

**Health Ministry Announced on Sunday That the Number of Deaths From the Coronavirus Pandemic in Iran Increased to 122,592 With 222 More Iranians Killed by the Deadly Virus Over the Past 24 Hours**

# IRAN NEWS

**Head of Atomic Energy Organization Of Iran (AEOI) Announced on Sunday That Generation of Electricity at the 1st Phase of Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant in Southern Iran Has Hit 50 Billion kWh**

VOL. XXVII, No. 7333 TEHRAN Price 40,000 Rials

www.irannewsdaily.com

MONDAY OCTOBER 11, 2021 - MEHR 19, 1400

2 DOMESTIC

Tehran, Damascus Continue Economic Development



> SEE PAGE 2

## Iran's 20% Enriched Uranium Stockpile Surpasses 120kg



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - The head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran says the Islamic Republic possesses over 120 kilograms of 20% enriched uranium to supply its research reactor in Tehran with fuel.

"We have exceeded 120 kilograms and in this matter, we are ahead of schedule. Earlier, based on the JCPOA, 20% uranium fuel was supposed to be provided for the Tehran reactor (from abroad), but it was not given, and if we had not started making this amount of fuel ourselves, this would have turned into one of our problems today," Mohammad Eslami said in a live interview on national TV on Saturday evening.

See Page 7

3 DOMESTIC

Economies of Tehran, Belgrade "Complementary"



> SEE PAGE 3

## Iran Foreign Debt Falls 3.3%

TEHRAN (MNA) - The latest data released by the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) show that the country's foreign debt stood at \$8.84 billion at the end of the fifth Iranian calendar month of Mordad (August 22), down 3.3 percent from \$9.142 billion at the end of the previous year, IRIB reported.

From the total foreign debt, \$6.36 billion was mid-term and long-term debts while \$2.48 billion was short-term debts, the data indicated.

Iran's external debts stood at \$8.744 billion at the end of the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (June 20), down 4.35 percent from \$9.142 billion at the end of the previous year, IRIB reported.

Some \$6.733 billion of the total foreign debt in the mentioned period was mid-term and long-term debts while \$2.011 billion was short-term debts.

External debt is the portion of a country's debt that is borrowed from foreign lenders including commercial banks, governments, or international financial institutions. These loans, including interest, must usually be paid in the currency in which the loan was made.

See Page 7

## ViewPoint

By: Hamid Reza Naghashian



## Bold and Brave

According to reports by an online oil shipment tracking service, a third tanker containing a shipment of Iranian oil destined for Lebanon docked in Syria's Baniyas port on Wednesday.

The service said the Fortune tanker, registered in Iran, had arrived at the northern Syrian port — the same docking point for previous shipments. The overland delivery through neighboring Syria is against U.S. sanctions imposed on Tehran after then-president Donald Trump pulled America out of a nuclear deal between Iran and world powers in 2018. But it shows how the Islamic Republic of Iran is behind its friends and allies and it is not just friend of good weathers and it will rush to their helps in the hard times.

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian said on Friday during a visit to Beirut that Iran aims to continue sending fuel products to Lebanon in the future and hopes a bilateral agreement can be struck for that purpose.

See Page 7

# Shiraz Petrochemical Company

## is a leader in complying with environmental standards

**According to the public relations of Shiraz Petrochemical Company:**

Shiraz Petrochemical Company is the first petrochemical company in the country with a history of more than sixty years in the field of production of chemical and petrochemical products. The company has complied with environmental standards in its activities. In this regard, the principle of pollution prevention and environmental protection has been implemented.

**In this regard, more than 50 environmental projects have been implemented at a cost of more than 60,000,000,000 Rials during the period from 1993 to 2020. The results of the implementation of these projects are as follows:**

**1- Water and wastewater sector:** In this field, a considerable number of projects have been implemented with the aim of reducing effluent production, wastewater recycling and finally reducing raw water consumption. The result is a reduction of more than 15% in volume of annual water consumption, which is equivalent to more than 1.800 / 1,000 cubic meters per year. The approval of the Fars Regional Water Authority is proof of this claim.

**2- Air sector:** In this regard, Shiraz Petrochemical Company has taken important measures so far. One of these issues, which is of special importance in the country's industries and was mentioned in the media, is the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) plan. Shiraz Petrochemical Company fulfilled its social responsibility in the region

and the world in the conditions of international sanctions, which deprived foreign partners of the possibility of financial investment. Due to the environmental commitments to the community stakeholders, the company directly covered all the foreign exchange and rial investment costs of the CDM project.

The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) project was implemented with the aim of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 425,000 tons of CO2 per year. This project was officially inaugurated on March 7, 2016 at a cost of 32 trillion Rials on March 7, 2016 in the presence of the then esteemed head of the Environment Organization, Dr. Ebtekar.

The results of this project include the fulfillment of 37% of the commitments of the petrochemical industry of the whole country in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 (based on the commitments of the Islamic Republic of Iran at the annual COP2015 meeting in Paris).

- International Registration of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) Initiative at the Kyoto Protocol Secretariat
- Receiving the certificate of Clean Development Mechanism in 2017 in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in accordance with the obligations of the Islamic Republic of Iran as the first petrochemical in the country
- Receiving a golden statue at the level of the Ministry of Oil in the field of environment and social responsibilities in 2020
- Received certification for reducing greenhouse gas emissions of more than 780,000 tons from the United Nations for the first 18-month monitoring period (2017-2018)
- Equipping the output towers of the urea and ammonium nitrate production units of Region 2 to a system for permanent monitoring of environmental pollutants
- Equipping the output tower of nitric acid unit and three HRSG towers with a system for continuous monitoring of environmental pollutants

**3- Soil and waste department:** Shiraz Petrochemical Company, in accordance with the Law on Waste Management and the Basel International Convention, managed its waste and production waste. These measures have brought important results in the region to prevent soil contamination. Among these cases, we can mention several studies in the field of location for landfill of process and

special wastes. This company was the first industry to take such measures. Meanwhile, the company is considering the implementation of the project for the use of the mentioned waste as environmentally friendly construction materials.

**4- Decommissioning old and worn-out units:** One of the points to consider is the dismantling of worn-out units and the construction of units with the latest technology in the world with a capacity of more than 20 times that of old units.

**5- Construction of green space:** Shiraz Petrochemical Company constructed more than 155 hectares of green space, which is equivalent to 30% of the owned lands. This amount is more than 10 times the limit set for industries. This action proves the company's commitment to prevent pollution.

**6- Other cases:** Shiraz Petrochemical Company, after evaluation by supervisory bodies and evaluation by internal and external auditors, has obtained several certificates. Some of these certificates are as follows:

- Clean Industry Award (National Environmental Protection Organization)
- Green Industry Award (Environmental Protection Organization)
- Award of appreciation for the selected green industry (Environmental Protection Organization of the country)
- Green Commitment Certificate (Office of Environmental Affairs of the Ministry of Mining Industry and Trade)



## NSC Omits Low Effecting Drugs for COVID 19 Treatment

TEHRAN (IP) - With the approval of the members of the National Scientific Committee against Corona, several anti-corona drugs were removed from the treatment regime of corona patients in Iran.

The secretary of the committee, Hamidreza Jama'ati, told Iran Press in an interview on Sunday that Hydroxychloroquine, Corticosteroid, Interferon were omitted from the treatment regime of the corona patients.

Jama'ati stressed that the medical centers should not use the omitted drugs in the early stages of coronavirus infection.

## Tehran, Damascus Continue Economic Development

**TEHRAN (MNA) – Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian and Syrian President Bashar al-Assad discussed expansion of bilateral relations, regional developments, and international issues in a meeting in Damascus on Saturday.**

Amir-Abdollahian, who arrived in the Syrian capital of Damascus on Saturday morning after visits to Russia and Lebanon, met and held talks with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

In the meeting, the strengthening and deepening of bilateral relations between the two countries were emphasized.

They also exchanged views on developments in Afghanistan, Yemen, Iraq and Syria.

The Iranian Foreign Minister called the extensive communication and meetings between the high-ranking officials of the two countries as showing the depth of relations between Iran and Syria and congratulated Syria on its political, international and field victories.

Amir-Abdollahian also said that the positive diplomatic space in the recent UN General Assembly meetings could be used as a testimony to show that had changed in favor of Syria.

Explaining the policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran towards the developments in Afghanistan, he stated that Iran is in contact with all parties in Afghanistan, including the Taliban, and invites them to form an inclusive government.

During the meeting, the Syrian President stated that in the short time that has passed since his last meeting with the Iranian foreign minister, many changes had taken place in favor of both nations.

"We were able to hold the presidential elections successfully. The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan shows the emergence of new axes and the decline of the Western axis," the Syrian president said.



Al-Assad also noted, "Countries in the region and Afghanistan's neighbors know that the United States does not accept to be held to account for its actions and policies in Afghanistan. The Islamic Republic of Iran has the capability and must enter into negotiations with its neighbors and other countries in order for Afghanistan to succeed because the Americans want to create differences between Afghanistan's neighbors."

"The Islamic Republic of Iran has this capability and must enter into negotiations with its neighbors and other countries in order for Afghanistan's developments to succeed because the Americans want to create divisions among Afghanistan's neighbors," the president said.

