

A Muted Response From the UN Security Council to the Zionist Regime's War Crimes Against Gaza Has Shifted the Burden Towards Nations and NGOs, Foreign Ministry's Spokesman Said, Calling for a Boycott of Israeli Products

IRAN NEWS

Russia Has Announced Plans to Export Coals to India Through Iran's Railways as the Announcement Was Made at a Meeting of BRICS Transport Ministers on Saturday on the Sidelines of the 27th St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF)

VOL. XXIX, No. 8006 TEHRAN Price 50,000 Rials

www.irannewsdaily.com

SUNDAY JUNE 09, 2024 KHORDAD 20, 1403

2

DOMESTIC

Iran Suggests Transportation-Related Proposals to BRICS

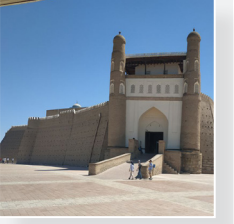
> SEE PAGE 2

3

INTERNATIONAL

Bukhara: A Gem of History, Beauty, and Literature

> SEE PAGE 3



E3, US, IAEA Ineffectual on Iran's Nuclear Case, Will Remain So



TEHRAN (PressTV) - A political advisor to Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei says the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the United States and the European troika — also known as the E3 — will never achieve any success in their moves against Iran. In a post on his official X account, Ali Shamkhani said the US and the Europeans — Britain, Germany and France — have been playing a good and bad cop game with the Iranian from negotiations to revive the 2015 nuclear deal to the recent meeting of the IAEA's Board of Governors. The US and its European allies sought to manage Iran's reactions to their misbehavior by creating false hope in Iran, he wrote. They have never been successful and been ineffectual, and will never achieve success in the face of the Islamic Republic, Shamkhani emphasized. The post by the Leader's advisor come after the 35-member IAEA's Board of Governors passed a resolution on Wednesday accusing Iran of withholding sufficient cooperation with the agency. Ratified by 20 votes in favor, two against with 12 abstentions, the resolution proposed by the European demands that the Islamic Republic step up its cooperation with the IAEA and provide "technically credible explanations which satisfy the Agency's questions." The resolution also supports the IAEA to pursue its dialogue with Iran to clarify all outstanding safeguards issues. Iran has strongly condemned the United Nations nuclear agency's passage of the resolution, insisting that such moves would not serve to undermine the country's nuclear development plans.

Bahrain Sent Message to Iran Through Russia to Normalize Relations



TEHRAN (PressTV) - An Iranian government official says Bahrain has sent a message to the Islamic Republic of Iran through Russia to normalize relations after a hiatus of more than eight years. Mohammad Jamshidi, the deputy chief of staff for political affairs to the Iranian president, made the remarks in a televised interview on Friday. Referring to the normalization of ties agreement between Iran and Saudi Arabia in the government of President Ebrahim Raeisi, Jamshidi said that Hezbollah's Secretary-General "Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah was the first one to support it, and then the resistance brothers in Yemen supported it." Jamshidi said that Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman had also requested to normalize relations with Iran through the President of China, Xi Jinping. "Likewise, Bahrain has sent a message to Iran through Russia to normalize relations with Iran," he stated. King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifah said last week in China Bahrain was working to restore diplomatic relations with neighboring Iran. "We believe in the principle of good neighborliness and non-interference in internal affairs," King Hamad said during a meeting with Chinese President Xi in Beijing, where he was on a state visit. "We are working to restore diplomatic relations with Iran as a neighbor," he added. The king said his country welcomes China's support for efforts aimed at promoting peace and stability in West Asia. Bahrain followed Saudi Arabia to sever diplomatic relations with Iran on January 4, 2016, after Iranian protesters, enraged by the execution of prominent Shia cleric Sheikh Nimr Baqir al-Nimr by the Saudi government, stormed its diplomatic mission in Iran. Iran and Saudi Arabia reached an agreement in the Chinese capital of Beijing in March 2023 to restore their diplomatic relations and re-open embassies and missions.

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

Iran Renews Support for Afghan Peace



TEHRAN - The caretaker foreign minister of Iran reaffirmed the country's support for peace and stability in neighboring Afghanistan. The 2nd meeting of Regional Contact Group on Afghanistan kicked off in Tehran on Saturday, June 8. The meeting was attended by the representatives of Iran, China, Russia, and Pakistan. Bagheri Kani has said that the United States has withdrawn from Afghanistan but it is still hampering the progress of the country by blocking its assets. Bagheri Kani made the remarks on Saturday in a message to the second meeting of the Regional Contact Group for Afghanistan. The meeting, taking place in the Iranian capital Tehran, also brings representatives from China, Russia and Pakistan. "Three years have passed since the occupying forces have withdrawn from Afghanistan, and our neighboring country has faced various challenges since then. The acting government in Afghanistan has had achievements on some of those challenges, but problems have persisted in other cases," the Iranian official said in his message, blaming the US occupation for the persisting problems. "If we honestly look at the scene in Afghanistan, we can say that the root cause of most of problems and challenges of this country is its occupation and the occupiers' negligence of economic growth there," Bagheri Kani said. "Today, although the occupiers have left Afghanistan's soil, they are practically creating blocks in the country's path of progress through freezing the assets of the Afghan people," the Iranian official said, adding that the occupiers ruined Afghanistan's economic infrastructures while they were present there and left behind a devastated country for its people after their pullout. However, he noted, the occupiers should realize that they cannot shirk their humane responsibilities and they must play their part to compensate for the economic underdevelopment of

Afghanistan by refraining from political interference in the country's affairs. Further in his message, the Iranian diplomat said that regional meetings, which have been held within various formats on Afghanistan in the past several years, are the best mechanisms that can help the country shape its future path and resolve the existing problems. He reiterated that Iran supports any constructive initiative that helps promote peace, stability and development in Afghanistan, while warning against extra-regional attempts to influence developments there, which the Iranian official said are in violation of Afghanistan's territorial integrity and national sovereignty. Bagheri Kani also called on the United Nations to put extra efforts on improving humanitarian conditions in Afghanistan to help promote regional stability and security, arguing that regional countries are the ones that suffer the most from backwardness in Afghanistan. Inside Afghanistan, the diplomat said, the ruling Taliban should do more efforts to ensure that an inclusive government made up of all ethnic groups is formed in order to help achieve political stability and economic development in the country. According to the UN, Iran is the world's second largest refugee hosting country as it hosts over 1.1 million Afghans of varying status, including 360,000 Afghans with Iranian resident permits, 267,000 family passport holders and 500,000 undocumented Afghans. In June 2022, Iran's deputy interior minister for security and law enforcement estimated that there were around 4.5 million documented and illegal Afghans in Iran. The takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban in 2021 triggered a huge influx of Afghans, many of whom have flocked to Iran, with which Afghanistan has 921 km of common land border.

