

Iran and Russia Have Reportedly Held Two Days of Talks in Moscow, During Iranian Foreign Minister Visit, to Discuss Cooperation Against Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing

# IRAN NEWS

The CEO of the National Iranian Oil Company Said that Iran's Oil Production Capacity Will Increase By 200,000 BPD by the End of the Current Iranian Year and Reach 4.038 BPD by Late March 2023

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## Iran Not to Leave Any Safe Spot for Terror Groups in World

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's top human rights official says the Islamic Republic will not leave any safe haven for the terror groups, which have the backing of the West and Israel, across the world and will stand firm in confronting them.

Kazem Gharibabadi, secretary of Iran's High Council for Human Rights, made the remarks on Wednesday over a conference for reviewing legal aspects of the United States' crimes against Iranians.

"There are more than 17,000 victims of terrorist attacks; the terrorist groups are set up with the support of the US, some Western countries and Israel, and are based in the US or Europe," Gharibabadi said.

"Iran is on the lookout for these terrorists around the world and there will be no safe place for them anywhere. Iran stands firm in confronting them," he added.

He also mentioned the US's unilateral sanctions against 30 countries, with Iran topping the list, saying that the bans violate international law and human rights.

Due to the sanctions blocking access to life-saving medical supplies and drugs in Iran during the COVID-19 pandemic, several Iranians lost their lives, he said.

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## IRGC Slams Ridiculous U.S. Claim

TEHRAN (Dispatches) - The Islamic Revolution Guards Corp (IRGC) hits out at US Central Command (CENTCOM) chief Michael Erik Kurilla over his "ridiculous" claim of an attempt by Iran's naval forces to "illegally seize" an American unmanned vessel in the Persian Gulf.

In a statement issued, the IRGC explained the details and the reasons of a security operation as part of which the elite force's Navy briefly took control of the US maritime done stranded in the Persian Gulf and towed it.

It said the unmanned vessel had lost "navigational communications" and remained stranded in the Persian Gulf, which is home to many international shipping routes.

The IRGC said the "timely" and "smart" move by its naval forces was meant to secure shipping lines and avert any accident in the key waters, slamming the CENTCOM chief's allegations, which were covered by media outlets affiliated with the global hegemonic system and Zionism.

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## Iran Submits Views on U.S. Response To EU Draft Text on JCPOA



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iran has offered its opinion on the US's response to an EU draft text for the revival of the 2015 nuclear deal, says Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Nasser Kanaani.

"After receiving the United States' response, the Islamic Republic's expert team examined it carefully and Iran's responses were compiled and submitted to the coordinator tonight," Kanaani said in early Friday.

"The text that was sent (by Iran) has a constructive approach aimed at finalizing the negotiations," he added. Iran's response was prepared "following evaluation on various levels," the official added.

The United States unilaterally withdrew from the landmark deal in 2018, and reinstated crippling sanctions under the so-called "maximum pressure" campaign, despite Iran's full compliance with the deal.

Since last year, the Austrian capital has been hosting multiple rounds of talks between the signatories of the deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), in order to examine the prospect of the deal's revival and removal of the illegal economic sanctions.

The negotiations have seen many interruptions due to Washington's obdurate refusal to respect Iran's red lines.

The European Union, which acts as the coordinator in indirect talks between Tehran and Washington, recently came up with a draft proposal to revive the deal. Tehran offered its response, which the bloc described as "reasonable."

The United States took several weeks to offer its response to Iran's comments.

Meanwhile reacting to Iran's response on Thursday Washington said Tehran's latest reply to the European Union proposal was "not constructive."

A US State Department spokesperson said the United States had received Iran's response to the EU bid to revive the 2015 deal and would formulate its own response.

"We are studying it and will respond through the EU, but unfortunately it is not constructive," the State Department spokesperson said.

Early in August, EU officials sent the US and Iran what it called the "final text" of a revived deal to limit Tehran's nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief.

## Qatar Tourism Opens First Representative Office in Tehran

DOHA (Dispatches) - Qatar Tourism (QT) has opened its first representative office in Tehran, the capital of Iran.

The office is QT's 13th global opening, and will lead "various promotional activities, including tour operator partnerships, travel agent destination training, media visits and campaigns", the tourism authority said in a statement.

Both countries follow Islamic calendars and have synced holiday seasons, allowing visitors from Iran to travel to Doha. More so, there are weekly direct flights from the Iranian cities of Tehran, Mashhad, Shiraz, and Isfahan to Doha, facilitating travel. Qatar could also serve as a stopover retreat for Iranian travellers set to continue to farther destinations.

The Gulf country aims to attract over six million international visitors annually by 2030. The tourism authority's office in Iran is the latest addition to its international network of rep offices worldwide, spanning from markets such as Australia, India and China to the US.

Chief operating officer of Qatar Tourism, Berthold Trenkel, said: "Qatar Tourism's choice in the location of its latest office opening is a testament to the decades-long cultural and trade ties between the two countries. Iran is one of 15 target markets identified by Qatar Tourism as a primary source for tourists looking to relax, rejuvenate and soak in some culture."

"Opening a representative office in Iran will help support Qatar Tourism's strategic goals to increase the number of visitors to Qatar by threefold, increase spending by 3 to 4 times, and grow the GDP contribution of the tourism sector to 12 per cent by 2030."

Earlier this month, QT announced that it had roped in football icon David Beckham for a new holiday campaign to boost the country's tourism landscape. The campaign aimed to attract GCC residents to choose Qatar as their next destination for a weekend break.

## Iran Ready to Respond To Threats at Any Level

TEHRAN (PressTV) - The chief commander of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) has hailed the achievements made in the defense industry despite all the restrictions imposed on the country, saying the Armed Forces are today ready to respond to all enemy threats at any level.

Major General Hossein Salami made the remarks on Thursday during a visit to an exhibition of Iran's defense industry achievements in electronic warfare, air defense, drones and cruise missiles.

He said Iran's defense industry has managed to make great progress in conformation with two realities: global technological advancements and efforts to render the enemies powerless in the defense sector.

It was imperative for Iran to promote its military equipment and defense systems and reduce the gap with advanced countries in the face of growing capabilities and the fast pace of technological gains on the global stage, the IRGC commander added.

"The Armed Forces have fortunately achieved determining successes in various defense fields, including electronics as an advanced and high-level [field of] technology," Salami said.

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## Pakistan Values Iran's Support During Devastating Floods

ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) - The Pakistani government thanked Iran for its support and humanitarian assistance in light of the devastating rains and floods in the Central Asian country.

On Thursday, Pakistani Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and his Iranian counterpart Hosein Amirabdollahian held a telephone conversation in which the parties discussed issues of bilateral cooperation, in particular the struggle of the Islamabad government against the worst monsoon rains in three decades, which have so far left more than 1100 people dead.

In this context, the Pakistani officials thanked Iran for the humanitarian assistance offered to those affected by the unprecedented floods. He also expressed his hope that the country could count on the financial assistance of the United Nations (UN) in order to alleviate the suffering experienced by Pakistanis.

After recalling his last trip to Iran, Bhutto Zardari invited the Iranian Foreign Minister to visit Pakistan to strengthen bilateral ties between both nations.

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## Iran's August Non-Oil Foreign Trade Up 25.4% YoY

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran has reported non-oil foreign trade worth \$8.109 billion in the calendar month to August 22, up 25.4% from the same month in 2021.

Figures by the Iranian customs office (IRICA) published showed that non-oil trade between Iran and the rest of the world had increased by 10.6% in volume terms year on year in August to reach 11.325 million metric tons (mt).

Exports from Iran rose 18% in value terms against August 2021 to reach \$3.648 billion, showed the figures.

China remained the main customer of Iranian non-oil exports in August with \$1.106 billion worth of purchases, up just 1% from last year, showed the customs data.