Bashar al-Assad also stated, "We are interacting with the Constitutional Committee within the framework of Syria's national interests, and not through interfering and imposing foreign views."

Regarding the developments in Syria's Idlib, he stressed the end of the occupation and the return of all occupied territories to Syria.

Referring to the pragmatism of the new government in the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Iranian foreign minister said, "We have a plan for sustainable economic development, which we will pursue despite the continuation of oppressive sanctions against Iran."

Amir-Abdollahian added, "Of course, we will return to the Vienna talks soon, and we will consider the issue of verification and receiving the necessary guarantees for the fulfillment of the obligations from the Western parties. If these negotiations are concluded, we will use them to accelerate the implementation of our country's development plan, otherwise, we will not stop the progress of the program."

## 9 Isfahan Caravanserais

### Nominated for UNESCO Inscription

ISFAHAN (IRNA) - Documents are ready to nominate 9 historical caravanserais in Isfahan province, in central Iran, in the list of UNESCO World Heritage List, a provincial official says.

A provincial Cultural Heritage official Ali Kamyabi said that inspectors affiliated to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) will pay a visit to the nine historical monuments in Isfahan province.

Neyestanak Caravanserai in Naean city, Caravanserais located in the town of Kuhpayeh, Sheikh Ali Khan Zanganeh and Gaz in Shahinshahr and Meymeh county, Caravanserais of Mahyar and Amin Abad in Shahreza city, Caravanserais of Gabri and Maranjab in Kashan and Aran-o-Bidgol counties, and Abbasi Caravanserai in Isfahan city are the ones nominated for the UNESCO inscription.

Given preplanned programs, the UNESCO inspectors arrived in Isfahan province on Saturday for a three-day stay to evaluate documents and inspect caravanserais.

Neyestanak Caravanserai dates is two centuries old and is located in Neyestanak village near the historical city of Anarak. The caravanserai is one of the unique monuments in Iranian central desert's trade route.

Kuhpayeh Caravanserai enjoys a history of more than 450 years. It has been registered as one of national Iranian heritage, which is appropriate tourist destination.

Gaz Caravanserai dates back to Seljuk dynasty and it is located in Barkhordar county near Isfahan city.

Mahyar Caravanserai was built during the reign of Shah Ismail I, the founder of the Safavid dynasty of Iran. It has various buildings such as market and some shops.

Amin Abad Caravanserai was constructed in Safavid era, locating 41 kilometers away from Shahreza city.

Gabri Caravanserai was one of the historical monuments dating back to the date of Safavid dynasty. It was an important caravanserais in the Silk Road era.

Maranjab Caravanserai, located 70 kilometers far from Kashan city, had been made of bricks and plaster. It has several rooms, stables and six towers.

Abbasi Caravanserai with around 300 years of age is one of the largest hotels in Isfahan and Iran. Its architecture has its roots from Safavid era. Abbasi Hotel was designated as the most beautiful hotels in the Middle East in March 2017.

## Leader Urges Officials in Afghanistan to Punish Friday Attack Perpetrators



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has called on Afghanistan's authorities to punish the perpetrators behind the Friday terrorist attack targeting worshippers at a packed Shia mosque in the northern Afghan city of Kunduz.

"The bitter, tragic incident involving a blast at the mosque of Khanabad district of Kunduz province, which resulted in the deaths of a large number of faithful worshippers, saddened us," Ayatollah Khamenei wrote in a message on Saturday.

"Authorities in the neighboring and brotherly country of Afghanistan are seriously expected to punish the bloodthirsty perpetrators of this heinous crime and take necessary measures to prevent a recurrence of such tragedies," he added.

The Leader also asked God to bestow mercy and the highest heavenly blessings upon the souls of the martyrs of the incident, and prayed for the immediate recovery of the wounded and patience for the bereaved.

On Friday, a bomber attacked a Shia mosque in Afghanistan's northeastern Kunduz province, killing and injuring hundreds of worshippers. The Daesh terrorist group claimed responsibility for the attack.

The attack followed other similar ones in Afghanistan in recent weeks.

## Iran, Brazil Discuss Expansion of Agricultural Cooperation

TEHRAN (MNA) - Minister of Agriculture Seyyed Javad Sadatinejad met and held talks with the Brazilian Ambassador to Tehran Laudemar Goncalves de Aguiar Neto on the agricultural cooperation between the two countries.

During the meeting, the Iranian Minister of Agriculture emphasized the development of scientific and technical cooperation between Iran and Brazil in the agricultural sector.

Referring to the historical and cultural relations between the two countries, Sadatinejad said that it is



necessary to change the approach of Iran-Brazil agricultural cooperation from "trade" to "food diplomacy".

Welcoming the suggestion of the Iranian minister, the Brazilian Ambassador to Iran, for his part, said that improving and expanding cooperation between Iran and Brazil in the agricultural sector requires planning.

Aguiar Neto announced that the Brazilian Minister of Agriculture will pay a visit to Iran in the near future.

He also invited Iran's Minister of Agriculture to visit Brazil's agricultural sector officially.

## Iran Money Supply Rises 39.1% y/y in August

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Figures by the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) show that money supply in the country rose by 39.1% year on year in late August to reach the equivalent of more than \$142.5 billion.

CBI figures published on Saturday showed that money supply (M3) had reached 39,214.3 trillion rials which would be equal to more than \$933.5 billion once calculated on the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per U.S. dollar.

Money supply had increased by 12.8% compared to figures recorded at the end of the last calendar year in late March, according to the CBI data which were covered in a report by the official IRNA news agency.

Tables cited in the report showed that CBI's net foreign assets had increased by 29.3% against late August 2020 to reach 4,815.2 trillion rials (\$17.5 billion).

Government debts to the CBI was 351.4 trillion rials (\$1.27 billion), up by more than 256% compared to March and over 207% against August last year.

Debts owed by state-run and private banks had increased by around 6% against both August last year and March 2021 to amount to 1,242.4 trillion rials (\$4.5 billion), showed the CBI figures.

Money in circulation was 819.8 trillion rials (\$2.97 billion), up 17.6% against August 2020, while banks' deposits held in the CBI rose by 47.9% year on year to top 4,339.6 trillion rials (\$15.7 billion).

The figures come just days after the Iranian Cabinet appointed a new CBI governor with a mandate to control government borrowing from the lender.

The governor, Ali Salehabadi, a former head of Iran's stocks and equities regulator, has vowed he would introduce a tight monetary policy to help tame inflation in Iran.

## President Calls for Directing Liquidity to Production

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Stating that the main responsibility and management of market regulation lies with the First Vice President, President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi said, "The Market Regulation Headquarters should be more active and operational under the supervision of the First Vice President."

Speaking at the meeting of the Cabinet's Economic Coordination Board, Raisi referred to the need to sell surplus government assets within the framework of the budget law, saying, "The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance is required to pursue this issue seriously".

The President considered it necessary to reform the tax system and identifies new taxpayers, and stressed the need to control and reduce government expenditure with the participation and efforts of various agencies and departments.

Raisi also called for serious and operational supervision of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) on all banks, including private banks, and said, "Directing liquidity from unproductive activities to productive ones and organizing liquidity using the opinions of economic experts is one of the most important tasks of the Central Bank". At the meeting of the Cabinet's Economic Coordination Board, the views and opinions of members on regulating the market for basic goods were also discussed.

## "Eghtedar 4" Military Drill Kicks Off in Persian Gulf waters

TEHRAN (MNA) - Iran's Law Enforcement Forces (Police) launched a military drill entitled "Eghtedar (Authority) 4" in the northern waters of the Persian Gulf on Sunday.

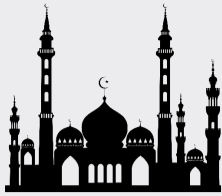
In this drill, border commandos of Iran's Law Enforcement Force (Police) displayed their defense and combat capabilities in northern waters of the Persian Gulf in order to ensure the security of the borders of the country.

Commander of Border Guards of the Islamic Republic of Iran Brigadier-General Ahmadi Ali Goudarzi said that the duty of border guards at sea borders is to control and coordinate border exchanges and establish maritime discipline in a way that ensures the security of the Persian Gulf region.

Under the auspices of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, security of the Persian Gulf is under the strict supervision and protection of the Armed Forces which is necessary for the country and also neighboring countries in the region, he emphasized.

He went on to say that the purpose of the military drill entitled "Eghtedar 4" is to improve the operational capacity and rescue at sea, to fight against all kinds of smuggling at sea.

Dealing with illegal traders and those who intend to cause disorder and smuggle products via sea are one of the important priorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran's border guard.



## PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	11:51
■ Evening (Maghreb)	17:52
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	04:45
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:08

37. He said: "Before any food comes (in due course) to feed either of you, I will surely reveal to you the truth and meaning of this ere it befall you: that is part of the (duty) which my Lord hath taught me. I have (I assure you) abandoned the ways of a people that believe not in Allah and that (even) deny the Hereafter. Surah 12. Joseph (37)

## Economies of Tehran, Belgrade "Complementary"

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

**TEHRAN – Chairman of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mine and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Mr. Gholam-Hossein Shafei in meeting with Ambassador of Serbia to Tehran Mr. Dragan Todorovic explored ways for improving the trade ties between the two countries.**

In the meeting, Shafei pointed to the economic laws in Serbia and called them among the most advanced laws which have also been adopted based on the EU rules and for this reason Iran is determined seriously to expand ties with it.

