

GENEVA (Dispatches) -- Alena Douhan, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Negative Impact of Unilateral Coercive Measures on the Enjoyment of Human Rights, has denounced foreign sanctions on Iran.

In an interview with French weekly 'Le Point', Douhan who traveled to Iran from May 7 to 18 to assess the effect of the U.S. sanctions has said the measures have cost the lives of Iranians. "Yes, the sanctions have killed people and there are several cases in my report. The most convincing reason is the lack of access to medicine. Yes, Iran produces more than 90% of its medicines, but unfortunately for doing so, they need to provide raw materials from abroad."

TEL AVIV (Dispatches) -- The shaky ruling coalition of the occupying regime of Israel's extremist PM Naftali Bennett is moving closer to collapse after a lawmaker with his own coalition said he was leaving the alliance.

"I have informed the prime minister that based on the current situation, I am no longer part of the coalition," Nir Orbach, a member of Knesset, said in a statement after quitting Bennett's team, several Israeli media outlets reported.

**VOL NO: LV 11725 TEHRAN / Est.1959**

**Wednesday, June 15, 2022, Khordad 25, 1401, Zil-Qa'dah 15, 1443, Price 200,000 Rials**

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## Pakistani, Turkmen FMs in Tehran 'Regional Diplomacy Moves Into High Gear'

TEHRAN -- Pakistan's Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Tuesday met with his Iranian counterpart as part of regular high-level exchanges between the two neighbors on his first visit to Tehran.

During a joint press conference, Zardari and Hussein Amir-Abdollahian said they discussed issues of mutual interest such as trade cooperation, border markets, and development of local trade. The top Pakistani diplomat arrived here for a two-day visit and is scheduled to visit Mashhad on Wednesday.

The two foreign ministers said they also talked about road and rail connectivity and tourism, as well as gas and electricity exports from Iran to Pakistan, adding that they also reviewed regional security issues with a particular focus on developments in Afghanistan and South Asia.

The two had met on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum in Davos late in May, calling for bolstering bilateral cooperation.

Meanwhile, the foreign ministers of Iran and Turkmenistan explored avenues for promotion of mutual and multilateral cooperation between the two neighbors and implementation of comprehensive agreements.

Amir-Abdollahian and his Turkmen counterpart Rasit Meredow met ahead of an official visit by Turkmenistan's President Serdar Berdimuhamedow on the 30th anniversary of

the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two nations.

Highlighting the strong foundations of expansion of relations between Tehran and Ashgabat, Amir-Abdollahian stressed the need for a full implementation of comprehensive agreements and memorandums of understanding.

He said Iran and Turkmenistan will cooperate on three main topics this year through holding the 17th session of the Joint Economic Commission, the 15th meeting of Joint Commission on Consular and Border Affairs, and a meeting of the Joint Committee of Political Consultations between the foreign ministries of the two neighbors.

For his part, Meredow said the Turkmen president's forthcoming visit to Iran signifies the great importance that his country attaches to relations with Iran.

He said Ashgabat has prepared a series of documents and projects and hopes to bring them into operation during the presidential visit.

Meredow also emphasized the need for bilateral and five-party cooperation to make arrangements for a summit meeting of the Caspian Sea states in Ashgabat.

Other subjects discussed in the meeting included plans for protecting the Caspian Sea's stability, security and environment, the developments in Afghanistan, and issues relating to the Central Asia region.

## Major Economies Face Recession Amid War



SINGAPORE (Dispatches) -- Stock markets across Europe and Asia on Tuesday mostly extended recent sharp losses on lingering worries about possible recession for major economies.

Panic has swept through trading floors since data on Friday showed U.S. consumer prices rising at their fastest pace in decades on surging energy and food costs caused by the Ukraine war and supply chain snarls.

The pain has been felt across all assets, with bitcoin threatening to

fall below \$20,000 for the first time since December 2020, currencies retreating against the dollar, and safe havens including the yen and gold feeling the squeeze.

Investors are bracing for the Federal Reserve's interest rate decision Wednesday as it struggles to walk a fine line between reining in inflation and trying to keep the economy on track.

"While there is no doubt that inflation is a considerable challenge for the U.S. at this point, slamming on the brakes too hard risks push-

ing the economy off its track," said Tai Hui of JP Morgan Asset Management.

Fears that the world's top economy is heading for a recession sent Wall Street plunging Monday, with the broad-based S&P 500 stocks index sinking into a bear market after dropping more than 20 percent from its recent peak.

Elsewhere, data Tuesday confirmed annual inflation in Germany, Europe's biggest economy, hit a record 7.9 percent in May.

Huge price increases for energy

and food have pushed inflation in Germany to its highest level since the oil crisis more than 50 years ago.

"The main reason for the high inflation is still prices increase for energy products," said Destatis President Georg Thiel.

The inflation rate is therefore the highest ever recorded in reunified Germany.

According to the data published by the UK's Office for National Statistics (ONS), Britons are suffering from soaring inflation, which has caused the value of wages to fall at the fastest pace in more than a decade.

"Pay in real terms is falling at its fastest rate in over a decade," with UK inflation at a 40-year high, said ONS Head of Economic Statistics, Sam Beckett.