Iraq bought some \$563 million worth of goods from Iran in August, an increase of 38% from last year, said IRICA, adding that purchases by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) had risen by 89% over the same period to reach \$517 million.

IRICA figures showed that imports into Iran over the calendar month to late August had reached 2.906 million mt worth \$4.425 billion, an increase of 32% in value terms compared with the same month in 2021.

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## President Congratulates Uzbek Counterpart on Independence Day

TEHRAN (IRNA) - President Ebrahim Raisi extended a message on Thursday to his Uzbek counterpart Shavkat Mirziyoyev congratulating him on the occasion of his country's Independence Day on September 1.

In his message, President Raisi felicitated the Uzbek nation and government on an important day. He expressed hope that Iran-Uzbekistan's strong roots and will of the two countries' officials would prepare the ground for growing interactions.

Since 1991, Uzbekistan celebrates its Independence Day or National Day on September 1.

## Iran "Invincible" to Bullying By Hegemonic Powers

**IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK**

**TEHRAN - President Ebrahim Raisi says the Islamic Republic has grown so strong that hegemonic powers are today unable to bully it.**

Addressing the 7th General Assembly of the AhlulBayt World Assembly in Tehran on Thursday, Raisi said Iran has suffered numerous injustices and faced different problems over years.

However, he added, Iran has now become so strong that not only the region but the whole world is well aware of the Islamic Republic's righteousness and high status.

Raisi emphasized that hegemonic powers have realized that they cannot coerce Iran into doing what they want and are well aware that the country is "invincible and powerful."

That is why the White House admits that the 'maximum pressure' on the Islamic Republic has faced a humiliating defeated and failed to deliver any results, said Raisi, referring to the pressure policy that ex-US President Donald Trump started against Iran.

He said Iran has not only become a regional heavyweight, but also secured a good standing on the world stage, adding that the country has always been seeking justice for all.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the Iranian chief executive slammed the global hegemony for violating human rights despite their claims of advocating them.



"They have always talked about the rights of humans [but] have never heeded any of them," Raisi said.

He also noted that the AhlulBayt World Assembly can play a role in connecting all active bodies in the Muslim world and various countries across the globe.

"This assembly serves to [promote] scientific and cultural communications and the interaction between scientists and intellectuals is very valuable. On the other hand, it can also be a means of communication for economic actors in different fields," the president stated.

He expressed confidence that scientific, cultural, economic and social communications among all the members of the assembly can definitely create a good future.

## Iran Has No Restrictions in Military Cooperation With Pakistan

**IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK**

TEHRAN - The Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces said that there are no restrictions on Iran's military cooperation with Pakistan regarding the lifting of the UN arms embargo from Iran.

Heading a high-ranking military delegation, Chief of Air Staff of the Pakistan Air Force Zaheer Ahmad Babar Sidhu met with the Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Hossein Bagheri.

As Iran's good neighbor, Pakistan enjoys a special position in the eyes of Iran's military and government officials, General Bagheri said in this meeting.



"We consider Pakistan's security as our security and we will spare no efforts for maintaining Pakistan's security," he said.

Elsewhere in his remarks, he stressed expanding cooperation and concluding various understandings so as to prevent foreign interventions.

Saying that the UN arms embargo has been lifted for about a year and a half, Bagheri added that there are no restrictions on Iran's military cooperation with Pakistan.

Bagheri said he was saddened by the news of the recent floods in Pakistan, voicing Iran's readiness to do whatever possible to alleviate the problems of the flood-hit people.

## Tehran, Ankara Follow Up Bilateral Issues Via Joint Working Group

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi on Wednesday stressed the importance of boosting Iran-Turkey relations, and said that the two countries follow up their issues within a joint working group.

The official made the remark during talks with Deputy Turkish Interior Minister Tayyip Sabri Erdil in Tehran.

Vahidi said that Iran and Turkey, as neighboring countries, have good capacities to help improve security and stability in the region.

He said that enemies are attempting to make the Islamic world be gripped by its internal issues. That's why a new path should be taken in the face of Western powers.

The Iranian interior minister referred to some issues existing between Tehran and Ankara, including Turkey's water projects that he said have created problems for Iran.

Vahidi said that his Turkish counterpart has promised to follow up issues related to those projects.

He also said that the existing issues can be resolved through a joint working group appointed by the two sides, and that negotiations should be constantly held.

The Turkish official, on his part, said that Iran and Turkey have always had good cooperation, including on fighting terrorism and organized crimes, adding that the mutual cooperation should be enhanced further.

He also said that issues related to water projects are bilateral too, which should be resolved through interaction.

## Iran Navy Flotilla Foils Pirate Attack on Iranian Vessel

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iranian naval forces have managed to thwart a pirate attack on one of the country's merchant vessels that had been besieged by pirates in the Red Sea following a fierce exchange of fire.

The escort flotilla of the Iranian Navy's 83rd fleet of warships, led by the domestically-manufactured destroyer Jamaran, rushed to the rescue of the cargo ship after the vessel came under attack by 12 armed pirates onboard a boat while sailing through the Bab el-Mandeb Strait – a main shipping route that connects the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea.

The Iranian forces managed to save the vessel and forced the pirates to escape the scene after heavy clashes.

Back on August 10, the Iranian naval forces saved a trade vessel from a pirate attack in the Red Sea.

Iranian Navy's deputy head of operations, Rear Admiral Mostafa Tajeddini, said that one of the country's merchant ships in the Red Sea made a distress call after coming under attack from pirates.

He said the Iranian naval flotilla, with Jamaran destroyer acting as its lead ship, was immediately dispatched to the zone and took action against the assailants.

The Iranian naval forces, tasked with escorting trade vessels in the Red Sea, forced the attackers to flee after a heavy exchange of fire, the senior commander noted.

Moreover, Iran's naval forces rescued an Iranian trade ship from a pirate attack in the Red Sea on May 18.



## Iran Deliberating On U.S. Response to EU Draft Proposal



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran is carefully examining Washington's response to the proposals for the revival of the 2015 nuclear deal and removal of anti-Tehran sanctions, Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian says, stressing that the Islamic Republic is preparing its own answer.

Amirabdollahian made the remarks in a telephone conversation on Thursday with his Emirati counterpart Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran has shown its goodwill and seriousness in order to reach a strong and lasting agreement. My colleagues are carefully and quickly reviewing the text and preparing the answer," the top Iranian diplomat pointed out.

The two sides also exchanged viewpoints on the most important issues of common interest, as well as the latest developments in the course of negotiations to resurrect the Iran nuclear accord, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and removal of sanctions against Tehran.

Amirabdollahian emphasized that enhancement of relations with neighboring countries constitutes a top priority in the foreign policy of the incumbent Iranian administration led by President Ebrahim Raisi.

He expressed satisfaction with the growing relations between Tehran and Abu Dhabi, and called for the resolution of consular problems of Iranians living in the United Arab Emirates, namely Iranian schools in the Arab country.

Amirabdollahian said on Wednesday during a joint press conference with his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov that "stronger guarantees" were needed from the American side to reach an agreement.

"We have received the American side's last text, and my colleagues are closely studying the response with the required [level of] rigor and speed," he remarked, flanked by Lavrov.

## Iran Steel Output Rises 34.1% yr/yr in July

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's crude steel production in July rose 34.1% from a year earlier to 2 million metric tons (mt), World Steel Association data shows.

The figures cited in a Thursday report by the Iranian Steel Producers Association showed that Iran's steel output in the seven months to July had reached a total of 17.4 million mt, up 3.7% from the same period last year.

That came as global steel output fell by 5.4% in January-July to reach 1,102.3 million mt, according to the same figures which indicated that largest producer China also saw its output decline by 6.4% to 609.3 million mt over the same period.

Global production in July fell by 6.5% from last year to stand at 149.3 million mt, showed the figures.

