

Health Ministry Announced on Saturday That the Number of Deaths From the Coronavirus Pandemic in Iran Increased to 143,332 With 44 More Iranians Killed by the Virus Over the Past 24 Hours

IRAN NEWS

India's Minister of Ports and Shipping and Waterways Arrived In Chabahar on a Commercial and Economical Trip to Iran and Was Welcomed With Local Officials

VOL. XXVIII, No. 7569 TEHRAN Price 50,000 Rials

www.irannewsdaily.com

SUNDAY AUGUST 21, 2022 - MORDAD 30, 1401

2 DOMESTIC

President Hails Medical Staff Efforts During Pandemic



> SEE PAGE 2

3 DOMESTIC

Iranians' Per Capita Declined by 32% In Last Decade



> SEE PAGE 3

Cooperation With Israel Threatens, Disrupts Persian Gulf Security

TEHRAN (PressTV) - The commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy says any cooperation with the Israeli regime poses a threat to and disrupts security in the Persian Gulf region.

Addressing a meeting with IRGC commanders and officials, Rear Admiral Alireza Tangsiri underscored the importance of security in Iran and the neighboring countries, warning against allowing Israel and its Western allies to gain a foothold in the region.

"We warn any country that prepares the ground for intervention and presence of arrogant powers in the region and gives them a base, space and soil to form a military coalition against regional nations that firstly..."

See Page 7

Iran to Stand by Palestine to the End



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - The commander of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) says the occupied West Bank has been armed against the Zionist regime, adding Iran will stand by the Palestinians.

Major General Hossein Salami said this year, many Zionists have been killed in operations by resistance groups' members in occupied Palestinian territories.

Salami added that the number of attacks by the

Palestinians cannot compare with that in the past.

He said despite that the Israeli regime has closed the borders tightly, weapons are made inside the besieged territories and distributed among Palestinians.

General Salami maintained that when something becomes homegrown, it cannot be stopped.

Salami also said the Zionists have no safe haven in occupied Palestine and all parts of the land are within the reach of Palestinians resistance movements' firepower.

According to the commander of the IRGC, when Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah is added to this equation, the conclusion is the deployment of hundreds of thousands of missiles that are pointed at the Zionist regime.

Salami said the Zionists are not the type to stay their ground and to fight back, adding that the return of Zionists to country they came from, also known as reverse migration, is growing now.

He said the Zionists are vulnerable to ground battle.

Salami cited as example the recent fight between Israel and the Islamic Jihad movement in Gaza, saying had the Zionists been able to continue the fight, they would have done so.

Salami said that Israeli regime's Achilles heel is the ground battle, noting that the missile battle is not the main focus.

"They know that the land must be liberated by a ground force," he said.

He further described Palestine as a "point of reliance and a powerhouse."

"From the beginning of the year to date, many Zionists have been killed in the operations carried out by the Resistance groups in the occupied territories, which cannot be compared to last year's records, apart from the Sword of Quds operation," the IRGC commander pointed out.

"When you add Lebanon's Hezbollah to this equation, you will realize that hundreds of thousands of missiles are ready to be poured on the Zionist regime," he said.

He also said that people in West Bank like Gaza Strip are arming themselves, noting that lots of Zionists were killed in this year's clashes.

4 INTERNATIONAL

N. Korea Rejects Seoul's Aid-for-Denuclearization Offer



> SEE PAGE 4

8 SPORT

Medvedev Advances While Swiatek Sinks In Cincinnati



> SEE PAGE 8

ViewPoint
By: Hamid Reza Naghashian

Coup d'Etat Unable to Defeat Strong Determination

On Friday Iranians marked the anniversary of the U.S.-Orchestrated Coup of 1953 as the darkest moment in the contemporary history of the country that years later Iranians proved the world that coup d'état is unable to defeat strong determination as the Pahlavi Dynasty collapsed in February 1979.

On Friday the Foreign Ministry of Iran said that the United States is a record-holder of interfering in the affairs of independent states, naming the U.S.-orchestrated coup of 1953 in Iran as an instance of that "dark history."

Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani took to Twitter to mark the 69th anniversary of the 1953 coup, which was organized by American and British spy agencies against the government of Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddeq.

"The U.S. administration holds the record for interference, military attack, and coup against independent states and governments."

The 1953 coup against Iran's government is a "clear example of this dark history," the spokesman stated.

"Will the U.S. administration revise its wrong and failed policy on Iran and respect the legitimate rights of the Iranian nation?"

Back in mid-July, the spokesman also reacted to former U.S. national security adviser John Bolton's confession that he had a role in planning a number of coups outside the States.

"Bolton's boasting about his role in attempted coups around the world made no one surprised," wrote Nasser Kanaani, noting that "nefarious activities of a notorious government" were an "open secret" that were "made public."

In August 1953, the British intelligence agency MI6 and its American counterpart CIA initiated the coup by the Iranian military, setting off a series of events, including riots on the streets of the capital Tehran, which led to the overthrow and arrest of Mosaddeq.

The coup, which was followed by the temporary rule of CIA- and MI6-approved General Fazlollah Zahedi, enabled the monarch, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi's return from exile in Italy. It also consolidated the monarch's rule for the following 26 years until the victory of the Islamic Revolution in 1979, led by Imam Khomeini, which toppled the Pahlavi regime.

Mosaddeq, who was convicted of treason by a court martial after the coup, served three years in solitary confinement and eventually died under house arrest in exile in 1967.

See Page 7

Koohzad, CEO of Shadegan Steel Company Says:

Transfer of Wastewater of Shadegan City to Shadegan Steel "a Headway Act"



According to the Public Relations of Shadegan Steel Company, the CEO of Shadegan Steel Company Mr. Koohzad called the signing of the contract for the transfer of urban wastewater from Shadegan City to Shadegan Steel as a headway and added: «We hope that with the serious entry of industries into this field for using the treated wastewater, we could take effective steps in this field for recycling water.»

The first memorandum of understanding for the sale of wastewater of treatment plant was signed between Khuzestan Water and Wastewater Company and Shadegan Steel Company. The CEO of Khuzestan Water and Wastewater Company pointed out that water recycling in this way is one of the methods of preserving water resources, and added: "Treated wastewater has a very high economic benefit for the industrial sector and large industries should participate in wastewater and water supply projects and it provides water recycling for Khuzestan industries." Pointing out that water recycling in industries and re-use of wastewater is one of the tasks of the Ministry of Energy, Kerminejad said: "In Khuzestan province, 5 treatment plants are being built in the cities of Abadan, Khorramshahr, Bandar Imam, Mahshahr and Shadegan, which are currently under construction. A 25-year contract was signed between Khuzestan Water and Sewerage Company and Shadegan Steel Company for reuse of sewage treatment plant. He stated: "According to this contract, the first effluent from the wastewater treatment plant in Shadegan, with a capacity of 20,000 cubic meters per day, will be provided to Shadegan Steel Industries in the first phase. The head of the board of ABFA (Water and Wastewater Company) of the province expressed his hope: "With the completion of the construction stages of Bandar Imam, Mahshahr, Abadan and Khorramshahr treatment plants by the end of next year, we will recycle 500,000 cubic meters of sewage effluent day and night and make it available to industry and agriculture for use." Karaminejad continued: Based on the estimates, including the city of Ahvaz, 1 million cubic meters of urban wastewater can be recycled day and night and enter the industrial and agricultural cycle of Khuzestan province.

Sokhan Gostar Institute
IRAN NEWS
PRIVATE ENGLISH NEWSPAPER IN IRAN

Advertisement Department
021-44253335-39

www.irannewsdaily.com
info@irannewsdaily.com

@irannewsdaily @irannewsdaily

Sonowals Iran Visit Could See Extension of Lease for Chabahar Port

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - Recent geopolitical developments have speeded up the Centre's pursuit to leverage Iran's Chabahar Port for trade, and with Union Shipping and Ports Minister Sarbananda Sonowal's visit to Iran, India may extend the short-term lease agreement for the port by another 18 months, Business Standard has learnt.

The Ports and Maritime Organisation (PMO) of Iran has proposed the extension by one and a half years, and the proposal is being examined by the Centre and is likely to be taken up during Sonowal's Iran visit, shipping ministry officials in the know of the matter told Business Standard.

See Page 7

Iran Congratulates Kenya for Successful Presidential Election

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani congratulated the people and the government of Kenya for holding a successful presidential election in 2022.

Congratulating the people and the government of Kenya for holding a successful presidential election, Kanaani praised the role of the government, parties, politicians, tribal elders, and religious leaders in holding and conducting the elections, describing it as an example and a successful experience in the region and entire Africa.

Kenya's Deputy President William Ruto has been elected as the country's next president, the electoral commission announced Monday (August 15, 2022).

President Hails Medical Staff Efforts During Pandemic

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Referring to the upcoming Arbaeen procession and the reopening of educational centers, President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi emphasized the need to inject a reminder dose of the COVID-19 vaccine and continue to follow health protocols.

Speaking in the Saturday morning meeting of the National Task Force Against Coronavirus, Ayatollah Raisi appreciated the efforts of the health and treatment staff in protecting people's lives against coronavirus, and said, "The selflessness and efforts of all members of the health and treatment staff during the COVID-19 pandemic is a bright page in the history of this land and will remain in the collective memory of the Iranian nation".

Referring to the country's self-sufficiency in the field of medicine, the President appreciated domestic pharmacists, and noted, "The government supports efforts to produce all the medicines needed by the country by domestic pharmacists".

Referring to a report that more than 90% of required drugs are produced by domestic companies, Raisi described this achievement as proud and added, "The continuation of this trend is undoubtedly a strategic step in the field of public health in the country and the government will do everything possible to support it".

The President also referred to the fact that reopening of educational centers and Arbaeen ceremony are nearing, and said, "Just as we were able to overcome the various waves of the outbreak of the disease with the efforts of the medical staff and of course the serious support of the people, even now it is necessary for the people to follow the instructions, which is the prerequisite to the success of policies in the management of coronavirus".



Raisi also emphasized the necessity of injecting a reminder dose of the vaccine and stated, "Research shows that injecting a reminder dose of the COVID-19 vaccine is effective in protecting people's lives, and those who did not inject a reminder dose are more vulnerable".

He considered it necessary to carry out testing and identification of COVID-19 patients at the country's borders and points of entry and asked all people to pay special attention to fully complying with health protocols in order to stay safe from coronavirus and its new variants.

