

**Head of Iran Customs Administration
Mehdi Mirashrafi Says Iran's Trade
Volume With Its Neighboring
Countries in the Past Seven Months
Has Exceeded \$19.6b**

IRAN NEWS

**An Official Says Recent
Development in the Forex Market
And Fall of Forex Price Has
Nothing to Do With the New Forex
Policies of the Government and
It May Bounce Back Soon**

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Iran Warns Armenia, Azerbaijan Not to Open Way For Terrorists' Presence

TEHRAN (IFP) - A senior Iranian military commander has seriously warned warring sides to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict that they should not provide for the presence of terrorists and Israelis near Iran's borders.

Brigadier General Abolfazl Shekarchi said both the Azerbaijan Republic and Armenia should take care not to open the way for terrorists to "be present in this region." "Iran definitely will not tolerate the presence of Takfiri terrorists [near its borders]," said General Shekarchi, a senior spokesman for the Iranian Armed Forces.

"The existence of the Zionist regime [of Israel]'s espionage bases is another important point," he said.

"We will, by no means, allow the bases of this regime to be established near our borders or in the disputed region," said the top general.

"These two points are very important to us, and both warring countries (the Azerbaijan Republic and Armenia) should seriously pay attention to this issue," he emphasized.

He said the country which opens the way for the presence of terrorists and Zionists in this region will be responsible for the consequences of such presence, and Iran will firmly deal with these two "evil phenomena."

Meanwhile, he stressed that Armenia should return the occupied territories of the Azerbaijan Republic, expressing hope the conflict between the two conflict will be resolved through dialogue.

Gov't Toughens Restrictions on Businesses to Contain COVID-19



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - The government has decided to toughen restrictions on some businesses in order to contain the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19) whose cases in the country is on the rise.

Deputy health minister and spokesman to the National Headquarters for Fighting Coronavirus Mr. Alireza Raisi yesterday announced that the headquarters has decided to impose more restrictions on some businesses in order to curb the spread of this deadly virus.

He said the condition regarding the number of COVID-19 infected patients is not good at all, and the number of the patients is on the rise and all provinces in the country is struggling with it, and urged the people to cooperate with health officials.

He said that recent decision for restricting entry of non-native cars into 25 provinces was welcomed by the people and they cooperated well.

Raisi added according to the latest decision, from November 10 to December 10, 2020, businesses will have to close at 6 pm.

He noted that of course those businesses related to the public basic needs like super markets and chain stores will be open. "Obviously, jobs related to daily life and essential needs of the people, including emergency services, service and administrative centers, security centers, chain stores, supermarkets, bakeries, etc., will continue their operation," he noted.

He also stated that due to President Hassan Rouhani's support, the ministry has increased its COVID-19 tests to 40,000 daily and soon by using domestically-produced test kits or importing them, the number of tests will increase and their results will be announced in 25 minutes.

Raisi further said that the headquarters has decided to continue its program of curbing this disease by implementing it in any district and quarter of the cities and the program will be quarter-centered one and Basij forces in any quarter will help the ministry for carrying out this plan.

He also warned the people to take care of themselves as the cold is gripping the country and winter is approaching, reiterating that any infected person can make all his family members contract the disease.

He asked people to observe health protocols and to stay away from family gatherings because it is one of the main reasons for the spread of this disease and its contraction.

Daily Rise in Iran's COVID-19 Cases at All-Time High

TEHRAN (IFP) - Health Ministry spokeswoman has confirmed 9,450 new cases of COVID-19 infection in the past 24 hours, the highest record since the beginning of the outbreak.

In a press briefing on Saturday, Sima-Sadat Lari said the new cases raise the total number of cases to 673,250.

She said the virus has also killed 423 patients since Monday noon, increasing the overall death toll to 37,832.

So far, she added, 515,153 patients have recovered from the disease or been discharged from the hospital.

Lari said 5,506 patients are also in critical conditions caused by more severe infection.

The spokeswoman noted that 5,185,361 COVID-19 tests have been taken across the country so far.

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New White House Ruler Urged to End Economic Terrorism Against Iran

TEHRAN (IFP) - President Hassan Rouhani has expressed hope the administration of the next US president will take a lesson from the Iranian nation's resistance in the face of Washington's economic sanctions.

President Rouhani made the comments on Saturday while expressing his gratitude to Iranians for standing up to the United States' "economic terrorism" over the past three years.

"I hope the next U.S. administration will take a lesson from this three-year experience, get to abide by law and regulations and return to all of its commitments, so that dear Iranian people will see and feel the reward for their patience and resistance," said the president at a meeting of the National Coronavirus Headquarters.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the president stressed the need to observe social distancing rules and other restrictions to help contain the spread of COVID-19.

"It is right that it's important to wear masks, but it is not enough, and social distancing and avoiding gatherings and the enforcement of other health protocols are as important," he said.

"From November 10 to December 10, 2020, businesses will have to close at 6 pm," he noted.

He added services should be offered online as much as possible as part of social distancing measures.

Meanwhile, President Rouhani noted that domestic production should remain on track, and people's livelihoods should not be affected.

CBI Blasts Bahrain Court's Verdict as "Legally Invalid"

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Director of Legal Studies Department of Iran's Central Bank yesterday reacted to a Bahraini court's verdict on Iranian banks and called it something lacking legal validity and it is just a political move.

Bahraini court on Wednesday issued legal verdicts in five money-laundering cases, convicting the Central Bank of Iran, along with a number of Iranian banks, the Future Bank, and five of its officials. The court found all the defendants guilty, sentencing the Future Bank officials to five years in prison, and to 1 million Bahraini dinars (SR10 million approximately) fines each.

The court also sentenced the Central Bank of Iran and the other banks implicated in the wide money-laundering scheme to fines of 1 million Bahraini dinars each.

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Cuban President Slams U.S. Sanctions on Iran

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, who is in Havana on an official visit, has held videoconference talks with Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel.

During the talks, the Cuban president stressed his country's opposition to US sanctions and actions against the Iranian nation as well as Iran's entitlement to use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

Zarif, in turn, expressed his gratitude for Cuba's support at the UN General Assembly.

The top Iranian diplomat once again conveyed to the Cuban president an invitation from his Iranian counterpart Hassan Rouhani to visit Iran. The two sides also praised good political ties between Tehran and Havana while touching upon the existing potential to enhance reciprocal economic relations and cooperation.

They also expressed their readiness to work together in the production of vaccines, including one for COVID-19. The issues of energy and oil cooperation were among other topics on the agenda of the talks between the two officials. Earlier Zarif sat down with Vice President of the Council of Ministers of Cuba Ricardo Cabrisas in Havana.

In the meeting, the two sides hailed good Tehran-Havana relations on the political front as well as mutual cooperation and coordination in international circles.

They urged closer cooperation in the fields of economy, energy and trade.

They also agreed to draw on one another's experience in the domains of medicine, nanotechnology, science and energy as well as in the pharmaceutical industry.

Zarif also met his Cuban counterpart Bruno Rodriguez and discussed promotion of mutual cooperation in political and economic cooperation on Friday.

In the meeting, the two sides also exchanged views on international cooperation between Tehran and Havana. During the talks, the two officials also discussed Iran and Cuba's support for the cause of Palestine, reciprocal cooperation in the domains of energy, nanotechnology and biotechnology as well as coordination between Tehran and Havana on issues pertaining to Latin America and the Middle East.

Iran to Produce Three New Human Vaccines By Yearend

TEHRAN (MNA) - The Secretary of Biotechnology Development Headquarters of the Vice-Presidency for Science and Technology said that three new human vaccines will be produced in the country by yearend (March 20).

Mostafa Ghanei broke the news on Sat. and reiterated that three human vaccines will be unveiled before the termination of the current year (to end March 20, 2021).

"We have decided to add three new human vaccines to the list of domestically-produced vaccines by the yearend," Ghanei added.

Presently, public sector has not thus far managed to produce these vaccines since they consume high currency valuation.

Elsewhere in his remarks, he pointed out that six accelerators have thus far been created in the country in the field of vaccine.

Presently, Islamic Republic of Iran has stood at the first rank in the West Asia in terms of biotechnology and vaccine production and is among top five producers of biotechnology products in Asia, Secretary of Biotechnology Development Headquarters of the Vice-Presidency for Science and Technology Ghanei added.



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Foreign Currency Saboteurs Dismantled

TEHRAN (MNA) – Iran’s Intelligence forces have identified and dismantled four networks of economic saboteurs in Yazd province.

According to the ministry’s public relations office, the forces have disbanded four rings of economic saboteurs responsible for disrupting the foreign currency market in Yazd Province.

Fifty offenders have been arrested and handed to the Judiciary and more than 30 different kinds of currencies with a value of 450 billion rials have been confiscated in the operations.