An analysis published in the official IRNA news agency said that a major surge in Iranian steel output in July was mainly a result of a stable electricity supply provided to plants in the country in the early summer.

Iranian steel producers faced lengthy and recurrent power cuts last year mainly because of a surge in electricity demand in the country's business and household sectors.

WorldSteel figures showed that Iran and India were the only countries among the 10 leading global steel producers who had recorded output increases in the seven months to July.

Russia recorded the biggest fall in output in January-July at around 7% as Western sanctions imposed on Moscow over a war in Ukraine continued to affect exports from the country.

## Tehran, Beirut to Keep Pursuing Imam Musa al-Sadr Case

TEHRAN (MNA) - The case of Imam Musa Sadr will be on the agenda of the diplomatic apparatus of Iran and Lebanon until reaching a clear result, the Iranian Foreign Minister said.

Hossein Amirabdollahian issued a statement on the occasion of the 41st anniversary of the kidnapping of Imam Musa Sadr and his two companions Sheikh Muhammad Yaqub and Abbas Badreddin in Libya in 1978.

Amirabdollahian hailed Imam Musa Sadr's measures in unifying the Muslim and Christian communities of Lebanon.

"Imam Moussa Sadr has not been among us for 44 years, but his determination in the fight against the Zionist regime is still the great goal of the Islamic Ummah," Amirabdollahian said.

The case of Imam Musa Sadr is always one of the important issues on the agenda of the diplomatic apparatus of Iran and Lebanon until the reality is clarified, he stressed.

Imam Musa al-Sadr was a highly revered Shia cleric of Iranian descent, who founded the Lebanese Amal (Hope) Movement in 1974. He came to Lebanon in 1959 to work for the rights of Shia Muslims in the port city of Tyre, located about 80 kilometers (50 miles) south of Beirut.

The prominent Shia cleric disappeared on August 31, 1978, during an official visit to the Libyan capital Tripoli.

He had constantly called for resistance against Israeli occupation in Lebanon warning that it would always be a threat against the country unless it is deterred. Over 40 years since his disappearance, people here say, his words are more relevant than ever.

## Tehran, Baku Not to Let Others Intervene in Bilateral Affairs

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Minister of Interior Ahmad Vahidi said that a third party is seeking to create misunderstandings between Iran and Azerbaijan Republic, noting that the two countries will not let others intervene in their bilateral relations.

Speaking on the sidelines of a meeting in Tehran with visiting Azeri minister of justice, Vahidi noted that such misunderstandings will not be in the interest of either Iran or Azerbaijan.

He said that the two ministers discussed ways to fight drug trafficking and also had talks on some medicines that are authorized in Iran while they are considered as illegal in Azerbaijan which have caused problems for a number of Iranian tourists or truck drivers in that country.

## Iran "Biggest Victim" Of Int'l Terrorism

TEHRAN (PressTV) - The secretary of the Guardian Council, Iran's top supervisory body, says the Islamic Republic is "the biggest victim" of international terrorism, slamming the so-called human rights defenders for turning blind eye to it.

Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati made the remarks, a day after the country marked its National Day of Fight Against Terrorism.

"Iran has suffered more from terrorist acts than any other country," the senior official said, "while those who lay claim to defending human rights have never wanted to see this reality."

National Day of Fight Against Terrorism, observed every year in the Islamic Republic of Iran with solemn ceremonies, marks the assassination of Iran's then-president Mohammad Ali Rajaei and Prime Minister Mohammad Javad Bahaonar.

Rajaei and Bahaonar and several other officials had convened at the Tehran office of the Iranian prime minister for a meeting of Iran's Supreme Defense Council when a bomb explosion ripped through the building, killing all of them.

Survivors recounted that a person, identified as Massoud Kashmiri, had brought a briefcase into the conference room and then left.

Subsequent investigations revealed that Kashmiri had been an operative working for the anti-Iran Mujahedin-e-Khalq Organization terrorist cult, who had infiltrated the Iranian premier's office disguised as a state security official.

Ayatollah Jannati said it was ludicrous that the countries that aided MKO in committing crimes against the people of Iran were claiming to fight terrorism.

He said it was strange for "the founders and employers" of terrorism in the world to claim to be fighting the phenomenon, identifying the Israeli regime as "the most principal example of state terrorism."

The senior official noted that the victims of terrorism need their rights restored through legal channels, saying it was the "destruction of terrorist administrations" that would avenge those martyred by acts of terrorism.



Epic of Popular Gov't in Line With Developing Infrastructures of Qeshm Free Zone

Old Dreams of Beautiful Kish Island Coming True



The purpose of creating and developing free zones is to increase and develop exports, create employment, attract domestic and foreign investment and transfer technology, increase public revenues, increase tourism, improve the economic status of the country and benefit from a competitive economy. The requirement to realize these goals is to provide infrastructure, which is one of the necessities of Iran's free zones today. During the past one year, Qeshm Free Zone has implemented important measures in order to complete the infrastructure measures that are considered necessary for the development and prosperity of production, in order to solve the demands of the people of this island in the past years.Qeshm Island is on the path of balanced and sustainable development. This issue can be seen now and one year after the popular and revolutionary government of Ayatollah Raisi and during the new administration of Qeshm Free Zone Organization. For months, various departments of the Qeshm Free Zone Organization have been working with all their might to provide services and improve infrastructure. There have been shortages in the island from the past, which has caused Qeshm to need many infrastructures to continue moving towards development. In order to achieve development, Qeshm Island needs the support of all departments and the sympathy of parliamentarians, officials and the local community.Qeshm has many capacities in the fields of tourism, economy, oil and energy, fisheries, etc., and the development along with increasing the capacity and improving the livelihood of the local community can lead to the prosperity of the island's economy and increase the quality of life of the island's residents. There are still many projects and plans in Qeshm Island that have not been completed and have been planned for, and with empathy and increased interaction between the representatives of the parliament and the people's government officials, we can try to solve the existing problems faster.

**Creating hope by solving three old problems of Qeshm**  
Supplying the drinking water needed by different parts of Qeshm Island, especially the western regions and villages, improving roads and building standard highways to facilitate traffic on the island's roads, as well as planning to solve the housing problem of the youth, are the three historical problems of the islanders, which fortunately in the government Popular and revolutionary Ayatollah Raisi, and especially after the beginning of Afshar Fath Elahi's administration as the chairman of the board and CEO of the Free Zone Organization, it has been seriously planned to solve them.During the past months, the organization of the Qeshm Free Zone has put measures related to solving old problems in several stages in order to create hope for the residents of Qeshm Island and to empathize with the local community. Actions that are still being implemented. Today, more than in the past, the residents of Qeshm Island hope to witness the improvement of the service situation and increase the quality of life with the implementation of infrastructure projects.

