

Health Ministry Announced on Wednesday That the Number of Deaths From the Coronavirus Pandemic in Iran Increased to **143,867** With **47** More Iranians Killed by the Virus Over the Past 24 Hours

# IRAN NEWS

Iran's Army Commander General Mousavi Said That Air Defense Specialist Personnel Has Made Considerable Progress From Radar Design and Production To Missile Systems

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## Iran Needs Stronger U.S. Guarantees For Revival of JCPOA

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iran needs stronger guarantees from Washington for the revival of a 2015 nuclear deal, Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian said in Moscow on Wednesday, adding that the UN atomic watchdog should drop its "politically-motivated probes" of Tehran's nuclear work.

The comment from Amirabdollahian came as Iran reviews Washington's answer to a final text drafted by the European Union that aims to overcome an impasse in attempts to revive the 2015 nuclear pact.

"Iran is carefully reviewing the EU-drafted text... We need stronger guarantees from the other party to have a sustainable deal... The (UN) agency should close its politically-motivated probes," Amirabdollahian told reporters.

He added that Tehran is carefully reviewing the EU-drafted text for the revival of the 2015 nuclear pact, as reported by Reuters. "We need stronger guarantees from the other party to have a sustainable deal," Amirabdollahian added. "The (U.N.) agency should close its politically-motivated probes." *See Page 7*

## Tehran Reacts to CENTCOM Commander Remarks

TEHRAN (MNA) - (MNA) - An Iranian military source reacted to the CENTCOM commander's remarks on IRGC action, saying that the illegal presence of the U.S. military forces in the Persian Gulf has always caused insecurity.

The illegal presence of the U.S. military forces in the Persian Gulf has always caused insecurity, and this process has recently created new problems for safe shipping in the region by using unmanned vessels, the military source said.

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) has seized an American sea drone in the Persian Gulf and tried to tow it away, only releasing the unmanned vessel when a US Navy warship and helicopter approached, U.S. officials have said.

The Commander of the terrorist Central Command General Michael E. Kurilla called the IRGC's action in controlling the American unmanned vessel in the Persian Gulf illegal and destabilizing.

"The professionalism and competence of the crew of the USS Thunderbolt prevented Iran from this illegal action. This incident once again demonstrates Iran's continued destabilizing, illegal, and unprofessional activity in the Middle East," he claimed in a statement. *See Page 7*

## Iran Managed to Build Over 1,000 IR-6 Centrifuges in 1 Year



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami says the country managed to build more than 1,000 new-generation IR-6 centrifuges within a single year.

"Compared to the restrictions that had been created for us in the negotiations and in the JCPOA, and while they imagined we would be having two middle cascades of 20 to 30 IR-6 centrifuges from year eight, we managed to go past 1,000 devices within a year and advanced well beyond what they imagined," he told ISNA in an interview published on Wednesday.

He was using an acronym for the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the official name of the 2015 Iran nuclear deal.

About keeping the IR-6 centrifuges in the event of a return to the JCPOA, especially since Iran is way ahead of the JCPOA in that regard, he said, "For us, what matters is the enrichment process and its quantitative targeting... that it takes place for research reactors and for power and for the... targets that have been set in the radiation and accelerator processes."

IR-6 centrifuges, Iran's most advanced model, can enrich uranium to at least 60% purity.

He further elaborated on the AEOI's performance over the past year, saying Iran's nuclear authority had on agenda an increase in the uranium enrichment capacity using efficient IR-6 centrifuges as well as the purity level.

"We managed to enforce certain reforms in the processes related to enrichment and to prepare the use of enriched material for practical purposes other than producing fuel or stockpiling, like the 20-percent enrichment, which is used for the Tehran reactor fuel," he said.

"But completing, continuing, and producing the 60-percent target, which few countries in the world have done, was advanced research work to enable us to effectively use targets to produce radiopharmaceuticals."

Eslami warned that there would be no "re-implementation day" for the 2015 nuclear deal, despite the diplomatic efforts being made to restore the multilateral accord, if the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) fails to drop its baseless claims against Tehran's nuclear work.

He said the IAEA's demands from Iran had no basis under the Safeguards agreement between the two sides and were part of the so-called possible military dimension (PMD) dossier, which had been closed under the 2015 nuclear agreement. *See Page 7*

## ViewPoint No More One-Sided Concession

By: Hamid Reza Naghashian

For years the Islamic Republic of Iran has tried to give some voluntary and one-sided concessions to the International Atomic Energy Agency in order to prove its good-will and sincere cooperation with this UN body but unfortunately the body has been emboldened to ask more from Tehran while closes its eyes on some other countries.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has always said that it will cooperate with the IAEA based on its obligations and even it gave some concessions during the JCPOA agreement in 2015 and let the body for more monitoring of Iran's nuclear activities but it seems the IAEA now thinks that Iran should continue giving concessions for more inspections while the West does not observe its obligations regarding the JCPOA agreement

On Tuesday, the spokesman for the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) described the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) demands as "excessive," saying they cannot be implemented due to the sanctions in place against the Islamic Republic.

"We consider the IAEA's demands excessive, because their implementation is impossible due to sanctions," Behrouz Kamalvandi said.

Kamalvandi elaborated on the current scope of Iran-IAEA ties, saying Tehran's cooperation with the UN nuclear watchdog is based on the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement (CSA), which, he added, revolves around the agency's inspection of nuclear materials.

Aside from the CSA, he added, countries adhering to the Additional Protocol, have undertaken to give the IAEA access for inspection of their uranium enrichment equipment as well.

The official said Iran used to provide the UN nuclear watchdog with even broader access for inspection as part of the 2015 nuclear deal, which is currently in trouble due to Washington's unilateral exit.

Iran, he said, decided to restrict the scope of its cooperation with the IAEA to the SCA under a law approved by the Iranian Parliament in late 2020, entitled "The Strategic Action Plan to Counter Sanctions."

Kamalvandi added, however, that "if the West lifts the sanctions and lives up to its own commitments under the nuclear deal, Iran will reciprocate." *See Page 7*

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## Gov'ts Urged to Stop Exempting Terrorists From Punishment

TEHRAN (IRNA) - The office of the vice-president of the Iranian Judiciary for International Affairs has issued a statement on the occasion of Counter-Terrorism Day in Iran, calling on all governments to stop exempting terrorists throughout the globe.

Kazem Gharibabadi is the Vice-President of the Judiciary for International Affairs and the Secretary-General of the High Council for Human Rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The office warned that following more than seven decades of ratification of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the world public are being affected by extremism, hatred, and violence.

If once world wars were the main reason behind deaths of millions of human beings throughout the world, nowadays it has been replaced by terrorism, which causes deaths of thousands of innocent people, the statement added.

The malicious phenomenon of terrorism as the instrumental use of the phenomenon by certain states has caused deaths of innocent people in different places around the world every day, it warned, noting that terrorism has never been in a unified framework, but it has showcased new appearances for instance by the use of drones in terrorism, bioterrorism, and cyber-terrorism.

The classification of terrorism into good and bad sorts is a kind of misuse of the phenomenon to distort rival's mindsets, whitewash terrorism, and grant exemption to terrorists, while their crimes will never be subject to expiration based on international criminal law, the statement read.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is considered the main victim of terrorism in the world, it mentioned, arguing that the assassination of more than 17k innocent people within four decades, as well as the assassination of Iranian scientists and important figures, in particular Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani, are among the blatant instances of terrorism engineering against Iran.

Nowadays, Western countries especially the US have turned into a safe-haven hideout for terrorist groups such as the MEK and these governments provide the terrorists with political, security, information, technical, financial, and media support, the statement added. *See Page 7*

## Self-Control Shores Up Administrative Efficacy

TEHRAN (IP) - President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi says adherence to ethical codes is effective in decreasing administrative violations.

Raisi said at the Shahid Rajai Festival that the more the ethical and professional codes were observed in the country's offices, the more effective will be the reduction of administrative violations and the more increase administrative efficiency. He added that in Iran's administrative system, responsibility was defined in four areas; responsibility to Allah (God), the public, the client, and the administrative hierarchy. He then stressed a self-control strategy as a way to increase the productivity of the staff in the administrative offices across the country.

President Raisi referred to Imam Ali's (AS) Nahjul Balaghah teachings and said that 'trust' and 'control' were key to the administrative system of the country.

By trust, he meant that the staff working in the system must be selected from among the most trusted people, and by control, he meant that the selected people must always be supervised.

The president said that the most efficient administrative system was the one in which the staff practiced self-control that is, they must adhere to observing the law and ethical codes and be committed to responding to clients appropriately.

He made the remarks on Wednesday at the Shahid Rajai Festival, where a number of the selected persons at the administrative event were appreciated.

# Iranian Borders With Iraq Reopened

TEHRAN (IP) - With the ease of the unrest in Iraq made by the proponents of the Sadr Faction, the Iranian land border terminals were reopened to Iraq.

Issuing a statement, the Leader of the Sadrist movement, Muqtada al-Sadr, announced his withdrawal from the political arena in Iraq on Monday, which was followed by the Sadrists' pouring into the streets and creating unrest.

Then, in a televised speech on Tuesday, the leader of the Sadrist movement directed the movement to withdraw from the parliament within one hour.

## President Urges His Executive Bodies to Address Leader's Concerns

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

**TEHRAN - Referring to the concerns of the Supreme Leader of the Revolution regarding the importance of reducing inflation, President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi emphasized, "All executive bodies and economic institutions are obliged to use all their might to control their expenses and implement the approved programs to reduce the rate of inflation as much as possible, especially in goods that are related to people's livelihood".**

The Cabinet's Economic Coordination Board convened on Tuesday night under the chairmanship of President Raisi, during which a report was presented about the declining trend of monthly inflation in the country, especially the control of food price growth in August.

According to this report, the August inflation rate was announced at 2%, which has declined significantly compared to the previous months.

In this meeting, referring to the concerns of the Supreme Leader of the Revolution regarding the importance of reducing inflation, the President emphasized, "All executive bodies and economic institutions are obliged to use all their might to control their expenses and implement the approved programmes to reduce the rate of inflation as much as possible, especially in goods that are related to people's livelihood".