Iran Leader of Resistance, Liberation Movements' Across World

BEIRUT (Dispatches) - A high-ranking Hezbollah official has praised Iran as the leader of resistance movements across the world and the only country that confronts the pro-Israel Western-led unipolar system. Sheikh Naim Qassem, deputy chief of Lebanon's resistance movement, made the statement in a ceremony held in the Iranian Embassy in Beirut in commemoration of the 35th anniversary of the passing of Imam Khomeini, the late founder of the Islamic Revolution. "The Islamic Republic of Iran is the leader of the resistance and liberation movements, and bears the sole responsibility of confronting the unipolar system that supports the Zionist regime," Sheikh Qassem said. Pointing to the latest developments in the besieged Gaza Strip, the Hezbollah official said, "The Zionist occupation is an incapacitated regime and has been vanquished by committing genocide against children, women and innocent civilians." Sheikh Qassem said the Israeli regime is also beset by a political collapse and is in a "terrible state of chaos." Touching on the fire exchanges between the Lebanese resistance and the Israeli forces in the country's south, Sheikh Qassem said, "Hezbollah's confrontation with the occupying enemy in southern Lebanon is a battle to support the resistance and the Palestinian

people... We emphasize once again that the South Lebanon Front will not stop unless the war in Gaza ends completely." Stressing that the resistance in Lebanon has no plans to move towards a large-scale war, the deputy chief of Hezbollah said, "If the enemy seeks to carry out provocative actions, it means that he has decided to go to war, and as a result, Hezbollah will fight the Zionists with all its might." Sheikh Qassem pointed to recent moves by the US and some Western countries to stop Lebanon's southern front, saying, "If you want politics to bear upon the field, stop the war in Gaza first and then the Lebanese front will stop, and first reach an agreement with the Palestinians and end the war in Gaza completely." Israel launched its brutal war on Gaza on October 7 last year after Palestinian resistance groups carried out a historic operation against the usurping regime in retaliation for its intensified atrocities against the Palestinian people. The Israeli military has also been conducting attacks against the Lebanese territory since then, prompting retaliatory strikes from Hezbollah on a nearly daily basis in support of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip. Hezbollah has pledged to keep up its retaliatory operations as long as the Tel Aviv regime continues its onslaught on Gaza.



Iran Refutes UAE's Claim on Persian Gulf Islands



TEHRAN (Tasnim) - Iran's UN ambassador dismissed the United Arab Emirates' "false and baseless claims" on the Iranian islands of Abu Musa, Greater Tunb, and Lesser Tunb in the Persian Gulf, rejecting Abu Dhabi's allegations as a blatant violation of the UN Charter.

In a letter for President of the United Nations Security Council Joonkook Hwang on Friday, Iran's UN Ambassador Saeed Iravani said, "Upon instructions from my Government, and further to our letter dated 2 October 2023 (S/2023/817), I am writing to you regarding the letter dated 9 May 2024 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2024/375). In the letter, the representative of the United Arab Emirates resorted to fabrications and made false and baseless claims about the Iranian islands of Abu Musa, Greater Tunb, and Lesser Tunb in the Persian Gulf." The Islamic Republic of Iran unequivocally rejects and condemns all allegations in the letter and considers the contents of the letter as a flagrant and unjustified interference in its internal affairs, in direct contradiction to the spirit of good neighborliness, and a blatant violation of the fundamental principles of international law and the United Nations Charter, particularly the principles of political sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity," the Iranian envoy added. "The Islamic Republic of Iran reaffirms its sovereignty over the Iranian islands of Abu Musa, Greater Tunb, and Lesser Tunb in the Persian Gulf and emphasizes that all decisions and actions taken by its authorities in these Iranian islands have always been, and will continue to be, based on the principle of national sovereignty," Iravani said. "The Islamic Republic of Iran calls on the United Arab Emirates to refrain from such irresponsible and provocative actions and, as a member of the United Nations, respect the principles of independent sovereignty, territorial integrity, and non-interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states that are foundational tenets upon which the United Nations was established. All member states are required to uphold and observe these principles. Furthermore, these principles are recognized as essential for fostering peaceful relations and cooperation among states," the Iranian ambassador stated.

Iran Says Pursues Situation of Its National Arrested in Iraq



TEHRAN (IRNA) - Secretary of Iran's High Council for Human Rights Kazem Gharibabadi has announced that the situation of Mohammad Reza Nouri, an Iranian national imprisoned in Iraq, is being pursued. Since the arrest of Nouri, his situation was followed up through the phone and during the visit of Iranian Judiciary chief to the neighboring country about three months ago, IRNA quoted Gharibabadi as saying on Saturday. After legally following up the issue, his charge changed from terrorist measure to another one, so it paved the way for transferring him to Iran within the framework of extradition treaty between Tehran and Baghdad, Gharibabadi noted. Further, Gharibabadi dismissed the basis of allegations against Nouri. He went on to say that the Iraqi side has rejected the US demand for transferring Nouri to the United States. In his remarks, Gharibabadi referred to his contact with Khaled Shwani, the Iraqi minister of justice, after meeting with Nouri's father and discussing the improper situation of his son. During the contact, Iran called on the Iraqi minister to take due measure to provide proper conditions for Nouri, according to Gharibabadi. The official underlined that Iran's Embassy in Iraq is in contact with Nouri and the prison staff. He added that transfer of Nouri is on the agenda of the Judiciary and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In mid-May, the late Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian had met with Nouri's father and wife, and said the Ministry spares no efforts to help Nouri be released and transferred to home.