**Serious Determination to Solve the youth housing problem**  
Solving the housing problem and building one million housing units annually in the country was one of the promises of the popular and revolutionary government of Ayatollah Raisi, which was also noticed by the officials of the Qeshm Free Zone Organization in Qeshm Island. The housing problem has been one of the serious concerns of the people of Najib Qeshm, which had not been paid attention to in recent years, and the Qeshm youth housing project was launched with the aim of providing housing for the people. This project started from the westernmost area of the island and will continue to the easternmost point of Qeshm.In the first phase of the Basaeido housing project, 137 young people will own houses, and in this plan, the price of land is almost removed from the cost of housing, and cheap facilities are considered for construction. More than 8,500 people have registered in this youth housing project in Qeshm, and after the stages of verification and refinement of applicants, implementation operations will be started in other villages of the island as well. In the youth housing project, the goal is not to hand over land; Rather, it is the people's access to affordable housing, with suitable and durable quality.Qeshm Free Zone Organization, in the process of implementing this project and to prevent land gambling, only native people, living in Qeshm and without a home, who did not use government facilities, were qualified in the youth housing project. Land grabbing has been done before with the slogan of providing housing for the people and the youth, and all the people, villagers and governors should help to prevent unauthorized constructions.Also, in the first week of August of this year, the construction of 499 units in the second phase of Qeshm Island youth housing project, with an area of 235,800 square meters, was broken in the presence of the CEO of Qeshm Free Zone Organization. Plots intended for housing construction have an area of at least 250 square meters, which for 499 households in this phase, will include a total of 235,800 square meters of land in 8 villages in the west of the island. The cost of the land has not been calculated in

this plan, and qualified youths with the cooperation of the Housing Foundation can start construction using low-interest facilities until the hard work stage.It was in this connection that the CEO of the Qeshm Free Zone Organization considered the full implementation of the youth housing plan as the key to solving the housing problem in this island. In response to people's demands regarding the housing problem, Afshar Fath Elahi said: With the full implementation of the youth housing project in the island, the housing problem in Qeshm will be solved. He continued: A good cooperation has been formed between the Qeshm Free Zone Organization and the Housing Foundation, the positive results of which will be visible to the residents of the island in the near future.In the area of issuing permits and also locating a suitable place for the construction and start of the Qeshm Island youth housing project, we have also seen good progress. The ultimate goal of the Qeshm Free



Zone Organization is to provide housing for the youth of Qeshm Island, and according to the plan, the land transfer policy will not be implemented. In the plan,Youth Housing seeks to build standard, safe and befitting housing for the residents of the island in line with the authentic culture of this region.

**The beginning of Movement for Making Asphalt the Qeshm rural roads**  
At the beginning of June of this year, Qeshm Free Zone Organization and Hormozgan Housing Foundation General Administration signed a memorandum of understanding on asphalt movement in villages and rural roads within Hadi's plan in more than 40 villages of Qeshm Island. With the implementation of this memorandum, the asphaltting of more than 40 villages of Qeshm Island will be implemented this year with the cooperation and support of the villagers.The implementation of this memorandum can increase the speed of project implementation as well as the optimal management of construction costs in the development plans of the villages of the island. At the same time, of course, it was announced that village councilors of the villages of Qeshm Island will be in turn to implement this project if they are ready and carry out the infrastructure for asphaltting the roads.In the people's government of Ayatollah Raisi and the new management period of the Qeshm Free Zone Organization, we will witness the proper service to the people and residents of Qeshm Island with the implementation of various plans and projects, and steps will be taken in the direction of the balanced development of this island. Also, it is planned and in order to improve the quality level and improve the environmental and residential conditions of the villages, and with the aim of solving the deficiencies and problems in the guiding plan of the villages of the island, various meetings are held.



**Ground-Breaking of South Coast Road of Qeshm**  
On the other hand, it was in the middle of June of this year that the 60-kilometer-long South Coast road widening project from Qeshm city to the island's international airport with a credit of 15 thousand billion Rials hit the ground. In this project, which is built by Khatam Al-Anbia camp, 2 new road lanes including infrastructure, paving, asphalt along with signs are considered. According to the estimates, this project will be put into operation with a credit amounting to 15 thousand billion Rials.The southern coastal road passes through the city of Qeshm, Souza and the villages of Turgan, Rigo, Barke Khalaf, Masan and Shib Daraz, and 49 thousand Qashm citizens will directly benefit from it. Also, according to experts, the amount of machinery for the implementation of this project,

which is equipped by the Khatam Al-Anbia camp, is unparalleled in national projects.Carrying out these huge construction projects promises the management planning of the Qeshm Free Zone Organization in the new era for a development leap in the island. In the path of development, Qeshm needs to complete the required infrastructure, one of the most important of which is the creation of access roads and a comprehensive transportation network. The CEO of Qeshm Free Zone Organization emphasized in this ceremony that Qeshm is on the path of development and some may be upset about this issue, but we are moving with all our strength in the direction of serving the people.Afshar Fateh Elahi also considered the construction of the Persian Gulf bridge as another infrastructure project that is currently in the process of financing, and the completion of this bridge and the island's roads and the creation of a suitable transportation network will pave the way for the Qeshm Free Zone to achieve its missions and objectives. The plans to establish the region and become the energy hub of the region accelerate.

The beginning of the executive operation of the east island highway ring

With the plans made in the new period of management of the Qeshm Free Zone and the deputy director of construction of this organization, in the middle of July, the executive operations of phase 4 and completion of phase 3 of the Persian Gulf highway with a credit amounting to 9 thousand billion Rials and a length of 40 kilometers were completed in order to complete the ring. East of Qeshm highway was started.The construction of this road is one of the long-standing demands of the people of the island, and we are planning with all our might in all the infrastructure and development areas of the island, and more good news is coming for the people. This project is the main vehicle traffic route to the island and its implementation is done in the form of completion of the Persian Gulf network communication master plan which includes bridge, highway and railway line connected to Kaveh port.This project is implemented in two parts, the first part includes the construction of phase 4, the construction of two lanes of the highway including infrastructure, pavement, buildings, asphalt and installation of traffic signs, 30 kilometers long, between the commercial port of Kaveh and the passenger port of Laft with credit It amounts to seven thousand and 500 billion Rials.The second part is the completion of the implementation of phase three of the Persian Gulf highway, including four lanes of the highway, including the completion of buildings, asphalt and the installation of traffic signs with a credit of one thousand and 500 billion Rials, with a length of 9 kilometers, which is between Darghan Square and Kaveh commercial port. connects each other.With the implementation of this project, the highway axis from Qeshm city to Laft passenger port, which is one of the busiest passenger ports in the country, has been completed and the level of accessibility and safety of residents and tourists has been improved. Also, with the implementation of this project, the highway ring in the east of Qeshm Island from Laft Passenger Port to Qeshm International Airport will be completed as one of the long-standing wishes of the people of the island, after many years in the 13th government with a people-oriented approach.

**Willingness to solve the challenge of water supply**  
The supply of drinking water required by all parts of Qeshm Island has always been one of the demands of the residents of this region. Although measures have been taken in past governments to solve the problem of water supply in villages and cities of Qeshm Island, these measures have had a different effect in the popular and revolutionary government of Ayatollah Raisi and caused many elders and officials to express their satisfaction in this regard. Jihadi measures in the new management period of the Qeshm Free Zone Organization to solve the water problem started from the very first days of the administration of Afshar Fatah Elahi, and with the beginning of the new year, it was put on the agenda more seriously.It was on the first day of this year that Ali Akbar Mehrabian, Minister of Energy, while in Qeshm, visited the island's power plant capacities and electricity and water production. It was during the same visit that the CEO of the Qeshm Free Zone Organization addressed the issue of solving the problem of water supply to the villages pursued the island seriously. On the same day, the Minister of Energy announced the construction of 3 new desalinators in Qeshm Island in 1401 and the provision of drinking water to villages across the island. Mehrabian said during a visit to the power plant projects of Qeshm Island: the provision of safe drinking water for the people of Qeshm villages, especially in the west of the island, is being pursued seriously. He continued: The contracts for the construction of these fountains have been concluded and will be completed by the end of the year.After that, it was announced that the necessary planning for the implementation of important water supply projects with the aim of meeting the water needs of Qeshm Island, especially rural areas, has been done, and their completion will lead to the stability of the water situation in this region. Based on the forecasts made by exploiting three desalination sites in Basaeido (west), Selakh (center) and Turgan (east) of Qeshm, more than 12 thousand cubic meters per day will be added to the production capacity of this city, which will improve the water condition of the villages. Qeshm will be

**Opening of Qeshm desalination plant**  
It was at the end of July of this year that the project of 1500 cubic meters of water desalination in Qeshm city with a credit amounting to 90 billion Rials to supply drinking water to 2500 households living in Negin of the Persian Gulf was officially opened in the presence of the CEO of the Free Zone Organization and high-ranking officials of this city. . This new water desalination machine with a capacity of 1500 cubic meters was launched in Qeshm, relying on the power of local experts, with a third of the normal costs and saving 700 thousand dollars.