In this meeting, the Ministry of Industry, Mines and Trade also presented a report on the results of its actions in the field of production and supply of various types of automobile inside the country.

According to this report, due to the efforts of domestic industrialists, the amount of automobile supply without defective parts has increased in the last five months compared to the same period last year, and the country's automobile industry has been able to complete the production chain by relying on domestic power and capacities.

After this report, the automobile industries of the country were obliged to increase their production, by innovating and improving technology and by taking help from knowledge-based industries and units, to double their efforts to improve the quality of domestically produced cars.

## France Denies Iran National Golf Team Visas

PARIS (Dispatches) - France had refused to grant visas to the players of Iran national golf team for the 2022 international competitions.

The Iranian men's team was invited by the International Golf Federation to take part in the Eisenhower Trophy 2022 scheduled to kick off on Wednesday, August 31, in Paris, but the French government locked the Iranians out of the tournament.

Although Iran's golf federation had requested for the visas and submitted the required documents to the French Embassy in the Iranian capital Tehran in time, France did not provide any explanations for the decision.

The 'hostile attitude' towards Iranian athletes by some Western countries, specifically by the US, Canada and Britain, is not unprecedented.

In July, Iranian track and field athletes failed to attend the World Championships after the United States refused to issue visas for them.

The Iranian government also condemned the United States failure to issue visas for some members of the Iranian national wrestling team in February.

Iran has slammed the move and says it will follow the issue through international channels.

## Outgoing French Envoy To Iran Bids Farewell



TEHRAN (IRNA) - Outgoing Ambassador of France to Iran Philippe Thiebaud met Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian at the ministry to bid him farewell.

Monsieur Thiebaud had on April 14, 2019 presented a copy of his credentials to the foreign minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran at the time as the ambassador of the Republic of France.

## Iran, Lebanon Confer on Developing Educational Cooperation

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iran's envoy to Lebanon Mojtaba Amani and Lebanese Minister of Education Abbas Salim al-Halabi discussed developing bilateral, especially educational, cooperation.

According to Alahednews, the two sides in this meeting, exchanged views on bilateral relations, especially in the field of education.

Accordingly, the Iranian ambassador and the Lebanese minister of education also discussed the latest developments of the P4+1 and Iran nuclear talks, as well as the process of negotiations between Iran and Saudi Arabia.



## Iran Hails Iraqis' Tactfulness

TEHRAN (PressTV) - As the political turmoil in Iraq subsides, Iran says it wants the neighboring Arab country to be stable and powerful, lauding the wisdom shown by all sides in overcoming the "great sedition."

Iranian Foreign Ministry said in a statement released on Wednesday morning that the Islamic Republic welcomes the return of peace to Iraq.

"Iran has always wanted a stable, secure, and powerful Iraq that plays a constructive role in regional developments and has never withheld its support for Iraq's political and legal processes and institutions," the statement read.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran, expressing its satisfaction with the return of peace to Iraq while asking for [divine] mercy for the dead and wishing the injured in the recent incidents [good] health, appreciates the patience, wisdom, and tactfulness of the government and people of Iraq and all legal institutions of the country in overcoming this great sedition," it added.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry also said the only way Iraq can get out of the current crisis is through dialog, protection of citizens' rights, and adherence to the constitution and political processes.

Iraqi supporters of prominent Shia cleric Muqtada al-Sadr withdrew on Tuesday from Baghdad's high-security Green Zone after he demanded an end to two days of unrest that left 30 dead and hundreds wounded.

Sadr had given his followers "60 minutes" to withdraw after which he would "disavow" those who remained.

"I apologize to the Iraqi people, the only ones affected by the events," he said in a speech from his base in the holy city of Najaf. "Shame on this revolution... Regardless of who was the initiator, this revolution, as long as it is marred by violence, is not a revolution."

In its Wednesday statement, the Iranian Foreign Ministry also said all Iraqi political groups and movements should act responsibly and cooperate in the political process with the aim of forming a new government.

It said the Islamic Republic asks Iraqi patriots to pursue their demands within the Arab country's laws and through legal channels to "block the way for any exploitation by Iraq's ill-wishers."

The Islamic Republic of Iran is certain that the Republic of Iraq is capable of passing through the difficult situation quickly, the statement said.

## Pakistan Keen on Cooperation With Iran on Aerospace, Drone Field

TEHRAN (MNA) - Stating that Iran has made great progress in aerospace, especially in the field of drones, the Chief of Air Staff of the Pakistan Air Force said that his country is interested in cooperation with Iran in these fields.

Zaheer Ahmad Babar Sidhu, Chief of Air Staff of the Pakistan Air Force made the remarks in a meeting with the Chief Commander of the Iranian Army Major General Abdolrahim Mousavi.

"In the current situation where we are witnessing complex and emerging battles, we need the armed forces of the two countries, especially the Air Force of Iran and Pakistan, to be closer to each other," he said, announcing the readiness of Pakistan in increasing military cooperation with Iran.



"In recent years, the Islamic Republic of Iran has made great progress in the field of aerospace, indigenizing airplanes, and especially in the field of drones, and we would like to cooperate with the Iranian Armed Forces in these fields," the Pakistani commander added.

General Mousavi, for his part, pointed to the holding of joint naval exercises between Iran and Pakistan, saying that the two countries can also hold a joint air exercise.

He stressed that the air force has always had a decisive role in war and deterrence, adding that in recent years, the impact of the air force and aerospace in the battle scene has increased, especially in the field of drones.

## Envoy Hopes Iran-Turkmenistan Trade Balance Returns to \$5.5b

MASHHAD (IRNA) - Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Iran said in peak of anti-Iran sanctions Tehran-Ashgabat trade volume reached 5.5 billion dollars annually, but it is currently lower.

Ambassador Ahmed Kurbanov said at the Governorate of Khorasan-e Razavi in a meeting with Governor General Ya'qoub-Ali Nazari that after the collapse of the former Soviet Union and Turkmenistan's independence they realized that their country is a large producer of natural cotton, but they have no industries to turn it into threads of textile.

He said that the other point was that Turkmenistan had only that single product, and therefore started its economy from scratch, and Iran, and especially Khorasan-e Razavi played a great role in that country's economy.

The governor of Khorasan-e Razavi, too, said in the meeting that neighbors have great rights and Iran and Turkmenistan, too, due to their shared religions, and the glorious civilization of Grand Khorasan have much stronger relations.

Nazari said that Iran was among the first countries that recognized Turkmenistan's independence 31 years ago and congratulated it.

He said that the expansion of relations among neighboring countries can be reached in peace and stability, which fortunately prevails along the two countries' shared borders, adding that the province has mining, agricultural and foodstuff industries, at the service of Iran's good neighbor, Turkmenistan.



## Realization of Palestinians' Rights Gauge of Justice Orientation



TEHRAN (IRNA) - The issue of Palestine is considered as the gauge of stability and justice orientation of the world order, an Iranian diplomat said.

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Ali Bagheri Kani made the remarks in a meeting with the Nigeria Parliamentary Friendship Group in Tehran on Wednesday.

Bagheri Kani emphasized that as long as the rights of the Palestinian people are not met, security and justice would be merely a kind of hallucination.

He stressed the role of parliaments in determining the agendas of their governments, noting that members of parliaments especially at the Islamic states level should support the Palestinian nation and promote standing against occupation and incursion by the Zionist regime as part of their everyday agenda in mutual and multilateral cooperation.

Referring to the four-decade-long hostility of the US hostile to the Iranian nation, he noted that the Iranians' progressing movement has not been paused even for a minute and that the Islamic Republic has presented a modern style of national, regional, and international living standard, showcasing national progress, regional cooperation, and international activism, along with resistance against bullying and pressure.

The Iranian politician also urged the Nigerian parliamentary delegation to visit various achievements of the Islamic Republic of Iran in industrial, medical, scientific, technological, and defensive fields.

Software achievements are more important than precious hardware successes within the four decades because the Islamic Republic of Iran has been successful in turning threats into opportunities relying on the Iranian nation's support so much that the enemies of the country are focused on getting in the way of the progress, he noted.

For his part, Head of Nigeria Parliamentary Friendship Group Salisu Iro Isansi expressed satisfaction with the trip to Iran, hoping that mutual and multilateral collaborations in different political and economic arenas will expand in line with the interests of both Iran and Nigeria.

The lawmaker also pointed to last week's visit by the Nigerian oil minister to Tehran and the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the two countries, describing it as a sign of determination among Iranian and Nigerian authorities to improve bilateral ties in different sectors.



PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	13:04
■ Evening (Maghreb)	19:50
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	05:10
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:37

27. They speak not before He speaks, and they act (in all things) by His Command.  
28. He knows what is before them, and what is behind them, and they offer no intercession except for those who are acceptable, and they stand in awe and reverence of His (Glory).

Surah 21. The Prophets (27 - 28)

# Tehran, Hanoi Call for Preferential Trade Agreement

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

**TEHRAN -** Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) Alireza Peyman-Pak and Vietnam's Ambassador to Tehran Luong Quoc Huy in a meeting on Tuesday stressed the need to begin official negotiations for signing a preferential trade agreement (PTA) between the two countries, the TPO portal reported.

"An important measure for increasing trade between the two countries is to start negotiations for signing a preferential trade agreement; such an agreement is underway with Indonesia and we hope that with the necessary follow-ups, it will also be signed and implemented between Iran and Vietnam," Peyman-Pak said at the meeting.

The TPO head pointed out that his meeting with Luong Quoc Huy could be a prelude to expanding cooperation between Iran and Vietnam, saying: "The value of trade between the two countries is currently \$120 million, which is not an acceptable figure and should be increased in the future with the development of cooperation."

Pointing out that the low volume of trade between the two sides has various reasons that should be identified and resolved, the official added: "Currently, the businessmen of the two countries do not have sufficient knowledge of each other's capacities and effective measures and planning should be done in this regard so that we can improve the space for the development of trade between the two sides."