"Implementation of the family doctor plan" was one of the other topics emphasized by the President in the meeting of the National Task Force Against Coronavirus. Raisi obliged the Ministry of Health and Medical Education to implement the government's transformative plans in the field of health, to implement the family doctor plan and the referral system more quickly, especially when the country is still involved in the coronavirus pandemic.

At the end of his speech, the President referred to the holding of sports competitions with the presence of spectators in stadiums and emphasized the necessity of complying with the resolution of the National Task Force Against Coronavirus for the presence of 30% of spectators in indoor sports venues.

Trusting U.S. in Int'l Relations Meaningless

TEHRAN (MNA) - The Iranian Government Spokesman Ali Bahadori Jahromi says that putting trust in the U.S. in international ties is meaningless.

On the occasion of the anniversary of the U.S.-led coup in Iran in 1953 which toppled the Iranian government under Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddeq, Ali Bahadori Jahromi tweeted that three lessons of the 28 Mordad coup d'état remain forever in the minds of the Iranian people and are the criteria for Iranian politicians' decisions.

"The U.S. is afraid of an independent and powerful Iran, trusting the U.S. in international relations is meaningless, the way to deal with this country should be with strength, dignity, and sufficient guarantees," he added.

The 1953 Iranian coup d'état, known in Iran as the 28 Mordad coup d'état was the overthrow of the democratically elected Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddegh in favor of strengthening the monarchical rule of the Shah, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi on 19 August 1953.

Creating Stable Security in Region Military Sports Games Goal

TEHRAN (MNA) - Commander of IRGC Ground Force says that establishing stable security in the region and the world is the main goal of military sports competitions.

"The most important goals of holding military competitions, which started with the initiative of Russia, are to create friendship among friendly countries and to create empathy among them for economic and commercial exchanges, as well as to create military interaction in order to establish stable security and peace in the region and the world," said Brigadier General Mohammad Pakpour at the opening ceremony of the 2022 International Military Forces Sniper Competition, which is being held in Yazd Province of Iran.

The 2022 International Military Forces Sniper Competitions will start on Saturday and will continue until September 5, and snipers from seven countries of the world, including Russia, China, Belarus, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Zimbabwe and two teams from the IRGC ground forces will participate in this edition of the competition.

According to General Pakpour, IRGC Ground Force hosts the eighth edition of the special forces shooting competition, IRGC Aerospace Force hosts the drones competition, and Iran Army hosts deep diving competitions.

Iran Defense Equipment Production Grows by 125%

TEHRAN (IFP) - Iran witnessed a whopping 125 percent increase in its defense equipment production last year, 25 percent ahead of the schedule, according to the Iranian defense minister.

Addressing worshippers in Friday prayers' sermons in the Iranian capital Tehran, Defense Minister Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Gharaei Ashtiani, said, "Last year, the production of defense equipment to be delivered to the armed forces grew by 125 percent."

Building various types of equipment for the army, navy, and air forces, ballistic missiles, offensive drones, surface and subsurface vessels, electronic warfare, smart and precision strike ammunition, and cognitive warfare are some of the achievements by the indigenous knowledge-based defense companies, according to the defense minister.

He added, "Today, we have turned the great challenge of sanctions into an opportunity. In addition to ending dependence on foreign countries and responding to all of the needs of domestic industries, we are moving beyond the export goals in our schedule."

Brig. Gen. Ashtiani also highlighted Iran's 'effective role' in regulating relations and making strategic decisions at regional level.

He said, "Today, we have become a role model of sustainable resistance against the arrogant powers, and we have changed the power equation in the region in our favor, and we have put the domination system and the Zionist regime at risk of collapse more than ever."

Iran, Most Leading Country in Fighting Narcotics



TEHRAN (IP) - The Secretary General of the Drug Control Headquarters of Iran says Iran is the leading country in the fight against drug trafficking, adding that 90% of the opium, 48% of the morphine, and 26% of the heroin in the whole world have been discovered by Iran.

During a press conference, Brigadier General Eskandar Momeni said: "Iran has a neighbor that produces the highest amount of narcotic drugs in the world, and during the 20 years of occupation of Afghanistan, the production of narcotic drugs in the country has increased 50 times and reached 9,500 tons. Unfortunately, with the support of the US, the production of industrial drugs has also increased in Afghanistan."

Elsewhere in his remarks, Momeni pointed out that the average age of drug use is 24 years, and with the implementation of the Life Helpers project, the trend of reducing the age of drug use has stopped.

Referring to efforts to treat addicts, he said that 13 addiction treatment centers with a capacity of 9,000 people were opened in the country last year, which six of them are located in Tehran, and their capacity has increased by 48%.

The Secretary General of the Drug Control Headquarters of Iran asserted: "Last year, drug trafficking gangs saw a loss of 19 thousand billion tomans, which this loss has increased by 48% compared to last year."

Momeni said: "Security is a social product that depends on interaction. In this regard, different people and institutions will be used. Three approaches in the field of people's participation in the process of preventing drug use, using knowledge-based companies and prioritizing the issue of prevention are on the agenda."

He concluded: "The government cannot solve the issue of drugs alone and should seek help from various institutions in this regard."

Imposition of Unilateral Sanctions, Unlawful, Against Human

TEHRAN (IP) - The first deputy of Judiciary considered the imposition of unilateral sanctions, imposition of will and coercion against the law and violation of human rights.

In recent decades, economic sanctions have become a tool for bullying countries to put pressure on independent countries in the world arena; Since the early 1990s, the United States, the European Union, and other developed economies have imposed hundreds of economic sanctions against other countries.

Since the victory of the Islamic Revolution, the enemies of the Iranian people are always trying to hit the country's economy by imposing sanctions, and they have not refrained from sanctioning any industry.

Mohammad Mossadegh, the first deputy of Iran's judiciary, who has traveled to Tajikistan to participate in the 17th meeting of Meeting of Presidents and Chief Justices of the Supreme Courts of the SCO Member States, at the head of a judicial delegation, at the closing ceremony of this meeting, called the event as a symbol of the convergence and belonging of the will of the governments on cooperation and the dynamics of legal capacities.

Mossadegh attributed the promotion of judicial proceedings in countries to the exchange of experiences among them and added that the imposition of sanctions, unilateralism, imposition of will and coercion are contrary to the dynamics of rights and violate human rights.

The first deputy of Iran's Judiciary also emphasized the readiness of the judicial system of the Islamic Republic to exchange experiences with other member countries, especially in areas such as cybercrimes and the use of artificial intelligence in judicial proceedings, as well as alternative punishments of imprisonment.

The 17th meeting of Meeting of Presidents and Chief Justices of the Supreme Courts of the SCO Member States, was held on Thursday and Friday, hosted by Tajikistan, in Dushanbe.

In this meeting, alternative punishments of imprisonment, adoption conditions, bankruptcy of natural and legal persons, cybercrimes, use of new technologies and artificial intelligence in the process of criminal investigations and proceedings were the main topics discussed by the members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

The 18th summit will be held next year and hosted by India in New Delhi.

Iranian Companies to Attend Russian Auto Exhibit

TEHRAN (MNA) - Representatives of 21 Iranian companies are going to showcase over 99 automobile parts and equipment at MIMS Automobility Moscow 2022 which is due to be held during August 22-25, an official with the state-run Iran Khodro Company (IKCO) announced.

According to Amir-Abbas Farnoudi, since the Russian auto industry has been sanctioned by the west, this exhibition is a great opportunity for Iranian auto parts manufacturers to introduce their capacities and capabilities to the Russian market, IRIB reported.

He noted that the main goal of attending the mentioned exhibition is to form long-term cooperation with Russian car and auto parts manufacturers and added: "companies were selected to participate in this exhibition that have the necessary technology for producing auto parts or to offer up-to-date technical engineering services so that they can operate directly in the Russian market."

According to Farnoudi, IKCO has also showcased one of the latest automobiles manufactured by the company called Tara in this exhibition in order to test the taste of Russian consumers.

"Iran Khodro's goal to re-enter the Russian market is completely strategic and planned," he said.

"Russia is the fifth largest car consumption market in the world and is one of the most attractive markets, with complexity and intense competition in the region, for this reason, for the last two years, studies, planning, and negotiations have been carried out for Iran Khodro to re-enter this market. And we are in the process of reaching good agreements, which will be announced as soon as the results are obtained," the official added.

MIMS Automobility Moscow 2022 is an international trade fair for automotive production, aftermarket, and service industry.

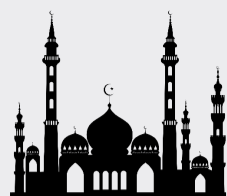
Iran, Russia Ink MoU on Cinema Cooperation

TEHRAN (IP) - A cooperation memorandum was signed between Iran Cinema Organization and Moscow State Cinematography University.

In a joint meeting between Mohammed Khazaei, the head of the Iran Cinema Organization, and Vladimir Sergeevich Malyshev, the president of the Moscow State University, and its professors, a memorandum of cooperation between the Iran Cinema Organization and the Moscow State Cinematography University was signed.

Khazaei who has traveled to Russia, after signing the memorandum of cooperation, referred to the importance of cultural exchanges and academic cooperation between Iran and Russia in the field of cinema and noted that Moscow State Cinematography University is a scientific center with a long history and a prestigious place in the world.

The head of the Moscow State Cinematography University also said: "We are aware of the history, and honors of Iranian cinema in the world." Expressing hope for the expansion and continuation of cooperation in the future, Sergeevich Malyshev said there are many opportunities to expand cooperation.



PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	13:07
■ Evening (Maghreb)	20:05
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	04:59
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:28

7. Before thee, also, the apostles We sent were but men, to whom We granted inspiration: If ye realise this not, ask of those who possess the Message.

8. Nor did We give them bodies that ate no food, nor were they exempt from death.

Surah 21. The Prophets (7-8)

Iranians' Per Capita Declined by 32% In Last Decade

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Deputy Finance Minister Hadi Sobhanian says per capita of Iranians in the past decade has declined by 32% and it bespeaks of one decade of economic pressure on the people.

Speaking at a presser, Sobhanian said that the economic growth of the country in the past decade (between 2012-2022) has been one percent and if we exclude last year, the economic growth has been 0.5%.

He went on to say that the per capita of the people in the past decade has nose-dived, adding that the per capita has declined by 32% which shows economic pressure on the people. He added that in the same period, capital in the field of machineries and construction has faced a downward trend and has been less than 8% of the schedule which has not been materialized.

He noted that in the past decade monetary base and liquidity growth rate has soared highly in a way that liquidity has increased from 639,000b tomans to 5 trillion tomans.

Sobhanian noted that in recent years the average inflation rate has been more than the past 30 years and if the reforming measure had not been taken, the country would have experienced higher rate.