Afshar Fath Elahi, the chairman of the board of directors and the CEO of the Qeshm Free Zone Organization, in the operation and opening ceremony of the 1,500 cubic meter water desalination project in Qeshm city, said: In the year that was named as the year of support for knowledge-based companies by the order of the Supreme Leader This great work was done by the compassionate and jihadist personnel of the Water, Electricity and Facilities Company of Qeshm Free



Zone Organization, which in my opinion doubles the value of the work.He continued: "Everywhere in the country we trusted young and expert forces, by the grace of God, we got results that surprised everyone, this work is also from a technical point of view and experts who know this specialized field and understand how much work this is." It is big, it was done within 60 days and with the production of 1,500 cubic meters of drinking water at less than a third of the cost.CEO of Qeshm Free Zone Organization added: This opening and launch is a valuable work and I kiss the hands of each and every personnel who participated in this project and proved themselves and appreciate all your efforts during these hot days of the year. do

**Solving the water problem of Darghan city**  
In the same days, it was announced that there is an issue of water supply in Darghan city, which was resolved by the decision taken by the CEO of Qeshm Free Zone Organization. Part of the need of Darghan city happened in the desalination of this city and it was done by updating this collection. Also, another part of it was restored and the water production capacity increased.Darghan's water problem, with the efforts of the provincial water managers and the governor, led to a four-way agreement and transferring this issue to the Minister of Energy. The Minister of Energy also agreed to participate in this project by leaving the water formalities of one of the private sector complexes (Qeshm Mould Power Plant) which is now able to produce water. It is being done and it will take about a month for the water transmission line from Qeshm Mould power plant to Dargahan city to be completed. With this work, we have added about five thousand cubic meters of water production in Darghan city, which is twice the existing capacity and a large part of it. The problems of that area are solved.Fath Elahi continued: "Now, by the grace of God, we do not have a water cut in the city of Qeshm, except in some old neighborhoods because the water supply network there has problems, and this update is a joint work of the Qeshm Municipality and the Qeshm Azad Zone Water, Electricity and Facilities Company." It is being done, and with this work, we will not have any problems in terms of water production in Qeshm city and the surrounding villages, thanks to God, and we will not have a definite water problem in Qeshm city around the clock.

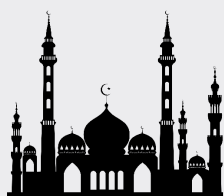
The beginning of the process of building a new desalination plant in Qeshm

On the other hand, in the early days of September of this year and at the same time as the beginning of the government week, the executive operation of designing and building a new desalination plant of 10,000 cubic meters in the city of Qeshm and a water storage tank with a credit amounting to 2550 billion Rials was carried out with the presence of the CEO of the Qeshm Free Zone Organization. And the judicial



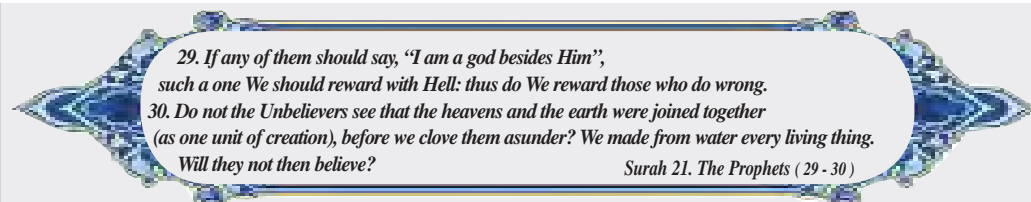
deputy of the Attorney General of the country began.The CEO of Qeshm Free Zone Organization said in this ceremony: Qeshm Island needs infrastructure development to achieve economic growth, and water is one of the main infrastructures, which unfortunately was not invested in this issue in the past years.Fath Elahi continued: Providing drinking water with good quality is one of the main demands of the people of Qeshm, and in the revolutionary government, we consider ourselves obliged to fulfill this demand, and of course, according to the contract, this project will be put into operation within one year, but according to According to the negotiations with the project manager, this water softener is expected to enter the circuit by the end of the year.According to the CEO of the Qeshm Free Zone Organization, we will not have any problems with the exploitation of this project by private sector investment in the city of Qeshm and the surrounding villages until 1404. Also, in addition to the provision of sanitary drinking water, the management of surface and underground water of the island for the revival of agriculture should also be followed seriously, and an expert team is currently conducting research in this field.





## PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	13:03
■ Evening (Maghreb)	19:47
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	05:12
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:38



## Iran Set to Join Russia's MIR Card Payment System

**IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK**

**TEHRAN - The Iranian Central Bank of Iran is negotiating to join Russia's MIR payment card system to facilitate financial transfers and trade, according to Hadi Tizhoush Taban, the Chairman of the Iran Russia Joint Chamber of Commerce.**

MIR is supported by Russia's SPFS payment system and operates as its alternative to SWIFT.

Taban said that the first stage of cooperation would be to enable financial transactions between Iran and Russia via MIR, adding that it is possible that Iran could transfer money with other member countries via this system in coming steps. That will include members of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), which Iran has a Free Trade Agreement with, and includes Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan in addition to Russia. All are connected to MIR.

It will also have a positive effect on Iran's trade with Tajikistan, Turkey and Uzbekistan, who also use MIR, in addition to Vietnam which also has an EAEU FTA and accepts MIR. Venezuela and Cuba also use MIR card systems and the network can be expected to grow. Russia recently approached the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which has a strong Central Asian and Arabic membership base, to consider joining its SPFS system. Should that happen, MIR payment card facilities will follow.



Taban pointed out the recent trilateral agreement between Iran, Russia, and Azerbaijan for accelerating transit will increase trade between the three countries and includes digital data exchange. According to the Russian Federal Customs Service, trade turnover between Iran and Russia reached \$4.035 billion in 2021, an 81.7% increase over the previous year.

In 2022 to date, Russia's exports to Iran hit US\$3.068 billion, recording a 2.2% increase while Russian imports from Iran reached US\$967.3 million, a 21.4% increase.

Meanwhile Taban said that Iran's share of Russia's trade turnover is just .5% and recent MoU between Iran, Russia and Azerbaijan is aimed at boosting trade among the three countries. He noted that according to the Custom Office of Russia, the trade volume of Iran and Russia was over \$4b in 2021 which shows 81.7% growth comparing to 2020.

He added that Russia's exports to Iran with 2.2% growth reached \$3b while its imports from Iran with 21.4% growth hit \$967.3%.

## EESC Begins Joint Interaction With Malaysia



**IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK**

TEHRAN – Head of Eurasian Economic Studies Center (EESC) Mr. Mehdi Azadvari announced beginning of joint cooperation with Malaysia after meeting Malaysian Charge d'Affaires to Tehran.

Azadvari said that the beginning of joint cooperation between EESC and Malaysia was discussed in meeting with Malaysia's Charge d'Affaires to Tehran Mr. Mohd Nizam Halimi and it was decided easing and reinforcing trade between the two countries and also Eurasia to be operationalized.

He added that Malaysia has one of the most successful economies of Southeast of Asia, noting that this country with population around 25m and land around 330,000 square kilometers enjoys over 7% of GDP and the per capita in this country was around \$43,500 in 2004 and its revenue only in tourism was \$13b in that year.

Azadvari went on to say that economic boom in Malaysia has prepared a good ground for economic cooperation with that country and many big Malaysian companies are ready for investment in other countries. He reiterated that beside trade of goods and services, Malaysia has always been pursuing attraction of investment in mega projects in Iran and during the visit of a high-ranking economic delegation from Malaysia to Tehran in July, both sides reached some agreements on investment.

He further said that since 60% of Malaysians are Muslims they have special attachment for cooperation with Iran and the grounds for cooperation exist in Iran for Malaysians to cooperate while other countries are deprived of these grounds.