The TPO head emphasized that the trade between the two countries should increase at least to two billion dollars and continued: "The first step in this direction is to hold a joint economic committee meeting to activate previously reached agreements because four years have passed since the last meeting of the two countries' Joint Economic Committee was held."

It is necessary to hold coordination meetings in this regard as soon as possible, Peyman-Pak stressed.



He pointed to exchanging trade delegations between the two countries as the second step toward improving mutual trade relations and said: "If these exchanges are planned and carried out in a coherent and logical manner, favorable trade agreements will be concluded between the parties."

Referring to the fact that delegations can be exchanged concurrently with holding various exhibitions in both countries, Peyman-Pak emphasized that an agreement should be signed with corresponding entities in Vietnam to manage such affairs.

The head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization further pointed to the establishment of a barter trade mechanism between the two countries as another important measure that could be taken for the development and expansion of mutual commercial cooperation, saying: "There are products in both countries that are needed by the other side, and with a barter trade mechanism, such products can be exchanged easily, leading to more exports for both sides."

Further in the talks, Luong Quoc Huy, in his turn, welcomed the ideas and suggestions offered by Peyman-Pak and emphasized that the implementation of the mentioned agreements would play a direct role in the development of economic cooperation between the two countries.

He went on to point out that in the first seven months of 2022 and after the end of the Covid-19 pandemic, all business and production fields of Vietnam have returned to normal operation, adding: "The country's economic situation has stabilized and inflation is under control; Currently, Vietnam's trade balance with other countries stands at \$431 billion and the country has a great potential to have economic cooperation with Iran as well."

The ambassador mentioned Iran as Vietnam's biggest trade partner in West, South East, and East Asia and considered the Islamic Republic as a gateway for the export of Vietnamese products to Europe.

## IDRO Ready to Help Renovation of East Azarbaijan Industries



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

**TEHRAN -** Deputy Industry, Mine and Trade Minister and Head of Industrial Development and Renovation Organization (IDRO) Mr. Ali Nabavi in meeting with Governor General of East Azarbaijan Province emphasized necessity for maximum interaction of provincial bodies with national institutions for developing industrial investment and renovation in the industries of this province.

Nabavi, who was in East Azarbaijan Province to visit industrial projects on the occasion of the government week, in meeting with Mr. Abedin Khorram pointed to the empowering approach of IDRO and said that this organization welcomes participation of non-government sector in the industrial projects and announced readiness of the organization for sharing its accumulated knowledge and experiences in the participation processes with private sector for empowerment and legal, easing and developmental supports.

He also pointed to the emphasis of the 13th government and the ministry of industry, mine and trade on the necessity of reviving, renovating and reconstruction of national industries and said that preparing reconstruction and renovation model based on removing and reforming existing problems in the industries and creating structures for offering specialized services and support to those who benefit it are of the major axes in the reconstruction and renovation model of industries.

Then in the meeting some other issues like providing working capital required by the Machine Sazi Tabriz Company and Machine Sazi Tabriz Foundry Company were discussed.

According to Mr. Nabavi, last year and after return of Machine Sazi Tabriz Company and Machine Sazi Tabriz Foundry Company to IDRO they enjoyed 33% and 26% growth in product comparing to the previous years, respectively.

Head of IDRO then visited Machine Sazi Tabriz and Machine Sazi Tabriz Foundry Companies and talked with their managers on the problems of these two industrial units.

In the meeting, Nabavi pointed to the developmental nature and responsibility of IDRO and expressed hope these two companies would become more successful in solving problems in the near future through more synergy.

These two companies which had been privatized under the Article 44 of the Constitutions were returned to IDRO two years ago because of their problems.

## Gov't Cuts Monthly Gasoline Quotas to Fight Smuggling

**TEHRAN (PressTV) -** Oil Ministry's fuel department (NIORDC) has slashed monthly gasoline quotas given to motorists in the country as it struggles to prevent fuel smuggling across the borders.

NIORDC Chief Jalil Salari said that a monthly quota of 250 liters of gasoline allocated to drivers at a price of 30,000 rials (\$0.1) per liter had been reduced to 150 liters taking effect in the calendar month that started on August 22.

Salari said there will be no change to a heavily subsidized quota system that allocates 60 liters of gasoline per month to each vehicle owner at a price of 15,000 rials.

The deputy Iranian oil minister said that the decision to cut the monthly quotas had been adopted to prevent smuggling of gasoline to neighboring countries where fuel prices are nearly 10 times higher than the rates charged in Iran.

He said partial restrictions on fuel delivery in border towns were impossible to implement because of the integrated nature of the fuel quota system in Iran. Salari said drivers will still have access to extra fuel supplies at gas stations if they need more than 210 liters per month.

"Each private vehicle can travel 2,100 kilometer per month with the 210 liters it is allocated," the official was quoted as saying by the semi-official Fars news agency.

Iran is a net exporter of gasoline and diesel but is has been grappling with a rising domestic demand for motor fuels in recent years. Oil Ministry figures suggest demand for gasoline in Iran will soon exceed a domestic production capacity of nearly 105 million liters per day.

That comes as fuel smuggling has become a double burden for Iran as the country has one of the cheapest fuel rates in the world.

## Loading, Unloading of Goods in Ports up 3% in 5 Months

**TEHRAN (MNA) -** Loading and unloading of goods in the ports of Iran increased three percent in the first five months of the present Iranian calendar year (March 21-August 22), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, the country's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) announced.

As the PMO reported, 62,865,288 tons of commodities were loaded and unloaded in the ports during the five-month period. The five-month loading and unloading of oil products stood at 23,289,283 tons, with a four percent growth, and that of the non-oil goods stood at 39,576,005 tons, with a three percent rise year on year.

During the said period, loading and unloading operations in the container sector reached 977,582 TEUs, which was 13 percent more than the 868,743 TEUs in the first five months of the past year.

As previously announced by the PMO, the loading and unloading of goods in the ports of the country increased seven percent in the first quarter of the current Iranian year (March 21-June 21), as compared to the same period of time in the past year.

The PMO reported that 51,661,306 tons of commodities were loaded and unloaded in the ports during the three-month period. Based on the data previously released by Transport and Urban Development Ministry, the loading and unloading of goods in the ports of Iran rose 17 percent during the previous Iranian calendar year 1400 (ended on March 20), as compared to the preceding year.

## Bauxite Reserves Exceed 40m Tons

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

**TEHRAN -** The CEO of Iran Alumina Company says due to the exploration program of the complex in the past 6 years, the amount of bauxite reserves has increased from some 7m tons to 40m tons.

Speaking in a presser, Mr. Tooraj Zare said that Tash mine has no legal or environmental problem and the related organizations has not confirmed pollution because of this mine. He added through explorations conducted by Iran Alumina Complex, there has been some one million tons of extraction.

He reiterated that researchers of universities of Shiraz and Shahroud have conducted studies on the issue of environmental pollution of Tash mine and all tests have shown no environmental pollution. He reiterated that the issue of pollution has not been even confirmed by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources General Department. He admitted that due to some inexpert and vulgar remarks, the mine has been closed and expressed hope that officials would abide by law and issue license for exploitation.

Zare went on to say that currently the country is forced to import bauxite and suffer



flight of forex due to the low quality of bauxite mines. He added that the company has taken action in indigenizing required parts and equipment like the project of special hydrates through cooperation with 52 knowledge-based companies and the research team of this company.

He stated that this project has progressed by 82% and will come into operation by the yearend, reiterating that this product is produced only in four countries. He added that the mentioned project started on a semi-industrial scale. He noted that this product has value added four times more than alumina. He further said that according to the schedule, some 3500 tons will be produced and it will be inaugurated by Ten-Day Dawn festivities.

He also pointed to the project for construction of 160-megawatt power plant with financial support of IMIDRO in the second half of the year, adding that the amount of investment is 2,000b tomans.

Zare then pointed to the inauguration of the sodium and evaporation unit in presence of North Khorasan Governor General and said that this project was implanted in two years with employing domestic knowhow and parts and the period of exploiting the project is 20 years.

## Iran, Among Biggest Animal Probiotics Producer Globally

**TEHRAN (IP) -** The use of probiotics in the livestock, poultry, and aquatic industry has been culturized as supplements with good economic value.

Iran is proud to have a complete basket of animal probiotics worldwide, with 14 probiotic products for animals. Zist Darman Mahan is an Iranian knowledge-based company that produces probiotic supplements for livestock, poultry and aquatic animals, which was established in 2014.

Probiotics are microorganisms that have health-giving effects on the body. The use of probiotics in humans is due to its health-giving effects, but in animals, it also has economic benefits. Due to the ban on the use of antibiotics in the European Union, the use of probiotics has expanded since 2000 in the livestock, poultry, and aquatic industry.

## IRISL to Save \$60m Through Home-Made Vessels

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

**TEHRAN -** The Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines Group (IRISL) in line with macro policies of government regarding attention to the domestic producers and manufacturers has signed 6 MoUs with Iranian manufacturers for building containers.

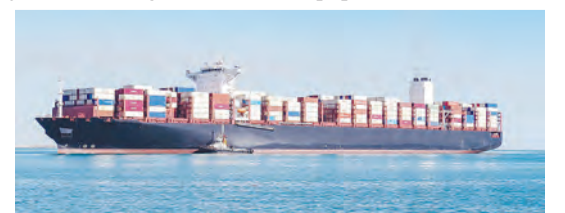
On the occasion of the Government Week, IRISL published some of major achievements and activities of the group and signing 6 MoUs with domestic manufacturers for building containers is one of them.

The report shows that the group in line with maximum use of capacities of the domestic producers has signed contract with one of the domestic producers for production of 1000-TEU containers which has been completed and joined the container transportation network.

The IRISL is determined to cut dependence of foreigners for providing containers and it has attained considerable success.

The report shows that the group has ordered to the domestic manufacturers for manufacture of four vessels worth of \$60m which are two 3500-ton vessels and two ro-ro ships.

So manufacture of those vessels will save the country 460m. The group also has strategy for creating 5,000 indirect jobs with using Iranian-made equipment in its fleet.