On the fate of return of coupon to the market, he said that it has been delayed due to technical problem and the government will abide by the law and will implement it as the law has stipulated but the government is working carefully for its implementation in order to avoid problems and challenges for the people. He noted that scheme of using coupon will be implemented tentatively next month.



Sobhanian went on to say that the government is determined to control growth of liquidity and restoring monetary disciplinary and stability in the forex market. He added that one of the important tools of the government to control the inflation is to manage creation of money in the banking network and it is to increase its monitoring over the banking network.

He also added that the government is working hard on transparency in the monetary system of the country especially financial balance of banks and state companies, reiterating that the current government is working hard to eliminate golden signatures and bring justice for the businesses.

Sobhanian also noted that the government has increased the amount of loans and banking facilities as it has increased from 1300b tomans to 19,000b tomans in just one year and the number of banking facilities has increased during the current government.

He reiterated that the government is determined to bring justice to the tax system of the country and it is the first priority of the economic team of the government. He reiterated that the tax system of the country is being smartized and over 8m commercial banking accounts have been identified during the current government which will be important for bringing the justice to the tax system of the country and loopholes for dodging tax payment will be closed.

Kish INVEX 2022 Best Venue for Presenting Investment Opportunities

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – The 14th Exhibition on Presenting Iran's Investment Opportunities and the 9th International Exhibition of Exchange, Banking, Insurance and Privatization (Kish INVEX 2022) will be held on Kish Island on October 17-20.

With coming to power of the 13th government and in line with policies and new economic approaches of the government, this event with participation of policymakers and activists of the financial markets and capital market as well as the enthusiasts will create a new outlook in the field of economy and economic events of the country.

The event will be a good opportunities for presenting the investment opportunities of the country and many elites and experts will exchange their information in this international event.



Examining Operation of Radio Stations of Makran Coasts Starts



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Head of Marine Department of Sistan and Baluchestan Ports and Maritime General Directorate says the examining operation of the related and unrelated radio stations of Makran coasts began.

According to the public relations of Sistan and Baluchestan Ports and Maritime General Directorate, said the Head of Marine Department of the directorate Mr. Seyed Ahmad Hashemi announced the news and said that Maritime Search and Rescue Unit of the organization has started inspection and examining the radio centers in line with implementing the required regulations of Communications Regulatory Authority and improving the maritime radio communications.

Hashemi added that these inspections are aimed at boosting safety of maritime in the waterways of the province and accelerating the maritime search and rescue in the coasts of the province as well as creating proper radio ground and pursuing implementation of the approvals of the committee on communication and marine meteorology.

He noted that that Maritime Search and Rescue Unit is ready to give service round-the-clock channel 16 VHF and telephone No. 1550.

Iran 95% Self-Sufficient In Dam Construction

TEHRAN (MNA) - Former Head of Iran's Water and Power Resources Development Company Mohammadreza Rezazadeh has said the country is currently over 95 percent self-sufficient in dam construction.

"We are now more than 95 percent self-sufficient in the design and construction of dams in Iran, and we only import some parts and equipment for hydropower plants," Rezazadeh told IRIB.

According to the official, dam construction is as important as other strategic knowledges like nuclear energy, nano, stem cells and military equipment.

Mentioning the country's current water shortage problems, Rezazadeh said: "In the country's water sector, it is necessary to move towards the use of a diverse resources basket, such as the use of sewage, desalination of seawater, use of deep water, etc."

"For example, the Persian Gulf coastal countries currently desalinate and use about 27 million cubic meters of seawater on a daily basis and have a plan to increase the figure up to 32 million cubic meters, but our country, having vast beaches in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, only desalinizes about 600,000 cubic meters of water," he said.

Regarding the reason for the ending of dam construction in advanced countries and its continuation in Iran, he said: "They started building dams 70-80 years earlier than us and built dams in all suitable geographical positions, but despite the great number of dams in our country, we still need to build dams in some regions."

"From 1900 to 1909, 545 dams were inaugurated in the world, and the figure reached 7,511 in the 70s," he added.

About 32 percent of the world's dams are located in North America, 30 percent in Asia, 19 percent in Europe, five percent in Africa, three percent in South America, and two percent in Australia, according to the official.

Iran's total dam reservoirs currently stand at 50.5 billion cubic meters, according to the Energy Ministry data.

Out of a total of 183 currently operational dams across Iran, 52 are related to the Caspian Sea catchment area, 12 are based in the Urmia basin, 68 dams are located in the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman watersheds, 34 dams are in the Central Plateau, 11 dams are in Sarakhs catchment basin, and another six dams are located across the eastern boundary basin (Hamoun).

3,000b Tomans of Liquidity Produced Per Day

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Ghorban Eskandari, secretary general of the Ministry of Economy's Office of Banking and Insurance affairs, tweeted that 3,000 billion tomans of liquidity was generated daily in the first quarter of this year.

Liquidity is the most important factor in inflation, and according to the latest report by the Statistical Center, inflation for the 12 months ending in June this year was 39.4% compared to the same period last year (annual inflation).

However, domestic media reports indicate that the real inflation rate is likely to be higher than the statistics center has announced.

Mr. Eskandari says the daily creation of liquidity in

2014 was only 390 billion tomans, which reached 3,700 billion tomans last year, in other words, over seven years, "the country's daily liquidity production has almost increased 10 times.

Central Bank statistics show that liquidity reached more than 5,000 to 5.1 trillion tomans in June of this year, while in June 2014 it was 665,000,000 tomans, in other words, the country's "total liquidity" has increased 7.5 times during this period.

IMF statistics show that Iran has always been unbridled by inflation among several countries in the world over the past few years.

In this year's budget, the government included exports of 1.4 million barrels of oil per day at a price of \$70 per barrel.

Weekly Trade on IME Up by 30%

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) last week witnessed trade of 2,574,119 tons of commodities with a total trading value of more than \$721m, logging growths of 30% and 90% in volume and value of traded compared with the week before that.

According to a report by the IME's International Affairs and PR, the exchange saw on its metals and minerals trading floor trade of 1,986,000 tons of commodities worth nearly \$477m.

On this floor the IME sold 869,683 tons of cement, 495,000 tons of iron ore, 506,228 tons of steel, 96,500 tons of sponge iron, 625 tons of zinc, 10,975 tons of aluminum, 7,557 tons of copper, 200 tons of molybdenum concentrate, 30 tons of precious metals concentrate, 500 tons of coke, 18 kg of gold bars and 600 Dignity and Fidelity SUV automobiles.

Furthermore, the IME witnessed on both domestic and export rings of its oil and petrochemical trading floor 578,017 tons of commodities valued at more than \$240m.

Commodities traded on this floor included 74,642 tons of polymeric products, 220,000 tons of vacuum bottom, 57,000 tons of lube cut, 32,891 tons of chemicals, 48,300 tons of sulfur, 5,711 tons of base oil, 640 tons of insulation and 138,419 tons of bitumen.

The IME also traded within the same week 9,476 tons of commodities on its side market.



HOSCO Wins Top Brand Award

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN – Hormozgan Steel Company (HOSCO) won the top award during the sixth conference on the Top Brands which was held on Wednesday at the conference hall of IRIB.

According to reports, the CEO of Hormozgan Steel Company Mr. Ataollah Maroufkhani received the top award of the event which was held in the presence of representatives of top Iranian companies and brands of the country and some government and Judiciary officials.



Addressing the ceremony Judiciary official termed producers as soldiers and officers of the economic war and said that the Judiciary does it best to avoid closure of plants and reopening of the closed plants and return of them to the production cycle and pick-up in production, adding that the Judiciary will not spare any effort in this regard.

At the end of the ceremony, top brands were announced and Mr. Maroufkhani received the statue of the top brand.

ESCO Wins National Award of Internal Auditing

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

ISFAHAN – Esfahan Steel Company (ESCO) won the golden statue of the third edition of National Internal Auditing Appraisal.

Secretary of the committee and manager of the internal auditing of the company Mr. Amir Hossein Zakeri announced this achievement and said that the national internal auditing award is given by the Iranian Association of Internal Auditors and based on the Maturity Model Integration (CMMI) and international standards of the U.S. Institute of Internal Auditors has been prepared and appraised.

He added that the third edition of the national internal auditing award was aimed at appraising the capabilities of internal auditing managements in the country and creating constructive competition in line with improving the existing capabilities in the country.

ESCO managed to win the golden statue of the event after the company scored the highest points in different parameters for the top award.

It is worth noting that in the past two editions of this event only four companies and organization had won this golden award.



Deadly wildfires contained in Algeria

ALGIERS (Dispatches) - Wildfires which killed at least 38 people and left a trail of destruction in northeastern Algeria this week have now been contained, a civil defence official told AFP.

"All of the fires have been completely brought under control," said fire brigade Colonel Farouk Achour, of the civil defense department.

Since the beginning of August, almost 150 blazes have destroyed hundreds of hectares (acres) of forest in Africa's largest country.



Sri Lanka's Ousted Leader Hopes to Return Home

COLOMBO (Dispatches) - Sri Lanka's deposed former president Gotabaya Rajapaksa is seeking to return home from his exile in Thailand and has asked his successor to guarantee his safety, his party announced.

Rajapaksa fled the island last month after a huge crowd stormed his house, capping months of white-hot public anger over the island nation's unprecedented economic crisis.

The 73-year-old was forced to flee his official residence with the help of the military and eventually issued his resignation from Singapore. He has since flown to Thailand but authorities there have warned him not to venture out of his hotel for his own safety, keeping him virtually under hotel arrest.



N. Korea Rejects Seoul's Aid-for-Denuclearization Offer



SEOUL (Dispatches) - The powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un rejected Seoul's offer of economic assistance in return for denuclearization steps, calling it the "height of absurdity".

The statement follows South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol this week putting forward an "audacious" aid plan that would include food, energy and infrastructure help in return for the North abandoning its nuclear weapons program.

Analysts previously said the chances of Pyongyang accepting such a deal -- first floated during Yoon's inaugural speech -- were vanishingly slim, as the North, which invests a vast chunk of its GDP into weapons programs, has long made it clear it will not make that trade.

Kim Jong Un's sister, Yo Jong, on Friday called Yoon's offer the "height of absurdity", adding the entire premise that the North might willingly put its nuclear program on the table was wrong.

"To think that the plan to barter 'economic cooperation' for our honor, (our) nukes, is the great dream, hope and plan of Yoon, we came to realize that he is really simple and still childish," she said in a statement carried by the official Korea Central News Agency.