He went on to say that analysts believe Serbia is a rising economy and the country has been successful in the field of economy and despite the past economic crisis, Serbian economy has found its way and moved ahead. He noted that since the past, Iran has had good ties with Serbia both in cultural and economic and political fields and this relation in the fields of handicrafts and tourism is very important.

Shafei also pointed to the revoke of visa and direct flights and said that the direct flight has faced problem and revoke of visa was canceled, reiterating that these two issues should be considered and restored.

He then pointed to diverse fields for cooperation and said Serbia has been successful in agro economy and exports of agro products and these two economies can be complementary. He went on to say that there is chance for cooperation in tourism, and by the way Iran has progressed very well in the mining sector and it can be a serious field for bilateral cooperation.

Shafei also referred to the regional capacities of the two countries and added countries around Iran and Serbia are good markets and Tehran and Belgrade can have serious presence in those markets and for this reason both states need to move towards joint cooperation and investments to meet the needs of their neighboring states.

He then pointed to the issue of the Iran-Serbia Joint Chamber of Commerce and said



the ICCIMA supports this idea, and both sides can take advantage of the online grounds for preparation for the launch of the chamber. He reiterated that the chamber can help business activists of the two countries to know each other for future trade exchanges.

Meanwhile Serbian Ambassador Mr. Todorovic, for his part, said that during his stay in Iran he has visited Isfahan, Qazvin and Khuzestan Provinces and he has realized there are several common interests and the two countries should restore a good economic relation to enjoy those interests.

He added that it will improve the bilateral trade relations, both countries can form the joint chamber of commerce in order that their economics could work together. He reiterated that the political and economic relations of Tehran and Belgrade have been good since the past, adding that once there was direct flight between the two countries which was cancelled but both countries would work to restore it because it is very effective on the bilateral economic relation.

He emphasized that the launch of the joint chamber of commerce will help the economic activists of the two states to know the capacities of the two states for trade.

Meanwhile head of international affairs of ICCIMA Mr. Mohammad Reza Karbasi, for his part, pointed to Iran's trade with most Eastern European countries and said Iran exports or imports goods to/from those countries based on the bartering and Serbia can expand its trade with Iran through bartering, reiterating that the trade volume of Tehran and Belgrade is not in an acceptable level and through bartering both countries can enhance the trade.

## Tehran to Host Webinar on Promoting Trade With New Delhi

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mine and Agriculture (TCCIMA) on Wednesday October 14 will host a webinar on promoting economic trade and cooperation between Iran and India.

According to the reports, the TCCIMA will host the webinar with participation of economic activists of Iran and India. The webinar has been organized in cooperation between TCCIMA and Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) of India and during it, senior officials of the two bodies as well as commercial attaches of Iran and India, and representative of UCO Bank of India are to take part.

The webinar will be focused this time on the trade of agro products and foodstuff between Iran and India.



## Over \$400m of Commodities Traded on IME Last Week

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) last week witnessed trade of 1,606,000 tons of commodities valued at \$399m on its physical market.

According to a report by the IME's international affair and PR, within the week, the exchange traded 1,222,000 tons of commodities worth almost \$190m.

On this floor, the IME's customers purchased 938,860 tons of cement, 263,452 tons of steel, 1,220 tons of copper, 3,690 tons of aluminum, 300 tons of molybdenum concentrate, 15 tons of precious metals concentrate, 310 tons of zinc, 20 kg of gold bars and 20,000 tons of sponge iron.

Furthermore, the IME saw trade 376,227 tons of commodities on both domestic and export pits of its oil and petrochemical trading floor valued at almost \$199m.

Commodities sold on this floor included 103,000 tons of vacuum bottom, 101,513 tons of bitumen, 86,830 tons of polymeric products, 34,464 tons of chemicals, 34,500 tons of lube cut, 3,060 tons of base oil, 3,000 tons of slops wax, 105 tons of insulation and 20,880 tons of sulfur.

It's worth noting that the IME witnessed trade of 500 kg of saffron on its agricultural trading floor.

Last but not least was the IME's side market with 7,764 tons of commodities traded on it.



## Iran-Turkey 6-Month Trade Up by 2.5 Folds

TEHRAN (MNA) - The value of trade between Iran and Turkey rose by 2.5 folds in the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, a board member of Tabriz Chamber of Commerce announced.

Reza Kami put the six-month trade between the two neighbors at \$4.7 billion, while the figure for the same time span of the past year was nearly \$2 billion.

The amount of trade between Iran and Turkey is increasing, even the amount of trade between the two countries in the first six months of this year is almost equal to the total trade last year, he underlined.

He said Iran exported commodities worth \$2.3 billion to Turkey and imported products valued at \$2.4 billion from the country in the first half of this year, while the figures were \$581 million and \$1.12 billion in the same time span of the previous year.

The head of Iran-Turkey Joint Chamber of Commerce has stated that the value of bilateral trade between the two countries is forecast to reach \$10 billion in the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2020).

"Official Turkish statistics show that Iran-Turkey trade has been declining sharply since the second quarter of 2019, and the downward trend in trade with



this country has continued until the second quarter of 2020. But since then, it has been on the rise and has increased in the first quarter of 2021 for the third consecutive season; In a way, we have witnessed a 53-percent growth in trade value between the two countries", Mehrdad Sa'adat stated.

He mentioned gas and petrochemicals, raw materials and agricultural products as the major goods traded between the two sides.

The value of trade between Iran and Turkey rose by 53 percent in the first quarter of 2021 from the first quarter of 2020, Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (TCCIMA) reported, based on the official statistics released by Turkey.

The report put the worth of the two countries' bilateral trade at \$986 million in the first three months of this year.

Of the mentioned figure about \$505 million was related to Iran's exports to Turkey and about \$481 million was related to Iran's imports from this country. Meanwhile, in the first quarter of 2020, Iran's main trade with Turkey was related to Iran's imports from this country, while during the first quarter of 2021, Iran's trade balance with Turkey was positive.

During the first quarter of 2021, Iran's imports from Turkey increased by about 29 percent compared to the same period last year, and during the same period, Iran's exports to this country increased by 87 percent, which caused Iran's trade balance with Turkey from minus \$104 million in the first quarter of 2020 reach a positive \$24.4 million in the first quarter of 2021.

As previously reported by the head of Iran-Turkey Joint Chamber of Commerce, Iran has exported \$2 billion of commodities to Turkey in 2020.

Putting Iran's imports from Turkey at \$2.254 billion in 2020, Sa'adat said, "Iran-Turkey trade declined highly in 2020, while we had experienced an annual bilateral trade of \$15 billion, and meanwhile our target is to reach \$30 billion".

## Iran, Iraq to Ink MoC on Tourism

TEHRAN (IP) - The Governor General of Iran's Ilam Province stressed the necessity of conclusion of memorandum of cooperation with Iraqi Karbala Province in the field of tourism.

Having taken a trip to Iraq, Mohammad Nozari in a meeting with Governor-General of Karbala Nassif Jassem al-Khattabi said: "Regrading the exclusive commute of Iranian pilgrims at Mehran border and the proximity of this international border to Karbala, we are ready to cooperate more and provide the necessary arrangements for better services to the pilgrims of al- Atabat al-Muqaddasa (Holy Shrines of Shia' Imams) at all times, especially in Arba'een."

Referring to the great tourism potential of Ilam province, he emphasized the conclusion of a joint memorandum between the two provinces in this regard.

The governor of Ilam Iran reminded: "Ilam province is ready to cooperate with Karbala province and Iraq in various fields such as medical tourism, education of Karbala students in Ilam universities and receiving tourists."

Nozari referred to the 65% commuting of Iranian pilgrims through the international border of Mehran in Arba'een, demanding the abolition of visas for pilgrims.

He praised the people and the governor of Karbala for the proper reception of the pilgrims of Aba Abdullah al-Hussein (AS) in Arba'een this year.

Following this meeting, the Governor-General of Karbala expressed his satisfaction with the presence of

Iranian pilgrims in the Arba'een procession in the current year, announcing his readiness to cooperate more with his Iranian counterpart.

At the end of the meeting, a team consisting of different parts of Karbala province was decided to leave for Ilam province in the near future to implement the issues raised.

## Flare of South Pars Phase 14 Refinery Lit Up

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - The operator of the phase 14 development project, Mohammad Mehdi Tavasoli-Pour, said concurrent with coming on stream of the first refining unit, flare of South Pars Phase 14 refinery was lit up.

Announcing the news, Tavasoli-Pour said due to connection of 42-inch pipeline of South Pars Phase 14 refinery to the nationwide sixth pipeline (IGAT6) and flow of sweet gas into the fuel unit of the refinery (fuel gas), the flare of the refinery in the project was lit up.

He went on to say that according to the schedule, it had been decided the flare of the refinery of Phase 14 development project to be lit up in October and it



happened as schedule.

He then pointed to the necessity of primary launch of the refining units with sweet gas before the flow of sour gas from the sea.

Tavasoli-Pour noted that according to the plan, first of all, the fuel unit of the refinery (Unit 122) with getting gas from the nationwide pipeline came into operation and then the flare of the onshore refinery of the project was lit up.