## Solomon Islands to Ban Navy Ships From Ports

SYDNEY (Dispatches) - The Solomon Islands has suspended entry into its waters for foreign navy ships pending adoption of a new process for approval of port visits, the prime minister's office said, in a bid to better police its exclusive economic zones.

The suspension of entry followed incidents last week when a U.S. Coast Guard vessel, the Oliver Henry, and a Royal Navy vessel, HMS Spey, were unable to make port calls because the government did not respond to requests to refuel and provision. "We have requested our partners to give us time to review, and put in place our new processes, before sending further requests for military vessels to enter the country," Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare said in a statement.



## Lula's Advantage Over Bolsonaro Unchanged for Oct. Election

SAO PAULO (Dispatches) - Brazil's Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva maintains a 12-percentage-point lead over far-right incumbent President Jair Bolsonaro ahead of the October election, according to a new poll published.

The survey by IPEC, formerly known as IBOPE, showed Lula with 44 per cent of voter support against 32 per cent for Bolsonaro in the first round of the election schedule for October 2, the same percentage of a poll from two weeks ago.

In an expected second round run-off, Lula's lead shrank to 13 percentage points, from 16 two weeks ago. The former leftist president had 50 per cent of voter support, while Bolsonaro's increased to 37 per cent.



## Zelenskiy Tells Russians to Run for Their Lives From Ukraine Offensive



MYKOLAIV (Dispatches) - Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy has urged Russian soldiers to flee for their lives after his forces launched an offensive to retake southern Ukraine, but Moscow said it had repulsed the attack and inflicted heavy losses on Kyiv's troops.

Ukraine said on Monday its ground forces had gone on the offensive in the south for the first time after a long period of striking Russian supply lines, in particular bridges across the strategically important Dnipro River, and ammunition dumps.

"If they want to survive, it's time for the Russian military to run away. Go home," Zelenskiy said in a late night address. "Ukraine is taking back its own (land)," he said, adding that he would not disclose Kyiv's battle plans.

In response, Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said on Tuesday that Russia was methodically pressing on with its plans in Ukraine, adding: "All of our goals will be reached."

The Ukrainian offensive comes after weeks of relative stalemate in a war that has killed thousands, displaced millions, destroyed cities and fuelled a global energy and food crisis amid unprecedented Western economic sanctions on Russia.

Russia captured swathes of southern Ukraine near the Black Sea coast in the early weeks of the war, including in the Kherson region which lies north of the Russian-annexed Crimean peninsula.

Ukraine, now armed with sophisticated Western-supplied weapons, sees retaking the region as crucial to prevent Russian attempts to seize more territory further to the west that could eventually cut off its access to the Black Sea.

Oleksiy Arestovych, a senior Ukrainian presidential adviser, said Russian defenses in the Kherson region had been "broken through in a few hours". It was unclear which line of Russian defense, of which there are many, he was referring to.

Arestovych also said Ukrainian forces were shelling ferries that Russia was using to supply its forces on the west bank of the Dnipro.

Natalia Humeniuk, a Ukrainian military spokesperson, told a briefing on Tuesday that Kyiv could destroy any pontoon bridge or ferry crossing across the river that Russia tried to build.

"The whole area where such a crossing can be built is under our fire control and (any new structure) will be hit," she said.

Britain, a close ally of Ukraine, said on Tuesday that Kyiv had stepped up its artillery barrage across the entire southern front, but said it was not yet possible to confirm the extent of Ukrainian territorial advances.

Vitaly Kim, governor of the Mykolaiv region, told Ukrainian TV: "Heavy fighting is going on. Our military is working around the clock. Liberation of the Kherson region is coming soon."

Unverified reports, images and footage on social media suggested that Ukrainian forces may have taken back some villages and destroyed some Russian targets in the south.

Russia's RIA news agency reported that the Russian-controlled town of Nova Kakhovka had been left without water or power after a Ukrainian missile strike.

However, Russia's defense ministry said the Ukrainian offensive had been thwarted.

It said Ukrainian forces, after attempting to go on the offensive in three different directions in the southern Mykolaiv and Kherson regions, had lost over 1,200 military personnel as well as 139 tanks, armored vehicles and trucks.

Russia's defensive actions had resulted in a rout of Ukrainian forces, it added, saying air defense units had also shot down dozens of missiles near Kherson.

Reuters could not verify the battlefield reports.

## Taiwan Shoots At Chinese Drone

PENGHU (Dispatches) - Taiwan fired warning shots at a Chinese drone which buzzed an offshore islet shortly after President Tsai Ing-wen said she had ordered Taiwan's military to take "strong countermeasures" against what she termed Chinese provocations.

It was the first time warning shots have been fired in such an incident amid a period of heightened tension between China and Taiwan, which Beijing views as its own territory. Taiwan strongly disputes China's sovereignty claims.

The drone headed back to China after the shots were fired, a military spokesman said.

Taiwan has complained of Chinese drones repeatedly flying very close to small groups of islands it controls near China's coast, most recently by the Kinmen islands, as part of military drills by Beijing.

China has carried out the exercises around the island after a visit by U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi this month.

Kinmen defence command spokesman Chang Jung-shun said the live rounds were fired just before 6 p.m. (1000 GMT) at the drone which had approached Erdan islet, with flares being used previously. The drone then flew off back to China, he said.

## EU to Tighten Visa Rules for Russians

PRAGUE (Dispatches) - European Union foreign ministers are likely to agree to suspend a visa facilitation agreement with Moscow and make Russians wait longer and pay more for their visas, diplomats said, while the bloc remained split over an outright EU travel ban.

Germany and France warned it would be counter-productive to ban ordinary Russians, a move advocated by Kyiv in response to Russia's invasion and backed by some EU members, and the agreement's suspension was a compromise that could be reached at the ministers' two-day meeting in Prague.

"Suspension of the facilitation agreement is almost certain," one senior European Union diplomat said.

German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock argued in favor of not going further. "It is crucial not to punish dissidents who are trying to leave Russia", she said.

In their joint memo, France and Germany said: "We caution against far-reaching restrictions on our visa policy, in order to prevent feeding the Russian narrative and trigger unintended rallying-around the flag effects and/or estranging future generations."

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba swiftly rejected the argument that travelling to the West could change the Russians' minds, saying Moscow fought a brief war with Georgia and annexed Crimea since securing easier EU visas in 2007.

"Travel to the EU has had zero transformative effect on Russia," he said. "To transform Russia, shut the door on Russian tourists."

Eastern and Nordic countries strongly back a tourist visa ban and some said they could go for a regional one if there was no agreement at EU level.

"If all 27 EU countries fail to reach an agreement, a regional solution for the countries most affected by the flow of Russian tourists may be sought in the future," said Lithuanian Foreign Minister Gabrielius Landsbergis.



## Tigray Rebels Vow to Pursue Military Advance in Northern Ethiopia

ADDIS ABABA (Dispatches) - Tigrayan rebels said they intended to advance further into neighboring regions of northern Ethiopia but were still open to peace talks after fighting erupted last week and put paid to a five-month-long truce.

The government of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) have each blamed the other for unleashing the renewed hostilities in areas bordering the southeastern tip of Tigray.

"We are fighting a defensive war," TPLF spokesman Getachew Reda said at a press conference broadcast online by the local Tigray TV channel, adding: "We will remain open for any negotiations."

Residents as well as diplomatic and humanitarian sources have said that in recent days TPLF fighters have pushed about 50 kilometers (30 miles) south from Tigray into Amhara as well as to the southeast into Afar, sending many people fleeing.

The fresh combat has shattered a truce announced in late March and cast a shadow over international efforts to try to end the nearly 22-month conflict in the north of Africa's second most populous country.

Access to northern Ethiopia is severely restricted and it is not possible to independently verify the situation on the ground or the claims by the warring sides.

"We have defended our positions and we are now launching a counter-offensive," Getachew said.

"Abiy keeps making miscalculation after miscalculation, he keeps sending reinforcements and we'll continue to neutralize (them) and that will take us probably deeper and deeper into Amhara region."

Abiy's government announced Saturday that federal forces had pulled back from the town of Kobo to avoid "mass casualties".

Getachew said Tuesday a significant part of the North Wollo zone in Amhara was in rebel hands although the TPLF did not want to control the area.

He also accused the Abiy government of hoodwinking the international community into believing it was "serious about peace" and said the rebels had no option but to protect their "safety and security".

In response, the Government Communication Service said: "The federal government is still committed to the peaceful resolution to the conflict that was once again initiated by the TPLF terrorist group."

A local NGO active in Afar, the APDA, said on Twitter it had counted about 18,000 people displaced by the recent fighting in the region, mainly women and children, and that roads in one area were "clogged with fleeing people".



## World Hails Turkey For Peace Efforts

ANKARA (Dispatches) - The world is appreciating the diplomatic efforts of Turkey for reinstating peace and stability in the region, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has said, as the nation celebrated the 100th anniversary of the Dumlupınar Victory that paved the way for the foundation of the Republic of Turkey in 1923.

"Our country, which has outstandingly dealt with the global crisis of the pandemic, is successfully managing crises in its region and making diplomatic moves, which are praised by the entire world, for restoring peace and stability," Erdoğan wrote in the memorial book of Anıtkabir, the mausoleum of modern Turkey's founder Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, as part of the official ceremony marking Victory Day on Aug. 30.

Erdoğan, cabinet members, leaders of the political parties, senior public servants and military officials paid a tribute to Atatürk as the president laid a wreath at the mausoleum. "Neither the plots by the invaders nor the attacks by bloodthirsty terrorist organizations will be able to prevent the building of a growing and strengthening Turkey, which is the hope of the oppressed as well as its own citizens with high self-esteem," he wrote in the book.

Describing Aug. 30 as one of the greatest milestones in Turkey's glorious history, Erdoğan said: "We remember with grace you, your brothers-in-arms, the distinguished members of our Grand National Assembly, and our gallant martyrs. Inspired by our brave veterans, we continue to advance the Republic of Turkey in line with the goals you set for us and to strengthen it in every field, economy, defense and diplomacy in particular."