"We make it clear that we will not sit face to face with him," she added, saying "no one barter its destiny for corn cake". She further accused the South of recycling past proposals the North had already rejected, and compared Yoon to a barking dog.

South Korea's presidential office expressed "strong regret" over Yo Jong's "rude" remarks, but added that the offer of economic aid remained in place.

"North Korea's attitude is in no way helpful to the peace and prosperity of the Korean peninsula, as well as its own future, and only promotes isolation from the international community," it said in a statement.

Pyongyang last week warned it would "wipe out" Seoul authorities over a recent Covid-19 outbreak, a threat that came less than a month after Kim Jong Un said his country was "ready to mobilise" its nuclear capability in any war with the United States and the South.

Yoon on Wednesday said his administration had no plans to pursue its own nuclear deterrent, even as Pyongyang test-fired two cruise missiles the same day.

Cheong Seong-chang, director of the Center for North Korean Studies at the Sejong Institute, said Yo Jong's Friday statement "clearly reaffirms" that Pyongyang will never give up its nukes.

Accordingly, the Yoon administration's policies on North Korean denuclearisation will inevitably need a "fundamental revision", he told AFP.

"The weight of North Korean nuclear threats that South Korea has to live with has already exceeded the level it can bear," he said.

North Korea has conducted a record-breaking blitz of weapons tests this year, including firing an intercontinental ballistic missile at full range for the first time since 2017.

Washington and South Korean officials have repeatedly warned that the North is preparing to carry out what would be its seventh nuclear test.

Putin Warns of Nuclear Site Catastrophe

PARIS (Dispatches) - Russian President Vladimir Putin has told French President Emmanuel Macron over the phone that shelling of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant poses the risk of a "large-scale catastrophe".

The Elysee says Putin has agreed to a fact-finding mission by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) at the nuclear site.

Putin and his French counterpart have both called for independent inspections at the Moscow-occupied Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant "as soon as possible" to "assess the real situation on the ground", the Kremlin has said in a statement.

"The Russian side confirmed its readiness to provide the Agency inspectors with the necessary assistance," the statement said. Putin "stressed that the systematic shelling by the Ukrainian military of the territory of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant creates the danger of a large-scale catastrophe that could lead to radiation contamination of vast territories".

Taliban Leader Says Foreign Engagement Will Be in Line With Sharia

KABUL (Dispatches) - The Taliban will deal with the international community in line with sharia law, the supreme leader of the hardline Islamist group said, according to a copy of his speech shared by the information ministry.

Yet to be formally recognised as a government by any foreign capital, the group is struggling with a severe economic crisis due to strict enforcement of international sanctions and the cutting off of development aid.

Many governments, including Washington, have put pressure on the Taliban to ease its restrictions on women and to open schools for high-school aged girls.

Around 3,000 tribal leaders, officials and religious scholars had gathered in the southern city of Kandahar, where the group's supreme spiritual leader Haibatullah Akhundzada is based, on Thursday, according to state-run news agency Bakhtar. It was the second such gathering since the group took power around a year ago.

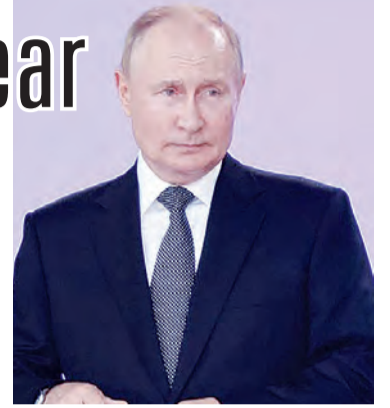
"This meeting is called to think about the freedom we received by the blessing of Allah, which we achieved from the blood of our mujahideen (fighters)," he said in the speech.

"We will deal with the international community as per Islamic Sharia ...if Sharia doesn't allow it, we will not deal with any other country," Akhundzada said.

Talks with U.S. diplomats have continued, in particular over how to revive the country's stalled banking sector and the possible release of frozen central bank assets held overseas. But officials have cautioned that many hurdles remain to any progress.

In an escalation of tensions, the United States last month carried out a drone strike in central Kabul to kill al Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri and accused the Taliban of violating an agreement between them by sheltering Zawahiri.

Thursday's gathering issued several resolutions, according to Bakhtar news agency, including one condemning the drone strike and another saying any neighboring country that allowed the use of its airspace for the strike was complicit.



Colombia, Venezuela Working To Coordinate Border Reopening

CUCUTA (Dispatches) - The full reopening of the Colombia-Venezuela border will come sooner rather than later, but will depend on legal conditions and the overall re-establishment of bilateral ties, Colombia's commerce minister said.

"The border will open soon, but at the time when we have that coordination," Commerce Minister German Umana said during a meeting in Cucuta of business people from both sides of the border, including the Colombia-Venezuelan Chamber of Commerce.

Relations between the two countries have warmed in the nearly two weeks since Gustavo Petro was sworn in as Colombia's new president. Petro has promised to reopen largely-shuttered trade across the porous 2,219-kilometer (1,380-mile) border.

Petro and Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro have each named ambassadors to each other's countries.

"Our business owners are looking for this not to be subject to sanctions," Umana added, without offering details.

A United Nations envoy said last year that sanctions on Venezuela put in place by the U.S. and the E.U. were worsening a humanitarian crisis and recommended relaxing them, much to the chagrin of the country's opposition.

The reopening will not mean a large uptick in trade in the short term but will be key to re-establishing institutional control in an area affected by illegal economies and smuggling, Umana said.

"What will happen when we open the bridges is that we will replace illegality, money laundering, contraband," he said. Trade between the two countries this year could total more than \$600 million, he added, after reaching \$316 million in the first half, about the same it reached during all of 2021.

Colombia's transport minister said border bridges were being assessed ahead of the reopening.

"Beyond the reopening of the border we hope to reactivate our industrial zones," said Freddy Sandoval, head of the automakers' guild in the Venezuelan state of Tachira, adding the country had the continent's most extensive auto-making infrastructure two decades ago.

"We have to recover that," he said.

Bilateral relations broke down in early 2019 after Caracas objected to members of the Venezuelan opposition, supported by the U.S. Trump administration, trying to send aid trucks across the border from Colombia. A U.S. audit last year found the effort was not planned in alignment with humanitarian principles.



Turkey Not Looking to Take Syrian Territory

ISTANBUL (Dispatches) - President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said that Turkey was not looking to seize any Syrian territory despite stepping up its attacks against Kurdish forces in the war-torn country's north.

Erdogan's comments came days after a Turkish air strikes on a Syrian border post run by regime forces reportedly killed 17 fighters.

A war monitor said that both Kurds who man some of the Syrian border posts and regime forces were killed in the Turkish raids.

The official Syrian news agency said three government soldiers died. Turkey said it was responding to a strike on its own positions along the border that killed two soldiers.

The exchange of fire marked one of the largest escalations since Ankara and Damascus traded attacks in 2020.

Erdogan appeared to try and calm the tensions in comments to reporters on board his return flight from his first wartime visit to Ukraine.

"We do not have eyes on the territory of Syria because the people of Syria are our brothers," Turkish media quoted Erdogan as saying.

"The regime must be aware of this."

Erdogan's visit to Ukraine came two weeks after he flew to Sochi for talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin that also covered Syria.

Putin's support was instrumental in helping Syrian President Bashar al-Assad survive an 11-year conflict against rebel groups backed in part by Turkey.

Erdogan said he told Putin that he wanted to cooperate more closely with Russia in northern Syrian regions where Ankara has been targeting Kurds it views as "terrorists".

"We are in contact with Russia on every step that we take in Syria," Erdogan said.

The border clash came with fears mounting that Turkey may be preparing to launch its fourth cross-border offensive against Kurdish forces since 2016.

Erdogan accuses the Kurdish fighters in Syria -- allied with the United States against Islamic State jihadists -- as outlawed militants with links to groups waging a decades-long insurgency against the Turkish state.

He repeated his catchphrase on Friday that Turkish forces could strike Syrian Kurds "suddenly one night".



Europe Divided Over Banning Russian Tourists

BRUSSELS (AFP) - Ukraine is pressuring the EU to bar Russian tourists from entering the bloc but has met varying responses, with some EU countries agreeing while others resist.

Already some EU nations neighboring Russia are barring Russian visa applications or limiting visas issued by their own services, but no EU-wide ban is in place.

The issue is to be discussed at an EU foreign ministers' meeting in Prague on August 31 as the 27-nation bloc weighs whether to come up with a unified position on short-term visas for ordinary Russians.

"Russians overwhelmingly support the war, cheer missile strikes on Ukrainian cities and (the) murder of Ukrainians. Let Russian tourists enjoy Russia then," Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba has said. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has demanded the West shut its borders to Russians, telling the Washington Post they should "live in their own world until they change their philosophy".

A furious Kremlin reacted by calling Kyiv's appeal "irrational" and pledged retaliation.

Eastern EU countries Latvia, Lithuania and Poland stopped issuing new tourist visas to Russians as soon as the Kremlin's forces invaded Ukraine in late February.

Estonia has gone a step further, barring entry to Russians with visas issued by its services. It is also looking at stopping Russians who have visas delivered by other EU states.

Finland, which has Europe's longest border with Russia, will from September 1 slash the number of Russian tourist visa applications handled to just 10 percent of the usual 1,000 received per day. A flat-out ban based on an applicant's nationality is impossible under Finnish law.

That measure will have an impact. Because of EU sanctions closing European airspace to flights from Russia, Russians had massively turned to land travel through Finland to go on to other European countries.

Russian leisure travellers use Schengen visas normally valid across 26 EU and neighbouring countries, including Switzerland and Norway. The visas typically allow stays of up to 90 days in a 180-day rolling period. Those 26 countries received around three million Schengen visa applications last year.

Russians made up the biggest group, accounting for 536,000 of them, with only three percent of their applications refused.

Estonia wants EU rules to be changed to allow it to stop Russians with Schengen visas regardless of which EU country issued them.

But Cyrille Bret of the Jacques Delors Institute think tank believes an EU-wide prohibition "has little chance of being adopted" even if national public opinions were in favour.

EU sanctions require unanimity among all 27 member states, and recent rounds had to negotiate objections, particularly from Hungary, which maintains friendly ties with Moscow.

The Czech Republic -- which holds the rotating EU presidency -- has taken a nuanced position. It argues "business as usual for Russian tourists in time of aggression is inappropriate", but says it does not support a total ban.

Prague says it wants to continue allowing entry to Russian journalists and other civilians fearing persecution.