The country's annual inflation rate has soared to nine percent, causing a cost-of-living crisis for millions of Britons.

The unemployment rate across the UK has also risen to 3.8 percent, in comparison to the rate of 3.7 percent in the first quarter of the year, with record-high vacancies seeking for employees, the ONS said in its statement.

"With inflation hurtling towards double digit territory, many workers are increasingly finding that their wages are not stretching wide enough to meet the bumper cost of seemingly everything from food to petrol," said Myron Jobson, senior

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## Greece Releases Iran's Tanker After Strong Response

TEHRAN -- Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) said Tuesday an Iranian-flagged tanker seized in April has been freed by Greece, according to the country's Mehr news agency.

"The Greek government finally issued an order and we are now witnessing the lifting of the ship's seizure and the return of its cargo to its owner," the PMO told Mehr.

The ship, previously called Pegas and renamed Lana in March, had reported an engine problem in April.

It was reportedly headed to the southern Peloponnese Peninsula to offload its cargo onto another tanker but rough seas forced it to moor just off Karystos, on the island of Evia, where it was seized.

Its release comes after a Greek court overturned an earlier ruling last week that allowed the confiscation by the United States of part of the tanker's Iranian oil cargo.

Athens had linked the tanker seizure in Greece to European Union sanctions imposed on Russia following its operation in

Ukraine in February. The tanker was initially Russian-flagged and had 19 Russian crew members on board at the time it was seized.

The tanker, which was reportedly carrying 115,000 tonnes of Iranian oil when it was seized, has been flying the Iranian flag since May 1. Iran and Russia face separate U.S. and EU sanctions.

Its seizure led to an angry response from Iran, which denounced the confiscation as "piracy" and warned it would take "punitive action" against Athens. Iranian forces seized two Greek tankers in the Persian Gulf last month.

A Greek court overturned an earlier ruling last week that allowed the confiscation by the United States of part of the Iranian-flagged tanker's Iranian oil cargo off the Greek coast.

Argentina Seizes Passports of Iranian Crew

Five Iranian crew of a cargo plane grounded in Argentina since

last week have had their passports temporarily seized pending a probe into possible links to the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), officials said.

A judge on Monday ordered their travel documents held for an additional 72 hours after Security Minister Anibal Fernandez claimed information had been received from "foreign organizations" that some among the crew may be linked to companies with ties to the IRGC.

A routine check found "things that were not logical," Fernandez told Perfil radio on Monday. He said the five Iranians were in a hotel.

Officials originally said their passports had been taken but would be returned if they left the country on a scheduled flight while investigations continued into the plane's origins.

The Venezuelan Boeing 747 cargo plane reportedly carrying car parts first landed in Cordoba, Argentina on Monday last week,

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## Russian Troops Close In on Sieverodonetsk as West Sends Arms

LIVIV, Ukraine (Dispatches) -- Russian troops control about 80% of the fiercely contested eastern Ukrainian city of Sieverodonetsk and have destroyed all three bridges leading out of the city but Ukrainian authorities are still trying to evacuate some wounded residents, a regional official said Tuesday.

Serhiy Haidai, governor of the eastern Luhansk region, acknowledged that a mass evacuation of civilians from Sieverodonetsk now is "simply not possible" due to the relentless shelling and fighting in the city. Ukrainian forces have been pushed to the industrial outskirts of the city because of "the scorched earth method and heavy artillery the Russians are using," he said.

"There is still an opportunity for the evacuation of the wounded, communication with the Ukrainian military and local residents," he told The Associated Press by telephone, adding that Russian forces have not yet blocked off the strategic city. About 12,000 people remain in

Sieverodonetsk compared to its pre-war population of 100,000. More than 500 civilians are sheltering in the Azot chemical plant, which is being relentlessly pounded by the Russians, according to Haidai.

In all, 70 civilians have been evacuated from the Luhansk region over the past 24 hours, the governor said.

Russian forces in the last few weeks have pressed hard to capture Ukraine's eastern Donbas area, which borders Russia and is made up of the regions of Luhansk and Donetsk. It is the industrial heartland of the country.

Jan Egeland, the Secretary-General of the Norwegian Refugee Council, one of the aid organizations supplying food to the people there, said the fighting of the past weeks have made regular food distribution impossible.

"The situation is difficult," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in a news conference on Tuesday with Danish media. "Our

task is to fight back."

Ukraine has pleaded for the West to send more and better artillery as the country runs out of ammunition for its existing Soviet-era arsenal, which is dwarfed by Russia's.

German Defense Minister Christine Lambrecht said on Tuesday the training of Ukrainian troops on German howitzers will soon be completed, paving the way for the use of the weapons in the war in Ukraine.

Western countries have promised NATO-standard weapons but deploying them is taking time.

"The training on the Panzerhaubitze 2000 will soon be completed so that it can be used in battle in Ukraine," Lambrecht told reporters during a visit to a military base in the western German town of Rheinbach.

The Panzerhaubitze 2000 is one of the most powerful artillery weapons in Bundeswehr inventories and can hit targets at a distance of 40 km (25 miles).

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