He then stated that four platforms of the project with the capacity of 56m cubic meters joined the production circuit.

Tavasoli-Pour also said that the progress of the refining complex of the Phase 14 has been more than 86 percent.

## KSC Sets Record for Most Sales of Rebar on IME

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Khorasan Steel Complex Company (KSC) with offering 205,480 tons of rebar has set a record for the most sales of rebar at the industrial ring of Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) in the first half of the year.

The CEO of the Company Mr. Kasra Ghafoori said according to the statistics on the website of the IME, the sold products of the company on the IME has been over 153,824 tons in the first half of the year which was valued at 20,700b rials, adding that this giant industrial complex succeeded in offering and selling 75 percent of its products on the IME.

He noted that the competition for buying KSC's offered products on the IME in the first half of the year led to the long lines for buying these products and setting the record for the most sales of rebar in the industrial ring of the IME.

According to reports, 99,000 tons of different types of ingots produced by KSC have been offered on the IME in the same period and some 61,500 tons of this ingot basket worth of 7002b rials have been sold.

Meanwhile head of sales department of the company Seyed Ahmad Lotfi regarding the strategy of the company for marketing and sales inside and outside the country said that the strategy of the company for export markets is based on the position of KSC and closeness of the Central Asia, development and penetration into the regional markets.



## Fuel Shortage Forces Shutdown of Main Lebanese Power Plants

BEIRUT (Dispatches) - The two main power plants in crisis-hit Lebanon have gone out of commission, effectively stopping all state electricity in the country.

The shutdown on Saturday of the Deir Ammar and Zahrani plants, which have generated very limited electricity in recent months, took place due to a diesel fuel shortage, sources said.

Residents of Halba in the northern Akkar province protested at the regional office of the state-run producer Electricite du Liban (EDL). In nearby Tripoli, angry residents blocked roads with cars and burning tyres after power cuts worsened water shortages.



## La Palma Volcanic Eruption Intensifies

MADRID (Dispatches) - The volcano began erupting on September 19 and has destroyed more than 800 buildings and forced the evacuation of about 6,000 people from their homes on the island.

La Palma, with a population of about 83,000, is one of the Canary Islands in the Atlantic.

On Saturday, the magma destroyed at least four buildings in the village of Callejon de la Gata, Reuters news agency reported. Lightning flashes were also seen near the eruption early on Saturday.



## China's Xi Vows Reunification With Taiwan



BEIJING (Dispatches) - Chinese President Xi Jinping vowed to achieve "peaceful reunification" with Taiwan, and did not directly mention the use of force after a week of tensions with the Chinese-claimed island that sparked international concern.

Taiwan responded shortly after by calling on Beijing to abandon its coercion, reiterating that only Taiwan's people could decide their future. Democratically ruled Taiwan has come under increased military and political pressure from Beijing to accept its sovereignty, but Taipei has pledged to defend its freedom.

Speaking at Beijing's Great Hall of the People, Xi said the Chinese people have a "glorious tradition" of opposing separatism. "Taiwan independence separatism is the biggest obstacle to achieving the reunification of the motherland, and the most serious hidden danger to national rejuvenation," he said on the anniversary of the revolution that overthrew the last imperial dynasty in 1911.

Peaceful "reunification" best meets the overall interests of the Taiwanese people, but China will protect its sovereignty and unity, he added.

"No one should underestimate the Chinese people's staunch determination, firm will, and strong ability to defend national sovereignty and territorial integrity," Xi said. "The historical task of the complete reunification of the motherland must be fulfilled, and will definitely be fulfilled."

He struck a slightly softer tone than in July, his last major speech mentioning Taiwan, in which he vowed to "smash" any attempts at formal independence. In 2019, he directly threatened to use force to bring the island under Beijing's control.

Still, the speech was poorly received in Taiwan.

The presidential office said they were a sovereign independent country, not part of the People's Republic of China, and had clearly rejected China's offer of "one country, two systems" to rule the island.

"The nation's future rests in the hands of Taiwan's people," the office said.

In a separate statement, Taiwan's China-policy making Mainland Affairs Council called on Beijing to "abandon its provocative steps of intrusion, harassment and destruction" and return to talks.

China's air force mounted four straight days of incursions into Taiwan's air defense identification zone from Oct. 1, involving close to 150 aircraft, though those missions have since ended. Xi made no mention of those flights.

Taiwan officially calls itself the Republic of China, the name of the country established in 1912 after the fall of the Qing dynasty.

That government fled to Taiwan in 1949 after losing a civil war with the Communists, who set up today's People's Republic.

## World Urged to Send Pledged Aid to Afghans

ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) - The world should urgently provide promised aid to Afghanistan, the U.N. refugee agency said on Saturday, warning that a lack of resources is hampering efforts to avert an economic crisis that could push fresh flows of refugees to its neighbors and beyond.

"The humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan remains really dire," Babar Baloch, spokesperson for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, said in an interview in Islamabad.

"The focus has to be inside Afghanistan to avoid and avert another refugee crisis."

Since the Taliban took over Afghanistan on Aug. 15, the country - already struggling with drought and severe poverty from decades of war - has seen its economy all but collapse.

Most of the nation's international assistance has been cut off, though there are exceptions for humanitarian aid. Billions of dollars in central bank assets held abroad have also been frozen, which has put pressure on the banking system.

"Our worry is Afghan suffering will increase, the impact will be inside...but also it could be beyond Afghanistan...in terms of displacement not only to countries like Pakistan and Iran that have been generous hosts of refugees for decades, but beyond."

The total needed for humanitarian operations in Afghanistan in the next few months is \$600 million, Baloch said, and only 35% of that had been provided by international donors, despite promises at a recent conference in Geneva where donors pledged more than \$1 billion in aid.

"Those pledges have to turn into reality, the cash has to be there for us to step in and support...Afghans," he said.

Baloch added there were new challenges since the collapse of the government and the takeover of the country by the Taliban administration. The lack of commercial flights meant supplies needed to be taken in on special flights or by road.

He said a humanitarian hub had been set up in Uzbekistan to fly in supplies which were then driven across the border into northern Afghanistan.



## Orban Backs Polish Court Ruling Challenging EU Law

BUDAPEST (Dispatches) - Hungary has called on European Union institutions "to respect member states' sovereignty" after it backed a Polish court ruling that some EU law is incompatible with the Polish constitution.

Prime Minister Viktor Orban signed a Hungarian government decree on Saturday, his press chief told state news agency MTI, welcoming the ruling by Poland's Constitutional Court which has plunged the EU into an existential crisis.

Ursula von der Leyen, president of the European Commission, said she was "deeply concerned" by the ruling and that the Commission would do all in its power to ensure the primacy of EU law.

Right-wing populist governments in Poland and Hungary have been at odds with the Commission over issues ranging from media freedoms, migration, LGBT rights to judicial independence.

The two former communist states, which joined the EU in 2004, have been allies within the bloc, often voting in tandem, and supporting each other's case.

Budapest said Thursday's Polish court ruling had been triggered by a "bad practice of EU institutions" which tried to take away certain competences from member states that had never been conferred upon the EU.

"The primacy of EU law can only apply in those areas where the EU has powers, the framework for this had been set out in the EU's treaties," MTI cited the Hungarian decree as saying.

The EU's institutions must respect member states' national identity, it added.

Poland's Constitutional Tribunal took on the case after Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki asked it whether EU institutions could stop Poland reorganizing its judiciary.

Despite the disputes between Brussels and their respective governments, support for membership of the EU remains high in Poland and Hungary.

## U.S., Taliban Hold First Talks Since Afghanistan Withdrawal

DOHA (Dispatches) - Senior Taliban officials and United States representatives have discussed "opening a new page" in their countries' relationship as they kicked off talks in Qatar, according to Afghanistan's acting foreign minister.

The in-person meetings that began in Doha on Saturday are the first since U.S. forces withdrew from Afghanistan in August - ending a 20-year military presence - and the Taliban's rise to power.

Mullah Amir Khan Muttaqi, Afghanistan's acting foreign minister, said the focus of the Afghan delegation was humanitarian aid, as well as the implementation of the agreement the Taliban signed with Washington last year which paved the way for the final U.S. withdrawal.

The minister said the Afghan delegation had asked the U.S. to lift its ban on the reserves of Afghanistan's central bank. He added that the U.S. would offer Afghan people vaccines against COVID-19.

The Taliban delegation will later meet representatives from the European Union.

A spokesperson of the U.S. State Department said on Friday evening that the talks were not about recognizing or legitimizing the Taliban as Afghanistan's leaders, but are a continuation of pragmatic talks on issues of national interest for the U.S.

He said the priority was the continued safe departure of Afghans, U.S. citizens and other foreign nationals from Afghanistan, adding that another goal was to urge the Taliban to respect the rights of all Afghans, including women and girls, and form an inclusive government with broad support.

The State Department did not disclose who would travel to the Qatari capital from the U.S. side.

Since the Taliban took power, the Islamic State in Khorasan Province, ISKP (ISIS-K), has ramped up attacks on the group, as well as ethnic and religious minorities.

On Friday, an ISKP suicide bomber killed at least 46 minority Shia Muslims and wounded dozens in the deadliest attack since the US departure.