That asylum proviso is generally also accepted by the countries in favour of a tourist visa ban, including Ukraine.

Germany and Portugal view a total EU ban on tourist visas as harmful when it comes to Russians who disagree with the Kremlin and try to flee their country.

In February, the EU restricted visas in certain categories for Russians linked to the Kremlin, including for officials, diplomatic passport holders and company bosses. But tourist visas were still permitted.



Solar Power Helps Indian Women Make Light Work of Cotton Spinning

MORADABAD (Dispatches) - As a traditional cotton spinner working from home in her village in northern India, Anita Devi was long resigned to having sore hands, meagre income and a constant struggle to make ends meet.

But her life changed in 2019 when the mother of two received a solar-powered spinning wheel, or charkha, as part of a drive by the state of Uttar Pradesh to boost rural women's work opportunities and incomes in an environmentally-friendly manner.

The solar charkhas - which feature 12 spindles, double the number on Anita's old wheel - are equipped with a motor and battery pack, and provided along with a 400 watt solar panel.

Anita, 34, produces up to 1.5 kg of cotton yarn daily using her solar charkha, up from 400 grams she spun with a traditional wheel, which has led to a more than fourfold increase in her monthly earnings - now at least 10,000 rupees (\$126) on average.

"With the additional income we can afford better nutrition, health care and even tuition for my children," Anita told the Thomson Reuters Foundation at her home in Phoolpur village in Moradabad district.

Anita is one of about 4,000 women across villages in Uttar Pradesh - India's most populous state and one of the poorest - who have been trained to use and provided with the solar charkhas in recent years under the state government initiative.

As India seeks to use less planet-heating coal to generate electricity and raise its renewables capacity to 500 gigawatts (GW) by 2030, up from about 115 GW now, Uttar Pradesh is looking to solar energy to power businesses, homes and communities, with a growing focus on those that are not connected to the grid.

Since 2018, solar charkhas worth 50,000 rupees have been distributed to about 1,000 women annually in Uttar Pradesh for free by the state's Khadi and Village Industries Board (UPKVIB).

Many women work at home, while others do so at production hubs in their villages which are run by local non-profits.

Millions of people across India - mainly women from marginalised communities - do home-based textile work, but tend to go under the radar and miss out on minimum wage and benefits.

Naveet Sehgal, additional chief secretary at UPKVIB, said persuading rural and "patriarchal" households to allow women to attend solar charkha training had proved a challenge initially - but emphasised that the project was thriving after a slow start.

"It is so satisfying to see their numbers grow - on how they are working with confidence, enjoying more self-esteem and a bigger say in running their households," he added.

The project in Uttar Pradesh followed a separate nationwide 2018 scheme, 'Mission Solar Charkha', with the aim of providing the wheels to create jobs for up to 100,000 people - from spinners to stitchers - in 50 areas or 'clusters' across India.

In Uttar Pradesh's independent program, the solar charkhas are distributed via several grassroots non-profits.

One of them, Avad Yuva Kalyan Gramudyog Sansthan, also pays the women for the yarn they provide and has it woven into khadi - a traditional handspun fabric - by other female workers in its network before the items are finished off and then sold on.

"There is more awareness among these women today - be it either on ... collective saving, helping each other during crisis, or sharing a line or two on the importance of solar energy in their lives," said its founder Anil Kumar Singh.



Don't Waste Your Time

Visit our website to choose your desired rental Properties

www.DeltaHOME.ir

The Most Specialized Website for Foreigners

HOME
Real Estate

Member of **DELTA** Real Estate Group
(021) 88888865



Germany to Lower Sales Tax on Gas to 7%

BERLIN (Reuters) - Germany will lower the sales tax on gas to 7% in an effort to cushion the blow of additional charges being placed on consumers to ensure energy companies can afford increasingly expensive supplies, said Chancellor Olaf Scholz.

The reduced tax rate will apply as long as the levy is charged, meaning through March 2024, added Scholz. Germany had been in talks with the European Commission this week to find another way to reduce the cost burden on consumers after the commission had said Germany's bid for an exemption on value-added tax was not possible. The measure comes after levies were announced this week that will tack on hundreds of euros to an average family's energy bill.



OPEC Chief Blames Policymakers, Lawmakers for Oil Price Rises

LONDON (Dispatches) - Policymakers, lawmakers and insufficient oil and gas sector investments are to blame for high energy prices, not OPEC, the producer group's new Secretary General Haitham Al Ghais told Reuters.

A lack of investment in the oil and gas sector following a price slump sparked by COVID-19 has significantly reduced OPEC's spare production capacity and limited the group's ability to respond quickly to further potential supply disruption.

The price of oil came close to an all-time high of \$147 a barrel in March, after Russia's ordering of troops into Ukraine exacerbated supply concerns. While prices have since declined, they are still painfully high for consumers and businesses globally.

"Don't blame OPEC, blame your own policymakers and lawmakers, because OPEC and the producing countries have been pushing time and time against for investing in oil (and gas)," Al Ghais, who took office on Aug. 1, said in an online interview.

Oil and gas investment is up 10% from last year but remains well below 2019 levels, the International Energy Agency said last month, adding that some of the immediate shortfalls in Russian exports needed to be met by production elsewhere.

The OPEC official also pointed the finger at a lack of investment in the downstream sector, adding that OPEC members had increased refining capacity to balance the decline in Europe and the United States.

"We are not saying that the world will live on fossil fuels forever ... but by saying we're not going to invest in fossil fuels ... you have to move from point A to point B overnight," Al Ghais said.

OPEC exists to ensure the world gets enough oil, but "it's going to be very challenging and very difficult if there is no buy-in into the importance of investing," he said, adding that he hopes "investors, financial institutions, policymakers as well globally seriously take this matter (to) heart and take it into their plans for the future."

Oil has tumbled since March and Brent hit a six-month low below \$92 a barrel this week.

The slide reflects fears of economic slowdown and masks physical market fundamentals, Al Ghais said as he took a relatively optimistic view on the outlook for 2023 as the world tackles rising inflation.

"There is a lot of fear," he said. "There is a lot of speculation and anxiety, and that's what's predominantly driving the drop in prices."

"Whereas in the physical market we see things much differently. Demand is still robust. We still feel very bullish on demand and very optimistic on demand for the rest of this year."

"The fears about China are really taken out of proportion in my view," said Al Ghais, who worked in China for four years earlier in his career. "China is a phenomenal place of economic growth still."

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, plus Russia and other allies, known as OPEC+, has unwound record oil-output cuts made in 2020 at the height of the pandemic and in September is raising output by 100,000 barrels per day.

Ahead of the next meeting which OPEC+ holds on Sept. 5, Al Ghais said it was premature to say what it will decide, although he was positive about the outlook for next year.

"I want to be very clear about it - we could cut production if necessary, we could add production if necessary."

"It all depends on how things unfold. But we are still optimistic, as I said. We do see a slowdown in 2023 in demand growth, but it should not be worse than what we've had historically."

"Yes, I am relatively optimistic," he added of the 2023 outlook. "I think the world is dealing with the economic pressures of inflation in a very good way."

Euro Zone July Inflation Confirmed at 8.9% y/y

BRUSSELS (Dispatches) - Euro zone inflation reached a new record high of 8.9% year-on-year in July, the EU's statistics office confirmed, with the core measure, excluding the most volatile components and key for monetary policy, also sharply up.

The European Union's statistics office Eurostat said consumer prices in the 19 countries using the euro rose 0.1% month-on-month in July for an 8.9% year-on-year increase, the highest since the euro was created in 1999.

Eurostat said that of the total, 4.02 percentage points came from more expensive energy -- the costs of which surged because of Russia's invasion of Ukraine -- and 2.08 percentage points from more expensive food alcohol and tobacco.



But even when these most volatile components are excluded, in what the European Central Bank calls core inflation and watches closely in interest rate decisions, prices still were 5.1% year-on-year higher in July.

The ECB's headline inflation target is 2.0%. Last month, the bank started a tightening cycle after years of ultra-loose monetary policy, but still the prices of services, which create more than two thirds of the euro zone's GDP, rose 3.7% year-on-year in July, adding 1.6 percentage point to the final outcome.

Industrial goods were 4.5% more expensive than 12 months earlier, adding 1.16 percentage point to the final headline figure.

Turkey Cuts Key Rate by 1% Despite Having 80% Inflation

ANKARA (Dispatches) - Turkey's central bank cut its key interest rate by a full percentage point despite the country suffering 80% .

In a statement accompanying the decisions, the bank justified its action by pointing to an expected growth slowdown in the current quarter and expectations that a process of disinflation will soon set in after a surge in prices in the spring triggered by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The bank cut its rate to 13% from 14%, after holding it steady for the past year. It also cut its overnight and rates, which form a corridor for short-term lira market rates, by a similar amount to 11.50% and 14.50% respectively.

The announcement hit the market, which has been badly undermined by a decade of unorthodox and often erratic macroeconomic policies under President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. The spiked as high as 18.1488 against it before paring its gains to be up 0.7% at 18.0759. The benchmark stock index fell sharply before recovering to trade roughly where it was before the announcement. Credit default swaps on the country's sovereign bonds, meanwhile, widened by around 50 basis points.

The lira is already down some 27% against the dollar so far this year against the backdrop of runaway inflation that the central bank has been unable to tackle effectively. The consumer price index was up 79.6% in the 12 months through July, setting the stage for what would be a second currency crisis in only four years. Erdoğan fired his last central bank governor for failing to accommodate his economic stimulus policies by keeping interest rates too high as the effects of the 2018 currency crisis eased.

In its statement, the CBRT said it expects a "disinflation process to start on the back of measures taken and decisively implemented for strengthening sustainable price and financial stability, along with the resolution of the ongoing regional conflict," in what appeared to be a nod to Erdoğan's role in helping the UN to broker a deal allowing Ukraine's grain exports to reach world markets. The conflict between Russia and Ukraine continues, but that deal has helped allay fears of food shortages in many poor countries that are dependent on Ukraine and Russia for wheat imports are now below their levels immediately before the invasion in February.

That, along with the global drop in energy prices since the middle of the year, has taken some of the steam out of Turkish inflation, which ran at a of 'only' 2.37% in July, down from a peak of 13.6% in January and its smallest increase since October last year.

Even so, analysts were baffled by the decision. "Just when you think the CBRT cannot get any crazier, they go to yet another level of craziness," said Tim Ash, an associate fellow at Chatham House in London.

Norway Raises Rates to Highest in Decade to Stem Inflation

OSLO (Dispatches) - Norway's central bank raised borrowing costs to the highest level in a decade and signaled a faster pace of future increases than earlier planned in a bid to slow surging inflation.