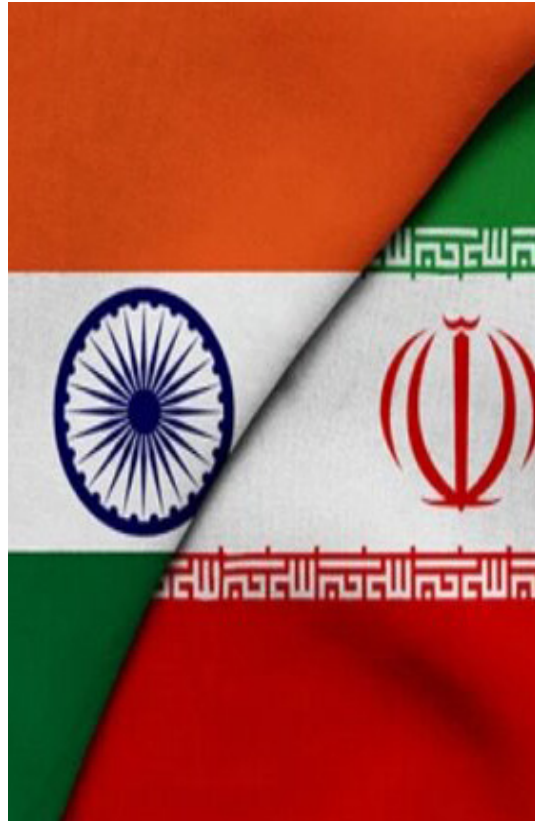
IRAN NEWS



Some \$1b of Pistachio Exported Last Year

TEHRAN - The Deputy for Port and Economic Affairs of the Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Organization stated that in less than a year, the export record from Shahid Rajaei Port has been broken three times. According to Mehr News Agency, Rouhollah Sha'alia said: "A vessel has been docked at pier 32 of Shahid Rajaei Port to export 81,000 tons of bulk mineral materials to expedite operations and reduce costs." He predicted that the mentioned ship would be loaded above the approved standard and would depart the pier within a week. The Deputy for Port and Economic Affairs of the Hormozgan Ports and Maritime Organization continued: "In the near future, an operational plan will be implemented, and in addition to conveyor belt loading, at least three ship loaders will be added to the mineral loading equipment at this major commercial port." Sha'alia added: "With the addition of this equipment, it will be possible to break the bulk mineral export record again at Iran's largest commercial port." He noted that this action is aimed at increasing the productivity of the piers and the profitability of exporting mainly low-value mineral materials.

Iran, India to Work Together on Expanding Bilateral



TEHRAN (MNA) - Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi says that Iran and India will continue to work together to expand bilateral relations and strengthen regional peace, security and prosperity. In a message to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Iran's Acting President Mohammad Mokhber called for further expanding the friendly relations between the two states. In a message on Friday, the Iranian interim president felicitated Modi's party on its re-victory in the general elections of India. Mokhber stressed that under Modi's guidance and leadership, India has become a major partner of the Islamic Republic of Iran. He further expressed hope that with the determination of the two states, Iran and Delhi would witness the best relations. In turn, Modi also sent a letter to Mokhber and expressed gratitude over his congratulatory message. Iran and India will continue to work together to expand bilateral relations and strengthen regional peace, security and prosperity, he said.



Iran Suggests Transportation-Related Proposals to BRICS

MOSCOW (IRNA) - Minister of Roads and Urban Development of the Islamic Republic of Iran Mehرداد Bazpash suggested Tehran's proposals in the first meeting of the transport ministers of member states of the BRICS group to enhance cooperation in the field of transportation and logistics. In the Friday meeting (June 8), which was held on the sidelines of the 27th St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF) in Russia, the Iranian minister delivered a speech via video conference. Ambassador of Iran to Russia Kazem Jalali also represented Iran in the meeting. The minister referred to Iran's potential and actual capacities in the fields of transportation and transit, including the International North-South-East-West Corridor, and declared the Islamic country's readiness for the digitalization of transportation and logistics supply chains, human resource training, and innovations in line with the objectives of BRICS - the acronym for an emerging-market cooperative mechanism that initially included Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. He also proposed suggestions for achieving the BRICS objectives, including cooperation in the innovation of supply chains, urban mobility consistent with the significance of developing urban public transport systems, training of competent human resources to create

a reliable transport system, and financing transport projects. Bazpash emphasized that the International North-South Corridor can improve synergy among the BRICS member states in the field of transportation and transit. 700 million tons of cargo are transported through this network per annum, and the volume of transit via the territories of Iran grew by more than 60% in 2023 to around 17 million tons, he added. He also pointed to the excellent geographic location and extensive transit advantages of Iran, as the intersection of the aforementioned transit corridor, which possesses 11 ports on the Caspian Sea, the Persian Gulf, and the Oman Sea, as well as a 15,000-kilometer railway network, more than 250,000 kilometers of various roads, and 26 land border terminals, so the country enjoys the potential to connect regional and international trade networks via land with the minimum time and cost. The SPIEF brings representatives from 136 countries, and in total, over 17,000 people attend the forum. The event is held under the slogan "The Basis of a Multipolar World - Formation of New Growth Points." Ministers and representatives from Iran, Russia, Brazil, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, and the United Arab Emirates spoke in person or via video conference.

Iran's Economy to Grow 3.2% in 2024

TEHRAN (Dispatches) - The World Bank (WB), in its latest report, predicted that Iran's economy will grow 3.2 percent in 2024 and the inflation rate will decrease to 35 percent. According to the estimate of the international body, Iran's economy experienced a five percent growth and a 40.8 percent inflation in 2023. The bank has forecast that the industrial sector in Iran will take the lead in 2024, experiencing a 4.9 percent growth, followed by the services and agricultural sectors with a 2.7 and 0.9 percent growth. In addition, the World Bank has predicted that Iran's export of goods and services will exceed 7.1 percent in 2024 compared to the preceding year. Also, the bank expects that import of products into the country will experience a 1.8 percent growth in 2024 compared to a year earlier. The balance of Iran's current accounts will also experience positive growth and reach 2.7 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) in 2024. In late February, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reported the Iranian economic growth in 2023 to be 5.4 percent. The head of Iran's Plan and Budget Organization (PBO) said the country's 5.4 percent economic growth in 2023 was the second-highest rate in the world. IMF also increased its estimate of Iran's economic growth in 2024, citing a higher-than-expected surge in the country's oil production. The IMF, in its report published on February 22,

forecast a 3.7 percent economic growth for Iran in 2024 while the figure in its October prediction was 2.5 percent. The IMF data showed that Iran's economic growth reached 5.4% in 2023 while the international agency had predicted a three percent growth for the country in the previous year. Iran's oil and gas industry's development has a direct impact on the country's economic growth, as the effect was felt during the previous administration's term, when the U.S. withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and reimposition of sanctions reduced Iran's oil production and exports and even led to negative gross domestic product (GDP) for a couple of years. Taking office in August 2021, the 13th administration put the increase in oil production and exports on the top of the agenda and stressed the need to neutralize the sanctions and avoid tying people's livelihoods to the revival of the JCPOA. Although the sanctions on Iran's oil industry and exports were ramped up by the U.S., the country witnessed a 40 percent increase in its oil exports at the end of the Iranian calendar year of 1400, which ended on March 20, 2022. After 30 months, the oil industry ranked first among other sectors, including the agricultural and service sectors, in terms of economic growth, making the largest contribution to the country's economic growth.