He then pointed to the trade balance and turnover of Malaysia and pointed to the grounds for cooperation with this country.

## Iran to Supply \$2.5b Worth of CNG Services to Nigeria

**IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK**

TEHRAN – Iranian companies will supply some \$2.5 billion worth of services related to natural gas for vehicles (NGV) business to Nigeria as part of recent agreement between the two countries, an industry source has revealed.

Mahmud Ghassemi, a member of Iran's syndicate of compressed natural gas (CNG) businesses, said on Wednesday that a delegation from Iran will travel to Nigeria next week to sign a contract to supply of CNG service to the African country.

Ghassemi said works in Nigeria by Iranian companies will include the conversion of 1 million vehicles to CNG as well as the construction of 1,000 CNG stations in the African country.

He said Iran and Nigeria had agreed to a duration of seven years for the project that will be concentrated in three Nigerian cities.

The businessman said fueling stations planned for



construction in Nigeria by Iranian companies will be of the LCNG type which feed on liquefied natural gas. He said some 70 plants will be set up in Nigeria for vehicle conversion services.

The remarks come days after Iranian and Nigerian oil ministers signed a memorandum of understanding to expand petroleum sector cooperation between the two leading oil producers in the world.

Iranian Oil Minister Javad Owji said after signing the deal that the provision of CNG services by Iran to Nigeria will be a main component of the agreement.

Owji said Nigeria will in return supply technical and engineering services to Iran's natural gas liquefaction sector.

Nigeria launched an ambitious plan to convert its car fleet to gas last year as the country aims to cut reliance on imported fuel and use its excessive supplies of liquefied natural gas.

## Iran, Syria Talk to Cooperate on Fields of Oil, Gas

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Deputy Minister of Oil and Mineral Resources Khaled al-Aleli and the Executive Director of the Syrian-Iranian People's Friendship Association, Chairman of the Economic Committee, Hassan Shakesi discussed the prospects of mutual cooperation in the fields of oil and gas.

Al-Alej stressed the importance of cooperation in the field of seismic surveying, drilling, petrochemical materials and oil services, according to Syria's official SANA news agency.

Shakesi, for his side, offered to establish a joint company in the field of prospecting, exploration, drilling and petrochemical materials so that it would form a nucleus for neighboring states.

The Syrian oil and gas industry is one of Iran's most significant markets for investment. The synergy of the two states in the oil and gas field can be an important step in the economic cooperation between Damascus and Tehran.

## Minister Stresses Need to Boost Refining Capacity

TEHRAN (Shana) - Emphasizing the investment in the construction of refineries and petro-refineries in the country, the Iranian Oil Minister said: "The refining capacity in the country should be enhanced."

Javad Owji said that the refining capacity in the country must increase and for that, there is no other way than building petro-refineries.

He stated the advantage of building a petro-refining plant, in addition to providing fuel for the country,

providing feedstock for petrochemical plants, and said: "Some petrochemical plants were facing shortage of feedstock last year."

Referring to the administration's plan to build a refinery with the capacity to refine 300,000 barrels of oil per day (martyr Qassem Soleimani) and stating that this is important in the 1401 budget, the petroleum minister added: "This refinery is located next to the Persian Gulf Star Refinery and its land has also been assigned."

# Europe Eyes Iran, Venezuela Oil, Gas

TEHRAN (IFP) - A former official with Iran's ministry of oil says Europe is pinning its hopes on gas supplies from Iran and Venezuela, both under US-spearheaded sanctions, to replace the Russian gas before the winter.

In an interview with Iran's Labor News Agency (ILNA), Mahmoud Khaghani, the former director general of the Caspian Sea and Central Asia Department at Iran's Ministry of Oil, said in case Europe fails to reach an agreement with either Iran or Venezuela, Europeans will have to go through a frigid winter.

After Moscow's spat over the conflict in Ukraine, Russia's state-run natural gas giant Gazprom completely cut gas deliveries to Europe through the Nord Stream 1 pipeline, raising concerns over energy rationing in the continent.

Khaghani said, "Currently, Europe's gas imports from Russia have decreased by about 80 percent. Europe is trying to persuade the US to green light imports from Iran and Venezuela to compensate for the deficit of natural gas and crude oil imports from Russia."

The former Iranian official also claimed US representatives have held secret ties with Venezuelan government officials in bid to fill part of the vacuum in Europe after Russia suspended its supplies.

However, Khaghani said the prospects for replacing the Russian fuel is bleak, as Venezuela might turn down the request and Iran has to fulfill its own domestic needs for gas during the winter before exporting its products.

## 12-Megawatt Power Station of Anarak Cement Factory Inaugurated



**IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK**

TEHRAN – On the occasion of Government Week, the 12-megawatt power station of Deljan Cement Factory of Anarak Cement Company was inaugurated in the presence of Deputy Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade and Head of Industrial Development and Renovation Organization (IDRO) Mr. Ali Nabavi.

The inaugurated power station has been constructed with a 12,000b rial credit.

Head of IDRO Mr. Nabavi also during his visit to Markazi (Central) Province which was accompanied by governor of the province and representative of Mahalat and Delijan to Majlis, visited the industrial unit of Arya Sanaat Company, the producer of different hot rolling, profile and pipes, the production unit of Sadaf Termeh Fiber as the active cooperative of fabric industry and Barij Essence Company which is producer of different medicines and herbal complementary.

Then Mr. Navavi with presence at the Golzar-e Shohada (Martyrs' Cemetery) of the town of Delijan paid pay homage to martyrs and met the family of Martyr Ghajri.

## 8 Water Supply Projects to Be Inaugurated in Isfahan Province

**IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK**

ISFAHAN – The CEO of Isfahan Province Water and Wastewater Company (ABFA of Isfahan) pointing to the importance of serving rural population said that during the Government Week, 8 projects for water supply to 16 villages with the cost around 383b rials will come on stream due to the policy for providing healthy and sustainable drinking water to villages.

Hossein Akbarian said that preventing excessive exodus of rural population to cities and increase and creating stability in the rural population will be possible through providing healthy drinking water as the basic factor. He added that reforming drinking water network of Batlien Boein Miandasht, water supply to 2 villages of Darreh Mehdigholi and Vanak Olia Chadgan, water supply to Moorche Khort and reform and expansion of water network of Badroud region are of the main projects for providing and developing sustainable drinking water in Isfahan Province which will come on stream in the government week.

He added that with implementing water supplies to 16 villages in Isfahan Province, some 12,971 people in 4,380 households will enjoy having healthy drinking water.

Akbarian then pointed to providing required infrastructures for supplying drinking water for villagers and said construction of 2 reservoirs and four pumping stations, reform and developing 17 kilometers of distribution network has been completed and implementation of project for launching 50 kilometers of transmission line for the sustainable access of villagers to the drinking water has been operationalized.

Akbarian also pointed to some other water supply projects in the province which helps over 167,000 people to enjoy healthy drinking water. He also mentioned completion of project of telemetry of pumping stations and transmission lines of water of Shahin Shahr which have been operationalized





## G20 Climate Talks In Indonesia End Without Joint Communiqué

BALI (Dispatches) - Group of 20 climate talks in Bali ended without a joint communiqué despite host Indonesia warning the world's leading economies they must act together to combat a warming planet or risk plunging into "uncharted territory".

The one-day meeting on the resort island concluded with Indonesia's environment chief saying G20 chair Jakarta would only issue a summary of the forum's aims, reflecting divisions between its members over how to tackle climate change.

The failure to agree a unified statement came at the end of a month in which more than 1,000 people died in Pakistan from flooding blamed on climate change and after a drought exacerbated by a record heatwave spread across half of China.

At a closing press conference, Indonesian Minister of Environment and Forestry Siti Nurbaya Bakar said the summary would detail the forum's "shared commitment and shared steps".