New U.S. Gov’t Has No Sanctions for Worsening Situation in Iran

TEHRAN (MNA) – The Government Spokesman said that new U.S. government has no sanctions for worsening the situation of Iranian people.

In reaction to U.S. 2020 Presidential Election, Ali Rabiei in a note on Sat. pointed to the maximum pressures exerted by the U.S. administration against Iran and added, “Maximum pressure has come to its end and any government in the United States no longer has sanctions to worsen the situation in Iran.”

“At the time of writing this note when the outcome of U.S. 2020 Presidential Election has not yet been decided, apart from who will take over the presidency in the United States, one can review once again the origins of its principled policies that both Leader of the Islamic Revolution and Iranian President emphasized it last week although the methodology indicates the ousting of the hated president. The Leader noted that whoever becomes President of the United States will not affect our policies. President Rouhani also reminded that we do not care who is elected in the United States, but the behavior of the United States is important for us.”

During the years when the Trump administration, with his selfish, belligerent and hateful nature and the most inhumane group in the White House came together, they withdrew from JCPOA and incited a number of countries in the region and imposed unilateral and illegal sanctions on Iranian people, so that Iran’s solution to terminate this lawlessness was unbelievably simple, he added.



In spite of all hardships created for the nation and government, Islamic Republic of Iran has shown that it will adhere to its principled policy in defending security concurrent with people’s livelihood, and will continue to stand by that principle and treaty firmly, government spokesman added.

The United States can return to a wise policy while respecting the civilized will to enjoy well-being, health and security of Iranians and at the same time and distance itself from today’s belligerent policies of the White House. This path will also benefit the world peace and security and people of the region, Rabiei said.

Standing Firm, Principled Way to Fight Terrorism

TEHRAN (IP) - Director of Academy of Persian Language and Literature Gholam-Ali Haddad-Adel stated that certainly, terrorism is a danger for the whole region, so the principled way to fight terrorism is to stand firm against this phenomenon.

Regarding the terrorist attack on Kabul University which once again is a serious threat to terrorism in Afghanistan and the region, Haddad-Adel highlighted that foreign forces train terrorists to kill people in the region and endanger the policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran for enhancing unity among Muslims and the regional countries.

“Afghanistan as Iran’s neighbor and friend has been suffering from all kinds of tragedies and hardships for more than four decades, the worst of which is the terrorist attacks which the latest and most unfortunate was the terrorist attack on students and professors at Kabul University”, he said.

The well-known figure paid tributes to those who lost their lives at the terrorist attack Monday at Kabul University, Afghanistan.

Iran Standing by Afghans In Fight Against Terrorism

TEHRAN (MNA) – Iranian Science Minister asserted that Iran has always stood by the Afghan Government in the fight against terrorism and extremism.

The Iranian Minister of Science, Research and Technology, Mansour Gholami, held a telephone conversation with Dr. Abbas Basir, the Afghan Acting Minister of Higher Education. In this telephone conversation, Gholami expressed his condolences, over the tragic terrorist attack at Kabul University, to the Afghan government, the scientific community, and the families of the students who were killed in that deadly incident.

Stressing that Iran has always stood by Afghanistan in the fight against terrorism and extremism, Iranian Science Minister said, “With respect to the cultural, religious, geographical and linguistic commonalities between Iran and Afghanistan, the tragic martyrdom of a large number of Afghan students, has strongly hurt the feeling of the Iranian scientific community.”

He also added, “As Iranian universities have always been the main host for a wide range of Afghan students, therefore, the Iranian universities are fully prepared to accept and host young Afghan people who seek to study in the Islamic Republic of Iran.”

JCPOA Not a Bilateral Deal Just Between Iran and U.S.

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Foreign Minister Mohammad-Javad Zarif said on Saturday that the U.S. chose to draw out of Iran’s nuclear deal on its own will and will seek certain concessions at the negotiation table if it decides to return to it but the important point is that the JCPOA was not a deal just between Iran and the U.S.

What is important is that the deal was not a bilateral one between Tehran and Washington, Zarif told the Telesur television network answering a question about whether Iran hopes for the US to return to the deal.

Zarif, who is on a Latin American tour, said since the Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) is part of a UNSC resolution, the U.S. was never entitled to withdraw from it; therefore, if the US basically wanted to free itself from the deal, it had to exit the United Nations as well.

Answering to comment on the French government’s so-called support for freedom of expression, Zarif said attacking others in the name of freedom of expression is vividly a hypocritical approach at a time France administration allows its citizens to offer not the smallest criticism over certain issues.

He doubted the truth of freedom of expression in France when Muslim women in the country are not allowed to wear hijab at schools.

On his three-nation tour to Latin America, Zarif has already visited Venezuela and Cuba will go to Bolivia.

Zarif was also asked about the U.S. assassination of General Qasem Soleimani early January this year and Iran’s promise of vengeance. He said Iran in a military move, Iran targeted the U.S. base from which the assassination was directed.

But the important issue is that the U.S. has committed a serious crime, consequences of which hit the US and will continue to do so, as seen in the funeral ceremony of General Soleimani in Iran and Iraq, he said, adding another consequence of the crime was Iraqi parliament’s passing the law that the US must take its forces out of the country which will be very costly for the U.S.

Iran’s Policies Unaffected by US Election Result



TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Iran’s deputy foreign minister said the result of the US presidential votes will have no bearing on the fundamental policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In a radio interview on Saturday, Abbas Araqchi said Tehran has always opted to stand up to bullying and pressure.

“Iran’s fundamental policies, which are based on countering domination and resisting illegal pressure, will definitely not be affected by the U.S. elections,” he said.

“But naturally, if a new situation emerges, the Islamic Republic of Iran will adopt proper methods and solutions which are in conformity with the new situation in order to secure its interests and counter any possible new pressure or threats,” the deputy minister added.

He further lashed out at Washington’s bullying, saying, “There will be no shift in the United States’ domineering and bullying policies with the change of president.”

However, if new individuals come to power in the United States, new approaches may emerge in Washington’s policy, Araqchi said.

The Iranian diplomat also weighed in on the possibility of the new U.S. president returning to the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

“It is still too early to talk about this. There are numerous challenges, but, in the first place, one should wait and see what possible new policies will be adopted by the U.S.,” he stated.

Iran, Spain to Cooperate On Organ Transplantation

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iran University of Medical Sciences has signed a 10-year-old contract with Barcelona’s Donation and Transplantation Institute (DTI).

Saam Zera’atiannejad, the caretaker of Iran University of Medical Sciences Organ Procurement Unit said on Saturday that under the terms of the contract, the Iranian university has gained the exclusive right to translate a guide book on organ procurement management published by DTI.

He said that DTI has been a pioneering institute in organ transplantation in Spain which has helped Spain’s remarkable success in this area.

Pointing out that Spain has been the leading world country in organ transplantation, Zera’atiannejad noted that Iran is indigenizing its model.

Envoy Confers Latest Developments With Afghan FM Over Phone

TEHRAN (IP) - In a telephone conversation with the Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, the Special envoy of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iran condemned the terrorist attack in Kabul University and expressed his condolences to the government and people of this country.

The special envoy of Iran’s foreign minister for Afghanistan, ‘Mohammad Ebrahim Taherianfard’, had a telephone conversation with ‘Mohammad Hanif Atmar,’ the Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan.

In this telephone conversation, Taherianfard condemned the terrorist attack on Kabul University and extended his condolences to Afghanistan’s Government and people.

Explaining the results of the recent meeting of the representatives of Iran, Russia, and India on Afghanistan in Moscow and emphasizing the support of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the establishment of peace and security in Afghanistan were other topics discussed in this conversation.

On Monday, a group of gunmen stormed Kabul University after a bomb blast, shot dead several students at the university, killing 22 students and wounding more than 40 others.

ISIS terror group claimed responsibility for the deadly attack, and its propaganda arm said it was behind the rampage.

TCCIMA to Hold Online Iran-Russia Business Forum on Tuesday

TEHRAN (MNA) - Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) is going to hold an Iran-Russia business forum via video conference on Tuesday (November 10), the portal of TCCIMA announced.

Representatives of the Iranian private sector, businessmen from both sides, as well as representatives of Russia’s Energy and Industry and Trade ministries will be attending this online event that is organized in collaboration with the Russian Export Center (REC).

The forum will be also attended by representatives of 35 Russian companies in the field of oil and gas, and

bilateral talks will be continued between the two sides until December 10.

In late September, TCCIMA held an online trade conference on Iran-Russia trade which attended by officials and businessmen from the two sides.

Another business forum was also held between the two sides on October 3 through video conference. The virtual event was attended by officials and businessmen from the two sides.

Iran and Russia have been expanding trade and economic ties over the past few years despite the pressures imposed by the U.S. sanctions on both nations.

Aerial Operation Underway to Put Out Forest Fire in North Iran

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – The Aerospace Force of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) and the Red Crescent Society of Iran have been flying aircraft over Iran’s northern province of Golestan to put out the wildfire that is burning the region’s mountainous forests, officials said.