Car Imports From Georgia Begin

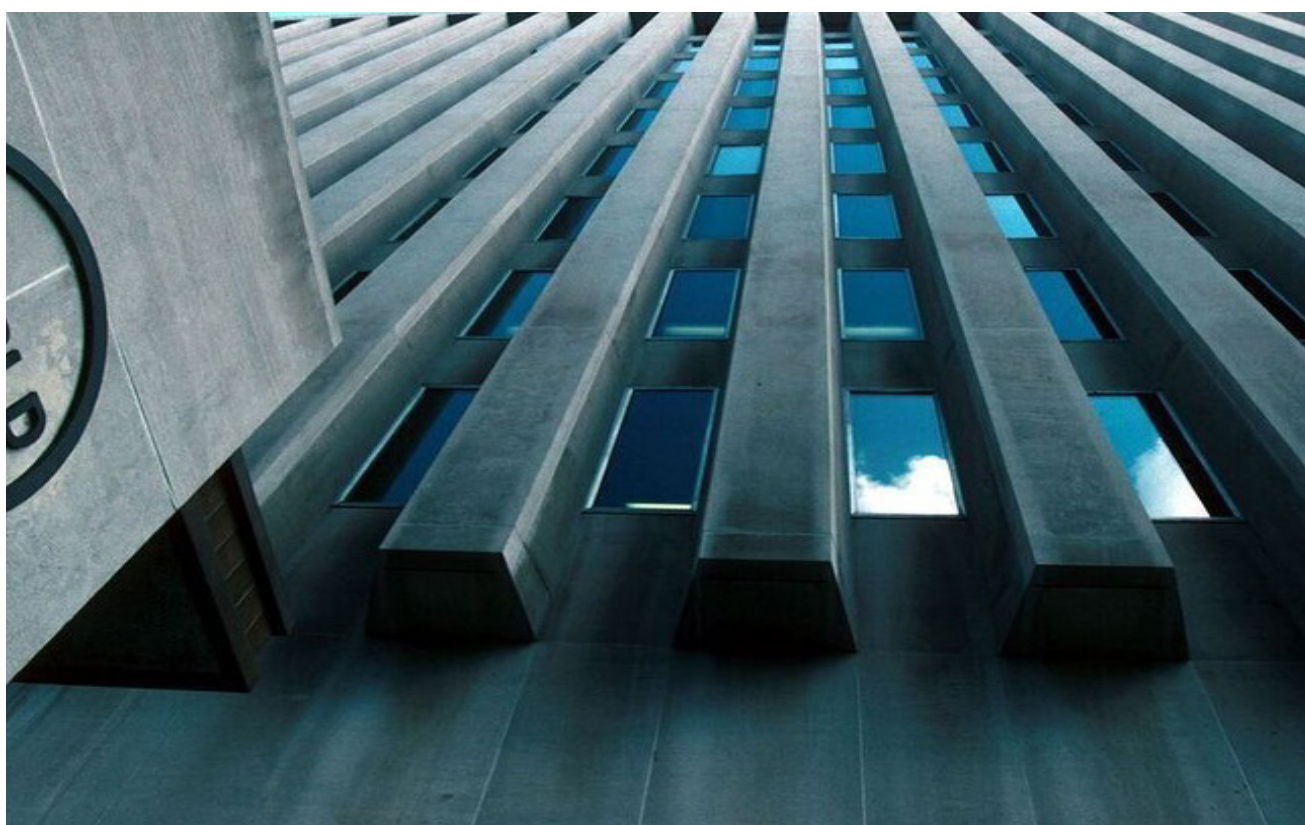


TEHRAN - The President of the Iran-Georgia Joint Chamber of Commerce said: "The Georgian automobile industry is growing, and Georgian cars are mostly imported into Iran on a temporary basis. Moreover, Georgian cars have a better final price compared to other imported cars to Iran." Seydeh Fatemeh Moghimi, President of the Iran-Georgia Joint Chamber of Commerce, in an interview with ILNA touched upon the latest state of trade between the two countries, stated: "Currently, a large portion of goods trade between Iran and Georgia is carried out with Iranian vehicles because Georgians do not have as many transportation vehicles as Iranians. Hence, Iranian trucks have a good opportunity for cargo transit on this route." She added: "A significant part of Iran's exports to Georgia includes goods that form the raw materials or semi-finished materials needed to produce final products. These goods are used in industrial units located in Georgia's free zones to produce final products, which are then marketed in Georgia." Moghimi continued: "Nevertheless, Iran's exports to Georgia in terms of weight and value are greater than its imports; Iran's imports from Georgia mostly include goods such as meat, wood, and cars, while Iran exports agricultural products, foodstuffs, and building materials to Georgia." Explaining more about car imports from Georgia to Iran, she said: "The Georgian automobile industry is growing, and Georgian cars are mostly imported into Iran on a temporary basis. Moreover, Georgian cars have a better final price compared to other imported cars to Iran."

Vietnam Market: Gateway to the Southeast Asian Market

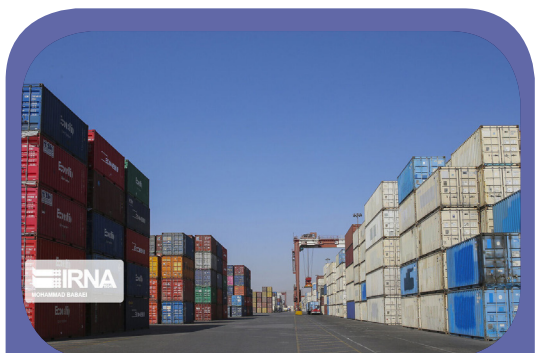


TEHRAN (Dispatches) - The President of the Zanjan Chamber of Commerce stated that entering the Vietnamese market paves the way for access to the Southeast Asian market. He suggested creating a joint market for the distribution of Vietnamese and Hidaj Zanzan shoes as an appropriate strategy to strengthen cooperation with this country. The President of the Zanjan Chamber of Commerce stated that entering the Vietnamese market paves the way for access to the Southeast Asian market. He suggested creating a joint market for the distribution of Vietnamese and Hidaj Zanzan shoes as an appropriate strategy to strengthen cooperation with this country. The President of the Zanjan Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture, referring to Vietnam's successful experiences, especially in economic liberalization and monetary and financial policy reforms, stated that operating in this Southeast Asian market will also open the doors to high-yield markets in Singapore, Taiwan, and Indonesia. During his visit to Vietnam, Samad Yousufi Asl met with Ali Akbar Nazari, Iran's ambassador to Hanoi. They discussed Zanjan province's economic capacities and investment opportunities, exploring the economic indicators of both parties, the feasibility of establishing joint cooperation, and practical solutions based on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. He also emphasized the importance of cultures and lifestyles in shaping economic approaches and production in various regions, stating that the shoe industry can create a deep bond between Vietnam and the city of Hidaj in Zanjan. This partnership could set patterns for joint cooperation to market this product globally, as Hidaj is one of Iran's largest shoe producers, exporting to countries like Egypt, Tunisia, Azerbaijan, Iraq, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. Yousufi Asl continued: "Drawing a line of cooperation and modern production between Vietnam and Hidaj will not only align us with global market demands but also provide a unique opportunity to understand the culture, market characteristics, traders' temperaments, and trade practices of Southeast Asian countries."