Al Jazeera's Natasha Ghoneim said that the Taliban delegation is in Doha with the hopes of dealing with the hardships of governing, mounting security issues and economic woes. "It appears that the one of the primary topics of discussion today was the distribution of humanitarian assistance," she said.

Reporting from Doha, she said expectations of a breakthrough at the talks should be "tempered" because there is still quite a "chasm" between what the U.S. wants and what the transitional government in Afghanistan wants.



## Czech Opposition Seen Snatching Majority in Election

PRAGUE (Dispatches) - Czech center-right and liberal opposition groups appeared on track to win a parliamentary election on Saturday, ousting Prime Minister Andrej Babis's ANO party and its allies, according to partial results and projections.

Babis is seeking a second term while battling criticism that he mismanaged the coronavirus pandemic, stoked fast-rising debt with handouts and tended to his own business interests in office. Babis denies all the accusations against him.

The two opposition groups were seen winning 104 seats in the 200-member lower house, claiming a combined majority despite a narrow election lead held by ANO, Czech Television calculations based on 89% of voting districts showed on Saturday.

The two-day election had ended at midday. The coalitions refuse to work with Babis over what they say are his unacceptable conflicts of interest related to the business empire he created before entering politics.

Babis, 67, has promised to continue raising public sector wages and pensions, hoping to shore up the basis of his popular support. He also stepped up his anti-migrant remarks and pledged to avoid ceding powers to the European Union.

President Milos Zeman has said he would give Babis the first try to form a government if ANO wins the most votes. But if Together and Pirates/ Mayors stick to their pledge not to work with ANO, he could have no mathematical chance to form a majority, based on the partial results.

Babis's big-spending policies, maintained despite a broad recovery from the pandemic, mark a break from traditional Czech fiscal prudence. Debt is set to be among the fastest growing in the EU, albeit from a low base.

Some voters said the policies were populist and damaging. "I will vote for Spolu (Together) because I want a change," Jan Mrazek, a 39-year-old manager, said before casting his vote in a northern Prague district on Saturday.





# Petrobras Agrees to Pay for 2000 Oil Leak

SAO PAULO (Reuters) - Brazil's state-run oil company Petrobras said it has agreed to pay 1.4 billion reais (\$254 million) to settle three civil suits relating to the leak of an oil pipeline in southern Brazil in 2000.

Petroleo Brasileiro SA, as the company is formally known, said it would pay the amount in four quarterly payments.



www.oecd.org

BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

DES POLITIQUES POUR UNE VIE MEILLEURE



## Global Tax Deal Seeks to End Havens, Criticized for "No Teeth"

PARIS (Dispatches) - A group of 136 countries on Friday set a minimum global tax rate of 15% for big companies and sought to make it harder for them to avoid taxation in a landmark deal that U.S. President Joe Biden said levelled the playing field.

The deal aims to end a four-decade-long "race to the bottom" by setting a floor for countries that have sought to attract investment and jobs by taxing multinational companies lightly, effectively allowing them to shop around for low tax rates.

The 15% floor agreed to is, however, well below a corporate tax rate which averages around 23.5% in industrialized countries.

Some developing countries that had wanted a higher rate said their interests had been sidelined to accommodate richer nations, while NGOs criticized the deal's many exemptions, with Oxfam saying it effectively had "no teeth."

The accord also promises to be a tough sell in Washington, where a group of Republican U.S. senators sent a letter to Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen saying they had serious concerns.

Negotiations have been going on for four years, with the deal finally agreed when Ireland, Estonia and Hungary dropped their opposition and signed up.

The deal aims to stop large firms booking profits in low-tax countries such as Ireland regardless of where their clients are, an issue that has become ever more pressing with the growth of 'Big Tech' giants that can easily do business across borders.

"Establishing, for the first time in history, a strong global minimum tax will finally even the playing field for American workers and taxpayers, along with the rest of the world," Biden said in a statement.

Out of the 140 countries involved, 136 supported the deal, with Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan and Sri Lanka abstaining for now.

The Paris-based Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which has been leading the talks, said that the deal would cover 90% of the global economy.

"We have taken another important step towards more tax justice," German Finance Minister Olaf Scholz said in a statement emailed to Reuters. "We now have a clear path to a fairer tax system, where large global players pay their fair share wherever they do business," his British counterpart Rishi Sunak said.

But with the ink barely dry, some countries were already raising concerns about implementing the deal. The Swiss finance ministry demanded that the interests of small economies be taken into account and said that the 2023 implementation date was impossible.

In the United States, meanwhile, Republican senators said they were concerned the Biden administration was considering circumventing the need to obtain the Senate's authority to implement treaties.

Under the Constitution, the Senate must ratify any treaty with a two-thirds majority, or 67 votes. Biden's fellow Democrats control only 50 seats in the 100-member chamber. And Republicans in recent years have been overwhelmingly hostile to treaties and have backed cuts in corporate taxes.

The reaction to the deal from U.S. markets was muted, with investors focused instead on the latest payrolls data. Some of the Big Tech companies, often cited by critics for seeking to lower taxes through operations overseas, welcomed the accord.

An Amazon.com Inc spokesperson said the company supports the "progress towards a consensus-based solution for international tax harmonization, and we look forward to their continued technical work."

Analysts at Morgan Stanley said that tech hardware, some media services, and healthcare appeared to be the most exposed to a 15% minimum tax rate.

## Australia Sees Trade Deal With EU by End of 2022

ROME (Dispatches) - Australian Trade Minister Dan Tehan said he expected to finalize a free trade agreement with the European Union by the end of next year, despite the EU's anger over Canberra's cancellation of a submarine contract with France.

Brussels postponed the latest round of talks, which were due to start on Oct. 12, until November in solidarity with France after Australia scrapped the multi-billion dollar deal that Paris considered the cornerstone of its Indo-Pacific policy.

Instead, it secretly negotiated to build at least eight nuclear-powered submarines with U.S. and British technology as part of a trilateral security pact between the three countries announced last month.

Tehan, in Italy for a meeting of the Group of 20 developed countries, told Reuters in an interview he was not concerned by the delay in the talks, and reaching an agreement was strongly in the interests of both sides.

Asked when he expected it would be finalized, he said: "I suggest it's likely the end-game will take some time and we'll be looking towards the end of next year to conclude negotiations."

He played down the damage to EU-Australian relations over the submarine dispute, and said he had "very good discussions" with seven EU ministers at a meeting this week of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development in Paris.

It will be more difficult to mend ties with France, which described Australia's actions in walking away from the naval deal as a "stab in the back" and has so far declined any talks to patch things up.

Tehan said Australia had issued an open to France.

"The most important thing is that we sit down so Australia can fully explain the decision we took because it was in our national interest," he said.

France said on Oct. 6 week it would send its ambassador back to Australia to help redefine relations after recalling him for consultations in protest.

## Samsung Forecasts Near-30% Jump in Q3 Operating Profit

SEOUL (Dispatches) - South Korean tech giant Samsung Electronics defied the global supply chain challenges to forecast a near-30% jump in third-quarter operating profits.

The world's biggest smartphone maker said it expected its operating profits to reach around 15.8 trillion won (\$13.3 billion) in a regulatory filing, up 27.9 percent year-on-year.

The company is the flagship subsidiary of the giant Samsung group, by far the largest of the family-controlled empires known as chaebols that dominate business in South Korea, the world's 12th largest economy.

The conglomerate's overall turnover is equivalent to a fifth of the country's gross

domestic product.

Samsung Electronics estimated sales for the July-September period at 73 trillion won, up 9.0% y-o-y - a record for any quarter, a spokeswoman said.

The coronavirus has wreaked havoc on the world economy, with lockdowns and travel bans imposed around the globe for many months. But the pandemic - which has killed around 4.8 million people worldwide - has also seen several tech companies boom.

Coronavirus-driven working from home has boosted demand for devices powered by Samsung's chips, as well as home appliances such as televisions and washing machines.

## IMF Still Working To Help Countries In Need

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The International Monetary Fund said it is still building support among members for a proposed Resilience and Sustainability Trust that would allow richer countries to channel their IMF reserves to countries in need, but hopes to see the new instrument up and running next year.

IMF officials have been racing to build support for the new trust, proposed by IMF chief Kristalina Georgieva in June, which would allow aid to countries outside the low-income nations served by the existing Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust.

The IMF is encouraging richer members to donate or loan their share of \$650 billion in newly issued Special Drawing Rights (SDR) to vulnerable countries, but some countries say the new trust would move beyond the scope of the IMF.

In a blog published on Friday, IMF strategy director Ceyla Pazarbasioglu and her deputy Uma Ramakrishnan said they hope to make progress on the Resilience and Sustainability Trust at the annual meetings of the IMF and World Bank next week.

"Building consensus is never easy; it takes time. Creative solutions are needed to bridge differences," they wrote. "We are confident that with the international community's support, the RST is one such innovative solution which could become operational in just over a year."

They said the proposed RST would help build economic resilience and sustainability, especially in low-income countries and small states, as well as vulnerable middle-income countries, by lending at cheaper rates and with longer maturities than the IMF's traditional lending terms.

They said members would agree on the purposes of the funding, which could include climate, pandemic preparedness and other "worthy global public policy goals."

They noted that the trust needed to be able to provide liquidity for creditors who channeled their SDRs if they faced a balance of payments need themselves, as well as adequate credit risk protection for the donors.