Commander of the IRGC Aerospace Force’s Aerial Operations General Shamsaddin Farzadi said on Saturday that the IRGC helicopters have performed at least 60 sorties in the province of Golestan since November 2 to extinguish the forest fires.

An official at the Iranian Defense Ministry’s Aerial Firefighting Department has also announced that the choppers of the IRGC and the Red Crescent Society have been dispatched to the mountainous forests in Tuskestan village near Gorgan county to contain the wildfire that has burned tens of hectares of woods so far.

Iranian military forces play a leading role in the rescue and relief efforts during natural disasters in the country. The Army and the IRGC units have saved the lives of civilians in many incidents, such as floods and earthquakes.

Azerbaijani MP Reprimanded Over Anti-Iran Remarks

TEHRAN (MNA) – Azerbaijan’s National Assembly has blasted remarks of MP Bahruz Maharramov about Iran, noting that the position of the MP does not reflect that of the parliament.

The disciplinary committee of the parliament held a meeting on Saturday to discuss the remarks of MP Maharramov, according to Qafqaz Info.

The committee said in a statement that Maharramov’s remarks made on November 6 “contradicts the spirit of friendly and good neighborly relations between Azerbaijan and Iran.”

The body urged the MP to take the ‘national interests of Azerbaijan’ into account, noting that Maharramov’s remarks “do not reflect the position of the parliament.” The committee has imposed ‘disciplinary measures’ on the MP, highlighting that “no one can damage the friendly relations” between Azerbaijan and Iran.

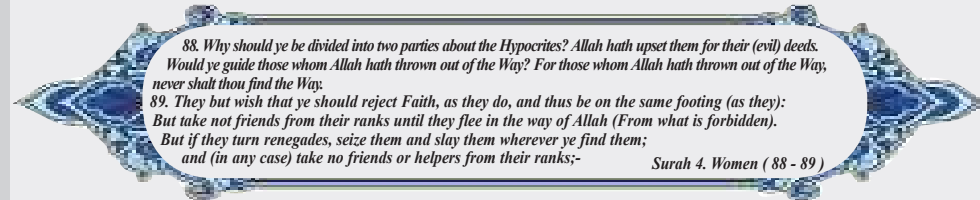
Earlier, Hikmet Hajiyev, an assistant to the Azerbaijani president, had taken to Twitter to slam the MP. Mentioning Iranian ambassador to Baku Abbas Mousavi, Hajiev wrote “Our countries based on mutual respect enjoy friendly relation. President Ilham Aliiev attaches great importance to our ties. We appreciate Iran’s support to our territorial integrity as it was expressed at Highest Levels. Views of MP in no way official position.”

Tehran has voiced support for Azerbaijan’s territorial integrity amid the military war of the country with neighboring Armenia over the Nagorno-Karabakh region.



PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	11:48
■ Evening (Maghreb)	17:21
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	05:08
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:34



Talks Underway for Return of German, Austrian Airlines to Iran

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – The CEO of Imam Khomeini Airport City (IKAC) says talks are underway with German and Austrian flag carriers Lufthansa and Austrian to resume their flights to Iran as soon as possible.

Speaking to IRNA, Mr. Mohammad Mahdi Karbalaei said that the number of flights to Imam Khomeini Airport (IKA) has tripled in recent months comparing to the early months of the current year and it is expected to grow more in upcoming months.

He said since the outbreak of the Coronavirus in Iran and the world, international travels and flights had almost been halted due to the closure of borders, and the number of flights declined significantly and most international flights in the world were almost closed.

He added that in late March and early April of this year and exactly one month after the outbreak of the virus in Iran, the number of arrival and departure flights in the Imam Khomeini Airport decreased by 95 percent but after some months and taking some measures, observing the health protocols and also the demand of the international community for trade ties, the number of flights gradually increased.

Karbalaei further said that according to the statistics, the number of flights has currently been tripled comparing to the early months of the year, admitting that the number of current flights accounts for 10 percent of flights before the pandemic broke out and it is still a long way to back to normal situation. He admitted that the current issue of decline in flights is universal and it has had negative impact on the world air industry in a way that all major international airports in the world are currently facing



with serious economic challenges and most of airlines are facing bankruptcy.

He said but the whole IKAC body as well as domestic and foreign airlines did cooperate to restore flights by observing all health protocols to avoid hurting passengers' health.

On resumption of flights of foreign airlines to Iran, he said since the outbreak of the virus, talks with airlines have been underway several times in order to assure them of observance of health protocols at Imam Khomeini Airport, noting that currently Qatar Airways, Emirates, and Turkish Air have restored their flights to Imam Khomeini Airport and last week talks with officials of Germany's Lufthansa and Austria's Austrian airlines began for resumption of talks.

Karbalaei admitted that the economy of airport city has seriously affected by the virus, saying that city airport is administered through two ways of aviation and non-aviation revenues. He added that currently due to the global crisis in air industry, the city is working to develop its economic sector and focusing on the special economic zone of IKAC.

He said that attention to the surge in production and boom in the zone through offering services to investors, producers and traders as well as developing ways of commercial revenues are of the major programs of the city.

On the probable rise in the air ticket fare, he said that the company has currently no intention for increasing the price of services at the airport, and the current prices are the same.

IME Enjoys Weekly Trade of 514K Tons of Commodities



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Over 514,047 MT of commodities worth over \$211m were traded on the Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) last week.

According to the report from IME International Affairs and PR, on the domestic and export metal and mineral trading floor of IME, 213,556 MT of various products worth close to \$102m were traded last week.

On this trading floor, 212,736 MT of steel, 320 MT of aluminum, 380 MT of copper as well as 120 MT of molybdenum concentrates were traded by customers.

The report declares that on domestic and export oil and petrochemical trading floors of IME, 299,776 MT of different commodities with the total value of \$109m were traded.

On this trading floor, 79,860 MT of VB feed stock, 87,788 MT of bitumen, 60,043 MT of polymer products, 31,825 MT of chemical products, 34,500 MT of lube cut oil, 1,765 MT of insulation, 1,647 MT of base oil, 1,200 MT of slaps waxes, 150 MT of argon as well as 1,000 MT of sulfur were traded.

Furthermore, 711 MT of commodities were traded on the side market of the IME.

Moreover, the agricultural trading floor of the IME experienced trading of 460 kg of saffron strands.

South Pars Phase 11 Drilling Operations Begin



TEHRAN (MNA) - The drilling operations have been started in Phase 11 of Iran's giant South Pars gas field in the Persian Gulf waters, the operator of the phase's development project said.

According to Mohsen Rezaei, the offshore drilling rig was settled at the mentioned phase's SPD-11B platform and the drilling operations for temporary wells of this phase were started on Saturday, Shana reported.

The official noted that the said drilling rig, belonging to Mapna Drilling Company, is going to dig 12 wells in the mentioned phase for extracting about one billion cubic feet of gas per day. The drilling operations will be carried out in two stages, the official said.

"In the first phase, by drilling and completing five descriptive-development wells and installing the SPD11B platform, the initial production capacity of this phase will reach 500 million cubic feet per day, then seven more development wells will be drilled in the second stage," he added.

Engineering and technical monitoring and supervision of all the mentioned operations will be carried out by Iranian experts and engineers.

Development of the South Pars phase 11 was officially started in May after several years of hiatus due to various financial and technical issues.

In November 2016, Iran signed a \$4.8 billion agreement with a consortium including France's Total, China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) and Petropars, a subsidiary of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) on development of phase 11, however Total and CNPCI, pulled out of the project in 2019 due to the U.S. sanctions.

Currently, Petropars is developing the phase 11 project after its partners left the contract.

The South Pars phase 11 project will have a production capacity of 2 billion cubic feet per day or 370 000 barrels of oil equivalent per day. The produced gas will be fed into Iran's gas network. South Pars is the world's largest gas field, covering an area of 3,700 square kilometers of Iran's territorial waters.

The giant field is estimated to contain a significant amount of natural gas, accounting for about eight percent of the world's reserves, and approximately 18 billion barrels of condensate. The field is divided into 24 standard phases.

Wind Power to Generate 30mw More Electricity by Yearend

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Deputy Minister and Head of Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA) said on Saturday that electricity wind power to generate 30 MW by the end of the current Iranian year making up 60% of the predicted capacity of the Zabol wind farm in Sistan and Baluchestan province.

Mohammad Satkin said that located in the Mil-e Nader village in Zabol City, the wind farm will have 20 wind turbines, each with a capacity of 2.5 megawatts, manufactured by Iranian company.

Use of such wind power plants in Mil-e Nader village in Zabol City can help market this kind of power plant in Sistan-Baluchestan province and is an example of attracting investment, he said

According to him, a 25-kilometer transmission line will connect turbines of the wind farm to the national grid.