Youth Unemployment Rate Decreased

TEHRAN - Deputy Minister of Sports and Youth Affairs said: This year, after many years, the average youth unemployment rate has decreased to 16%, and in many provinces, it is 14%. Sina Kalhor stated in a press conference on the occasion of Marriage Week regarding the overall employment status of the youth: This year, after many years, the average youth unemployment rate has decreased to 16%, and in many provinces, it is 14%. He added: The number of registered divorces has decreased by about 6,000 compared to 2022, with the highest reductions in the provinces of Tehran and Alborz. Kalhor explained: Three indicators influence the assessment of marriage status; one of them is the number of marriages, which decreased by about 40,000 in 2023 compared to 2022. However, because the youth population has decreased by nearly 7 million over the past decade, we cannot say this indicator alone is influential. The Deputy Minister of Sports and Youth Affairs continued: The second indicator is the number of marriages per thousand people, which is still not accurate because we consider the entire population, not just those on the verge of marriage. Kalhor stated: The third indicator is the number of marriages per thousand single women who have never been married, which was 44 in 2023. In reality, if we say 6 marriages per thousand Iranians, but if we say 44 per thousand single women who have never been married, that is the most accurate indicator. He noted: The age of marriage is a conventional matter. If we consider girls aged 15 to 49 and boys aged 20 to 49, about 12 million people are of marriageable age, and 10 to 12 percent of people in the marriageable age group marry annually, requiring planning to increase this statistic. He highlighted the actions and activities of the Youth Department of the Ministry of Sports regarding marriage: Perhaps the most important work done is the development of a national map for marriage and divorce.



Denmark's PM Assaulted in Central Copenhagen, Man Arrested

COPENHAGEN (Dispatches) - Denmark's Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen walked away following an assault by a man in central Copenhagen on Friday and had no outward signs of harm, a local resident told Reuters. "Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen was beaten on Friday evening at Kulturvet (square, red.) in Copenhagen by a man who was subsequently arrested. The Prime Minister is shocked by the incident," her office said in a statement without giving further detail. Police said on social media platform X they had arrested a man and were investigating the incident but declined to give further detail. "She seemed a little stressed," Soren Kjergaard, who works as a barista on the square, told Reuters after seeing the prime minister being escorted away by security following the assault. The assault comes two days before Danes head to the polls in the EU election. Three weeks ago, Slovakia's Prime Minister Robert Fico was seriously injured in an assassination attempt. Danish Minister of Environment Magnus Heunicke said on X: "Mette is naturally shocked by the attack. I must say that it shakes all of us who are close to her."



Malaysia Defends Eviction of Sea Nomads, Citing Security Concerns



KUALA LUMPUR (Dispatches) - Malaysian authorities defended their decision to evict hundreds of sea nomads from their homes off the coast of Sabah state this week, saying it was aimed at boosting security and combating cross-border crime. More than 500 people from the Bajau Laut, a mostly stateless sea-faring community who live on rickety houseboats or coastal huts built on stilts, saw their homes demolished or burned by enforcement officials this week, local activists have said. The operation in Sabah's Semporna district was criticised by rights groups, which called on the government to halt the evictions and ensure the safety and protection of the Bajau Laut. Sabah's minister of tourism, culture and environment Christina Liew said authorities were empowered to act against illegal activities, such as fishing, building structures and farming without permission, in protected areas controlled by Sabah Parks, a state conservation agency. "The sovereignty of the country's laws in this issue must be upheld," she said in a statement on Friday. Liew said evacuation notices were sent to 273 unauthorised settlements last month, with 138 structures demolished between Tuesday and Thursday in "hot spots" around the Tun Sakaran Marine Park, a tourism attraction known for its diving spots. Citing police sources, Liew alleged that some homeowners had burned their own houses to gain sympathy and go viral on social media. The operation was carried out taking into account security factors, including cross-border crime, she said. Semporna lies on the north-eastern tip of Borneo, bordering the southern Philippines. The Bajau Laut have been recorded living in the area for centuries, but many are born without nationality documents and are regarded by authorities as migrants. Rights group Pusat Komnas called on the state to provide alternative homes and address documentation issues to ensure the Bajau Laut received fair treatment and access to essential services. "Their forced removal raises serious questions about the equitable treatment of ethnic minorities in Malaysia," the group said.

Bukhara: A Gem of History, Beauty, and Literature



By: F. Taherpoor

BUKHARA, Uzbekistan - On the eve of the 12th session of tourism ministers of the Organization of the Islamic Countries (OIC) in Khiva, Uzbekistan, we had this opportunity to tour some historical cities and monuments of Uzbekistan in collaboration with the Tourism Committee of Uzbekistan which was in charge of organizing the journalists and the event and Mr. Sultanov Sherzod Ikromogli, the deputy head of the committee, was in charge of leading the group of journalists in this unforgettable and dreamy visit to this country. Words sometimes stumble in narrating the beauties and breath-taking scenes but what I reflect from this visit is just a small reflection and one cannot imagine these beauties unless he visits them in person. Nestled in the heart of Uzbekistan, Bukhara stands as a testament to the splendor of Central Asian history and culture. This ancient city, with its rich tapestry of historical landmarks, architectural marvels, and literary traditions, has captivated scholars, travelers, and poets for centuries. Bukhara's history stretches back over two millennia, making it one of the most storied cities in the world. It served as a major center of trade, culture, and learning on the Silk Road, connecting the East and West. The city's strategic location made it a melting pot of various cultures and civilizations, including Persian, Mongol, and later Islamic influences. The Samanid Dynasty: One of the most illustrious periods in Bukhara's history was during the Samanid Dynasty (9th-10th centuries). Under the rule of the Samanids, Bukhara flourished as a cultural and intellectual hub. The dynasty's emphasis on scholarship and the arts led to the city becoming a renowned center for Islamic learning. Mongol Invasion and Timurid Renaissance: The city faced devastation during the Mongol invasion in the 13th century. However, it experienced a renaissance under the Timurid Empire in the 14th and 15th centuries. The Timurid rulers, particularly Timur (Tamerlane), invested heavily in the reconstruction and beautification of Bukhara, bringing it back to prominence. Bukhara is home to some of the most exquisite examples of Islamic architecture, many of which are UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The Ark Fortress: This massive fortress, dating back to the 5th century AD, served as the residence of Bukhara's rulers for centuries. Its walls have witnessed numerous battles and political events, making it a symbol of the city's enduring strength. Kalon Minaret and Mosque: One of the most iconic landmarks of Bukhara, the Kalon Minaret, built in 1127, is an