To that end, they said they were proposing a multi-layered credit risk protection framework with policy safeguards, financial buffers, and a diversified creditor and borrower base.

They said RST lending would likely come in addition to a regular IMF-supported program, and would benefit from strong policy safeguards included in those programs.

They said details were still being worked out on the size of the trust, eligibility requirements, conditionality, lending terms, and the financial architecture.

"We continue to engage with our membership and other stakeholders to ensure full buy-in, while working closely with other international financial institutions, especially the World Bank, to ensure that the RST is a part of a broader strategy for international country assistance," they said.

## BOJ Cuts Assessments Amid Supply, Output Shortages



TOKYO (Dispatches) - The Bank of Japan cut its economic assessment for five of the country's nine regions as supply constraints disrupted factory output of cars and other products, clouding the outlook for the export-reliant economy.

In a sign of the broadening damage from the global chip and parts shortage, the central bank slashed its view on output for four regions including the Tokai central Japan area - home to auto giant Toyota Motor Corp.

Output is stagnating due to shortages in auto parts, the BOJ said in a quarterly report on regional economies.

Recent rises in energy prices are also adding pressure on manufacturers, though it will help consumer inflation accelerate towards the BOJ's 2% target.

Core consumer inflation is hovering around 0% but we expect it to turn slightly positive reflecting rising energy prices, Kuroda told the meeting of regional branch managers, indicating that global inflationary pressure is spreading even to a country which has long struggled to shake off deflation.

As the economy continues to improve and the impact of mobile phone fee charges dissipate, consumer inflation will gradually accelerate, he said.

Japan's core consumer prices halted a 12-month run of decline in August, as energy costs offset the impact of cuts in mobile phone fees as well as weak consumption blamed on the coronavirus pandemic.

Kuroda maintained his optimistic view on the economy, saying it is likely to recover as the pandemic's damage fades thanks to robust external demand and massive fiscal and monetary support.

# U.S. Job Growth Falls to Slowest Pace of Year

NEW YORK (CNN) - America's economic recovery has hit a roadblock: U.S. employers added only 194,000 jobs in September, another troubling sign that Covid is disrupting the economy.

It marked the second-straight month in which the U.S. economy added far fewer jobs than expected. Jobs growth slowed down dramatically in August.

The unemployment rate declined to 4.8% in September, the Bureau of Labor Statistics said Friday, down from 5.2% in August. Joblessness declined across the board, with the Black unemployment rate falling the most of any group -- to 7.9% from 8.8% in August.

But if you're an optimist, there is reason to be hopeful about the future: The surveys behind the jobs report were completed around the middle of September when Covid infections began to plateau. They have been on a steady decline since mid-September, a reason to be hopeful about job growth in October.

And the report did have some good news: The disappointing August report was revised higher by 131,000 jobs, which means employers added 366,000 the month before last. (Even so, the August report remained far below analysts' initial expectations.)



"The weak jobs report shouldn't be a surprise given the survey for it was taken near the peak of the Delta variant wave on September 12," said Robert Frick, corporate economist at Navy Federal Credit Union. "Hundreds of thousands of jobs that could have been added in the leisure and hospitality industry alone had to wait until coronavirus infections and deaths dropped, as is happening now."

Daniel Zhao, senior economist at Glassdoor wouldn't even go as far as calling the report a mixed bag. "On the one hand, this shows us how big the impact from the

Delta variant really was... but hopefully with the Delta wave receding the September report will be the worst of it," he told CNN Business.

In the late summer, rising Covid-19 infections from the Delta variant kept people at home. Many grew wary of spending time in large groups.

Hiring in restaurants and bars was thin last month as customers avoided travel and dining. Leisure and hospitality employers added just 74,000 jobs last month, far underperforming the industry's monthly average gain of 197,000 this year. The leisure and hospitality industry bore the worst of the pandemic-linked layoffs last year.

# Iran, Russia Prepare Draft of Strategic Cooperation Document

TEHRAN (MNA) – According to the Director-General of Eurasia at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tehran and Moscow are drafting a comprehensive strategic document on long-term cooperation. The preparation of a comprehensive document on long-term cooperation between Iran and Russia is underway, Alireza Haghghighian, Director General of Eurasia at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iran told Iranian media. Haghghighian made the remarks referring to the recent meeting of the Iranian Foreign Minister with his Russian counterpart in Moscow.



# China Presses U.S. to Cancel Tariffs In Test of Bilateral Engagement

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - China said on Saturday it pressed the United States to eliminate tariffs in talks between the countries' top trade officials that Washington saw as a test of bilateral engagement between the world's biggest economies.

The virtual talks between U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai and China's Vice Premier Liu He follow Tai's announcement on Monday that she would seek "frank" talks and hold China to its commitments under a "Phase 1" trade deal negotiated by former President Donald Trump.

"The Chinese side negotiated over the cancellation of tariffs and sanctions, and clarified its position on China's economic development model and industrial policies," China's Xinhua state news agency said after the talks, held on Friday Washington time.

Tai intended to use the call, the second between the two, to test whether bilateral engagement can address U.S. complaints about Beijing's trade and subsidy practices, a USTR official said.

"Ambassador Tai and Vice Premier Liu reviewed implementation of the U.S.-China Economic and Trade Agreement and agreed that the two sides would consult on certain outstanding issues," USTR said in a statement.

Xinhua said the two sides "expressed their core concerns and agreed to resolve each other's reasonable concerns through consultation."

"Both sides agree to continue communicating with an equal approach and mutual respect, and to create the conditions for the healthy development of economic and trade relations between the two countries and the recovery of the world economy," it said.

In a briefing ahead of the call, a senior USTR official said Tai would give Liu an assessment of China's performance in implementing the Phase 1 deal, including promised purchases of U.S. goods that are falling short of targets. She also would raise concerns about China's "non-market" economic practices.

"We recognize that Beijing is increasingly explicit that it is doubling down on its authoritarian state-centric approach and is resistant to addressing our structural concerns," the official said. "Therefore our primary focus will continue to be on building resilience and competitiveness, diversifying markets, and limiting the impact of Beijing's harmful practices."

The official said Tai would base future engagement with China on "how China responds to tonight's call" and declined to discuss possible next steps, but added that Tai will not seek Phase 2 trade negotiations with Beijing over state subsidies and other structural issues.



The Phase 1 deal in January eased a long running tariff war between the world's two largest economies. It focused largely on China's promise to boost purchases of U.S. farm and manufactured goods, energy and services by \$200 billion over two years, along with increased protections for copyright, trademarks and other forms of intellectual property.

The Trump administration envisioned a Phase 2 negotiation to follow to tackle more difficult issues such as subsidies to state enterprises and China's strategic industrial policies.

Asked whether the United States would resort to another "Section 301" investigation that could lead to more tariffs on Chinese goods if the engagement with Beijing fails, the official said the United States will use "the full range of tools we have to protect American workers, farmers and businesses from unfair trade practices."

Tai, a fluent Mandarin speaker and the daughter of immigrants from Taiwan, considers the call a "a test of whether or not this type of engagement will help to secure the outcomes that we're looking for, and we're going in with the hopes that China will respond positively," the USTR official said.

## Bold and Brave

FROM PAGE 1

It means Iran will continue helping its allies despite being under the U.S. sanctions and threats because it does not fear the U.S. or any baseless threats. According to the media reports, Iran's fuel shipments to Lebanon has mitigated this country's fuel crisis and this Arab country can count on Iran's assistance in the hard times.



According to a report by The Cradle news website, which describes itself as a journalist-driven publication covering West Asia, Lebanon's energy crisis stems from a past decision by the Beirut government to allow private companies to monopolize and set prices in the strategic oil sector, a report says, adding that a recent move by the Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah to import fuel from Iran is meant to eliminate the "notorious" monopoly and improve the livelihood of people in the crisis-stricken Arab country.

"As Hezbollah noted at the outset, the price at which Iranian fuel will be distributed to major Lebanese institutions, hospitals, and regular citizens will be lower than the price set by the oil cartel companies," the report said. "This cost discrepancy will swing the door wide open to serious questions about the size of the profits reaped by private companies in the absence of a Lebanese state intervention."

So it means Iran is not an opportunistic country to milk its friends in the needy times and it is a genuine friend and ally, and the countries in the region and especially in the Persian Gulf can experience it with having a friendship bond.

Last month, the first tanker trucks carrying Iranian fuel arranged by Hezbollah arrived in Lebanon, with the resistance group declaring that it had broken the "American siege." Lebanon has been mired in a deep economic and financial crisis since late 2019. The crisis is the gravest threat to the country's stability since the 15-year civil war ended in 1990.

The economic and financial crisis is mostly linked to the sanctions that the United States and its allies have imposed on Lebanon as well as foreign intervention in the Arab nation's domestic affairs.

Despite Iran's aids to Lebanon, some countries are unhappy with Hezbollah's bold and brave decision for helping Lebanon and they are trying to accuse Iran of different charges but they are unable to change and distort the truth, as the Islamic Republic of Iran is resolved to help its allies.

Iran has been the true friend of its allies or any independent country both in words and in action. The world has seen the Islamic Republic of Iran's support of its allies in Iraq, Syria, and Venezuela. Lebanon is a small example for this commitment and now the Lebanese are realizing who their real friend is in the hard times and ready to risk its own interests for the sake of this nation.