He later visited the State Cemetery, where the tombs of the senior commanders and military personnel who had fought during Turkey's Independence War are located. Voicing his respect for those who have sacrificed their lives for the protection and unity of the country, Erdoğan stated, "We continue our struggle to preserve these lands as our eternal homeland without stopping and by following your footsteps."

Erdoğan reiterated his government's determination to reach 2023, the centennial of the Republic of Turkey, and to realize the 2053 vision in unity, solidarity and brotherhood. "No internal or external malign power will be able to prevent Turkey's rise, strengthening and obtaining its well-deserved place in the global system," he added.



# Monkeypox Patients Reveal Psychological Scars



PARIS (Dispatches) - The monkeypox virus may cause intense pain but the psychological scars of the illness can be just as devastating, say sufferers and those who are treating them.

"You do not come out unscathed from a disease that has hurt you so much... as well as the additional burden of discrimination," said Corentin Hennebert, one of the first cases in France.

Since May the virus has rapidly spread across the world, overwhelmingly among men who have sex with men, provoking fears of a repeat of the stigma faced by gay men seen during the AIDS epidemic. Nathan Peiffer-Smadja, an infectious disease specialist at the Bichat-Claude Bernard Hospital in Paris, who has coordinated research on monkeypox patients, said the "psychological distress is linked to several aspects" of the disease. Monkeypox can be very painful, particularly due to lesions which commonly appear on the genitals, anus or face. The "after-effects, particularly aesthetic", are distressing for many who fear they could be left with long-lasting scars, Peiffer-Smadja said.

Then there is the impact of being suddenly hit by "a disease people had never heard of" after two years of the Covid pandemic, with the three-week monkeypox isolation period reviving bad memories of lockdowns. A small number of patients can develop internal lesions, particularly inside the anus, which can be "extremely painful", Peiffer-Smadja said.

That was unfortunately the cases for Hennebert. "I constantly had the impression that razor blades were being thrust into me -- I can't think of any other comparison, (the pain) was so strong," the 27-year-old told AFP.

Before he was given the powerful painkiller tramadol, he lost seven kilos (15 pounds) in just three days because he was not eating.

"All I could think about was the pain," he said. "And I'm not the only one, others have contacted me to tell that they were at the end of their tether, that they were crying all the time."

After recovering, Hennebert went on to become the spokesman for a group of monkeypox patients demanding swifter action against the disease.

Sebastien Tuller, a 32-year-old LGBT activist, said he was "very anxious" when monkeypox lesions began to appear on his face.

"It was really ugly and I didn't know what to do," he said. Michel Ohayon, head of the Paris sexual health centre 190, said that "as soon as a disease is visible, it is frightening because it becomes potentially stigmatising."

He compared the monkeypox lesions to those from kaposi sarcoma cancer, a visible "symptom of AIDS". The global monkeypox outbreak has "reawakened the trauma of HIV" despite the disease being far less deadly, said Nicolas Derche of the French LGBT group SOS.

"For HIV-positive people, this has revived some very rough things," from fear of a diagnosis to reliving past discrimination, said Vincent Leclercq of the French group AIDES.

Tuller said he received a torrent of insults and derogatory comments when he went public about having monkeypox.

"There is a lot of residual homophobia and this has a real impact on mental health," he said. "Many don't say they have -- or have had -- monkeypox, fearing being stigmatised," he added.

Young people who have not yet come out are put in a particularly difficult position, as are those afraid of having their sexual orientation revealed to their employer because they have to isolate for three weeks, he said.

# Black Sea Dolphins Casualties of Russia's War in Ukraine



PRYMORSKE (Dispatches) - Pacing up and down a beach of fine white sand on the Black Sea coast, 63 year-old Ukrainian scientist Ivan Rusev breathes a sigh of relief: he did not find any dead dolphins.

A few moments earlier he had rushed towards what he thought was a stranded dolphin. Mercifully it turned out only to be "tangled fishing gear".

Rusev spoke to AFP from the Tuzly Estuaries National Nature Park, a protected area of 280 square kilometers (108 square miles) in the Bessarabia region of south-west Ukraine.

Rusev, whose weather-beaten face is shaded by a hat he brought during adventures in central Asia, is the scientific director of the park.

Now his job entails walking every morning along beaches bordered by anti-tank mines in search of the dolphins that have been washing up here since the beginning of the war.

"We only found three dolphins over our entire 44 kilometers (27 miles) coastline last year," he tells AFP. "This year, over the five kilometers (3 miles) that we can still access, we already found 35 of them."

Much of the coastline has been off-limits to employees of the park since Ukrainian troops took up positions there to prevent any possible Russian sea assault.

This means Rusev and his team cannot say exactly how many dolphins have been stranded in the park or survey the full extent of the damage.

In any case, the death toll is "terrifying," says Rusev, who has been keeping an online diary -- now widely followed on Facebook -- about the impact of the war on wildlife.

When dolphins started washing up on the coast in March, Rusev and his team had to get to work quickly to spot dead animals before the many jackals roaming the area got to them.

"Then, we reached out to our colleagues in Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania. Everyone witnessed the same thing: a huge number of dolphins have died since the beginning of the war," Rusev said.

The Turkish Marine Research Foundation (TUDAV) warned in March of an "unusual increase" in dead dolphins washing ashore on the Black Sea coast.

Rusev estimates that 5,000 dolphins have been killed -- about 2 percent of the total dolphin population in the Black Sea.

The Black Sea was home to an estimated 2 million dolphins during the 20th century, but fishing and pollution contributed to their decline.

A survey found there were about 250,000 of dolphins left in 2020.

There's no doubt in Rusev's mind: military sonars used by Russian warships are to blame for the current bloodbath.

The powerful sonars used by warships and submarines "interfere with dolphin's hearing systems", he explains.

"This destroys their inner ear, they become blind and cannot navigate or hunt," and are more susceptible to lethal disease due to their weakened immune systems, according to Rusev.

The dolphin remains do not show any trace of fishing nets or wounds, which for Rusev is further evidence ruling out the possibility they died any other way.

Russia and Ukraine are trading blame even on the environmental toll of the war, so Rusev's theory is disputed. Russian scientists who looked into the increase in dolphin mortality blamed morbillivirus, a common lethal disease for the species.



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## Russian Gas Cut Could Jeopardize French Growth

PARIS (Dispatches) - French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire said that the French economy remained on track for reaching a growth rate of 2.5% this year but warned that a drastic cut in Russian gas supplies to France could jeopardize this projection outlook.

"We have to anticipate the possibility of a complete cutoff of Russian gas exports to France, combined with a harsh winter (as a possible scenario among others)," Le Maire told reporters.

He also said that France is studying options for better energy interconnections with Spain and reiterated Paris's view that European power prices should not depend on gas prices, urging the bloc to reform the mechanism.



## France Accuses Russia Over Gas Supply

PARIS (Dispatches) - France accused Moscow of using energy supplies as "a weapon of war" after Russia's Gazprom cut deliveries to a major French customer and said it would shut its main gas pipeline to Germany for three days this week.

European governments are trying to coordinate a response to soaring energy costs for businesses and households and to fill storage facilities ahead of peak demand in the winter.

Western nations fear that Moscow is deliberately driving up gas prices to try to weaken their opposition to its invasion of Ukraine, a tactic Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy on Monday dubbed "economic terrorism". Moscow denies the charge.

Nord Stream 1, the main conduit for Russian gas into Europe, has become a flash point in the dispute. Europe faces a further squeeze on supplies this week as Gazprom shuts off the pipeline for maintenance from Wednesday till the early hours of Saturday.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on Tuesday technological problems caused by Western sanctions on Russia are the only thing standing in the way of supplying gas via Nord Stream 1.

But France's Energy Transition Minister Agnes Pannier-Runacher said: "Very clearly Russia is using gas as a weapon of war and we must prepare for the worst case scenario of a complete interruption of supplies."

She was speaking to France Inter radio after French utility Engie said it would receive less gas from Gazprom from Tuesday because of an unspecified contractual dispute.

Russia has been pumping gas via Nord Stream 1 at only 20% of capacity and there are fears that this week's outage could be extended.

Asked if there are guarantees that Gazprom will restart gas flows via Nord Stream 1, the Kremlin's Peskov said: "There are guarantees that, apart from technological problems caused by sanctions, nothing hinders the supplies." read more

EU energy ministers will hold an emergency meeting on Sept. 9 to discuss the crisis.

Germany, Europe's largest economy, is open to discussing a price-cap scheme on gas supplies at a European level, a source in Italy said, citing a text message Germany's economy minister sent to his colleagues across the bloc.

The source said Robert Habeck sent a message to EU energy ministers flagging that Berlin was open to discuss the price cap at next week's meeting.

Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi has been pushing for a price cap, and has also called for steps to decouple the cost of electricity from the gas price. Such a move would allow European households to get the benefits from electricity produced from cheaper sources such as renewables.

The chief executive of German energy firm Wintershall Dea said on Tuesday that current price levels meant demand for gas would fall in the long term.

"The prices we are having currently are insane. That is nothing even a gas producer is looking for because in the end, we are going to massively destroy demand for our product," Mario Mehren told reporters on the sidelines of a conference in Norway.

## S.Korea Reins in Stimulus With First Spending Cut in 13 Years

SEOUL (Dispatches) - South Korea said it would cut annual government spending for the first time in more than a decade next year, as it strives to cut back on pandemic-era stimulus and help the central bank temper inflationary pressures.

Unveiling the first budget proposal under right-leaning President Yoon Suk-yeol, the finance ministry said government expenditure will be 639 trillion won (\$473 billion) in 2023.

That is 6% smaller than this year's spending after two supplementary budgets, and would be the first annual decline in spending since 2010, assuming there are no additional budgets for 2023.

Excluding extra budgets, South Korea's 2023 spending will grow by 5.2%, the slowest since 2017.

The move marks a shift away from aggressive fiscal spending under predecessor Moon Jae-in's left-leaning government in recent years and from the massive stimulus measures taken during the pandemic to help the economy withstand the COVID-19 crisis.