architectural masterpiece. Standing at 47 meters tall, it was spared by Genghis Khan during his invasion due to its impressive stature. The adjacent Kalon Mosque, with its vast courtyard and intricate tile work, further enhances the spiritual and aesthetic appeal of the site. The Lyab-i Hauz Ensemble: This charming area, built around one of the few remaining hauzes (pools) in Bukhara, is a tranquil oasis. The surrounding buildings, including the Kukeldash Madrasah and the Nadir Divan-Begi Madrasah, showcase the city's architectural splendor. Bukhara has also been a cradle of literary and intellectual achievement. The city's libraries and madrasahs attracted scholars, poets, and philosophers from across the Islamic world. Al-Bukhari: Another towering figure in Islamic scholarship is Muhammad al-Bukhari, a native of the city. He is best known for compiling "Sahih al-Bukhari," one of the most authentic collections of hadith (sayings of the Prophet Muhammad). His meticulous work has been revered in Islamic tradition for over a millennium. Bukhara's cultural heritage is also reflected

in its spiritual significance. The city is dotted with numerous mosques, madrasahs, and mausoleums that highlight its role as a spiritual center. The Baha-ud-Din Naqshbandi Complex: This site is dedicated to Baha-ud-Din Naqshband, the founder of the Naqshbandi Sufi order. The complex, which includes a mosque, madrasah, and mausoleum, is a pilgrimage site for many Sufis and reflects the spiritual heritage of Bukhara. Today, Bukhara continues to enchant visitors with its well-preserved historical sites and vibrant cultural scene. Efforts to restore and maintain its architectural heritage have made it a popular destination for tourists seeking to experience the allure of the Silk Road. Bukhara's bazaars, filled with traditional crafts, textiles, and spices, offer a glimpse into the city's rich artisanal traditions. The annual Silk and Spice Festival celebrates this heritage, bringing together artisans, performers, and visitors from around the world. Bukhara, with its blend of historical depth, architectural beauty, and literary brilliance, remains a jewel of Central Asia. Its legacy as a center of trade, culture, and learning continues to inspire and attract people from all corners of the globe. As one strolls through its ancient streets and marvels at its timeless monuments, the city's past comes alive, offering a profound connection to the history and culture of the region. This city can be a hub for attracting tourists who are in love of turning the pages of the history and it can be a source of income for tourism industry of Uzbekistan which is blooming now.



Germany Looking Into Buying Eight Additional F-35 Jets

BERLIN (Dispatches) - Germany is looking into buying eight additional F-35 fighter jets made by U.S. defence giant Lockheed Martin, a military source told Reuters on Friday, on top of the 35 jets it has ordered. Berlin is examining the costs of such a purchase, the source said, with the stealth aircraft seen as the most advanced fighter jet. In 2022, Germany decided to order 35 F-35s, including missiles and other weapons, for around 10 billion euros (\$10.89 billion). The jets are equipped with advanced sensors and other gear, and Lockheed says it is nearly impossible to track them with radar. The aircraft will replace the aging Tornado, the only German jet capable of carrying U.S. nuclear bombs stored in Germany. The German air force has been flying the Tornado since the 1980s, and Berlin has plans to phase it out between 2025 and 2030. The F-35 will be stationed at an air base near the western German town of Buechel from 2027 and could also carry U.S. nuclear weapons. The first eight F-35s are scheduled for delivery in 2026 and will be based in the U.S. for pilot training.

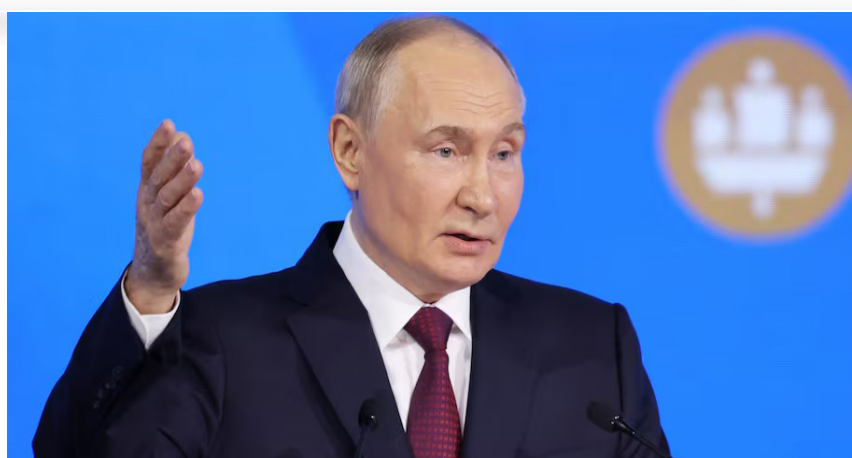
UN Chief to Call Out Israel and Hamas for Violations Against Children

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has added Israel's military to a global list of offenders for committing violations against children in 2023, said Israel's U.N. envoy Gilad Erdan, describing the decision as "shameful." Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad will also be listed, said a diplomatic source, speaking on condition of anonymity. Erdan said he was officially notified of the decision on Friday. The global list is included in a report on children and armed conflict that Guterres is due to submit to the U.N. Security Council on June 14. It covers six violations - killing and maiming, sexual violence, abduction, recruitment and use of children, denial of aid access and attacks of schools and hospitals. It was not immediately clear what violations Israel, Hamas or Palestinian Islamic Jihad had been listed for. Israel's Foreign Minister Israel Katz said the decision "will have consequences for Israel's relations with the U.N." Israel has long had contentious relationship with the U.N. that has only worsened during the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip. The U.N. said last month that at least 7,797 children have been killed in Hamas-led Gaza during the eight-month-long war, citing data on identified bodies from Gaza's Ministry of Health, which the U.N. considers reliable. The Gaza government media office says in total some 15,500 children have been killed. According to Israel's National Council for the Child, 38 children were killed in the Oct. 7 Hamas-led attack that sparked the war and 42 of some 250 people taken hostage into Gaza on Oct. 7 were children. All but two children have been released. U.N. spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said Guterres' chief of staff called Erdan on Friday as "courtesy afforded to countries that are newly listed on the annex of the report." Erdan posted a video on social media of

him responding during the phone call. "I am utterly shocked and disgusted by this shameful decision of the Secretary-General," said Erdan. "Israel's army is the most moral army in the world, so this immoral decision will only aid the terrorists and reward Hamas." Dujarric described the video and its partial release as "shocking and unacceptable and frankly something I've never seen in my 24 years serving this organization." The report is compiled by Virginia Gamba, Guterres' special representative for children and armed conflict. The list attached to the report aims to shame parties to conflicts in the hope of pushing them to implement measures to protect children. The list is split into two: parties that have put in place measures to protect children and parties that have not. Erdan said he was told Israel had been included on the list of parties that had not put in place adequate measures to protect children. Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in a statement that the U.N. had "added itself to the black list of history when it joined those who support the Hamas murderers." Israel is retaliating against Hamas over an Oct. 7 attack by its militants. More than 1,200 people were killed and over 250 taken hostage by Hamas on Oct. 7, according to Israeli tallies. More than 100 hostages are believed to remain captive in Gaza. Israel's invasion and bombardment of Gaza since then has killed at least 36,731 people, including 77 in the past 24 hours. Gaza's health ministry said in an update on Friday. Thousands more are feared buried dead under rubble, with most of the 2.3 million population displaced. A spokesperson for Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas said the U.N. decision was "a step in the right direction towards holding Israel accountable for its crimes" and that Israel should have been added long ago.