"There is no plan to exchange energy generated by the plant with Afghanistan at present, but it is an example of developing such joint capacities that will contribute to development," he said.

According to media and statistics, winds blow from end of May to late September in the east and southeast of the



Iranian Plateau, particularly in Sistan-Baluchestan. Typical wind speed is 30-40 kilometers per hour, but occasionally exceeds 100-110 km, and when the winds start blowing, it makes executive works impossible to continue and install the turbines.

Under construction on 20 hectares, the wind farm is located in the Mil-e Nader village in Zabol County and it is the first large wind farm in the southeastern region.

Upon completion, it will have a total capacity of 50 MW, with 20 wind turbines each with a capacity of 2.5 MW. The project is expected to cost \$70 million.

One MW wind power can produce up to 3 million kilowatt-hours of electricity a year. When operational, Mil-e Nader farm will generate up to 150 million kilo-watt hours a year.

With abundance of wind, Zabol has huge potential for producing high volumes of electricity with wind turbines. The city is near the Afghan border and if electricity output goes up, increasing power export to the neighbors would be possible.

Northern areas of the underdeveloped Sistan-Baluchestan Province are suitable for large wind farm.

Silk Road to Expand Economic Ties Between Iran, China

TEHRAN (MNA) – Consul General of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Shanghai said that the Silk Road will expand cultural and economic ties between Iran and China.

Highlighting the strategic and international importance of the Silk Road, Ramezan Parvaz underlined that the road will expand cultural and economic ties between Iran and China.

The Iranian diplomat further pointed to the significance of expanding relations between the two countries in the future.

He went on to say that Iran plays a major role in the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative due to its strategic position in West Asia.

The event was organized by the Chinese International Economic Cooperation Association and on the sidelines of the China International Import Expo.

Some 28 Iranian companies in the fields of technology, Carpets, and handicrafts, dried fruit, and culture attended the event.



Operating Permits Issued for 29 Industrial Units in Bushehr

TEHRAN (MNA) - Operating permits have been issued for 29 industrial units in the southwestern Bushehr Province during the first seven months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-October 21), according to a provincial official.

Hossein Hosseini, the head of the province's Industry, Mining and Trade Department, said 2.457 trillion rials (about \$58.5 million) of investment has made for the mentioned units to start activity.

The official further mentioned the trend of implementing industrial-production projects in the country and said completion of the units with physical progress of over 60 percent is attached priority.

He also announced that through the planning and some special support, the idle industrial-production units in the province's industrial parks will be revived.

The acting head of Iran Small Industries and Industrial Parks Organization (ISIPO) has announced that 819 idle industrial units have been revived in the country during the first seven months of the current year.

Asghar Mosaheb said that reviving the mentioned units has created jobs for 14,458 persons.

The official also announced that ISIPO plans to revive 2,000 idle industrial units throughout the country by the end of the current Iranian year (March 19, 2021).

He said the targeted figure for the mentioned seven-month period was 1,500 units, but the figure was increased in line with the objectives of "Surge in Production", which is the motto of this year.

Four Arrested in Police Brutality Protests in Nigeria

ABUJA (Dispatches) - Dozens of protesters took to the streets of Nigeria's capital Abuja calling out police abuse, activists said, two weeks after the unrest over the issue rocked the country.

Activists said four protesters were arrested on Friday.

Footage on social media showed a small crowd taking to the streets to try to keep up pressure on the authorities after a bloody crackdown helped stamp out demonstrations last month.

"Four of our members were arrested this morning in front of the National Assembly," rights activist Deji Adeyanju told AFP news agency.



U.S. Imposes Sanctions on Lebanese President's Son-in-Law

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The United States imposed sanctions on Friday on Gebran Bassil, the leader of Lebanon's biggest Christian political bloc and son-in-law of President Michel Aoun, accusing him of corruption and ties to Hezbollah.

Bassil heads the Free Patriotic Movement (FPM), founded by Aoun, and has served as minister of telecoms, of energy and water and of foreign affairs.

The target of protests that erupted last year against a political class accused of pillaging the state, Bassil said in a Twitter post that sanctions did not scare him and that he had not been "tempted" by promises.



Biden Predicts Victory as His Lead Over Trump Grows



WILMINGTON (Reuters) - Democrat Joe Biden said Friday that he was going to win the U.S. presidency as his lead grew over President Donald Trump in battleground states, although television networks held off from declaring him the victor as officials continued to count votes.

"The numbers tell us ... it's a clear and convincing story: We're going to win this race," Biden said, adding that he and his running mate Kamala Harris were already meeting with experts as they prepare for the White House.

Biden's speech was originally planned as a victory celebration, but he changed his approach in the absence of an official call from television networks and other election forecasters.

Still, it amounted to a blunt challenge to Trump. The Republican incumbent kept out of view in the White House on Friday as Biden's lead grew in the four states that will decide the outcome: Pennsylvania, Georgia, Arizona and Nevada.

Leading Trump by 4.1 million votes nationwide out of a record 147 million cast, Biden said Americans had given him a mandate to tackle the coronavirus pandemic, the struggling economy, climate change and systemic racism.

"They made it clear they want the country to come together, not continue to pull apart," Biden said. He said he hoped to address Americans again today. Georgia presidential vote likely to go to a recount, state official says

Pennsylvania court orders some provisional election ballots set aside

Trump has remained defiant, vowing to press unfounded claims of fraud as his Republicans sought to raise \$60 million to fund lawsuits challenging the results. But some in his camp described the legal effort as disorganized, and so far they have not found success in the courts.

On the fourth day of vote counting, former Vice President Biden had a 253-to-214 lead in the state-by-state Electoral College vote that determines the winner, according to Edison Research. Democrats grew increasingly frustrated that networks had not yet called a winner.

Securing Pennsylvania's 20 electoral votes would put Biden over the 270 he needs to win the presidency after a political career stretching back nearly five decades.

Biden would also win if he prevails in two of the three other key states. Like Pennsylvania, all three were still processing ballots on Friday. As officials count a deluge of mail-in ballots, Biden has held on to narrow leads in Nevada and Arizona and earlier on Friday overtook Trump in Pennsylvania and Georgia.

"In Arizona, Biden led by 29,861 votes with 97% of the tally completed. In Nevada, he led by 22,657 votes with 93% of the count complete."

"In Georgia, he led by a mere 4,289 votes with the count 99% complete, while in Pennsylvania he led by 27,130 votes with 96% of the vote complete." Biden said Trump's demands to stop the count would not work.

"Your vote will be counted. I don't care how hard people try to stop it. I will not let it happen," Biden said.

Anti-Gov't Demonstrator Killed in Basra Protests

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) - An anti-government protester was killed and 40 others wounded in the southern city of Basra on Friday.

Medics said Omar Fadhel was hit by at least one bullet as hundreds of protesters and the anti-riot police clashed.

Basra security sources and rights official said several dozen protesters took to the streets in the country's southern oil hub demanding jobs and basic services.

They were angry that PM Mustafa al-Kadhimi had generally failed to deliver on both and that protest camps had been cleared by security forces in Basra and the capital Baghdad, the rights official said.

It was the first killing of a protester by security forces in Basra since Kadhimi took office in May.

Iraq's interior ministry confirmed the death but said in a statement that no Iraqi security forces were being allowed to use weapons against demonstrators and that it was investigating the incident.

In a separate incident on Friday, a key figure in anti-government protests launched in Baghdad in



Kremlin Denies Reports Putin Planning to Quit

MOSCOW (Dispatches) - Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov has denied a UK media report claiming President Vladimir Putin was planning to resign due to health conditions, assuring the Russian leader is in good health.

"No," Peskov said in response to a question on whether the president was planning to quit. "He is in excellent health," Russia's TASS news agency reported.

The statement came after The Sun reported, citing sources, that Putin was planning to quit next year after showing possible symptoms of Parkinson's disease.

According to the UK tabloid, observers studied recent footage where Putin's leg appeared to be in constant motion while he seemed to be in pain clutching the armrest of a chair. His fingers seemed to be twitching while he held a cup believed to contain painkillers, the newspaper said.

The report came after the lower house of Russia's legislature proposed a law that could provide Russian ex-presidents immunity from criminal prosecution in their lifetimes, not merely while in office.

The bill, published on a government website, is one of several being introduced following constitutional reforms that, among other things, allow Putin to run again when his term ends in 2024.

The new bill would also make it harder to revoke ex-presidents' expanded immunity.

It would require the upper house of Parliament to vote overwhelmingly to revoke it on the strength of accusations by the lower house that the president had committed treason or another serious crime.

The bill will become law if the lower house votes to approve it in three readings, the upper house backs it, and Putin then signs it. Putin was first elected as Russia's president in 2000. He has served longer than any Russian or Soviet politician since the early 1950s – and could be on course to be one of his nation's longest-serving leaders.