As Amirabdollahian has said, "At any point in time if the Lebanese government asks Iran formally within the context of their brotherly ties ... Iran is ready to send fuel products."

So any country who stretches its hands for friendship towards Iran will benefit it and it will not be a loser; therefore, countries in the region are trying to shift their hostile policies and make friend with Tehran because they have realized that Tehran can be a better and honest friend for them than other so-called friendly countries thousands of miles away from the region.

Cooperation among the Muslim countries in the region can make a strong front against aliens but it first needs a self-belief and unity that unfortunately it is missed among the countries in the region which has helped the world powers to take advantage of it, and through fanning its flame, they have made them struggle with regional rifts.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has proved that it is a true and trustable ally, and countries in the region should not be deceived by the aliens and cast doubt on this commitment

## Iran Foreign...

FROM PAGE 1

Foreign debt as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the ratio between the debt a country owes to non-resident creditors and its nominal GDP.

Back in January, Deputy Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs Mohammad-Ali Dehqan Dehnavi had said the country's foreign debts were very insignificant.

"Currently, the volume of Iran's foreign debt is extremely small due to the existing restrictions," said.

The official noted that using foreign debts could be a positive opportunity, meaning that the government can borrow from abroad and invest inside the country.

# Asia LNG Price Soars On China Power Crunch, European Demand



SINGAPORE (Dispatches) - Asia liquefied natural gas (LNG) prices soared this week, as the world's top buyer China faced an ongoing power crunch and low inventory in Europe drove up competition for the super-chilled fuel.

The average LNG price for November delivery into Northeast Asia was estimated at about \$37 per metric million British thermal units (mmBtu), up nearly 16% from the previous week, industry sources said.

December delivery prices were estimated to be about \$38 per mmBtu, they added.

Price agency S&P Global Platts' Japan-Korea-Marker (JKM), which is widely used as a benchmark in the spot market, had surged to a record high of \$56.326 per mmBtu on Wednesday, before easing later in the week.

"The market is still very bullish for winter and any piece of headline is driving up sentiment," a Singapore-based trader said.

Gazprom's China-focused Amur gas processing plant in Russia's Far East has halted operations after a fire early on Friday, a spokesman for the plant told Reuters.

The broader implications were not immediately clear, but the plant plays an important part in Russian gas exports to China, which has been hit by electricity shortages that have led to power rationing across the country.

Bangladesh bought on LNG cargo from Vitol for delivery in mid-October at \$35.89 per mmBtu and another from Gunvor for late October delivery at \$36.95 per mmBtu, which are the highest prices paid by the country for spot cargoes, an official of state-run Petrobangla said.

Freight rates to ship LNG rose this week and are at multi-month highs as the increase in LNG demand has driven up the need for vessels to move supplies, sources said.

Production issues at Sakhalin and Indonesia are also supporting prices, a Singapore-based source said.

Pakistan may consider only relying on term supplies should current spot prices remain elevated, an industry source said.

# Indian States Suffer Power Cuts as Coal Stocks Shrink

CHENNAI (Dispatches) - North Indian states have suffered electricity cuts and face further outages because of a lack of coal, an analysis of government data and interviews with residents found, contradicting government assurances there is enough power.

The shortages in India - the world's largest coal consumer after China - follow widespread outages in neighboring China, which has shut factories and schools to manage the crisis.

Over half of India's 135 coal-fired power plants, which in total supply around 70% of India's electricity, have fuel stocks of less than three days, data from the federal grid operator showed.

India's power ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

On Wednesday, the Indian Express newspaper quoted power minister R.K. Singh as saying: "There is nowhere that we have not been able to supply the quantity of power demanded."

Reuters analysis of daily load dispatch data from federal grid regulator POSOCO showed India's power supply deficit in the first seven days of October amounted to 11.2% of the country's total shortages throughout the year.

The data is publicly available but the analysis provides a first concrete indication of the extent of the problem.

Energy supplies are under strain globally as prices surge and demand and supply chains are strained by the recovery of consumption following lockdowns to contain the pandemic.

India's power shortfall in the first seven days of October was over 21 times the deficit in the same period last year, and more than four times of that in 2019. Supply shortages over the last two years have largely been restricted to the strife-torn region of Jammu and Kashmir.

"For the last several days, we haven't had power for 7-8 hours a day," Prashant Raj, an electronic store manager in the Madhubani district of Bihar told Reuters.

India's eastern states of Jharkhand and Bihar state, and north western Rajasthan were among the worst affected, an analysis of daily load dispatch data from federal grid regulator POSOCO showed.

Jharkhand recorded a power deficit of 18%-24%, while power supply to Bihar and Rajasthan was between 6% and 17% below requirements, the POSOCO data revealed.

## Iran's 20% Enriched...

FROM PAGE 1

The Iranian nuclear chief said the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran has almost fully adhered to the parliament's law on sanctions removal.

The law was passed in December last year in response to a failure by remaining parties to the nuclear deal to fulfill their obligations and make up for unilateral U.S. sanctions against Tehran.

"20% and 60% nuclear fuel production has been carried out and planning is underway for the production of uranium metal, IR2M and IR6 centrifuges are being built," he explained.

Eslami also criticized the International Atomic Energy Agency for failing to denounce a sabotage operation against Iran's Karaj nuclear site back in June, adding that the IAEA's silence effectively encouraged such terrorist acts.

Several Iranian nuclear energy sites and many nuclear scientists have come under attack over the past years with Israel behind them.

Eslami explained that the agency was not allowed to replace damaged cameras at the Iranian sabotaged site as required under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action because the U.S. and the Europeans have failed to keep their part of the deal.

Meanwhile referring to the cameras installed at Iran's nuclear sites, the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) said that the Safeguard and JCPOA-related

cameras are fundamentally different from each other.

Asked about the difference between the cameras installed at Iran's nuclear sites, Eslami said, "At the definite time, IAEA inspectors review the memory cards of the safeguard cameras in the nuclear sites. then they cut the cards, leaving them aside in a sealed envelope."

In another word, under regulations of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Safeguards Agreement, the agency's cameras record data at Iran's nuclear sites just like other sites across the world.

In December 2020, the Iranian Parliament passed the Law on "Strategic Action Plan to Counter Sanctions and Protect Rights of the People" that prompted the Iranian administration to restrict the IAEA's inspections and accelerate the development of the country's nuclear program beyond the limits set by the 2015 Iran nuclear agreement.

The IAEA inspectors take out these old memory cards and seal them in the presence of the Iranian side, Mohammad Eslami said, adding that therefore the inspectors do not have access to the data.

They only insert the new memory card, he said.

He also spoke about the number of cameras that were damaged in the wake of terrorist operations.

The IAEA sought to install a new camera on the Karaj nuclear site, he said, adding, "But we told them that this is not necessary."

**Switchboard:**  
(+98) (21) 44253448  
**Public Relations Tel:**  
(+98)(21) 44253450  
Editorial Board: 44253449  
**Public Relations Fax:**  
(+98)(21) 44253395  
**Advertising Department:**  
Tel/Fax:(+98) (21) 44253335-9/44253234  
**Website:**  
http://www.irannewsdaily.com

**E-Mail Address:**  
info@irannewsdaily.com  
**ISSN 1024-6053**  
**P.O. Box:** 15875-8551  
**Address:** No 13, Pajouhesh St.,  
Golestan II St, Golestan St. Marzadaran  
Blvd., Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran  
**Printed by:** Honar Sarzmin Sabz  
**Distributed by:**  
Cities of Iran Cultural and  
Artistic Institute  
**Managing Director:** Fereydoon Taherpour Asl

## Im, Ramey Share PGA Tour Lead in Las Vegas

LOS ANGELES (Dispatches) - South Korea's Im Sung-jae grabbed six birdies in his six-under par 65 on Friday to seize a share of the halfway lead alongside Chad Ramey at the US PGA Tour Shriners Children's Hospital Open. Im and Ramey both started the day two strokes behind South Korean Kang Sung-hoon, who faded after posting a 61. Im opened with a 14-foot birdie at the 10th hole and drained a 23-footer for his fifth birdie of the day at the second before firing out of a greenside bunker to two feet for birdie at the par-five ninth.

## Ko Leads by Two at LPGA Founders Cup

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - South Korea's Ko Jin-young carried a two-stroke lead into the third round of the fog-hit LPGA Founders Cup after the darkness-halted second round was completed Saturday morning. World number two Ko made a bogey at the par-4 17th hole but closed with a birdie at the par-5 18th in finishing her last four holes at Mountain Ridge Country Club in West Caldwell, New Jersey. That gave Ko a three-under par 68 to stand on 11-under 131 after 36 holes.

# England Thrash Andorra in a One-Sided Match

LONDON (Dispatches) - Scott McTominay scored an injury-time winner as Scotland came from behind to claim a crucial 3-2 victory over Israel in World Cup qualifying on Saturday, while England thrashed Andorra 5-0 to stay on track to reach next year's global showpiece.

The win takes Scotland four points clear of Israel in second place in Group F with three matches remaining as they bid to qualify for the World Cup for the first time since 1998. Group winners qualify automatically for next year's finals in Qatar, with the runners-up heading into the playoffs.