Norges Bank lifted its benchmark interest rate by half a percentage point, as forecast, returning to a level not seen since March 2012. It said the policy rate "will most likely be raised further in September."

The move indicates growing urgency in stemming Norwegian price growth that's at a 34-year high even after the Nordic nation's policy makers were among the first in the rich world to start raising rates last September. The second half-point hike in three months echoes the aggressive steps taken by the top global monetary authorities in tightening policy.

"We believe that Norges Bank will deliver another 50 basis point rate hike in September, before resuming with 25 basis point hikes from November onwards," Nordea economists Dane Cekov and Kjetil Olsen said in a note to clients. "The top for the key rate in Norway will likely end at around 3%, with the risks balanced."

The , which has been the best performer in the G-10 space of most traded currencies since July, strengthened following the announcement, trading 0.3% lower versus the euro at 9.8580 at 10:19 a.m. in Oslo.

Elsewhere in the region, speculation is building that neighbor Sweden will raise borrowing costs by 75 basis points next month -- mirroring the most recent move by the Federal Reserve. Norway's Atlantic neighbor Iceland, with the most aggressive policy tightening in western Europe, is also expected to raise its key interest rate by the same margin to 5.5% next week, according to a survey of market participants.

Sri Lanka to Ask Japan to Open Talks With Main Creditors

COLOMBO (Dispatches) - Sri Lanka will ask Japan to invite the Indian Ocean island's main creditor nations, including China and India, to talks on bilateral debt restructuring as it seeks a way out of its worst economic crisis in decades, its president said.

"Someone needs to call in, invite the main creditor nations. We will ask Japan to do it," President Ranil Wickremesinghe told Reuters in an interview, adding that he would travel to Tokyo next month to meet Prime Minister Fumio Kishida.

Sri Lanka, a country of 22 million people off India's southern tip, is facing its most severe financial crisis since independence from Britain in 1948, resulting from the combined impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and economic mismanagement.

Left with scant foreign exchange reserves, stalling imports of essentials including fuel and medicines, ordinary Sri Lankans have been

battling crippling shortages for months amid sky-rocketing inflation and a devalued currency.

Public anger stoked unprecedented mass protests, with thousands of people storming the colonial-era presidential residence in Sri Lanka's commercial capital Colombo in early July, forcing then president Gotabaya Rajapaksa into hiding.

Protesters occupied the residence for days, some of them sleeping in the president's bedroom and others frolicking in a swimming pool surrounded by manicured gardens.

Rajapaksa, a former military officer, then fled the country to Singapore and resigned, becoming the first Sri Lankan president to quit mid-term.

Wickremesinghe, a six-time prime minister, won a parliamentary vote and took office as president on July 21.

Local broadcaster Newsfirst, citing a former ambassador, said on Wednesday that Rajapaksa would return home next week.

Wickremesinghe said he was "not aware" of any such plans, speaking to Reuters at the presidential secretariat, part of which had also been occupied by protesters.

Udeeshan Jonas, chief strategist at Colombo-based investment bank CAL Group, said Wickremesinghe's outreach to Japan could help secure additional funds after once a restructuring plan is agreed.

"As one of the Quad countries, Japan can bring India and the rest of the key bilateral creditors together and Sri Lanka can work on a restructuring plan that will cover a large part of the debt," Jonas said, referring to the Quad grouping of the United States, Japan, Australia and India.

"Only China will be on the other side," he said. Wickremesinghe said talks were ongoing with China, and that they had been positive so far.

Sri Lanka's total bilateral debt was estimated at \$6.2 billion at the end of 2020 by the IMF, according to a March report, with Japan and China holding the largest shares.



ANKARA (Dispatches) - Turkey's central bank cut its key interest rate by a full percentage point despite the country suffering 80% .

In a statement accompanying the decisions, the bank justified its action by pointing to an expected growth slowdown in the current quarter and expectations that a process of disinflation will soon set in after a surge in prices in the spring triggered by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The bank cut its rate to 13% from 14%, after holding it steady for the past year. It also cut its overnight and rates, which form a corridor for short-term lira market rates, by a similar amount to 11.50% and 14.50% respectively.

The announcement hit the market, which has been badly undermined by a decade of unorthodox and often erratic macroeconomic policies under President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. The spiked as high as 18.1488 against it before paring its gains to be up 0.7% at 18.0759. The benchmark stock index fell sharply before recovering to trade roughly where it was before the announcement. Credit default swaps on the country's sovereign bonds, meanwhile, widened by around 50 basis points.

The lira is already down some 27% against the dollar so far this year against the backdrop of runaway inflation that the central bank has been unable to tackle effectively. The consumer price index was up 79.6% in the 12 months through July, setting the stage for what would be a second currency crisis in only four years. Erdoğan fired his last central bank governor for failing to accommodate his economic stimulus policies by keeping interest rates too high as the effects of the 2018 currency crisis eased.

In its statement, the CBRT said it expects a "disinflation process to start on the back of measures taken and decisively implemented for strengthening sustainable price and financial stability, along with the resolution of the ongoing regional conflict," in what appeared to be a nod to Erdoğan's role in helping the UN to broker a deal allowing Ukraine's grain exports to reach world markets. The conflict between Russia and Ukraine continues, but that deal has helped allay fears of food shortages in many poor countries that are dependent on Ukraine and Russia for wheat imports are now below their levels immediately before the invasion in February.

Indian Inflation Still Elevated, May Warrant Policy Response



MUMBAI (Dispatches) - Inflation in India may still require a monetary policy response going forward as it remains above the target range even though it has eased in recent months, the Reserve Bank of India said.

"In India, supply conditions are improving, with the recent monsoon pick-up, strong momentum in manufacturing and a rebound in services," the central bank said in an article on the state of the economy, published in its monthly bulletin.

"Inflation has edged down, but its persistence at elevated levels warrants appropriate policy responses to anchor expectations going forward," RBI added.

India's consumer inflation dipped to 6.71% in July, easing for the third month in a row and helped by a slower increase in food and fuel prices but it remained above the RBI's 2% to 6% tolerance band for a seventh straight month.

"Imported inflation pressure points remain the overarching risk, followed by pending pass-through of input costs if producers regain pricing power, and wages," RBI wrote.

"Yet, some risks have turned down - commodity prices, especially of crude; supply chain pressures; revving up of monsoon activity due to the depression in the Bay of Bengal," it added.

The RBI's monetary policy committee raised the bank's key lending rate by 50 bps earlier in the month, its third increase in four months to curb rising price pressures.

RBI also highlighted that portfolio inflows had turned positive for India in August so far after a long hiatus, but it sounded cautious on the outlook of these "fickle flows".

"Tightening of global funding conditions as monetary policy is front loaded is hence expected to worsen the outlook for portfolio flows," it wrote.

Iran Wants to Activate Border Markets

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iran's Interior Minister said that the current administration wants to activate border markets.

Ahmad Vahidi said that activation of border markets would improve both the livelihood of residents of border area and the security of borders.

Vahidi said that all border markets were active in Iran, but Kuhak market on the border with Afghanistan is being disturbed due to

security issues in Afghanistan.

He noted that the administration was making efforts to negotiate with neighboring countries to keep all border markets active.

On the border tensions with the Taliban's border guards, he said that some shooting incidents have taken place that were caused by the fact that the Taliban's guards are not sufficiently trained.



U.S. Oil Refiners Aim to Run Full Bore, Spurning Recession Fears

HOUSTON (Dispatches) - U.S. crude oil refineries plan to keep running near full throttle this quarter, according to executives and estimates, as refiners set aside worries about recession and sliding retail prices to deliver more fuel.

The operating levels will keep U.S. gasoline prices below their spring highs while providing strong earnings to refiners, analysts said. Many aim to run at rates similar to the second quarter's 94% average utilization rate.

"Refiners will continue to run hard in Q3," Tudor, Pickering, Holt refining analyst Matthew Blair said in a note this week, adding he would not be surprised "if Q3 runs weren't higher" than June given past conservative forecasts.

The largest refiner by capacity, Marathon Petroleum Corp (MPC.N), aims to run at 97% of its 2.9 million barrels per date capacity with overhauls slightly trimming output. Its 13 plants ran at a 100% average rate last quarter.

Valero Energy, the second largest by capacity, expects to drive its 2.2 million-bpd system at 90% to 93% of capacity, down slightly from the second quarter's red-hot 94%.

"There is really no indication of any demand destruction," Gary Simmons, a Valero executive vice president, said on a call with investors, explaining the decision to maintain high rates.

Chevron said it does not disclose refinery operating targets. Exxon Mobil did not reply to a request for comment. Citgo Petroleum, which ran its three U.S. refineries at 101% of their combined, 769,000 bpd capacity last quarter, said it does not issue forward-looking guidance.

Historically, U.S. production peaks in the second or third quarter as the summer driving season winds down and companies begin autumn equipment overhauls.

U.S. refineries have run this year at record levels due to plant closings, the quick recovery of domestic demand and strong export demand over Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Low U.S. stocks of gasoline and diesel have raised fears of diesel shortfalls as the winter heating season draws more distillates.



U.S. gasoline stocks were at nearly 24 days of supply last week, compared with the pandemic peak of 48.7 days in 2020. Inventories of diesel were 29.4 days, compared with the peak 54.3 days in 2020, according to government data.

Third-quarter targets do not incorporate any impact from the Atlantic hurricane season, now moving toward its peak activity period. Plants along the U.S. Gulf Coast have more than 47% of the nation's refining capacity and are most at risk to storm disruptions. Scheduled maintenance typically begins in the third quarter.

German Gas Import Costs Surge 153% in H1

FRANKFURT (Dispatches) - German natural gas import costs rose by 153% in the first six months of 2022 from a year earlier, even though imports were down by 24.3%, official data showed.

Europe's biggest economy mainly imports gas from Russia, Norway, the Netherlands, Britain and Denmark, but has turned more to liquefied natural gas (LNG) since the Ukraine crisis. The June statistics from Germany's foreign trade office are the fourth to reflect the impact of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which began on Feb. 24, and Western sanctions against what the Kremlin calls a "special military operation".

Russia has cut flows through Nord Stream 1, the major gas delivery route to Europe via Germany, to a fifth of its capacity, forcing importers and governments to scramble for substitutes before the heating season from October.

Gas, power and carbon traders monitor gas imports because the supply and demand balance affects prices and traded volumes in all three markets. Gas data also correlates with coal, which competes in the production of electricity, while also giving clues about demand for mandatory European Union carbon emissions permits.