It is a similar move to that seen in finance talks in Indonesia last month where the host -- which maintains a neutral foreign policy -- issued a chair statement after ministers disagreed over Russia's responsibility for global economic turmoil in light of its invasion of Ukraine.

"We cannot say that," Bakar told AFP when asked if there was no communiqué because of geopolitical disagreements.

"But the chair summary is something we can achieve given the geopolitical issues and (given) some countries cannot be flexible on certain issues.

"Just like in many working groups, issues on Russia and Ukraine have become geopolitical tension."

Another source close to the meeting said G20 members "did not manage to reach a joint communiqué" and most countries started their speeches by condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine, though there were no walkouts or clashes when the Russian representative spoke.

"The reason that killed the communiqué from the start is the presence of Russia today," the source told AFP.

Moscow only sent a deputy minister for economic development to the talks, according to a list of attendees seen by AFP.

In her opening remarks Bakar had told delegates that "global environmental problems require global solutions" and nations "cannot solve those global environmental problems on our own".

Countries around the world are being increasingly hit by record heat, flash floods and droughts -- phenomena that scientists say will become more frequent and intense due to climate change.

Research published this month showed the Arctic has warmed nearly four times faster than the rest of the planet over the last 40 years, suggesting climate models and governments are underestimating the rate of polar heating.

"We cannot hide from the fact that the world is facing increasingly compounding challenges," Bakar said, referencing energy price spikes and global food shortages.

"We know that climate change could become an amplifier and multiplier of the crises."

She added that climate change "would not only wipe out all development progress that has been achieved over past decades, particularly in emerging economies, but it would also propel us over an environmental tipping point into uncharted territory where no future will be sustainable".

At the meeting were US Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry, Britain's climate minister Alok Sharma and officials from India, Australia, Italy, Brazil, Japan, South Korea and the European Union among others.

China -- the world's biggest emitter of greenhouse gases -- only sent a vice minister of ecology and environment, with higher-level officials staying home because of the Covid-19 pandemic.



## Cuba Seeks More Electricity Supply From Turkish Powerships

HAVANA (Dispatches) - Cuba, mired in an energy crisis that has brought frequent blackouts, is negotiating with a Turkish company to have it double the megawatts it currently produces for the country from shipboard generators just offshore, according to two people with knowledge of the discussions.

Cuban officials are in talks with Karpowership, one of the world's largest operators of floating power plants and part of the Turkey-based Karadeniz Holding, the sources said. The company already has five ships operating off Cuba with a capacity of around 250 megawatts (MW).

The Communist-run country needs to generate more than 3,000 MW to meet minimum demand and currently is producing between 2,000 MW and 2,500 MW.

The Cuban National Electric Union did not respond to a request for comment. Karadeniz declined to comment.

The sources, who asked not to be identified due to the sensitivity of the negotiations, said the talks centered on how to ensure lease payments from Cuba.

"The (U.S. trade) embargo makes Western financial transactions very difficult and Cuba is cash short and behind on payments with many suppliers and joint venture partners," one source said.

Experts say the Turkish company would need to add to its fleet off Cuba to produce the required amount of energy. Powerships carry their own generator fueled by oil or gas, anchor close to land and connect to the local electricity grid. They are leased by the host country.

The deal, if it moves forward, would provide quick and much-needed relief for the embattled Cuban government as power outages have spread across the island and increased in length.

Cuba is desperate for more electricity.

The energy crisis, with blackouts in 4 to 6-hour-blocks twice daily or more in most of the country, is perhaps the most painful symptom of a deeper financial crisis caused by external factors such as U.S. sanctions, the COVID-19 pandemic and poor economic management.

Cubans are also living through food, medicine and fuel shortages, forcing them to wait in long lines for the basics.

There have been scattered, small protests this summer and U.S. authorities registered a record of more than 175,000 Cubans at the U.S.-Mexican border since October, according to U.S. Customs and Border Protection agency statistics.

Cuban power plants are obsolete, averaging 35 years of age, with a backup system of hundreds of smaller generators at least 15 years old. Just 5% of power comes from alternative energy sources.

The government blames lack of funds for its inability to update its decrepit grid, and says breakdowns, not fuel shortages, are the main cause of blackouts.

Energy and Mining Minister Livan Arronte Cruz said last week that the country hoped to all but eliminate blackouts by the end of the year, in part by adding "531 megawatts to generating capacity through new investments," a figure reduced to 450 MW by President Miguel Diaz-Canel at the weekend.

Omar Ramirez Mendoza, deputy director of the state electricity monopoly, said on state-run TV that "240 MW {of the 450 MW} will come from mobile generation," a euphemism used by officials to refer to the powerships and coinciding with the source accounts.

The remainder of the new capacity would come from upgrading existing facilities with the help of foreign partners in the Moa nickel region in eastern Cuba and at the Mariel Special Development Zone just west of Havana, Ramirez said.



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## Indian Troops Join Russian Military Exercise

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - Soldiers from the Indian army have landed in Russia for a week-long military exercise, India's defense ministry said, days after the United States said it had concerns about any country exercising with Russia now.

The Indian government said that its forces have regularly participated in multilateral exercises in Russia, along with a number of other countries. Russia is the biggest supplier of military hardware to India.

An Indian Army contingent "arrived at the exercise location and over the next seven days will undertake joint manoeuvres to include joint field training exercises, combat discussions, and firepower exercises", the Indian defence ministry said in a statement.



## Pakistan Court Extends Imran Khan's Bail

ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) - A Pakistani court extended former Prime Minister Imran Khan's pre-arrest bail for two weeks on terrorism charges relating to a speech after Khan appeared in court amid tight security, his lawyer said.

"It is not at all a case of terrorism," Faisal Chaudhry, the lawyer told Reuters of the charges, which Khan and his aides have termed politically motivated.

The bail was approved until Sept. 12, he said. The pre-arrest bail expired on Aug. 31.

The charges against Khan are related to what police said was a threat to Islamabad police chief and a female judge after Khan spoke about police torture of an aide who faces sedition charges for inciting mutiny in the military.



## Taiwan Claims China Simulating Attacks on U.S. Navy Ships



TAIPEI (Dispatches) - China has been simulating attacks on U.S. Navy ships and is aiming to prevent foreign forces from coming to Taiwan's aid in the event of a war, Taiwan's defense ministry said in a strongly worded report raising the alarm on Beijing's military designs.

Tensions between Taiwan and China have soared following a visit to Taipei last month by U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, which infuriated Beijing, which viewed it as an interference in its affairs.

China, which claims democratically-governed Taiwan as its own despite the strong objections of the Taipei government, carried out war games after Pelosi's trip and is continuing its military activities near the island.

Taiwan's defense ministry, in a report to parliament that was reviewed by Reuters, said China was continuing to strengthen its combat preparedness for an attack on the island. It was focusing on the first island chain, which runs from Japan through Taiwan, the Philippines and on to Borneo, enclosing China's coastal seas.

There was no immediate response from Beijing to the report.

China has been "using combat drills to carry out simulated attacks on U.S. ships that enter into the first island chain", the report said, and aims to gain strategic control of that island chain by 2035.

The United States has been regularly sailing naval ships into the South China Sea, sometimes close to Chinese-held islands, and also through the Taiwan Strait on what it calls freedom of navigation missions that always anger China.

Starting this year, the ministry said China has increased its military intimidation including drills that aim to undermine Taiwan's morale and "force negotiations with a war" and "force a unification with arms".

China could use special forces or agents to "decapitate" Taiwan's command systems and damage infrastructure in an attack, and is capable of launching electronic attacks to disrupt communications and command systems, said the report which was dated Thursday. Logistics constraints China could also blockade Taiwan and cut off its energy supplies and economy, it added, but noted Beijing still had transport and logistics constraints to launch a full invasion.