Nagorno-Karabakh Says Its Two Largest Cities Under Fierce Attack

TBILISI (Reuters) - Three residents of Nagorno-Karabakh's largest city were killed during overnight shelling by Azeri forces, the enclave's ethnic Armenian-controlled Emergency and Rescue Service said on Friday, as the battle for control of its major settlements intensified.

Azerbaijan denied the reports of shelling in Stepanakert. Two independent observers said fighting appeared to be moving deeper into the enclave, with Azeri troops stepping up attacks on its biggest two cities.

At least 1,000 people – and possibly many more – have died in nearly six weeks of fighting in and around Nagorno-Karabakh, a mountainous enclave internationally recognised as part of Azerbaijan but populated and controlled by ethnic Armenians.

The conflict has underlined the influence of Turkey, an ally of Azerbaijan, in a former Soviet region long dominated by Moscow, which has a defence pact with Armenia. It also threatens the security of Azeri oil and gas pipelines.

The Nagorno-Karabakh Emergency and Rescue Service said residential buildings and public infrastructure in Stepanakert had been targeted. It said that the three people killed had been inside the same house.

Reuters was unable independently to verify these reports. Three sources working in Stepanakert said that the city – known in Azerbaijan as Khankendi – had come under heavy shelling late on Thursday.

Shushi, 15 km (9 miles) to the south and the enclave's second-largest city, had also come under bombardment overnight and several houses were on fire, the Emergency and Rescue Service said. The city is of strategic importance to both sides.

Azerbaijan's defence ministry said allegations that it had shelled civilian areas were "misinformation".

It has previously accused Armenian-controlled forces of shelling cities under its control, including Terter and Barda, as well as Ganja, the second-largest city in Azerbaijan. Dozens were killed in those attacks.

Thomas de Waal, analyst at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and author of a book on the 1990s Nagorno-Karabakh war, said the conflict appeared to be moving toward a potentially bloody battle for Shushi, known to Azeris as Shusha.

"Shusha has great importance for Azerbaijanis, as a cultural and historical centre and the town where they had a majority population before the war," de Waal told Reuters.



EU Sanctions Lukashenko For Crackdown on Belarus Protests



MINSK (Dispatches) - The European Union (EU) has slapped sanctions on Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko and 14 other officials for repression of the pro-democracy movement following August's contested election.

The asset freezes and travel bans were implemented on Friday following an EU ambassadors' agreement earlier this week that came in response to "violent repression and intimidation of peaceful demonstrators, opposition members and journalists", according to a press release.

Lukashenko's son and national security adviser, Viktor, is among those targeted by the new measures.

Among the others hit with sanctions are Lukashenko's chief of staff, the head of the country's KGB secret service and the president's press officer.

The EU rejected the results of the August 9 election and said it does not regard Lukashenko as the legitimate president.

Mass protests rocked the former Soviet republic following the contentious August 9 presidential election that protesters alleged was rigged.

A report looking into the election and subsequent crackdown by authorities, published by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) on Thursday, said human rights abuses "were found to be massive and systematic and proven beyond doubt".

The vote was "not transparent, free or fair" and it recommended the result to be annulled "due to irregularities at all stages of the process", urging Belarus to "organise new genuine presidential elections based on international standards".

Lukashenko claimed victory in the election but tens of thousands of opposition protesters have since taken to the streets in a wave of protests. The interior ministry last week said it arrested some 300 people.

The 66-year-old leader, who is backed by Russia, was initially spared from inclusion on the EU blacklist imposed early last month on 40 officials accused of fraud and rights abuses.



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Shanon (adviser)

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S, J, balcony
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Russian Weapons Maker Kalashnikov Acquired by Ex-Gov't Official

MOSCOW (Reuters) - A former Russian deputy transport minister has acquired a controlling stake in weapons maker Kalashnikov, the company said on Friday.

Alan Lushnikov, who served as deputy transport between 2017 and 2018, has acquired a 75% stake minus one share in Kalashnikov via a firm called TKH-Invest.

Lushnikov acquired the stake from Deputy Defence Minister Alexei Krivoruchko, who was among the high-ranking Russian officials hit with European Union sanctions last month over the poisoning of Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny.



UK Faces Significant Disruption From Brexit

LONDON (AFP) - Government failures to prepare for Brexit mean the UK faces "significant disruption" when it is fully free of the European Union on January 1, an official watchdog said Friday.

The coronavirus pandemic will add to the strain on freight, farming and other economic sectors, especially in Northern Ireland, with or without an EU trade deal, the National Audit Office (NAO) said.

Britain formally left the EU in January but remains bound by its rules under a transition period until the end of this year.

The two sides are currently battling to thrash out a new economic partnership, but Britain's full exit will mean changes either way, in particular customs checks for trucks heading to the EU from British ports.

In a report, the NAO backed up complaints by business leaders who have been warning for months that the government is putting all the pressure on companies to prepare, but failing to do enough itself.

"Even if government makes further progress with its preparations, there is still likely to be significant disruption at the border from 1 January 2021 as traders will be unprepared for new EU border controls which will require additional administration and checks," the NAO said.

NAO chief Gareth Davies said: "The January 1 deadline is unlike any previous EU exit deadline -- significant changes at the border will take place and government must be ready."

He added that the situation was all the more challenging because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The watchdog's report said computing systems have yet to be tested for outbound freight, and transit areas for lorries were not ready.

It said the government had also yet to appoint enough customs agents, despite their "vital" role in ensuring trade flows smoothly from next year.

Under its "reasonable worst-case scenario", the UK government concedes that queues of up to 7,000 heavy-goods vehicles could develop in southeast England from January 1 as the post-transition period kicks in.

It insists it has ploughed more than £700 million (\$920 million) into border infrastructure, but business groups say they are hampered especially by the slow rollout of critical IT systems identified in the NAO report.

The auditors also highlighted concerns about checks that will be required for goods moving from the rest of the UK to Northern Ireland, which shares a border with EU member Ireland.

Northern Ireland's agriculture department has been "severely hampered" by the ongoing trade talks with Brussels and a "lack of clarity" over the measures required.

As a result, the devolved administration in Northern Ireland is having to explore "contingency options" after January 1, the NAO said.

Japan's Household Spending, Wages Slump

TOKYO (Reuters) - Japan's household spending slumped in September from a year earlier and real wages slid for the seventh straight month, data showed on Friday, a sign sluggish domestic demand will continue to drag on any recovery in the world's third-largest economy.

The data underscores the challenge authorities face in balancing the need to prevent the spread of the coronavirus pandemic and reviving economic activity. Household spending fell 10.2% in September from a year earlier, marking the fourth biggest drop on record and roughly matching a median market forecast for a 10.7% fall, government data showed. It followed a 6.9% drop in August.

Providing some optimism, however, spending rose 3.8% from the previous month, suggesting households were gradually adjusting to life under the pandemic.

"Spending on services recovered in September as people appear to have become used to dealing with COVID-19," said Yoshiki Shinke, chief economist at Dai-ichi Life Research Institute.

"We expect consumer spending to pick up gradually, though a possible resurgence in infections is a risk," he said.

The year-on-year decline was partly driven by the high base effect from September last year, when consumers rushed to buy goods to beat a sales tax hike in October 2019. Spending on services continued to fall, though the pace of decline slowed from August for some items such as travel and transportation fees, the data showed.

In a sign sliding income could dent consumption, however, real wages - a key barometer of households' purchasing power - declined 1.1% in September from a year earlier. Overtime pay and bonuses slumped in September as companies slashed costs to weather the hit to profits from COVID-19.



Japan's economy is bottoming out after suffering its worst postwar slump in April-June, thanks in part to a rebound in exports and output. But weak consumption and capital spending is likely to keep any economic recovery modest, analysts say.

With the Bank of Japan left with little ammunition to spur growth, the onus is on the government to deploy more fiscal stimulus to cushion the blow from the pandemic, they say. Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga is expected to announce this month a plan for fresh stimulus to help the economy shake off the crisis, sources have told Reuters.

"Overcoming this coronavirus crisis and reviving Japan's economy remain our top priority," he told parliament on Friday.

Malaysia's Economy Projected to Grow Up to 7.5% Next Year

KUALA LUMPUR (Dispatches) - Malaysia's economy is projected to rebound with a growth between 6.5 per cent and 7.5 per cent next year, said the government on Friday (Nov 6) as it unveiled an expansionary budget geared towards a recovery from COVID-19.

The government led by Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin allocated RM322.54 billion (US\$77.9 billion) or 20.6 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) for total expenditure in 2021, according to the fiscal outlook report released by the Ministry of Finance in conjunction with the tabling of the budget.

"Accordingly, the total expenditure for the year 2021 is the largest expenditure in history with a value of RM322.5 billion," said Minister of Finance Tengku Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz when he tabled the budget at the parliament on Friday afternoon. Of the total, RM236.5 billion is for operating expenditure and RM69 billion is for development expenditure, while RM17 billion is for the COVID-19 Fund.