German foreign trade office BAFA's monthly statistics, which are published with a roughly two-month delay, showed January-June imports at 2,023,691 terajoules (TJ), or 57.5 billion cubic metres (bcm), compared with 2,671,691 TJ a year earlier.

As supply disruptions propelled gas prices to record highs, Germany's import bill increased to 30.8 billion euros (\$31.20 billion) in the six month period, compared with 12.2 billion euros in the same period of 2021, BAFA data showed.

The average price paid on the border during January to June was up 234% year on year at 15,243.71 euros/TJ, BAFA said. The June alone price of 17,594.31 euros, equivalent to 6.33 cents per kilowatt hour (kWh), was more than three times that of June 2021.

German gas inventories are at 77.8% of available storage capacity, European gas infrastructure group GIE's website showed. This compared with 55.1% a year ago.

Cyprus Row Over Threat to Dig Up Protected Turtle Nests

NICOSIA (Dispatches) - A row has erupted in Cyprus after a community leader threatened to dig up the nests of protected turtles because his village is missing out on land development compensation.

On Thursday the authorities said his "inexcusable" threat would undo decades of conservation efforts if it went ahead.

Yiangos Tsivikos, leader of the Ineia community in the Akamas region in the west of the Mediterranean island, posted a video on YouTube on Wednesday saying he would dig up turtle nests on the nearby Lara beach. He claimed that nest markings there were fake, and called on the agriculture minister and media to go to Lara beach on Sunday to watch him dig up the nests.

"Residents are ready for war," Tsivikos said.

The fisheries department warned Akamas residents that Cyprus sea turtles and their eggs have been protected by law since 1971.

Conservationists estimate the number of turtle nests in Lara at around 2,000 in 2021. Lara is a habitat of enormous ecological importance for both loggerhead and green sea turtles.

Spain's Jan-June Trade Deficit Widens Almost Six-Fold to 32b Euros

MADRID (Dispatches) - Spain's trade deficit in the first six months of the year widened almost six-fold from the same period a year earlier to 32 billion euros (\$32.6 billion), the Industry Ministry said.

The outcome was wider than the deficit for the whole of 2021 and compared with a 5.4 billion euro deficit in the first six months a year ago, the ministry said in its monthly report.

Excluding energy imports and exports, the trade deficit in the period was 6.1 billion euros, the ministry said.

Imports during the first six months rose 41% year-on-year to 223 billion euros, boosted by oil and gas, while exports increased by 25% to 191 billion euros, the ministry said.

Energy imports represented 179 billion euros of total imports.



Like many other European countries, Spain is entirely dependent on imports for its oil and gas supplies, and prices have soared following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Spain has committed with European Union partners to cut its gas consumption by 7%, mainly by reducing demand for electricity from gas-fired power plants.

From last week, a series of restrictions on companies' electricity use was imposed by the government, including limits to air conditioning and night lights.

Spain is also looking to establish a gas pipeline connecting the Iberian Peninsula with central Europe to be able to pump part of the gas it imports from countries other than Russia to the rest of Europe.

South Korea Discussing Iran Nuclear Deal With U.S., EU

SEOUL (Dispatches) - South Korea is discussing with top officials from the United States and the European Union the possible restoration of the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, which may lead to unfreezing of Tehran's assets in Seoul.

According to Yonhap, South Korea's vice foreign minister Cho Hyun-dong held back-to-back separate phone calls Friday with US special envoy for Iran Robert Malley and EU coordinator Enrique Mora to share the latest progress in negotiations to revive the JCPOA nuclear accord.

During the phone talks, Cho reaffirmed Seoul's support for restoring the agreement and expressed hope that a deal could help resolve South Korea's pending issues related to Iran. Bilateral relations between Seoul and Teheran remain frayed after two South Korean banks locked \$7-9 billion of Iranian funds owed for oil imports because of U.S. banking sanctions, which were reimposed after former President Donald Trump in 2018 withdrew from the deal.

Iran, which sits on the world's fourth-largest oil reserves, was a key oil supplier to South Korea, and a main importer of goods such as industrial equipment, household appliances and vehicle parts.

Seoul stopped purchasing Iranian oil in May 2019 due to sanctions that banned the Islamic republic's oil exports. Bilateral relations between Seoul and Teheran remain frayed over \$7 billion in Iranian funds locked in two Korean banks under U.S. sanctions, which were reimposed after then U.S. President Trump.

Tehran has long condemned Seoul for abiding by the illegal U.S. sanction and refusing to release the funds.

Sonowals Iran Visit...

FROM PAGE 1

"Our vision is to make Chabahar Port a transit hub and link it to the INSTC (International North South Transport Corridor) to reach out to Central Asian countries," Sonowal told the media in the run-up to his visit.

The short-term lease agreement for using the Shaheed Behesti terminal typically sees a renewal tenure of one year on a rolling basis.

An official said the attempt was to increase the tenure of the agreement as an in-principle commitment to continue cooperation in developing the port.

However, sources indicated India had raised the issue of the lack of a long-term investment commitment becoming a hurdle in the way of trade, and is looking to make progress on a long-run agreement to instil confidence in all stakeholder countries.

Long-term supply chains can be established only when industries are assured of the longevity of a project.

"The development of the Chabahar Port Project is a prestigious project of national importance," the ministry said on Thursday. This is after a period of dormancy in the development of the port, which is operated by India Ports Global.

The ministry has been pushing for higher trade engagement through the port, and is seeking a trans-Caspian multi-modal transit corridor between Central Asia and South Asian nations.

The route was identified as an alternative to the European one via the Suez Canal, which takes significantly longer.

The INSTC is a 7,200-km corridor, conceptualised to optimise trade between India, Russia, and Eurasian and Central Asian economies, and it reportedly has an eight-fold increase potential.

Sonowal is likely to sign a memorandum of understanding concerning mutual recognition of seafarers' certificates of competency in unlimited voyages between India and Iran.

Ministry officials said the signing could also result in training exercises of Iranian seafarers in India, as a show of mutual cooperation.

Five years ago, Chabahar Port was a symbol of the promise of flourishing multilateral trade between Central Asian countries, India, Russia, and Europe through the INSTC.

Today, Iranian sanctions, lack of shipping lines, and a strong supply chain have made traders wary of leveraging the route, and they are still using alternative, much longer routes to conduct trade with Russia and Europe.

Coup d'Etat Unable to...

FROM PAGE 1

The historic overthrow, though, is still given as a reason for the Iranians' mistrust of Britain and the United States. Experts say the upheaval, known in Iran as the '28 Mordad Coup', was aimed at making sure the Iranian monarchy would safeguard the West's oil interests in the country.



Of course, the 1953 coup has not been the first U.S.-orchestrated one because this country has been behind most coups in the world like what happened in Chile when the U.S. brought General Augusto Pinochet to power in 1973 after attempting coup by Chilean Army against the democratic President Salvador Allende.

The U.S. usually resorts to sedition and internal conflict, and when its pretexts do not work, it orchestrates coup d'etat in countries where generals and armies are powerful and they can bring down the leaders.

According to the documents released by the U.S. and British governments they both admitted they were behind this coup in Tehran. In 1953, the CIA and British intelligence orchestrated a coup d'etat that toppled the democratically elected government of Iran. The government of Mohammad Mossadegh. The aftershocks of the coup are still being felt.

In 1951 Prime Minister Mossadegh roused Britain's ire when he nationalized the oil industry. Mossadegh argued that Iran should begin profiting from its vast oil reserves which had been exclusively controlled by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. The company later became known as British Petroleum (BP).

But anti-British and later anti-U.S. feelings in Iran soared and this was the main reason for attempting coup in Tehran to bring a un-popular and puppet regime and Shah in order to rule in the country.

The crushing of Iran's first democratic government ushered in more than two decades of dictatorship under the Shah, who relied heavily on U.S. aid and arms. The anti-American backlash that toppled the Shah in 1979 shook the whole region and helped spread Islamic values in the world.

Iranians proved the world that nothing is able to defeat strong determination of nations and coup and boots of generals are unable to stop the nations from moving ahead.

Now, 69 years after that coup, Americans are trying different ways to topple the government and establishment in Iran, and since they are not able to plot any coup in the country, they have resorted to domestic rift and unrests but Iranians have shown that they may have differences and problems but they will not fall in the trap of Americans, and the Islamic Republic of Iran will march ahead strongly and every year will chant its anti-U.S. slogans louder than ever.

Cooperation With Israel...

FROM PAGE 1

...they will pay the heaviest price for their unfriendly and provocative behavior and secondly, the stable and secure situation of the region will pay a price for that," the IRGC commander stated.

He added that Iran has cordial relations with the neighboring countries in the Persian Gulf region based on the principle of Islamic unity and noted that the Islamic Republic aims to improve sustainable security among all the countries in the region.

Tangsiri said the presence of the "child-killing Zionist regime" anywhere has always brought nothing but sedition, theft, and aggression.

He added that protecting the Iranian nation's dignity and the country's territorial integrity and independence is the red line of the IRGC Navy, emphasizing, "We are very sensitive to any enemy's threat and sedition and we do not hesitate for a moment to respond decisively [to the enemies] in a way that will make them regretful."

Tangsiri hailed the high combat capabilities of the IRGC naval forces, saying they are ready to carry out any mission aimed at safeguarding and protecting Iran's interests and nations.

The senior IRGC commander's remarks come while Turkey and Israel on Wednesday announced that they had decided to fully restore diplomatic ties and reappoint ambassadors, marking the culmination of hectic efforts by the two sides to repair bilateral ties following years of tensions.

Turkey and Israel have announced the restoration of full diplomatic relations and to mutually reinstate ambassadors, marking the culmination of hectic efforts by the two sides to repair bilateral ties.

Tangsiri warned in July that any presence of the Israeli regime in the Persian Gulf region will only fuel insecurity, asserting that regional countries are able to maintain security.

"We believe that the Zionist regime gaining a foothold in the Persian Gulf region will have no result other than sowing sedition and creating insecurity," he said.

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

US Open to Award Record \$60.1m in Prize Money

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - This year's US Open will award a record \$60.1 million in total player compensation, the US Tennis Association said on Thursday, with \$2.6 million going to each singles champion, twice the runner-up total. The prize money total tops the old mark of \$57.5 million from last year, with an emphasis on boosting payouts for players in early rounds. That means a boost to \$80,000 for each singles competitor in the main draw first round and \$121,000 in the second round.

