academy said. Hungarian-born Krausz, whose team generated the first ultra-fast pulses in the early 2000s, has likened attosecond physics to a fast-shutter camera where the short light flashes allow a freeze frame look within the microcosm. "Just as you try to photograph a Formula 1 racing car with a fast camera, for example, as it runs through the finish line. You need a camera to take sharp snapshots and reconstruct the movement," he told Reuters at the Max Planck Institute of Quantum Optics in Garching, Germany, where he is director. "This is exactly the concept we use for the fastest movements that happen in nature outside the atomic nucleus, which is the movement of electrons." L'Huillier, who received



word she had won the prize in the middle of a lecture, said, "it is really a prestigious prize and I'm so happy to get it. It's incredible." She proceeded with the lecture after the news, a half hour she described as "a bit difficult". Only the fifth woman to win a Nobel physics prize, French-born L'Huillier works at Lund University in Sweden, while Agostini, who was also born in France, is an emeritus professor at Ohio State University in the United States. The two French winners were congratulated by French President Emmanuel Macron, who said on social media: "What pride for our

Nation!" L'Huillier discovered a new effect from the interaction of laser light with atoms in a gas in experiments beginning in the 1980s. Agostini and Krausz then demonstrated how this could be used to create shorter light pulses than previously possible. While Krausz and his colleagues in Austria were working on a technique that could select a single pulse, Agostini and his group in France succeeded in producing and investigating a series of consecutive light pulses, like a train with carriages. These experiments all showed that attosecond pulses could be observed and measured, and could be used in new experiments. Krausz said he was trying to take in the reality of winning the award. "I did not expect it," he said. "I am overwhelmed." The academy was unable to immediately reach Agostini, who was in Paris, to give him the news. "My daughter called me and she was asking: 'Is it true you have the Nobel prize?'," he said in an interview at his Paris apartment. "Of course I told her, 'No, this can't be true'." Physics is the second Nobel to be awarded this week after Hungarian scientist Katalin Kariko and U.S. colleague Drew Weissman won the medicine prize for making mRNA molecule discoveries that paved the way for COVID-19 vaccines. Created in the will of dynamite inventor and businessman Alfred Nobel, the prizes for achievements in science, literature and peace have been awarded since 1901 with a few interruptions, becoming arguably the highest honour for scientists everywhere. While the award for peace can take the limelight, the physics prize has also often taken centre stage with winners such as Albert Einstein and awards for science that has fundamentally changed how we see the world. Announced on consecutive weekdays in early October, the physics prize announcement will be followed by ones for chemistry, literature, peace and economics, the latter a later addition to the original line-up.

Republican Hardliners Oust U.S. House Speaker in Historic Vote



WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - Kevin McCarthy was axed Tuesday as speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives in a brutal, historic rebellion by far-right Republicans accusing him of a string of broken promises and furious at his cooperation with Democrats. The maneuver laid bare the chaotic levels of infighting among Republicans heading into the 2024 presidential election, with its likely candidate Donald Trump making history of his own as the only former or sitting president to face criminal indictment. The first ouster of a speaker in the House's 234-year history was supported by only a handful of right-wing Republican hardliners. However, the House is almost evenly divided and with Democrats joining eight rebel Republicans rather than riding to McCarthy's rescue, he had no way to survive. "I ended up being the 55th speaker of the House -- one of the greatest honors. I loved every minute," a circumspect McCarthy told reporters after the vote, making clear he did not plan to stand again. "And the one thing I will tell you is doing the right thing isn't always easy, but it is necessary. I don't regret standing up for choosing governance over grievance." The 58-year-old former entrepreneur had sparked fury among conservatives when he passed a bipartisan stopgap funding measure at the weekend backed by the White House to avert a government shutdown. Florida conservative Matt Gaetz, who forced the removal vote, gambled that he could oust McCarthy with just a few Republicans, helped by Democrats loath to bail out a speaker who only recently opened a highly politicized impeachment inquiry into President Joe Biden. "The reason Kevin McCarthy went down today is because nobody trusts Kevin McCarthy," Gaetz said. "Kevin McCarthy has made multiple contradictory promises, and when they all came due, he lost." South Carolina Republican Nancy Mace revealed she, too, had soured on McCarthy over promises to put legislation up for a vote that were never honored. Democrats pointed to his decision to renege on a deal with Biden on spending limits agreed earlier this year in high-stakes talks over the federal budget. Biden issued a statement through his press secretary after McCarthy's overthrow urging the House to quickly choose a replacement, arguing that the urgent challenges facing the country "will not wait." The New Democrat Coalition, a bloc of pro-business Democratic lawmakers, described McCarthy as "simply not trustworthy." And Congressional Progressive Caucus chairwoman Pramila Jayapal, a leading leftist, vowed to let Republicans "wallow in their pigsty of incompetence" rather than rescue McCarthy. The tussle came just days after the House and Senate passed a measure to avert a costly government shutdown -- both with big bipartisan majorities -- by extending federal funding through mid-November. Conservatives were furious, seeing their chances dashed for forcing massive budget cuts. They accused McCarthy of a flip-flop, saying he'd promised an end to hastily prepared stopgap legislation, hammered out with the support of the opposition, and a return to budgeting through the committee process. With McCarthy out, a temporary speaker put the House into recess as Republicans gathered to discuss picking a replacement. The ousted speaker, who got the gavel in a marathon 15 rounds of balloting in January, didn't immediately endorse a successor. His decision not to run again sets up a potential showdown among McCarthy's lieutenants -- most likely House Majority Leader Steve Scalise and House Majority Whip Tom Emmer. ercise control from the sidelines.