The sum is about 2.5 per cent higher than this year's RM314.7 billion, which has been revised upwards from the initial budget estimate of RM297 billion. The government also expects to run on a fiscal deficit of 5.4 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP), lower than this year's 6 per cent, according to an accompanying economic outlook report.

This is the first budget tabled by Mr Muhyiddin's administration, which holds a slim majority in the House of Representatives. There have been fears earlier that Members of Parliament (MP) would block the passage of the budget and turn it into a no-confidence vote against Mr Muhyiddin. But the crisis appears to have been averted after the king urged MPs from both sides of the political divide to support the Bill.

India Economy Bouncing Back at an Unexpected Pace

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - Several macroeconomic indicators over the last few days indicate that the Indian economy is getting back on track at a faster-than-expected pace, information and broadcasting minister Prakash Javadekar said.

Higher tax collection in October, with goods and services tax (GST) collections crossing 1 trillion rupee mark for the first time this fiscal year, exponential growth in digital payments via unified payments interface

(UPI), rise in power demand, increasing foreign direct investment and railway freight loading, are some of the indicators, signalling a recovery in economic growth, Javadekar said at a virtual briefing.

"There is a sustainable development of demand in oilfields, inputs purchased for manufacturing is rising, steel and other sectors are witnessing export growth and demand, rail freight increased in October by 15% despite stoppage of railways in certain places, Q2 (July-September) showed growth in profits of listed companies. Thus, it is very clear that the economy is coming back on track despite the pandemic," he added.

Meanwhile, the finance ministry in its monthly economic report said that India is poised to recover at a fast pace and reach pre-COVID levels by the end of the year, barring the incidence of a second wave that may be triggered by people not adhering to social distancing.

"The continuous improvement in forward-looking RBI indices of consumption and business sentiment for the next year augurs hope of a strong economic rebound," it said in its report for October.

Speaking about cabinet decisions, the minister said that the Cabinet Committee of Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved ₹1,810 crore investment proposal of 210 MW Luhri Stage-I hydropower project on river Satluj. The project will be commissioned within 62 months and will cut 610,000 tons of carbon dioxide from the environment annually.

The hydroelectric project will generate 758.20 million units of electricity annually.

"This project is being implemented by Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam Ltd on Build-Own-Operate-Maintain basis with active support from the government of India and state government.

The MoU of this project was signed with the government of Himachal Pradesh during Rising Himachal, Global Investor Meet, which was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 7 November 2019.

U.S. Economy added 638,000 Jobs as Unemployment Rate Falls to 6.9%

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - U.S. employers brought back more jobs than expected in October and the unemployment rate improved by a greater than anticipated margin. Still, improvements in both metrics have decelerated considerably from earlier this year during the initial stages of recovery during the pandemic period.

The Department of Labor released its monthly non-farm payrolls report Friday at 8:30 a.m. ET. Here were the main results from the report, compared to consensus estimates compiled by Bloomberg:

Friday's jobs report also saw revisions to the last couple months' worth of payrolls. August employment was upwardly revised to see a gain of 4,000 jobs to 1.493 million, and the change for September was revised up by 11,000 to 672,000.

U.S. stock futures, which had been trading sharply lower earlier during the pre-market session, cut some of their declines after the release of the better-than-expected jobs report.

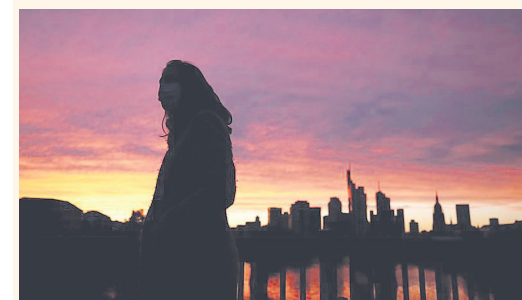
Leisure and hospitality industries contributed a significant portion of jobs to October's overall rise in payrolls, as the areas hardest hit earlier on during the pandemic continued to recover. Employment in these industries rose by 271,000, though this sum was a step down from the 406,000 jobs added back in September. Elsewhere within the service sector, professional and business services jobs rose by 208,000, increasing significantly from the 122,000 brought on during the previous month. Retail trade jobs also increased by more than 103,000.

Utilities industries were the only area in the private sector to see net job losses during October. Government employment, however, slid by 268,000, with 147,000 of these due to losses from temporary 2020 Census workers.

"The 638,000 rise in non-farm payrolls in October is stronger than it looks as it included a 147,000 drop in temporary Census employment and, alongside the big fall in the unemployment rate, it suggests that the labor market recovery still has plenty of momentum," Andrew Hunter, senior U.S. economist for Capital Economics, said in a note Friday morning. Excluding the decline in government jobs, private payrolls rose by 906,000 last month following a jump of 892,000 in September.

"The slowdown in hiring in leisure and hospitality might be an early sign that virus concerns were starting to weigh on the sector but, at 271,000 last month, hiring remains much stronger than it was back in August," Hunter added. "In any case, that was offset by larger gains in retail, construction and professional & business services payrolls."

Gender Pay Gap Narrows Only Marginally in Europe



BRUSSELS (Reuters) - The pay gap between men and women doing the same job in Europe narrowed only marginally this year, the European Commission said on Friday, even though a vast majority of EU citizens support eliminating that difference.

A woman doing the same job as a man is still getting 14.1% less money for it, a small improvement on the 14.5% last year. "Women are not equally valued for their work. They still earn on average 86 cents for every euro a man earns across Europe. Women thus work 51 days more to earn the same as their male colleagues," the Commission said in a statement.

"At the current rate, it would take decades, or even centuries, to achieve equality. This is not acceptable, we must accelerate and reduce this pay gap to zero," it said.

The Commission said the smaller pay for women was the result of inequalities throughout life as women enter the labour market and progress in careers while trying to balance work and family.

"The pandemic has exacerbated these structural gender inequalities and the risk of poverty," the Commission said.

"Women are over-represented in frontline low-paid jobs providing the most basic and essential community services. They are also disproportionately present in informal jobs that are not covered by social protection systems," it said.

The Commission is to propose binding measures on pay transparency in the next few weeks. It said adequate minimum wages, for which the Commission has proposed common EU rules, could help, because more women than men earn a minimum wage.

The Commission said 9 out of 10 Europeans thought it was unacceptable that women were paid less than men for the same job of equal value and that 64% of European workers backed pay transparency through the publication of average wages by job type and gender at their company.

American Bull Wins at Arlington Film Festival

TEHRAN (MNA) – Iranian short ‘American Bull’ directed by Fateme Tousi has won at the 10th edition of the Arlington International Film Festival in the US.

The film won the Best Narrative Short prize at the event, which started online on November 5 and will go through November 15. The film narrates the story of a little boy who is the owner of the only American bull in the area and has a very good relationship with it.

He makes money by renting the bull to other bull owners for mating.

‘American Bull’ has had many international screenings, the most notable of which was at the 65th International Short Film Festival Oberhausen in Germany, which is considered as one of the oldest short film festivals in the world. It has been accredited by the FIAPF since 1960, and is a reference festival of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.



Wealthy States Edge Towards Global Climate Finance Goal

BRUSSELS (Reuters) - Wealthy countries have ramped up financing to help developing countries cut carbon emissions and cope with the impact of climate change, although it is unclear if they will meet their goal of \$100 billion this year.

In its annual update on climate finance for developing countries, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) said donor governments contributed \$78.9 billion in 2018, the latest year for which data are available. This was an 11% increase from \$71.2 billion in 2017.

The funds include loans, grants and a small amount of equity, plus private investments which public bodies helped mobilise.

Developed countries agreed at the United Nations in 2009 to together contribute \$100 billion each year by 2020 in climate finance to poorer countries, many of whom are grappling with rising seas, storms and droughts made worse by climate change.

The \$100 billion goal remains within reach, the OECD said, even though mobilised private finance, which totalled \$14.6 billion in 2018, hardly increased from 2017-2018.

“That means they’d need more public finance to meet that target,” said Simon Buckle, head of the OECD’s climate change division. “That’s not impossible, based on this trend.”

With the coronavirus pandemic upending investments this year, the OECD said data were not yet available on how the pandemic has affected climate finance.

“Developed countries haven’t yet delivered on their promise, both in terms of quantity and quality,” said Mohamed Adow, director of Nairobi-based think-tank Power Shift Africa.

Adow urged developed countries to increase support for “climate adaptation” - such as defences against wilder weather, or methods to adapt farming practices



during droughts and floods.

Only a fifth of global contributions went on adaptation last year, while most support focussed on cutting greenhouse gas emissions in developing countries.

The European Union and its member countries are, taken together, the biggest provider of climate finance to developing countries. The EU said last week it also increased such contributions in 2019, to 21.9 billion euros.