The Bank of Korea, which has been at the forefront of a global tightening cycle, has raised interest rates by a total of 2 percentage points since August last year.

By contrast, governments from Australia to Canada have continued expansionary fiscal policies so far even as their central banks have raised rates to tackle soaring inflation.

"The government is shifting its fiscal policy stance completely to 'sound financing' to secure fiscal sustainability, improve external credit standing and spend responsibly for future generations," the South Korean ministry said in a statement.

To achieve the 2023 spending cut, the government said it would "transfer some public projects to the private sector" and would cut wages of senior officials at the highest levels of government, according to the budget.

The government plans to cut spending for public infrastructure by 10.2%, while subsidies and other spending for small- to medium-sized businesses will decline by 18% next year.

But the budget also foresees an increase in social welfare expenses for low-income earners and the vulnerable, with demand for welfare spending only likely to grow in a rapidly aging economy. South Korea's birth rate hit a new low of 0.81 child per woman last year.

Government expenditure on defense will increase 2.5% to 57.1 trillion won as the nation seeks to modernize military equipment against possible threats from North Korea.



## Russia Oil Output Exceeds Expectation, But Pressure Looms

STAVANGER (Dispatches) - Russia's oil output has exceeded expectations in the wake of the war in Ukraine but Moscow will find it increasingly difficult to uphold production as Western sanctions begin to bite, the head of the International Energy Agency said.

"In the absence of (Western) companies, in the absence of the technology providers, in the absence of service companies, it will be much harder for Russia to maintain the production," IEA chief Fatih Birol told Reuters.

Russian domestic demand has so far remained robust, and the country also offers large discounts to non-European buyers, Birol said on the sidelines of a conference in Stavanger in southern Norway.

Nations that are members of the International Energy Agency could meanwhile release more oil from strategic petroleum reserves if they find it necessary when the current scheme expires in November, he added. "We still have substantial amount of stocks at our disposal," Birol said.

"If our member countries believe that as a result of the supply disruption there is a need to make a stock release, I am sure (they) will consider (it) and it is not off the table."

Birol earlier said Russia is likely to ramp up gas flaring in the coming months as the country's storages fill up. He said trust in Russia as an energy supplier had been eroded around the world following the invasion of Ukraine and its cuts to gas exports, and that the loss of Europe as a partner would hurt Moscow.

"Russia is not winning the energy battle here," Birol said during a question and answer session at the conference.

## Sri Lanka in Final Stage of IMF Talks

COLOMBO (Dispatches) - Crisis-hit Sri Lanka unveiled fresh measures in an interim budget aimed at clinching a bailout package from the International Monetary Fund, talks for which, the president said, had reached the "final stage".

The budget revised up the island nation's deficit projection for 2022 to 9.8% of the gross domestic product from 8.8% earlier, while outlining a slide in tax revenue and a sharp net increase in expenditure.

Unveiling the measures in parliament, President Ranil Wickremesinghe added that the government would aim to rein in inflation and introduce legislation to bolster central bank independence.

The country of 22 million is battling its worst economic crisis since independence from Britain in 1948. Wickremesinghe, who took over as president last month, is pushing to adopt fiscal consolidation measures agreed with the IMF.

"The government has taken sufficient fiscal reforms, including the VAT hike in the interim budget as well as income tax raises ... which were pre-requisites from a fiscal angle to qualify for the staff-level agreement," said Udeeshan Jonas, chief strategist at Colombo-based investment firm CAL Group.

Negotiations with the IMF, which has a team of officials visiting Sri Lanka, had made headway, said Wickremesinghe, who is also the finance minister.

"It is imperative that we use this opportunity to correct past mistakes and implement long-term policies that will stabilize the economy and take us out of the challenges we currently face," he said in his budget speech.

Sri Lankan officials hope the budget will be followed by a preliminary, staff-level agreement with the IMF for a loan package worth between \$2 billion and \$3 billion.

The revised budget estimates project revenues of 2 trillion Sri Lankan rupees (\$5.6 billion) in 2022, down from an initial figure of 2.23 trillion.

Total expenditure is set to rise to 4.4 trillion rupees, exceeding the earlier estimate of 3.9 trillion.

The government's primary deficit, essentially borrowing requirements excluding interest payments, is expected to fall to 4% of GDP, however, versus 5.7% in 2021.

"Given the policies outlined in the budget, especially around structural reforms and achieving a 2% primary surplus by 2025, groundwork is being set in place to put in reforms that the IMF is expecting," said Shehan Cooray, head of research for Acuity Stockbrokers.

## Turkey's Trade Gap Grows 147% To \$10.7b in July

ANKARA (Dispatches) - Turkey's foreign trade deficit rose to \$10.7 billion (TL 194.5 billion) in July, the country's statistical authority announced.

The gap grew 147% from a year ago, Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat) said in a statement.

Türkiye's exports rose 13.4% year-over-year to hit \$18.6 billion in July, while imports jumped 41.4% to reach \$29.2 billion.

The exports-to-imports coverage ratio rose to 63.4% last month, versus 79.1% in July 2021.

This July, the country's main trading partner Germany received \$1.5 billion worth of Turkish exports, followed by the United States with \$1.2 billion, the United Kingdom with \$1.15 billion, and Iraq with \$1 billion, TurkStat said.

On the other side of the ledger, the top country for Türkiye's imports last month was Russia with \$4.4 billion, followed by China with \$3.8 billion, Germany with \$1.8 billion and Switzerland with \$1.5 million.

In January-July, Türkiye's foreign trade deficit widened by 143.7% on an annual basis to \$62.2 billion.

The country's exports stood at \$144.3 billion, up 19.1%, while imports totaled \$206.5 billion, rising 40.7% during the seven-month period.

While the ratio of exports to imports coverage was 82.6% in the January-July 2021 period, it decreased to 69.9% in the same period of this year.

Meanwhile, exports, excluding energy products and non-monetary gold, increased by 7.4% in July from \$15.6 billion to \$16.8 billion.

In July, imports excluding energy products and non-monetary gold increased by 19.3% from \$16.5 billion to \$19.7 billion.

Foreign trade deficit, excluding energy products and non-monetary gold, amounted to \$2.9 billion in July.

Foreign trade volume increased by 13.5% and reached \$36.5 billion.

In the January-July period, Russia again took the first place in imports with some \$32.1 billion worth products were imported from this country. Russia was followed by China with \$23.8 billion, Germany with \$13.2 billion, the U.S. with \$8.9 billion and Italy with \$7.9 billion.

Imports from the first five countries corresponded to 41.7% of the total in the said period.

The amount paid by Turkey for energy imports increased by 95.7% in July compared to the same month of the previous year and rose to \$7.7 billion.

The energy imports composed of "mineral fuels, mineral oils and products obtained from their distillation, bituminous substances, mineral waxes."

## IMF Board Releases over \$1.1b In Pakistan Bailout Funds



ISLAMABAD (DiReuters) -The International Monetary Fund (IMF) board approved the seventh and eighth reviews of Pakistan's bailout program, allowing for a release of over \$1.1 billion to the cash-strapped economy, the fund and the government said.

The IMF agreed to extend the program by a year and increase the total funding by 720 million special drawing rights, or about \$940 million at the current exchange rate.

The funds will be a lifeline to the South Asian country now also suffering from devastating floods that have already killed more than 1,100 people and inflicted at least \$10 billion of damage according to the country's planning minister.

In a statement, IMF Deputy Managing Director Antoinette Sayeh said adhering to scheduled increases in fuel levies and energy tariffs was "essential" with Pakistan's economy being "buffeted by adverse external conditions".

These include "spillovers from the war in Ukraine, and domestic challenges, including from accommodative policies that resulted in uneven and unbalanced growth," Sayeh noted.

The floods were not mentioned in the fund's statement. Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said on Twitter that the formal resumption of IMF support though was "a major step forward in our efforts to put Pakistan's economy back on track".

Confirmation of the widely-expected assistance gave Pakistan's government bonds a small lift on Tuesday. They have fallen heavily this year as the economic woes have left it with a wide current account deficit and critically low foreign exchange reserves.

The IMF estimated those reserves would only cover key imports for little over two months. The economy is also wracked by soaring inflation and political upheaval after former Prime Minister Imran Khan was ousted in April.

## “ZOO” Goes to FERFILM Festival in Kosovo

TEHRAN (MNA) – Written and directed by Iranian filmmaker Nafiseh Zare, the short film “Zoo” is scheduled to vie at FERFILM in Kosovo. Kaveh Mazaheri and Sorena Ekbatani are the producers of the short film. The Synopsis of “Zoo” reads, “Among the animals in the zoo, Ra’na is looking for the deer she saw in her dream, and her mother is looking for an opportunity to tell her important news.”

International Film Festival – FERFILM was thought for some years but was established in 2013. FERFILM was formed by a group of artists from Ferizaj and beyond. This moment was considered an initiative to promote universal cultures and values of the world through film as a multidimensional and attractive method. The festival will organize visits and other events that show the cultural diversity in Kosovo.



## More Western Tech Companies Set out Russian Exit Plans

STOCKHOLM (Dispatches) - Western technology companies, including Ericsson and Nokia, announced plans for complete exits from Russia, following Dell last week, as the pace of withdrawals accelerates.

Ericsson said it will gradually withdraw from Russia over the coming months, while its Finnish rival Nokia said it also plans to exit its Russian business by the end of the year.

Switzerland-based Logitech International (LOGN.S) also said it would wind down its remaining activities in Russia, having suspended its operations in March.

More western companies are selling or withdrawing from their Russian businesses, having initially halted operations after Moscow sent tens of thousands of troops into Ukraine on Feb. 24.

The process has required careful planning given the ongoing political challenges, Paolo Pescatore, analyst at PP Foresight, said.

“We are now seeing the fruits of exit plans that have been months in the works,” Pescatore said. “They are all now following suit.”

While Ericsson had suspended its business in Russia indefinitely in April, Nokia went a step further and said it would withdraw fully from the country.