Russia Does Not Need to Use Nuclear Weapons for Victory in Ukraine

ST PETERSBURG (Dispatches) - President Vladimir Putin said on Friday Russia had no need to use nuclear weapons to secure victory in Ukraine, the Kremlin's strongest signal to date that Europe's deadliest conflict since World War Two will not escalate into a nuclear war. Since Putin ordered troops into Ukraine in February 2022, he has said on several occasions that Russia would use such weapons if necessary to defend itself - comments the West says are nuclear sabre-rattling. Asked at the plenary session of the St Petersburg International Economic Forum by moderator Sergei Karaganov, an influential Russian analyst, if Russia should hold a "nuclear pistol to the temple" of the West over Ukraine, Putin said he did not see the conditions for using such weapons. "The use is possible in an exceptional case - in the event of a threat to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country. I don't think that such a case has come. There is no such need," Putin said. Moscow considers Crimea - which it seized from Ukraine in 2014 - and four other Ukrainian regions now as integral parts of its own territory, raising the possibility of a nuclear strike if Kyiv appeared poised to retake them. Ukraine has stepped up drone and missile attacks on Russian targets, including in Crimea, and has vowed to drive all Russian forces from its territory. Putin said he did not rule out



changes to Russia's nuclear doctrine, which sets out the conditions under which such weapons could be used. He also said that if necessary Russia could test a nuclear weapon, though he saw no need to do so at the present time. The public debate about nuclear strikes on a stage at Russia's premier economic forum appeared to be a Kremlin attempt to reduce nuclear fears just as the Ukraine war escalates towards what both Russian and U.S. diplomats say is its most dangerous phase yet. Russia and the United States hold nearly 90% of the world's nuclear weapons. Last year Karaganov proposed a limited nuclear strike on a NATO member in Europe to force the West to back off in the conflict over Ukraine and thus avert World War Three. On Friday Karaganov invoked the Biblical story of how God destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah for their wickedness as he pressed Putin on whether Russia should escalate in Ukraine to teach the West "a lesson". Putin said he prayed that the world would never witness a nuclear confrontation, adding: "And we don't have that need. Because our armed forces are not just gaining experience, they are increasing their effectiveness." Russian troops are advancing along the front line in Ukraine, Putin said, adding they had taken 880 square km of territory since the start of the year, including 47 villages and towns.

Zverev Beats Ruud to Set Up French Open Final With Alcaraz



PARIS (Dispatches) - Alexander Zverev exacted revenge on Casper Ruud at the French Open to reach his second Grand Slam final and first since 2020, with Carlos Alcaraz standing between him and the title. Fourth seed Zverev, who had lost in the semi-finals at Roland Garros in each of the past three years, fought back to beat Ruud 2-6, 6-2, 6-4, 6-2 in a repeat of their last-four clash 12 months ago. Zverev won just seven games when the pair met in the 2023 semis and a similar story was on the cards after Ruud cruised through the opening set. But the German raised his game, reaching his first French Open final and keeping his hopes of a maiden Grand Slam title alive. Zverev holds a career 5-4 winning record against Alcaraz, including a victory in their only previous Roland Garros meeting in the 2022 quarter-finals. Alcaraz earlier battled past incoming world number one Jannik Sinner in five sets. "If you're in the final of Roland Garros, you deserve to be there. That goes for him, as well," said Zverev. "He played a fantastic match today. Played a fantastic tournament in general, I think. I'm expecting a very difficult match." There will be two first-time finalists for the first year since Rafael Nadal defeated Mariano Puerta for the first of his 14 titles in 2005. The 27-year-old Zverev's only previous major final appearance saw him blow a two-set lead to lose to Dominic Thiem at the 2020 US Open. "I was not ready then to win my first Grand Slam final," said Zverev, the first German man to make the final since Michael Stich in 1996. "I'm definitely not a kid any more, I'm a little older. If not now, then when?" A German court

dropped a case against Zverev over allegations he assaulted an ex-girlfriend earlier on Friday, after a settlement was agreed. Ruud was targeting a fourth Grand Slam final, but the two-time Roland Garros runner-up was well below his best and struggling with illness. "I wasn't able to play with the kind of tennis I like to play with intensity because I was kind of limited with my stomach," said Ruud. "I don't want to make an excuse or excuses, but it's frustrating and disappointing." The Norwegian seventh seed had not played since Monday after enjoying a walkover in the quarter-finals due to Novak Djokovic's withdrawal from the tournament with a knee injury. Zverev had spent more than eight hours on court during two five-setters in the third and fourth rounds, before beating Alex de Minaur in the last eight. "To go deep and to win a Grand Slam, you have to go through difficulties and you have to go through a lot of ups and downs," added Zverev. "You're not going to win a Grand Slam by winning every match in straight three sets. Some players do, like Roger (Federer) did, Rafa (Nadal) did a few times, but normally to win a Grand Slam you have to go through battles." Ruud looked the fresher of the two as he raced into a one-set lead. But Zverev was much improved in the second set, breaking twice while hitting 15 winners against just four unforced errors to level the match. A break in the fifth game of the third set put him in control against a struggling Ruud. He served it out for a 2-1 edge in sets, despite briefly faltering with successive double-faults and having to save a break point.

Bangladesh Keep Nerve to Win Thriller With Sri Lanka

DALLAS (Dispatches) - Bangladesh emerged victorious from a gripping encounter with Sri Lanka in Texas with the two-wicket victory getting them off to a winning start in Group D of the T20 World Cup. Rishad Hossain produced a brilliant spell of leg-spin as Bangladesh fought back to restrict Sri Lanka to 124-9. Then Liton Das (36) and Towhid Hridoy (40 from 20 balls) put Bangladesh in command before some excellent pace bowling from Nuwan Thushara (4-18), in his second spell threatened a late twist in the plot. But veteran Mahmudullah Riyad showed all his experience at the end to see Bangladesh over the line with an unbeaten 16. It was the final of four games at the Grand Prairie Stadium and the Dallas crowd have been treated to some top entertainment on a surface which offered some bounce and produced good contests between bat and ball. Sri Lanka made a fast start, rattling their way to 53-2 in six overs and they progressed to 100-3 after 14 overs with Pathum Nissanka's 47 from 28 including eight boundaries (one six). But then the 21-year-old wrist spinner Rishad struck twice in successive balls to totally change the momentum of the innings. Charith Asalanka's sweep shot found Shakib Al Hasan at deep backward square