Daily Rise...

FROM PAGE 1

She said the high-risk “red” zones include Tehran, Qom, Mazandaran, East Azarbaijan, Isfahan, Yazd, Ardabil, Khorasan Razavi, Khuzestan, Hamadan, West Azarbaijan, Bushehr, Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad, Alborz, Lorestan, Markazi, Ilam, South Khorasan, Kermanshah, North Khorasan, Semnan, Gilan, Zanjan, Qazvin, Kurdistan, and Kerman provinces.

The “orange” and “yellow” zones also include Golestan, Hormozgan, Fars, and Sistan and Baluchestan provinces, she added.

CBI Blasts Bahrain...

FROM PAGE 1

The total of fines imposed on the Iran Central Bank and the other implicated banks reached 37 million Bahraini dinars. The court also ordered the confiscation of the illegally transferred money that reached \$112 million. But on Saturday, Director of the Legal Studies Department of Iran Central Bank, reacting to the report, said that so far Bahrain government has not communicated anything on Iranian banks and the CBI, adding that in case the court had issued the verdict, it would be legally invalid because the court has not given the defendant chance to defend. Morteza Etebari said that such a verdict is a political move and it is natural that Iran will not refrain from any effort to defend its rights and Bahrain government is responsible for the consequences.

Afghanistan Violence Jumps 50% Amid Peace Talks



KABUL (Dispatches) - Violent attacks in Afghanistan have surged by 50 percent over recent months, even as the Kabul government and the Taliban launched unprecedented peace talks in September, a U.S. watchdog warned.

Despite brief lulls provided by two temporary ceasefires over the summer, fighting has raged across the country as the Taliban launched devastating attacks on provincial capitals and security installations, with fears the violence may jeopardize negotiations.

Attacks against Afghan forces and civilians were 50 percent higher in the three months to the end of September when compared to the previous quarter, the U.S. Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) said in its quarterly report to the U.S. Congress.

“Overall enemy-initiated attacks this quarter were also characterized as ‘above seasonal norms’,” the report added.

The watchdog reported 2,561 civilian casualties this quarter, including 876 deaths, up 43 percent from the April to June period.

The report’s publication comes as scattered calls to boycott the ongoing peace talks have been raised following back-to-back attacks on education centers in Kabul claimed by ISIL, but which some government officials insist were carried out by the Taliban.

Earlier this week, at least 22 students were killed in Kabul University in an attack claimed by ISIL.

Little progress has been made in meetings between Afghan government negotiators and the Taliban since the talks started on September 12, with negotiations stalled over the basic framework of talks and an agenda still undecided.

Both sides have routinely accused each other of upping hostilities and killing civilians.

Zalmay Khalilzad, the U.S. envoy who negotiated a separate deal with the Taliban in February, has repeatedly warned that “continued high levels of violence can threaten the peace process and the agreement and the core understanding that there is no military solution” to the Afghan conflict.

U.S. influence over Afghanistan’s battlegrounds is on the wane, however, with the Pentagon looking to withdraw all its troops that remain in the country by next May.

Confusion over the ongoing US election vote count has raised further questions over whether Washington’s withdrawal from Afghanistan after 19 years of war will continue on schedule or accelerate if Trump clinches another term in the White House.

The Trump administration signed an agreement with the Taliban in February, which called for the withdrawal of U.S. forces and a guarantee by the Afghan armed group not to harm U.S. security interests.

Turkey Paying Extraordinary Cost for Marginal Economic Gains

ANKARA (Dispatches) - Turkey’s government is insisting on achieving marginal growth in the economy this year at extraordinary cost to the country, columnist Erdal Sağlam said in Cumhuriyet newspaper.

Turkish Treasury and Finance Minister Berat Albayrak told parliamentarians of his governing Justice and Development Party (AKP) this week that the economy would grow this year, even if the expansion amounted to just 0.1 percent. Albayrak is clearly aiming to prove the party’s economic success by attempting to deliver on that goal, Sağlam said.

But the cost of this policy far outweighs the benefit to the country, according to Sağlam. He pointed to Turkey’s widening current account deficit, exhausted foreign currency reserves and the difficulties companies are experiencing in rolling over their foreign debt.

Despite a recent slump in the value of the lira, Albayrak is saying that the Turkish authorities will not intervene in the currency markets unless there is an emergency, he said. Under government orders to keep interest rates low, the central bank has spent about \$100 billion of its foreign currency reserves this year in the lira’s defense, but it



The government has also ruined a hard-earned reputation for financial discipline among investors in the chase for economic growth, so much so that it has exhausted cash accumulated in a vast unemployment fund and is now transferring share dividends in a leading Turkish bank belonging to autonomous state institutions to the Treasury, Sağlam said.

The problem for the government is that, despite its insistence on securing economic growth to prove its success, Turkish citizens are now experiencing the negative repercussions of its misguided policies in their everyday lives, he said.

S. Korean Economy Expected to Benefit From U.S. Presidential Election Result

SEOUL (Dispatches) - If Democratic candidate Joe Biden wins the U.S. presidential election, South Korea’s annual export growth rate is estimated to increase by up to 2.2 percentage points.

Democratic candidate Joe Biden is expected to win the U.S. presidential election. The America First policy and trade protectionism of the Trump administration are expected to subside in that Biden supports free trade.

According to Hyundai Research Institute, South Korea’s annual export growth rate is estimated to increase by up to 2.2 percentage points and its upward growth pressure is estimated to rise by up to 0.4 percentage point based on his election instead of the current president’s reelection.

His view on tariffs against China is different from the current president’s and this can have various effects on South Korean industries as well. He is likely to try to limit the influence of China by cooperating with U.S. allies and mentioning human rights, environmental and labor issues whereas the incumbent president did so with unilateral tariffs.

“U.S. tariff rates applied to steel products are expected to be cut, and then Chinese steel can enter the United States with ease,” said a steel industry source, adding, “The current U.S. government imposed high tariffs on Chinese steel, which led to more and more cheap Chinese products in the South Korean market and rapidly intensifying competition, but this is expected to be alleviated.”

The other promising sectors include green industries such as solar and wind power generation and the hydrogen industry. The candidate is planning to invest US\$2 trillion for four years in green infrastructure in order to respond to climate change, create more economic opportunities and reduce the carbon emissions of the United States to zero by 2050. His election pledges include more electric vehicles and more renewable energy production as well and South Korean battery manufacturers’ expectations are rising, too.

South Korea, however, may face a dilemma with the United States trying to put pressure on China together with its allies. South Korea may be compelled to choose its side between Washington and Beijing whereas the incumbent president put the same pressure on his own. For South Korea, China is a very important trade partner accounting for one-fourth of its exports. The leading candidate is considering keeping China in check by re-acceding to the Trans-Pacific Partnership. South Korea may have to decide whether to follow or not.

India Wants OPEC to Fix Asian Oil Pricing Anomaly

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - India wants OPEC to review its pricing policies for the Asian market and end the premium it puts on its crude for Asia, Indian Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said at the virtual OPEC-India Dialogue meeting with OPEC Secretary General Mohammad Barkindo.

Pradhan urged the cartel, led and dominated by Middle Eastern oil producers, to address the ‘pricing anomaly’ for its oil. The minister urged OPEC “about the urgency and need to address the historical aberration in crude pricing for Asia by ending Asian Premium recognizing the shifting of demand for crude oil to Asia, which is further accelerated by Covid-19 pandemic,” Pradhan said on Twitter.

“We had discussions on the rapidly changing global energy landscape, overcoming energy challenges, global oil price mechanisms, measures being taken by OPEC and its partners for balancing oil markets, and on ensuring oil supply security for India,” he added.

“Both sides drew attention to the close cooperation and engagement in many projects and investments between OPEC Member Countries and India, and other topical issues were addressed, including the Asian Premium and term contracts,” OPEC said in a statement about today’s meeting.

India depends on OPEC for 78 percent of its crude oil demand, 59 percent of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) demand, and nearly 38 percent of its liquefied natural gas (LNG) demand, the Indian minister said, noting that India imported US\$92.8 billion worth of oil, gas, and petroleum from OPEC members in the 2019-2020 financial year.

Earlier this year, India used the ultra-low crude oil prices to top its strategic petroleum reserves with oil at \$19 a barrel, saving nearly US\$700 million in the process, India’s Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas said in September. The average cost at which India bought the crude oil in April and May was \$19 per barrel, compared to \$60 a barrel oil price in January 2020. Thanks to the cheapest oil in years at the start of the second quarter, India saved US\$685.11 million on its crude oil import bill, the ministry said.



Miller Tops Rainy Opening European MotoGP Practice

VALENCIA (AFP) - Australian rider Jack Miller produced the best time in Friday's opening practice at the European MotoGP in Valencia, while championship leader Joan Mir was 17th in a wet, crash-filled session.