“By the end of the year, the vast majority of our employees in Russia will have moved on from Nokia, and we have vacated all of our offices,” a Nokia spokesperson said on Monday. “We will retain a formal presence in the country until the legal closure is completed.”

Ericsson, which put its employees on paid leave earlier this year, also recorded a 900 million crown (\$95 million) provision in the first quarter for impairment of assets and other exceptional costs related to the move.

It has about 400 employees in Russia and said it would provide financial support to those affected.



Nokia, which had about 2,000 employees in Russia, said its remaining activity in the country is related to the limited maintenance of critical networks to comply with contractual and humanitarian obligations.

As Ericsson and Nokia exit Russia, the country’s mobile operators MTS and Tele2 will become more dependent on Chinese companies such as Huawei and ZTE.

MTS and Tele2 declined to comment.

Russian daily Kommersant first reported Ericsson’s exit and said some of its support staff would move to a new firm that will be established by top managers in Russia. Ericsson did not comment on the new firm.

## Shared Iran-Brunei Cultural Capacities Pave Path For Broader Cooperation



TEHRAN (IRNA) - Deputy culture and Islamic guidance minister for legal, parliamentary and provincial affairs said in a meeting with Brunei ambassador that Iran and Brunei share a lot in cultural field, which pave the path for broader comprehensive cooperation.

Mahammad Hashemi said in his Tuesday evening meeting with Ambassador Haji Ismail ben Haji Abdul Manap that such cooperation can benefit the two nations in the cultural field, such as film, theater, music, and the tourism industry.

Hashemi said that such bilateral meetings can meanwhile serve as the opening of a new chapter in mutual cooperation and interactions between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Brunei, because both countries favor deeper relations.

He said that the Culture Ministry’s responsibility is commissioned to activate and organize for the holding of the Joint Economic Commission of Iran and Brunei, adding that the two countries have numerous capacities in economic, technological, agricultural, scientific, and cultural fields for expansion of cooperation.

“By activating the Iran-Brunei Joint Economic Commission we can use those potentials in line with materializing the objective of Brunei 2035 Perspective objectives,” added Hashemi.

Ambassador Abdul Manap, too, said in the meeting that the Iran-Brunei Joint Technical Committee was held in Iran eight years ago, and in the framework of the joint committee the two countries can implement joint programs.

He said that the bilateral economic relations, too, will be expanded after the joint economic commission that the Iranian deputy minister had earlier referred to.

## Tehran, Baku to Expand Legal, Judiciary Relations

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Justice minister and visiting prosecutor general of Azerbaijan Republic in a meeting agreed on the need to expand bilateral legal and judiciary relations.

Justice Minister Amin-Hossein Rahimi in the meeting referred to the age-old relations between the two countries, and argued that the upcoming state visit of the president of Azerbaijan to Iran is a sign for the high level of the two countries’ political relations, and comprehensive cooperation.

“Legal and judiciary interactions and cooperation between the two countries is expanding, and keeping in mind the upcoming Joint Economic Commission, it is necessary to implement its ratifications effectively,” said Rahimi. The justice minister said the neighboring countries’ stability and security equals Iran’s stability and security, and the occurrence of difficulties and unrest in them is worrying for Iran.

## Barkat Pharmaceutical Group, Nicaragua Sign Cooperation

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Barkat Pharmaceutical Group and Nicaragua signed a cooperation document.

Following the MoU signed between Barkat Pharmaceutical Group and Nicaragua embassy in Tehran, the contract on mutual cooperation was signed.

Based on the contract, all Nicaragua’s needs in the field of medicine and medical equipment that can be supplied in the Islamic Republic of Iran will be



provided through Barkat Pharmaceutical Group.

According to its official website, Barkat Pharmaceutical Group is one of the largest pharmaceutical holding Companies with more than 20 subsidiaries. The company’s name was changed to “Tadbir innovation pharmaceutical company” in 2010. As a knowledge-based economic complex, the company has focused on health care products.

## Iran Managed to Build...

FROM PAGE 1

Rafael Grossi, the IAEA chief, in August called on Iran again to explain why traces of enriched uranium were found at previously undeclared nuclear research sites three years ago.

Grossi said, “Give us the necessary answers, people and places so we can clarify the many things needed for clarification.” Eslami once again rejected the IAEA’s claims and what the Agency called “evidence” against three sites in question in Iran and reaffirmed that the Islamic Republic had no secret nuclear sites.

“What we wrote down is definitive,” he said, referring to Iran’s comments on an EU-drafted text aimed at restoring the Iran deal.

“Our goal and emphasis is that there will be no re-implementation day for [the Iran deal] if [the case] of these questions are not closed. We have not and cannot back down. We cannot sit back and [let them] impose sanctions on the Iranian people for delusional reasons,” he added.

Elsewhere, he was asked to explain what will happen to the mutual commitments of Iran and its JCPOA partners, which have different time frames, in case the two sides agree to revive the accord.

“The dates stipulated in the JCPOA are Adoption Day, Day Zero, and Implementation Day. No matter how much time has passed from them, the criterion is the same dates. What Iran has been constantly emphasizing in the process of the negotiations is that the same time table envisaged in the 2015 JCPOA should remain and be the criterion,” he replied.

The nuclear chief also spoke about a previously announced plan to replace the old-generation IR-1 centrifuges with IR-6 models and said the country will not dispose of any of the old machines that it retires

“Each of them has a benefit and it’s not true that they are useless. Each of them can be put to use at its own appropriate place and we will not at all lose them,” Eslami added.

## Iran Needs...

FROM PAGE 1

Meanwhile criticizing the violation of international laws by the Westerners, the Russian Foreign Minister says Moscow supports the revival of the nuclear agreement and the removal of all sanctions imposed on Iran.

At the beginning of the joint press conference, Lavrov told reporters that he had discussed various bilateral, regional, and international issues with his Iranian counterpart.

According to Lavrov’s remarks, Russia and Iran have similar opinions on various issues. Both sides are against the actions of Western countries that impose their positions on regional and international issues.

Saying that Western countries seek to ignore international laws and regulations, Russian diplomats stressed that Tehran and Moscow do not accept such approaches adopted by the West.

The senior diplomat also added that he has discussed the issue of the implementation of JCPOA aimed at the removal of illegal US sanctions with Iran’s foreign minister.

The Russian Foreign Minister also announced that Moscow supports the revival of the nuclear agreement and the removal of all sanctions imposed on Iran.

In response to a question about the intense Western

pressures against Moscow and Tehran, Lavrov said that those who seek to gain independence from American dictates are targeted by sanctions.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Lavrov spoke about some measures by Iran and Russia to facilitate economic relations. The senior Russian diplomat also added that there is a cooperation between Russia and Iran, especially in the fields of nuclear energy and energy-related issues.

Earlier AmiraAbdollahian and his Russian counterpart Lavrov held talks.

“Today, we will discuss issues such as the unconditional revival of the JCPOA and the crisis situation in the region,” said Lavrov in the meeting.

“I am glad that the relations between the two countries are on the right track. We focus on the interests of two nations and two countries,” the Iranian Foreign Minister noted. “During Mr. Putin’s recent visit to Tehran, important and high-level talks were held. Today, we have the opportunity to discuss the implementation of the agreements between the heads of the two countries.”

“Of course, regarding the crisis in Ukraine, some European officials have proposed ideas, and we will discuss this matter as well,” Amirabdollahian added.

## No More...

FROM PAGE 1

Referring to Iran’s removal of 27 surveillance cameras at different nuclear sites, Kamalvandi said that if the other parties return to their commitments, it would be possible for the devices and cameras to be reinstalled.



Tehran will continue its constructive cooperation with the UN nuclear agency in line with its commitments under the CSA, the official added.

Iran ratified the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1970, which requires nonnuclear-weapon states to accept comprehensive IAEA safeguards. Four years later, Tehran concluded a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the IAEA.

As a goodwill gesture, Iran voluntarily chose to have extensive cooperation with the UN nuclear agency, beyond the safeguards agreement.

Iran and the IAEA are currently locked in a dispute triggered by the agency’s Israeli-influenced accusations, which were leveled against Tehran’s peaceful nuclear activities just as the Islamic Republic and other parties to the Iran deal appeared close to an agreement on reviving the Iran deal.

Iran asserts that an agreement on the revival of the Iran nuclear deal hinges on the settlement of Safeguards issues between Tehran and the IAEA, and that without settling those issues, reviving the 2015 accord makes no sense.

Although Iran has always shown its good-will and cooperated with this body, this body is getting bold and wants one-sided concessions from Tehran but it should know this fact that there will be no more free concessions and this time Tehran will give concessions in case it benefit otherwise it will not cooperate with the IAEA more than its international obligations.

And IAEA chief Rafael Grossi is better to stop repeating accusations against the Islamic Republic, calling on Iran to explain what he claimed to be “traces of enriched uranium” found at the country’s nuclear research sites three years ago.

Tehran now will abide by law and will cooperate with the IAEA according to its commitments stipulated for cooperation with this body and extra cooperation and concession will not be available any longer until the West comes to its senses and observe its obligations regarding the JCPOA otherwise the IAEA and the West should dream of Iran’s concessions any longer.

## Tehran Reacts to...

FROM PAGE 1

Referring to the timely action of the IRGC Navy, the Iranian military source added that recently, a large number of unmanned military vessels have been sent by the US Navy to the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, which, in addition to threatening the security of shipping lines, has also led to some maritime accidents.

Emphasizing the determination of the naval forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran to continue to carry out their legal and necessary missions in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, the source said, “As in the past, we will not be indifferent to the measures that cause insecurity in the region, and we will continue our legal duties in the framework of the inherent missions of protecting and securing shipping lines to prevent any insecurity and instability.”

## Gov’ts Urged to...

FROM PAGE 1

The High Council for Human Rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran categorically condemns all sorts of terrorism and fervently opposes policies of certain Western countries like the US, who attempt to classify terrorism into good and bad, it underlined, adding that the council knows the Counter-Terrorism Day as the day of scrutinizing and holding accountable governments backing terrorism.