and he snaffled up the catch. Sri Lanka skipper Wanindu Hasaranga was the next victim of Rishad's spin, edging a sharply turning delivery to Soumya Sarkar at slip. Dhananjaya de Silva who made a solid 21 off 26 balls was then beaten by Rishad's flight and was stumped by the alert Liton. Sri Lanka were just able to add 24 runs from the final six overs losing six wickets in that period. Rishad finished with career-best T20I figures of 3-22 from his four overs. Mustafizur Rahman finished with 3-17 from four overs while Taskin Ahmed also bowled well for his 2-25. Bangladesh made a shaky start and were struggling at 28-3 in the sixth over before Liton and Hridoy put together a crucial 63-run partnership. Hridoy hit Hasaranga for three consecutive sixes before he was trapped leg before on the next ball and when Hasaranga removed Liton, there was a glimmer of hope for Sri Lanka. A brilliant diving catch in the deep from Maheesh Theekshana saw the back of Shakib Al Hasan to leave Bangladesh at 109-6. Thushara then returned to the attack and removed Rishad and Taskin to increase the pressure but when Mahmudullah dispatched a loose full toss from Dasun Shanaka for six over mid-wicket, the nerves eased and victory was soon secured.

Germany Earn Late 2-1 Comeback Win Over Greece in Final Euro 2024 Warm-Up



MOENCHENGLADBACH (Dispatches) - Euro 2024 host Germany had to come from a goal down to snatch a last gasp 2-1 victory over Greece today in a lacklustre dress rehearsal ahead of next week's tournament start. Pascal Gross fired in the winner in the 89th minute as the Germans showed they still have room for improvement ahead of their June 14 tournament opener against Scotland. In an error-ridden first half performance, the hosts showed little in terms of dynamism and often lost possession, with the Greeks overrunning them and carving out a golden chance in the sixth minute. But Christos Tzolis's double effort from close range was blocked by goalkeeper Manuel Neuer, who will be first choice between the posts in the tournament over Marc-Andre ter Stegen. Neuer, however, could not hold on to another Tzolis shot in the 33rd after the German defence lost possession in their own half, with the keeper spilling the ball into the path of Giorgos Masouras for a tap-in. "We know well that in football bad first halves are part of it," said Germany midfielder Toni Kroos. "Just too many mistakes. We gifted the ball away too often, then we were hit on the break. We were more focused in the second half. We did it better after the break." Germany put the ball in the net in the 43rd with Kai Havertz but he was offside. The Arsenal player is expected to start in attack at the Euros with Niclas Fullkrug, who came on in the second half, on the bench. Germany started pressing higher after the break with coach Julian Nagelsmann, who cut fourth goalkeeper Alexander Nuebel from the Euros squad, making five substitutions in the second half, and they started pushing the visitors back. Havertz did better in the 55th, turning in the box and levelling with a deflected shot.

Alonso Quickest in Practice at Rain-Hit Canadian GP



MONTREAL (Dispatches) - Fernando Alonso led the way for Aston Martin in the second free practice at the Canadian Grand Prix, the two-time world champion making the most of changing conditions to outpace Mercedes' George Russell on a wet day at the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve. Alonso clocked a best lap in one minute and 15.810 seconds to beat Russell by 0.462 seconds in an unpredictable and open session that saw Red Bull's defending three-time world champion Max Verstappen struggling again. The Dutchman managed only four laps and jumped out of his smoking car in the pits midway through a session that offered few clues of what to expect in Saturday's qualifying or Sunday's race. Home hope Lance Stroll was third in the second Aston Martin ahead of Ferrari's Charles Leclerc, winner of his home Monaco Grand Prix two weeks ago, Daniel Ricciardo of RB, Haas's Kevin Magnussen and seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton in the second Mercedes. Yuki Tsunoda was eighth for RB ahead of improving Williams' Alex Albon with Sergio Perez 10th for Red Bull, days after signing a two-year contract extension with the team. After a rain-hit opening session, which reduced the action to only 35 minutes including just five on slicks, there was an early queue to leave the pit lane as another rainstorm arrived. "It's coming down much harder now," warned Russell, as Verstappen led the way before pitting immediately to switch from softs to mediums. A bold lap on soft slicks from Alpine's Pierre Gasly, in 1:29.007, lifted him 5.8 seconds clear of an earlier Hamilton lap. He trimmed it to 1:24.389 - a full 10 seconds faster than anyone else - and then to 1:20.789 before anyone else began to find any real grip. As they did, Ricciardo, Alonso and Stroll showed bold speed on softs, the home hero reducing the best lap time to 1:18.662 before Alonso clocked 1:17.835, the top three making light of the conditions.

England Suffer Iceland Embarrassment in Final Euro Warm-Up

LONDON (Dispatches) - Gareth Southgate insisted England's embarrassing 1-0 defeat against Iceland in their final warm-up before Euro 2024 will serve as a useful reality check for his title contenders. Southgate's side had hoped for a confidence-boosting victory at Wembley on Friday before travelling to Germany as one of the Euro favourites. But Jon Dagur Thorsteinsson's first half goal spoiled England's farewell and led to the lacklustre hosts being booed off at half-time and the final whistle. Against a team ranked 72nd in the world, who were unable to qualify for the Euros, Cole Palmer, Anthony Gordon and Kobbie Mainoo all failed to make compelling cases to be included in the starting line-up at the Euros. "We have to be better. We didn't get our pressing right. There were questions asked that we weren't able to answer," Southgate said. "It was obviously a disjointed and disappointing performance. We didn't show enough character, but I think it's a really good focus for us ahead of the tournament. I'm confident we will be better than tonight. Everybody's saying we're going to go there and walk through the tournament. The reality of international football isn't that." Adding to Southgate's worries, John Stones didn't reappear after the interval, possibly a precautionary move after the England centre-back fell awkwardly in the first half. "We think he is probably okay. We didn't want to take the chance," Southgate said. Southgate said his starting line-up was "close" to the team that will face Serbia in England's Group C opener in



Gelsenkirchen on June 16. If that is the case, he will need to coax a substantially improved effort from a group that looked short on energy and composure in the absence of resting Real Madrid star Jude Bellingham. Bored fans spent most of the night entertaining themselves by buzzing the pitch with paper aeroplanes and few stayed for the post-match lap of honour. "You'd like a good performance and to be leaving on a high. We didn't play well enough to keep them excited," said Southgate, whose side have won one of their last five games. While Southgate can point out that this result will count for nothing when England start their bid to win a first major trophy in 58 years, it was still an alarming performance that raised questions about key areas of his team. With just two clean-sheets in their last seven games, England's defensive frailties were concerning for Southgate. "We've got to be far better without the ball and we've got to show more composure with it," he said. "These last games going into tournaments can be like that because players are worried about picking up an injury. We can't hide the fact that we have a lot of physical issues. We haven't had the core of the team together yet. We need to stay calm. No excuses on the result but there are a lot of things we can put right quickly. It actually gives us a chance to focus the mind."