Second-placed French rider Fabio Quartararo came 21st and last as Yamaha-SRT team-mate Franco Morbidelli, the Teruel Grand Prix winner two weeks ago, was second quickest behind Ducati's Miller. Factory Honda pair Stefan Bradl and Alex Marquez were third and fifth respectively, with Frenchman Johann Zarco fourth on his Ducati-Avintia.

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France Call Up Aouar For Injured Fekir

PARIS (AFP) - Lyon's Houssem Aouar has replaced injured Real Betis midfielder Nabil Fekir in the France squad for Nations League matches against Portugal and Sweden, the French federation announced Friday.

Fekir picked up a left hamstring injury, opening up a spot for 22-year-old Aouar.

France play Finland in a friendly at the Stade de France on Wednesday before two Nations League matches, away to Portugal on November 14 and home against Sweden three days later.

8 IRAN NEWS

SPORTS

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 8, 2020

Nadal on Course For Maiden Paris Masters Crown

PARIS (Reuters) - Rafa Nadal stayed on track for a maiden Paris Masters title by beating fellow Spaniard Pablo Carreno Busta 4-6 7-5 6-1 on Friday, a result that gave Argentine Diego Schwartzman the last spot at the season-ending ATP Tour Finals.

Spain's 20-time Grand Slam champion recovered from a wobbly start and revved up the engine near the end of the second set to clinch victory and progress to a clash with German fourth seed Alexander Zverev, who beat Swiss Stan Wawrinka 6-3 7-6(1). Carreno Busta needed to lift the trophy at Bercy, and at next week's Sofia Open, to deny Schwartzman a spot in the ATP Finals at the O2 in London after the Argentine was earlier thrashed 6-3 6-1 by Russian Daniil Medvedev.

The ninth seed played with confidence early on as Nadal struggled to find his range but when the 13-time French Open champion hit his stride, there was no hope for Carreno Busta. Nadal bagged the second set on his first opportunity with a jaw-dropping forehand passing shot that set the tone for the rout in the decider. Nadal, who has now beaten Carreno Busta in all of their seven encounters, had only reached the final here once.

Medvedev took a 3-1 lead before sealing a one-sided opening set when Schwartzman hit his eighth forehand error into the net.

The 24-year-old Russian found another gear as he claimed 27 of 28 first serve points and wrapped up an emphatic victory with an ace down the line. "I think Diego is capable of playing better so didn't show his best tennis," said Medvedev, who had already booked a place in the season finale in London and will face Canadian Milos Raonic for a place in the Paris Masters showpiece.

"With Diego, you know you're going to have long rallies so it was good for me to win in such a short time. It was good preparation for London, even without the spectators." Schwartzman needed a win to guarantee qualification for the ATP Finals in London, contested by the top eight players from Nov. 15, but went down in 62 minutes.



He is now through, however, after clinching the last spot.

Raonic had to dig deep to beat 22-year-old Frenchman Ugo Humbert, saving two match points in a 6-3 3-6 7-6(7) victory. The 10th seed was 6-4 down in the tiebreak but prevailed in a 30-stroke rally to save the first match point and saw off the second with a service winner.

Humbert then saved a match point but bowed out on the second when Raonic smacked his 25th ace of the match. Meanwhile Zverev battled past Wawrinka in straight sets in the Paris Masters quarter-finals and will face Nadal in the last four.

The 23-year-old German, who is seeking a third straight title after back-to-back victories on home soil in Cologne, edged out Wawrinka 6-3, 7-6 (7/1).

"From my side I thought it was a pretty good match," said Zverev.

"Definitely happy to be in the semis and it'll be an interesting one tomorrow (Saturday against Nadal)... A lot of people are looking forward to that and I am too."

Fourth seed Zverev has won 11 consecutive matches since losing in the French Open last 16 to Italian youngster Jannik Sinner.

He has a 5-1 losing record against Nadal, but won their last meeting at last year's ATP Tour Finals, which was also played on an indoor hard court.

Wawrinka looked to be building momentum in the second set, but his level dropped when he served to force a decider in the 10th game and Zverev broke before easing through a one-sided tie-break.

Mourinho Uneasy With Arsenal Coach Managing Bale

LONDON (AFP) - Tottenham manager Jose Mourinho is unhappy that Gareth Bale's return to the Wales squad next week will be partly overseen by a coach at North London rivals Arsenal.

Wales boss Ryan Giggs is not taking charge of games against the United States, Ireland and Finland later this month after being arrested on suspicion of assaulting his girlfriend.

The former Manchester United star denies all allegations against him, but "mutually agreed" with the Football Association of Wales to sit out the upcoming matches.

Robert Page will take temporary charge with Albert Stuivenberg, who is also on Mikel Arteta's staff at Arsenal, acting as assistant manager. "The fact that one of the coaches is an Arsenal coach does not make me very comfortable," said Mourinho. "National team matches should have coaches that work exclusively for them, not coaches who work for other clubs."

Bale is edging closer to full fitness after an injury-hit start to his second spell at Spurs. He scored his first goal since returning on loan from Real Madrid in the 2-1 win against Brighton last weekend, but is yet to complete 90 minutes this season.

"It's about managing the situation and keeping him safe, because he's a player that needs to be safe, he's a player that had enough problems in the past," said Mourinho.

"He's working so much and we're all working so carefully with him that we don't want to destroy the work everybody is doing for the last couple of months."

Last month Mourinho put pressure on England manager Gareth Southgate not to play Harry Kane in a friendly against Wales.

And he repeated the call for Bale to miss the friendly against the USA to prioritise the Nations League clashes with Ireland and Finland. "Wales has two matches where they play for the Nations League and I expect him to play," said Mourinho. "But if they care as much about him as we do, they have to manage the recovery period. "They have to manage how many days' difference between one match and another. They have to manage the minutes that he plays and they should not let him get to fatigue levels."



Di Maria Returns to Argentina Squad

BUENOS AIRES (AFP) - Paris Saint-Germain winger Angel Di Maria has been recalled to the Argentina squad announced by coach Lionel Scaloni on Friday ahead of World Cup qualifiers against Paraguay and Peru.

The 32-year-old has not played for his country since the 2019 Copa America.

He is amongst 25 foreign-based players selected by Scaloni for the matches against Paraguay, in Buenos Aires on November 12, and Peru in Lima on November 17.

Alongside bitter rivals Brazil, Argentina are the only side in South American qualifying to have started with two straight victories, having defeated Ecuador (1-0) and Bolivia (2-1) last month.

Udinese midfielder Roberto Pereyra, defender Walter Kannemann of Brazilians Gremio, Porto goalkeeper Agustin Marchesin and Stuttgart forward Nicolas Gonzalez have also been added to the list of players called up last month.

Manchester City forward Sergio Aguero, and defenders German Pezzella and Juan Foyth miss out through injury.

Scaloni is due to add some locally-based players to his squad over the weekend with goalkeepers Franco Armani and Esteban Andrada, full-back Gonzalo Montiel and winger Eduardo Salvio expected to be called up.

Guardiola Downplays Liverpool Clash

LONDON (AFP) - Pep Guardiola has compared Manchester City's Premier League challenge with the U.S. presidential election in a bid to downplay the impact of Sunday's clash with Liverpool, pointing out "all the votes must be counted".

City and Liverpool have been the two dominant sides in England for the past three years, with the Reds running away with the league last season after back-to-back titles for Guardiola's men.

However, with City just six games into their league season and every team in the top-flight having dropped points in at least two games so far, Guardiola believes he must steer his side into contention over the long haul. "It's an important game, but like the presidential elections in the United States of America, all the votes must be counted," he said at his pre-match press conference on Friday. "So there are a lot of points to play (for)."

Liverpool's title defence has been rocked by a long-term knee injury to talismanic defender Virgil van Dijk.

The Dutchman is expected to miss the rest of the season with a cruciate ligament injury similar to that suffered by Aymeric Laporte last season that derailed City's season.



Federer Targeting Big Australian Open

LONDON (Reuters) - Roger Federer's recovery from a knee injury is going well and the Swiss great expects to be able to play a "big" Australian Open, his coach Ivan Ljubicic says.

Federer, 39, has not played a competitive match since losing to Novak Djokovic in the Australian Open semi-final, since when the COVID-19 pandemic and surgery has sidelined him.

"He is in the recovery phase and I would say that things are going in the best way," Croatian Ljubicic said in an interview with website OKtennis.it on Friday.

"He trains more and more and better and better, I'm curious to see how much we will be able to push in the coming months.

"There is a lot of confidence."

The 20-time Grand Slam champion is yet to clarify his schedule for next year but has committed to playing the Australian Open.

"I certainly can't tell today what we will do in April. I know we want to leave as soon as possible, play a big Australian Open and then evaluate step by step.

"It is important to go step by step and observe rest periods. As we have always done."