India-Canada Ties Fray in Dispute Over Sikh Separatist Killing

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - India has asked Canada to reduce its diplomatic staff in the country by more than half, the Financial Times reported on Tuesday, with ties fraying after Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau publicly levelled suspicions that Indian agents were involved in the killing of a Sikh separatist leader in Canada. Hardeep Singh Nijjar was shot dead by unidentified gunmen outside a Sikh temple on June 18 in a Vancouver suburb. India had designated him as a "terrorist" three years earlier. Here's a list of diplomatic and trade actions taken by the two nations so far: * Canada paused talks on a proposed trade treaty with India, a Canadian official said on Sept. 1, an unexpected move that came about three months after both countries said they planned to seal an initial pact this year. * Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi conveyed strong concerns about Sikh separatist protests in Canada to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on the sidelines of a G20 summit in New Delhi on Sept. 10. * Canada postponed a trade mission to India planned for October led by Trade Minister Mary Ng, a spokesperson for the minister said on Sept. 15. Canada's decision to halt trade talks and postpone the mission was due to concerns surrounding the murder, a Canadian source told Reuters. * Trudeau told parliament on Sept. 18 that Canada was "actively pursuing credible allegations" linking Indian government agents to the killing of Nijjar, a Canadian citizen campaigning for the creation of an independent Sikh homeland carved out of India. * India dismissed Trudeau's assertion as "absurd" on Sept. 19. Both countries expelled a diplomat in tit-for-tat moves, with Canada throwing out India's top intelligence officer in the country while India expelled his Canadian counterpart. * India urged its citizens in Canada to exercise caution in a statement on Sept. 20, as the U.S., Australia and Britain expressed concerns about the issue. * India's JSW Steel Ltd is slowing down the process to buy a stake in the steelmaking coal unit of Canada's Teck Resources. Reuters reported on Sept. 21 citing a source close to the discussions. * India suspended issuing new visas for Canadians on Sept. 22 and asked Ottawa to reduce its diplomatic presence in India. * Fertiliser importer Indian Potash said on Sept. 22 that it does not expect supplies of Canadian potash to be affected by the row and that it hopes to extend a contract with Canadian supplier Canpotex beyond the end of September. Canada is one of the key suppliers of potash to India. * Canadian lentil sales to India slowed after tensions rose between the two nations, industry sources in both countries told Reuters. Canada is India's main import source of lentils, a protein-rich staple. * India's steel secretary told reporters on Sept. 28 that Indian exports to Canada were marginal and have not been affected by the diplomatic row.