The Scots still hold a slim chance of topping the group, trailing leaders Denmark, who cruised past Moldova 4-0 in Chisinau, by seven points.

"We've got a few games left and we have to just remain focused. We wanted a win tonight and we got it," Dykes told Sky Sports.

England manager Gareth Southgate rested key players including Harry Kane and Raheem Sterling as his second string impressed in a 5-0 thumping of Andorra.

Ben Chilwell opened the scoring in the 17th minute, with the goal awarded by VAR after initially being disallowed for offside against Jadon Sancho.

Bukayo Saka made the points safe before half-time and Roma striker Tammy Abraham made the most of a rare start by scoring in the 59th minute.

Jack Grealish came off the bench and won a penalty which James Ward-Prowse saw saved, before turning in the rebound.

Grealish rounded off the scoring with a fine individual effort for his first international goal after collecting goalkeeper Sam Johnstone's long kick.

"It has been a long time coming and it's about time that I scored because everyone has been saying it to me," Grealish told the BBC. "I think that is 16 games now. It was coming and I'm just delighted that I've got off the mark."



It was a busy night for Kateryna Monzul, the first female official to referee an England match, with five yellow cards as well as the penalty award.

England remain four points clear at the top of Group I after second-placed Albania won 1-0 against Hungary in Budapest.

Poland are a point further back in third after seeing off San Marino 5-0 and next face Albania in Tirana on Tuesday.

Sweden moved within a point of Group B leaders Spain thanks to a 3-0 win over Kosovo in Solna. Alexander Isak scored a magnificent goal to cap a brilliant individual display, with Robin Quaison and Emil Forsberg also on the scoresheet.

Sweden also have a game in hand on Spain, who they visit in their final qualifier next month.

Greece kept their hopes of pushing into the top two themselves alive as two late goals secured a 2-0 win in Georgia. The Greeks remain unbeaten and are three points behind Sweden and also have a game in hand on Spain.

Switzerland remain close on the coattails of European champions Italy after edging out 10-man Northern Ireland 2-0 in Geneva. The Swiss are three points behind Italy in Group C with a game in hand and lead third-placed Northern Ireland by six points.

Elsewhere, Serbia moved above Portugal to the top of Group A with a 1-0 win over Luxembourg.

Ukraine ended a run of five straight draws with a 2-1 victory in Finland to consolidate their grip on second place in Group D.

The Euro 2020 quarter-finalists are two points ahead of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who beat Kazakhstan 2-0, and four points behind France.

## Raducanu Ousted in Opening Match At Indian Wells



LOS ANGELES (Dispatches) - Emma Raducanu crashed out of the WTA Indian Wells tournament in the second round, losing in her first match since her stunning U.S. Open triumph to Aliaksandra Sasnovich 6-2, 6-4.

Britain's Raducanu looked rusty in her first time back on the court since September 11 when the 18-year-old stunned the tennis world at the US Open by becoming the first qualifier to win a Grand Slam title.

Raducanu swept past Canadian Leylah Fernandez 6-4, 6-3 to win the title at Flushing Meadows.

Raducanu won the first game of the opening set on Friday, but it was all Sasnovich after that in the first career meeting between the two.

The unseeded Sasnovich, playing her second match while Raducanu enjoyed a first-round bye, won three straight points to reach 40-0 in the final game then clinched the match when Raducanu hit a backhand long.

The Belarusian blasted one ace and won 67% of her first-serve points, taking advantage of Raducanu's soft second serve and inability to hit winners on easy shots.

## Curry Praises Lakers Star James For Longevity in NBA

LOS ANGELES (Dispatches) - Four-time NBA champion LeBron James of the Los Angeles Lakers has set the standard for longevity in the league as the 36-year-old entered his 19th season, Golden State Warriors' Steph Curry said.

The 17-time All-Star James picked up his fourth NBA Finals MVP title last year after helping the Lakers win the championship over the Miami Heat, adding another accolade to his dazzling career.

Curry, who faced James and the Cleveland Cavaliers for four straight years in the NBA Finals from 2015 to 2018, heaped praise on James.

"He set the standard for that," Curry said before yesterday's preseason game against the Lakers, which the Warriors won 121-114.

"Nine straight Finals, all the things that he's accomplished. You have a vision of sustaining your prime for as long as you can, kind of re-imagining what that looks like.

"So you know the work that goes into it, especially in the off-seasons, especially how you take care of your body, your mind. Balance on court, off court."

Two-time MVP Curry said James started attending his games while the Warriors star was still playing for Davidson College in North Carolina in 2008.

"For me, it's a weird perspective just because I still remember my college days and he was just coming into his prime in the league," Curry said.

## Shoaib Malik Gets T20 World Cup Place in Pakistan Squad

ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) - Veteran batsman Shoaib Malik has been included in Pakistan's Twenty20 World Cup squad, replacing top order batsman Sohaib Maqsood, who was ruled out due to a back problem, selectors said Saturday.

The 39-year-old has been in prolific form in the ongoing National Twenty20 tournament in Pakistan, having scored 225 in seven games and there were calls from the fans for his inclusion. Having retired from test cricket in 2015 and one-day internationals two years ago, Malik had announced he will end his career after the Twenty20 World Cup, if selected.

# Messi and Ronaldo in Ballon d'Or Contention



PARIS (PARIS) - Six-time winner Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo, a five-time victor, were among the 30 names revealed yesterday for the Ballon d'Or award.

The serial favorites face competition that includes Kylian Mbappe, Neymar, Karim Benzema, Jorginho and N'Golo Kante who are also considered as leading runners in the list unveiled by France Football magazine.

The prestigious award was not handed out in 2020 due to the pandemic.

There are also 20 women in the running for their own prize to be announced in Paris on November 29.

French champions PSG can boast Messi, a winner in the Copa America this summer, and teammates Mbappe and Neymar who last season took the ambitious club to the Champions League last-four.

Italian midfielder Jorginho gets the nod after helping Chelsea to the Champions League title as well as playing a major role as Italy won the delayed Euro 2000.

Chelsea teammate Kante, man of the match in the Champions League semi-final and final, is also on the list. Ronaldo, who was third in the 2019 Ballon d'Or vote behind Messi and Liverpool's Virgil van Dijk, sees former Real Madrid teammate Karim Benzema also nominated.

Also in the running are Bayern Munich's Robert Lewandowski, the top scorer in Europe with 41 goals, as well as Dortmund's Erling Braut Haaland, the Champions League's best scorer with 10 goals. England, the Euro 2020 finalists, are represented by Harry Kane, Mason Mount, Phil Foden and Raheem Sterling.

Among the women, 2019 winner Megan Rapinoe, whose United States team were knocked out of the Olympics in the quarter-finals, was missing from the nominations.

Christine Sinclair, of Olympic gold medal winning Canada, is in the running.

## Murray Eases Past Mannarino in Indian Wells Opener



LOS ANGELES (Dispatches) - After reuniting with his stinky shoes and wedding ring, Andy Murray was back in business as the former world number one sealed a comfortable 6-3 6-2 win over Frenchman Adrian Mannarino in the first round of the Indian Wells tournament.

Murray was the talk of social media this week as he asked for fans' help in finding his items that went missing after training for the event in the California desert.

The Briton was happy with his performance, firing five aces and striking 19 winners to secure his first victory at the Indian Wells since 2016, but said the missing items dilemma before the match nearly pushed him to contact the police.

"I spoke to the lost and found at the hotel... they said they'd found nothing. I spoke to security. They said they found nothing," Murray said. "I was going to file a police report to try to get them back or increase my chance of getting them back."

"(The hotel) decided to take all of my details down. I asked them if they could look at the cameras... about an hour later, one of the employees at the hotel found them in their lost and found."

Murray will face 18-year-old Spaniard Carlos Alcaraz in the second round as he looks to improve on his best career finish at the tournament in 2015, when he reached the semi-finals.

The 34-year-old, who had hip surgeries in 2018 and 2019, has struggled to reclaim the kind of form that helped him win three major titles and two consecutive Olympic singles gold medals in London and Rio de Janeiro.

"Whilst my body feels good, I want to try to play as much as I can between now and the end of the year to set myself up as best as I can for next season," he said.

## Benzema Still Dreaming of Balon d'Or



MADRID (Dispatches) - Real Madrid's Mon-form striker Karim Benzema has been dreaming of winning the Ballon d'Or since he was a little boy, he told Spanish daily AS in an interview published on Saturday.

Benzema was selected on the long list of 30 for the 2021 Ballon d'Or on Friday a day after scoring as France beat Belgium 3-2 and make the Nations League final.

"I've been dreaming of winning it since I was a kid, we all do, all professional players," said Benzema.

"So I've been doing everything possible and will continue to do so, because I hope to win it and fulfill my childhood dream."

With nine goals in eight games for Madrid this season Benzema has flowered since Cristiano Ronaldo moved on two years ago.

"What is important is that people enjoy my football and that I feel happy and proud."

"There are strikers these days playing very well into their 30s and scoring many goals," said Benzema, who will be 34 in December.

"Modern football allows for that," he said.

"It's always a pleasure to be named on this list of the top 30 players, and I'll keep it in my corner of my mind as an objective in the big matches."

France tackle Spain on Sunday in the Nations League final.

"I'm sure it'll be a huge final. Spain are a young team, but a very talented one. I just hope above all that it's a great game," he said.