The council urges all world governments to stop exempting and leaving unpunished terrorists throughout the globe, and bring them to justice, it read.

Pointing to the UN Charter, it added that the Islamic Republic of Iran expresses readiness to coordinate with its neighboring states at a geographical level and that it is determined to conduct an inclusive and purposeful fight against the malicious phenomenon in West Asia.

August 30 has been designated as Counter-Terrorism Day because it coincides with the assassination of the then Iranian president, prime minister, and their entourage in Tehran in 1981.

The bombing of the prime minister’s office was carried out by anti-Iran elements, who had connections with certain Western governments in a bid to target democratic pillars of the new-born establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

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## Hayter Quits Vuelta for Covid

MADRID (Dispatches) - The Covid cases on the Vuelta continued to mount as Ineos announced it has pulled Ethan Hayter out of the race after a positive test.

"In line with team and UCI protocols Ethan hayter has this morning withdrawn from the Vuelta a Espana after returning a positive lateral flow test," Ineos tweeted.

Hayter was forced out as racing resumes after a rest day with a time-trial, one of his specialities. The 23-year-old Londoner briefly led the young riders category early in the Vuelta.

## British Open Champion Smith Joins LIV Golf

LONDON (Dispatches) - British Open champion Cameron Smith has become the latest leading player to sign up to the breakaway LIV Golf Series which announced that he was in the field for its next event.

The Australian was one of six new recruits for the Saudi-backed tour for the LIV Golf Invitational Boston, from September 2-4.

As the world's number two, the 29-year-old Smith will become the highest-ranked player to compete in a LIV Golf event.

# Nadal Downs Wildcard Hijikata in U.S. Open

NEW YORK (Dispatches) -Second seed Rafael Nadal overcame an early scare to down 21-year-old Australian wildcard Rinky Hijikata 4-6 6-2 6-3 6-3 in his first appearance at the U.S. Open after winning in 2019.

Playing in only his second match after pulling out of Wimbledon with an abdominal injury, the Spaniard had speculated whether he was ready to take on New York and seemed to confirm those fears as he struggled on the return in the first set.

Hijikata incredibly broke the 22-times major winner with a crisp overhead shot in the seventh game of his Grand Slam debut but it was Goliath who got the momentum over David under the bright lights of Arthur Ashe Stadium, as the fighter Nadal charged through the first three games of the second set.

Nadal improved in virtually every respect as his opponent's form deteriorated, dropping just one of his first-serve points with few mistakes, as Hijikata racked up a dozen unforced errors and dropped his serve in the final game.

Thriving on familiar territory, the four-time Flushing Meadows winner Nadal never faced a break in the third set and broke Hijikata to love in the fifth game of the final set before recovering from 0-40 in the eighth to hold his own serve.

Hijikata gave the rowdy New York crowd a final thrill as he defended four match points in the ninth before succumbing to Nadal's vicious forehand winner.

"Long wait - for some time I thought that maybe I will not be able to be back," Nadal said in an on-court interview after the match. "The night sessions here in New York are the best without a doubt."

Meanwhile Emma Raducanu, who made a dream run to the U.S. Open title last year, suffered a nightmare 6-3 6-3 first round loss to Frenchwoman Alize Cornet as the clock finally struck midnight on an improbable tennis fairytale.

Raducanu captivated the sporting world when she became the first qualifier to claim a Grand Slam title, winning 10 matches in New York without dropping a set, catapulting her career into the stratosphere and making her one of the most marketable athletes on the planet.

Twelve months ago Raducanu arrived at her opening match an unknown with no



expectations or pressure but on Tuesday the 19-year-old sometimes appeared to be carrying the weight of world on her slender shoulders.

Not only was Raducanu defending her one and only title but a massive 2,040 of her 2,756 ranking points and with those gone the world number 11 will drop out of the top 70 and back having to qualify for some events or depend on wildcards.

But the loss, said Raducanu, has also brought freedom and a clean slate that will allow her to reconstruct her game and career without unrealistic expectations.

"Obviously really disappointing, really sad to leave here," Raducanu told a post-match press conference, her face partially hidden by a baseball cap pulled tight to her eyes. "But also, in a way happy because it's a clean slate."

Raducanu endured a difficult first full year on Tour with injuries and poor form limiting her match wins, with each early exit bringing increased scrutiny.

Still just 19, Raducanu will now be able to grow into her career and if that means playing lower level events then that is what she will do.

"I can just start again," said Raducanu. "I don't know what my ranking will be. Probably pretty low down."

"I think it would be nice in a way to kind of just start over, start fresh. I think any player would be happy to win a tournament. I think it makes a massive difference no matter what the level is."



NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Former U.S. Open winner Stan Wawrinka hinted that he was getting closer to hanging up his racket after being forced to retire mid-match during his opening round contest at the hardcourt major yesterday against French lucky loser Corentin Moutet.

Wawrinka, 37, had twice called the trainer on court to tend to his finger and was trailing 6-4 7-6(7) when he signalled he could no longer continue against Moutet, who managed to make the main draw despite losing in the qualifying stage.

It was the sixth straight defeat for the three-time major champion, who lifted his last Grand Slam trophy at Flushing Meadows in 2016.

"I'm getting closer to the end. That's for sure. It's a reality," Wawrinka told reporters.

"I was injured for more than a year. It took me a while to feel much better physically and tennis-wise. I still love the game and want to compete a bit longer before stopping."

Wawrinka returned to the tennis circuit in March after over a year on the sidelines following two surgeries on his left foot. But he has failed to reprise his old form and suffered a slew of first round exits at tournaments.

But the Swiss is not giving up hope, yet.

## Representative of ADF Meets German Official



IRAN NEWS SPORTS DESK

TEHRAN - Head of cultural sector of Embassy of Germany in Tehran Mr. Timo Stum received representative of Asian Dodgeball Federation (ADF) Mr. Saeed Babae.

According to the public relations of the ADF, Babae and Stum met at German Embassy in Tehran where both sides had talks on the dodgeball and future cooperation.

In the meeting both sides discussed and reviewed possibility of holding Asia and Europe dodgeball competition with Germany as the host with the slogan of honoring tireless medical staff during the Covid pandemic era.

## Bournemouth Sack Manager Parker

LONDON (Dispatches) - Bournemouth manager Scott Parker was sacked by the newly-promoted Premier League club, three days after they were thumped 9-0 at Liverpool for their third straight defeat.

The struggling south-coast club are fourth from bottom of the standings with three points from four games."I would like to place on record my gratitude to Scott and his team for their efforts during their time with us," the club's owner, Maxim Demin, said in statement.

"However, in order for us to keep progressing as a team and a club as a whole, it is unconditional that we are aligned in our strategy to run the club sustainably." Bournemouth said their search for a new manager would begin immediately and first team coach Gary O'Neil would take over in the interim.

## Romero Completes Permanent Move to Tottenham

LONDON (Dispatches) - Tottenham Hotspur have completed the permanent signing of Argentina defender Cristian Romero on a deal until 2027, the Premier League side said.

The 24-year-old center back had initially joined the London club on a loan deal from Serie A side Atalanta in August 2021 and helped them finish fourth in the English top flight and return to the Champions League.

A crucial part of manager Antonio Conte's back three last season, Romero helped Spurs collect 10 wins from 14 league games in the final part of the campaign. He has made 32 appearances for the club and scored in the win over Brighton & Hove Albion in March.

Romero, who has 11 caps for Argentina, missed Spurs' last two games against Wolverhampton Wanderers and Nottingham Forest with an adductor issue but has begun training ahead of Wednesday's trip to West Ham United.

## Cavani Signs With Valencia On Free Transfer

LONDON (Dispatches) - Former Manchester United striker Edinson Cavani will join Valencia on free transfer, the Spanish club announced on social media.

The Uruguay team forward, 35, was available after his contract expired earlier in summer after spending the last two seasons at Old Trafford.

According to the club, Cavani has agreed to sign a two-year contract and will be the reference up-front to Italian manager Gennaro Gattuso.

Valencia won the race to sign the veteran against Real Sociedad, who are still in the market looking for a replacement for Swedish forward Alexander Isak who was sold last week to Newcastle for a 70 million-euros transfer fee.

Cavani arrived on Monday afternoon to Valencia and talked to the local media before passing medical exams with club doctors and signing his new deal.

"I am happy to be here. I wanted to play in Spain and Valencia were willing to bet on me," Cavani said.

"I like to be where I'm wanted, where I'm loved because you live off the strength of the fans and the club's love."

"I talked to coach Gennaro Gattuso and Valencia have given me a lot of confidence, so I hope I can give them my best and leave a good image here."

Cavani began his career at Danubio in Uruguay before making the jump to Europe in 2007, signing with Palermo.



## Holt Stuns Fellow American Fritz

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Qualifier Brandon Holt, the son of former two-time U.S. Open champion Tracy Austin, made a memorable Grand Slam main draw debut by staging an upset 6-7(3) 7-6(1) 6-3 6-4 win over fellow American 10th seed Taylor Fritz.

Ranked 303rd in the world, the 24-year-old Holt was awarded a qualifying wild card at Flushing Meadows and was making his Tour-level debut against Fritz, the highest-ranked American, at 12th.

Holt, who turned professional in 2020, was not even sure if he could continue playing tennis when he needed career-threatening surgery on his hand last year.

He did not play for the rest of 2021 and only returned to action at the feeder International Tennis Federation circuit in Cancun, Mexico, in January.

"I started the year ranked like 900-something after having an injury in my hand. I was out for like eight months. I basically had to start from scratch down there," Holt told reporters.

"I did well my first three tournaments back. I won all three of them in a row after a long time off, a lot of hard work recovering. Yeah, from there to here has been a very quick upward tick. Hopefully, I can keep it going."



For a place in the third round of the hardcourt Grand Slam, Holt will next play Argentine Pedro Cachin, who edged Slovenia's Aljaz Bedene 6-4 6-3 5-7 1-6 7-6(10-6) in a final set tiebreaker.

Holt said he did not exactly remember the advice he received before the match from his mother, who won the U.S. Open in 1979 and 1981.