North Korea Slams U.S. for Labelling It as Persistent Threat



SEOUL (Dispatches) - North Korea criticised a new U.S. strategy on countering weapons of mass destruction for describing the reclusive state as among those it considers a "persistent threat," KCNA media reported on Wednesday. In a statement, a spokesperson for North Korea's defence ministry accused the United States of increasing nuclear threats, citing joint military drills with South Korea and sending a strategic nuclear submarine, the state-run KCNA report said. The North Korean military will counter the U.S. military strategy with the "most overwhelming and sustained response strategy," the spokesperson said, citing an addition to the country's constitution. North Korea last week adopted a constitutional amendment to enshrine its policy on nuclear force, as leader Kim Jong Un pledged to accelerate production of nuclear weapons to deter what he called U.S. provocations, according to state media. South Korea's defence ministry criticised the move in a statement on Wednesday, saying Pyongyang will be "further isolated" internationally, which would "worsen" the suffering of North Koreans. Any use of nuclear weapons by Pyongyang will bring the regime to an end, the ministry added, echoing President Yoon Suk Yeol's remark last month. The U.S. Department of Defense's unclassified version of its "2023 Strategy for Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction" said "North Korea, Iran and violent extremist organizations remain persistent threats as they continue to further pursue and develop WMD capabilities". The spokesperson for North Korea's defence ministry also criticised the U.S. military's Sept. 28 strategy statement for its descriptions of China as the "pacing challenge" and Russia as an "acute threat", calling it a "political provocation" against independent sovereign states. Unification minister Kim Yung-ho told reporters in Germany on Tuesday that the situation for inter-Korean exchange was "being monitored," according to news agency Yonhap.

Thai PM Vows Action on Guns After Deadly Mall Shooting

BANGKOK (Dispatches) - Thailand's prime minister on Wednesday vowed "preventive measures" after a shooting at a Bangkok shopping mall left two people dead and raised fresh questions about the kingdom's gun control. Shoppers returned in dribs and drabs as the Siam Paragon mall reopened less than 24 hours after the shooting -- Thailand's third high-profile deadly gun attack in four years. The shooting at one of Bangkok's biggest, most upmarket malls will come as a fresh blow to the kingdom's efforts to rebuild its vital tourism industry after the pandemic. Prime Minister Srettha Thavasin joined a minute's silence at the mall before offering the government's condolences to the families of the two female victims -- one Chinese and one from Myanmar. "I am confident Siam Paragon and government officials did their best to minimise the casualties and damage," he said. "Let this be the only time this happens. My government insists we will give priority to preventive measures," he added, without giving details. Police arrested a 14-year-old suspect, a student at a \$4,000-a-term

private school just metres from Siam Paragon. Investigators say the boy was being treated for mental illness, has not been taking his medication and reported hearing voices telling him to shoot people. Samran Nuanna, Assistant National Police Chief, told a news conference on Wednesday that the weapon used in the attack was a blank-firing pistol. "But the barrel was modified for live shooting," Samran said. "We will increase regulations and laws to control the use of firearms." But repeated promises of tightening gun laws in the past have not prevented tragedies. The Siam Paragon shooting came just days before the anniversary of a massacre at a nursery in northern Thailand that left 36 people dead. And in 2020, a former army officer gunned down 29 people in a rampage at a mall in the northeastern city of Nakhon Ratchasima. By one estimate, Thailand has 10 million guns in circulation -- one for every seven citizens, and one of the highest rates of ownership in the region. Many firearms are smuggled into the country, but Kritsanapong Phutrakul, a former police officer and now academic, said internet

sales were becoming a problem. "Only a small number of police officers have the knowledge, capabilities and experience to track the gun market online," he told AFP. Thailand is desperate to rebuild its tourism sector after travel restrictions during the Covid-19 pandemic saw visitor numbers dwindle. China -- which sent around 10 million visitors a year before the pandemic -- is a crucial market, but numbers are not returning as fast as Thai officials would wish. This is partly because of fears in China about whether Thailand is a safe holiday destination, and the fact one of the mall shooting victims was Chinese is unlikely to improve this situation. Srettha spoke to the Chinese ambassador late Tuesday and issued a statement saying the government would implement "the highest safety measures" for tourists. At Siam Paragon on Wednesday, AFP reporters saw that security was stepped up in some places, with bags being searched -- but not on all entrances to the sprawling mall.