Thief Tries to Steal Lewandowski's Watch

MADRID (Dispatches) - Barcelona striker Robert Lewandowski nearly had his €70,000 watch stolen outside the club's training ground Ciutat Esportiva on Thursday, Spanish newspaper Marca reported. The 33-year-old Polish international was on his way to evening training when a person opened the passenger door of a car and took the watch as Lewandowski was greeting fans. Police quickly arrested a suspect and Lewandowski got his watch back before participating in the practice session ahead of Sunday's LaLiga game at Real Sociedad.

Medvedev Advances While Swiatek Sinks in Cincinnati

CINCINNATI (Dispatches) - Top-ranked Daniil Medvedev advanced to the ATP and WTA Cincinnati Masters quarter-finals while women's world number one Iga Swiatek was upset by American Madison Keys.

Top seed Medvedev kept Denis Shapovalov winless against world number ones with a 7-5, 7-5 victory while Poland's Swiatek lost 6-3, 6-4 to 2019 Cincinnati champion Keys, who needed five match points to finish off the shock triumph.

Shapovalov, who lost in an hour and three-quarters, has dropped all eight career matches he has played against the elite echelon. Medvedev moved into a quarter-final against 11th seed Taylor Fritz after the American stopped number six seed Andrey Rublev 6-7 (4/7), 6-2, 7-5.

"It was a fight today, definitely not easy," said Medvedev, who clinched the top US Open seeding when Rafael Nadal lost here in the second round.

"The match was pretty tight, played at a great level. My goal was to stay in every point possible and try to put pressure on him if I had the chance." Medvedev secured late breaks in both sets as he matched his volatile Canadian opponent.

Medvedev and Fritz have never played.

"We trained together at the start of the season before the ATP Cup," Medvedev said. "He won Indian Wells, he's a Masters champion. I need to be at my best to try and beat him." Unseeded Keys was thrilled with her defeat of Swiatek, against whom she had lost two prior matches.

"I had a couple of games with a couple of match points," Keys said. "She beat me pretty badly last time so I'm happy to get the win." Swiatek never found an ace and was broken five times as she fought back in vain after standing one game from defeat.

It was the second week in a row that the Pole, who put together a 37-match win streak this season, lost in a Masters third round. She suffered the same fate in Toronto seven days earlier.

Keys plays on Friday against Wimbledon winner Elena Rybakina, who advanced to the last eight 6-2, 6-4 over Alison Riske-Amritraj.



Also ousted was Estonian second seed Anett Kontaveit, who fell to China's Zhang Shuai 2-6, 6-4, 6-4. Top-ranked American Jessica Pegula ended the run of US Open champion Emma Raducanu 7-5, 6-4, sending the Briton onto the practice courts before the August 29 start of her Grand Slam title defense.

Raducanu will head to New York with a 15-18 record since her 2021 title triumph and will drop from the top-10 after failing to reach the quarter-finals.

The teenager put a backhand into the net to give her opponent a match point, with Pegula sending over a service winner to wrap up the victory in an hour and three-quarters on her opponent's 21st unforced error. "I didn't feel amazing out there," Pegula said after reaching her seventh career quarter-final at a Masters 1000. "I've never hit with Emma, there was a lot to get used to."

"I'm happy with how I competed and stayed in it. I'm glad I handled things really well. I've been playing very consistently, no dramas, get out there and do what you've got to do. I try to do that every single week." Czech Petra Kvitova, twice a Wimbledon champion, defeated Wimbledon finalist Ons Jabeur 6-1, 4-6, 6-0. Kvitova broke six times as her fifth-ranked Tunisian opponent committed six double-faults.

Borna Coric, who upset second seed Rafael Nadal, continued his injury comeback progress by beating Roberto Bautista Agut 6-2, 6-3.

Number 152 Coric is the lowest-ranked ATP Masters 1000 quarter-finalist since 239th-ranked Ivo Karlovic at 2011 Indian Wells.

Fourth seed Stefanos Tsitsipas, semi-finalist at the last two editions, defeated Diego Schwartzman 6-3, 6-3.



LONDON (Dispatches) - Manchester United are close to signing Real Madrid midfielder Casemiro for a fee that could rise to 70 million euros (£59 million, \$71 million) according to multiple media reports.

The BBC and The Athletic reported United will pay an initial 60 million euros and make the Brazilian international among the top earners in the Premier League with a four-year deal along with a club option to extend that contract by an extra season.

United are badly in need of new recruits after a miserable start to Erik ten Hag's reign has left them bottom of the Premier League for the first time in 30 years.

A lack of new signings has been partly to blame for embarrassing defeats to Brighton and Brentford with Lisandro Martinez, Christian Eriksen and Tyrell Malacia the only additions to Ten Hag's squad so far.

Worse could still be to come for the Red Devils with Liverpool up next at Old Trafford on Monday.

Even if talks progress smoothly over the weekend, Casemiro is unlikely to be registered in time for that match.

The 30-year-old has won three La Liga titles and five Champions Leagues during nine years with the Spanish champions as he formed a formidable midfield trio with Luka Modric and Toni Kroos.

Kobe Advance in Asian Champions League

SAITAMA (Dispatches) - Andres Iniesta's Vissel Kobe shrugged off their domestic woes to reach the Asian Champions League quarter-finals with a 3-2 win over fellow Japanese side Yokohama F Marinos.

Big-spending Kobe are currently mired in the relegation zone in Japan's J-League but goals from Nanasei Iino, Daiju Sasaki and Yutaro Oda sent them through to the last eight of Asia's top club competition.

"It was a really difficult game but I think this will give us confidence," said Kobe boss Takayuki Yoshida -- the club's third manager this season.

"The players were concentrated from the start and we were able to play the way we set out to. There were some areas where we struggled but that was down to our opponent's quality and that was to be expected."

Earlier in the day, Kim Jin-gyu scored a last-gasp extra-time winner as two-time champions Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors also advanced to the quarter-finals with a 2-1 win over South Korean rivals Daegu FC.

The game kicked off the East region's knock-out round, with all matches being played in the Japanese city of Saitama and decided over one leg.

Iniesta stayed on the bench as Kobe took on J-League leaders Yokohama at Saitama Stadium, and Iino gave them the lead with only seven minutes on the clock.

Takuma Nishimura equalised for Marinos two minutes later but Sasaki put Kobe back in front from the penalty spot in the 31st minute after Yokohama defender Yuki Saneto had handled in the box.

Yokohama poured forward in the second half but Oda bagged Kobe's third goal 10 minutes from time before Anderson Lopes gave Marinos a late lifeline.

"I think we played with more spirit than they did but they had a chance to equalise right until the end," said Hotaru Yamaguchi, who stood in as Kobe captain in Iniesta's absence.

"We have to make sure we don't let up in the next game."

Yokohama manager Kevin Muscat said the defeat was "emotional" and that his team would "have some regrets".

Aubameyang Focused on £22.8m Chelsea Bid



LONDON (Dispatches) - Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang is reportedly 'focused' on a move to Chelsea, who have made a €27m to sign him from Barcelona.

The former Arsenal striker has emerged as a priority signing for Blues owner Todd Boehly this summer as he looks to bolster manager Thomas Tuchel's forward options.

Aubameyang only joined Barcelona in January, scoring 13 goals in 23 appearances having been jettisoned from the Arsenal squad by Mikel Arteta for various disciplinary problems. But Tuchel - whom the Gabon international scored a whopping 79 goals in 95 games under in their time together at Borussia Dortmund - insisted last week that he never had any problems with the striker.

Tuchel said: "I enjoyed working with him a lot, it was a pleasure. I've never had any issue."

"Some players stay your players, as you are very close. Auba is one of them players. Even when we played Arsenal, straight away it was a close bond".

The Chelsea boss didn't rule out a move for Aubameyang and reports suggest he continues to put pressure on Boehly to complete the deal.

And Spanish football journalist Gerard Romero claims, via BarcaTimes, that Chelsea have made an opening bid of €27m (£22.8m) for the 33-year-old.

It's not clear whether that bid has been rejected or not as yet, but Fabrizio Romano claims there will be 'new direct contacts on Thursday to discuss personal terms conditions'.

The transfer expert says Aubameyang is 'focused on Chelsea bid as he wants Champions League football'.

World Cup Ticket Sales Approach 2.5m

DOHA (Dispatches) - A total of 2.45 million tickets have been sold for this year's World Cup in Qatar after over half a million were snapped up in the latest sales period, organizers announced.

World football's governing body FIFA said that 520,532 were sold in the period between July 5 and August 16, with Qatar, the United States, England, Saudi Arabia, Mexico, the United Arab Emirates, France, Argentina, Brazil and Germany the leading countries of residence for those purchasing match tickets.

FIFA stated that the most popular games for ticket sales include Brazil's group-phase encounters against Cameroon and Serbia, Portugal's meeting with Uruguay, Costa Rica's clash with Germany, and Australia against Denmark. In June organizers said there had been "record-breaking" demand for tickets at a time when 1.2 million had been sold.

That figure has now more than doubled, with total ticket sales including those going to partners of FIFA, federations and for hospitality, as well as to the general public.

There are 3,010,679 tickets available altogether, with FIFA saying a "last-minute" sales period will open in the run-up to the start of the tournament at a date still to be confirmed.

More than a million visitors are expected in Qatar -- the tiny Persian Gulf state with 2.8 million inhabitants -- for the first World Cup in the Middle East.

Last week organizers announced that the competition would start a day earlier than planned, on November 20, with Qatar playing Ecuador in the first game.



Rooney Blasts Mbappe for Deliberate Messi Incident

LONDON (Dispatches) - Wayne Rooney has called for someone to remind egomaniac Kylian Mbappe who Lionel Messi is after he "deliberately" shouldered the Argentine.

Mbappe chose to renew his Paris Saint-Germain contract in May, snubbing interest from Real Madrid after flirting with the Spanish side for over a year.

Los Blancos tried to sign the World Cup winner last year and were confident in acquiring him as a free agent this summer.

It was not meant to be, however, as Mbappe opted to stay in the French capital with Messi and Neymar.

The 23-year-old's new contract is an interesting one, to say the least.

He essentially penned a three-year deal to become PSG's new general manager, as well as their striker. Mbappe clearly wants to be the main man in Paris, and this was evident from a few incidents in his first appearance of the season last Saturday.

In the fashion of a seven-year-old, the 23-year-old France forward threw a bit of a tantrum when one of his teammates did not give him the ball.

Vitinha instead passed to Messi during a counter-attack, and as a result, Mbappe wanted nothing to do with that pattern of play.

He threw his arm in the air in disgust and began to walk further away from where the ball was. It was quite literally astonishing.