China has, however, been drafting civilian transport ships for annual amphibious drills to boost logistics support for any Taiwan attack, the ministry said, adding it expected China's newest aircraft carrier to enter service in 2025.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine is also being studied by China and has prompted them to "modify" their Taiwan attack plans, the ministry said, without elaborating.

China has "substantially threatened our nation's defense security and endangered peace, security and stability in the areas near the Taiwan Strait," the report said, pointing to Chinese drills that have expanded beyond the first island chain, a move the ministry said was meant to stop foreign countries from intervening in an attack on Taiwan.

## IAEA Chief Inspects Zaporizhzhia Plant

KYIV (Dispatches) - A team of investigators from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has inspected the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant to ascertain the damage caused by shelling at the compound.

Ukraine has accused Russia of shelling Enerhodar, as well as the agreed upon route of the UN team. Meanwhile, Russia's defense ministry has accused Ukrainian "saboteurs" of trying to seize the plant.

The head of Ukraine's state nuclear company says Ukrainian authorities are making "all efforts" to switch back on the plant's fifth reactor after it shut down due to shelling early on Thursday.

Speaking to Reuters at a Ukrainian-controlled checkpoint on the road to the plant, chief Petro Kotin said Ukraine's top priority was to demilitarize the plant and the surrounding area, which has seen increased shelling in recent weeks, to avoid a nuclear accident.

"If this mission helps to do that, then it will be successful," he added.



## 4 Dead as Shiite Rivals Clash in Iraq's Basra

BASRA (Dispatches) - Four militants were killed overnight after an ambush in the southern Iraqi city of Basra sparked clashes between rival Shiite factions, a security source said Thursday, days after deadly clashes in the capital.

Two members of Saraya al-Salam -- an armed faction linked to powerful Shiite cleric Moqtada Sadr -- were killed when their vehicle came under fire from the Asaib Ahl al-Haq force, which lost two fighters in the ensuing gun battle, the source said.

Security forces deployed to quell the fighting, and Basra's governor Assad al-Eidani said on Thursday morning that the situation in the city was now "safe and under control".

The exchange of fire triggered panic only days after clashes between Sadr supporters and rival Iran-backed factions turned Baghdad's highly secure Green Zone into a battlefield.

Thirty Sadr supporters were killed in nearly 24 hours of clashes that erupted on Monday after they stormed the government headquarters in the Green Zone, which houses state institutions and foreign embassies.

The attack in Basra drew strong condemnation from Sadr representative Mohammed Saleh al-Iraqi, who lashed out at Qais al-Khazali, head of the Asaib Ahl al-Haq force.

The force is part of an ex-paramilitary network now integrated into the country's security forces.

"I warn you, Qais! If you do not restrain your insolent militias and if you do not absolve yourself of the murderers and criminals that are affiliated to you... you too are insolent," he said in a statement on Twitter.

Khazali called on his supporters to shut Asaib offices and ignore "insults" against him to avoid an escalation.

"I ask our brothers in Asaib Ahl al-Haq to close all offices of the movement immediately and until further notice," he said on Twitter.

## Poland Seeks €1.3 Trillion From Germany In Reparations for Nazi Occupation

WARSAW (Dispatches) - Poland's government estimated the financial cost of World War II losses to be 1.3 trillion euros and said it would "ask Germany to negotiate these reparations".

Jaroslav Kaczynski, leader of the ruling Law and Justice party (PiS), announced the huge claim at the release of a long-awaited report on the cost of years of Nazi German occupation.

"We not only prepared the report but we have also taken the decision as to the further steps," Kaczynski said during the report's presentation, time to coincide with the 83rd anniversary of the start of World War II.

"We will turn to Germany to open negotiations on the reparations," Kaczynski said, adding that it will be a "long and difficult path".

Since coming to power in 2015, Poland's governing PiS party has often championed the issue of war reparations.

Work on the reparations report began in 2017, when the conservative government insisted that Germany had a "moral duty" in the matter.

Germany has previously dismissed Poland's claims, pointing to a 1953 decision by Poland's then-communist leaders to renunciate reparation claims against East Germany.

But Poland's current government says it rejects that decision, stressing that it was made under pressure from the Soviet Union. On Thursday, Kaczynski brought the issue back front and centre.

"Germany has never really accounted for its crimes against Poland," he said, claiming that many Germans who committed war crimes lived in impunity in Germany after the war.

"The Germans invaded Poland and did us enormous damage. The occupation was unbelievably criminal, unbelievably cruel and caused effects that in many cases continue to this day," the PiS leader added.

Kaczynski claimed the German economy was capable of paying the bill and insisted the move would serve "true Polish-German reconciliation".

The release of the three-volume report was the focus of national observances of the anniversary of the war that began on September 1, 1939, with Nazi Germany's bombing and invasion of Poland that was followed by more than five years of brutal occupation.

The head of the report team, lawmaker Arkadiusz Mularczyk, said it was impossible to place a financial value on the loss of some 5.2 million lives he blamed on the German occupation.



## Macron Defends Russia Dialogue To Prepare Negotiated Peace



PARIS (Dispatches) - French President Emmanuel Macron defended his policy of keeping up a dialogue with Russia after its invasion of Ukraine, saying that Turkey should not be the only power talking to Moscow and preparations should already be made for a negotiated peace.

Macron has repeatedly spoken to Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin since Moscow launched its attack on Ukraine in February, with their latest conversation coming on August 19 following a lengthy pause.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, with whom Macron has had a fractious relationship, has meanwhile actively sought to play the role of mediator, meeting in person with both Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky.

"Who wants Turkey to be the only world power which continues to talk to Russia?" the president told a meeting of French ambassadors at the Elysee Palace.

"We must not give in to any form of false morality which would leave us powerless," he added.

"The job of a diplomat is to talk to everyone, especially to people with whom we do not agree. And so we will continue to do so, in coordination with our allies."

Macron argued that world powers should already be preparing for a "negotiated peace" to end the conflict that has already lasted over half a year, while emphasizing it was up to Kyiv to decide on the timing and the terms.

"We must prepare for a long war. We must avoid escalation and prepare the peace," he said.

"Preparing the peace means talking to all the parties including, as I did just a few days ago and will again, to Russia."

He said such a negotiated peace would not be on the terms "Ukraine would have been subjected to if we had abandoned it to its fate."

Macron argued that Western military assistance for Ukraine, including from France, had allowed the country to withstand the Russian invasion far more effectively than many experts and also Russia had predicted.

"We are not participating in the war, we do not want to," he said, repeating an argument Macron has used since the first days of the war.

"But we cannot let Russia win this war militarily by gaining territory and, at the same time, showing the defeat of the international order and our values on the basis of an aggression."



## Raisi Congratulates Vietnam On Independence Day

TEHRAN (IRNA) - President Ebrahim Raisi in a message congratulated Nguyen Xuan Phuc, the president of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, on the Independence Day of the country.

On the eve of the 50th anniversary of the diplomatic relations of the two countries, I hope to see expansion of the friendly relations between the two nations and cooperation in different economic, political, and cultural fields, President Raisi said in his message.

The National Day of Vietnam is observed on 2 September, commemorating President Ho Chi Minh reading the declarations of independence of Vietnam at Ba Đình Square in Hanoi on September 2, 1945.



## Pakistan Floods Highlight Need for Climate Loss and Damage Help

PARIS (Dispatches) - Rich carbon polluters should feel “moral pressure” to help fund climate-vulnerable nations wracked by weather extremes such as Pakistan, where monstrous flooding has caused devastation, diplomats and observers told AFP.

Torrential monsoon rains have killed more than a thousand, left a third of Pakistan under water and displaced hundreds of thousands, months after the country was scorched by record-shattering heat, intensified by climate change.

While it is too early to quantify the contribution of warming, scientists say the rains are broadly consistent with expectations that climate change will make the Indian monsoon wetter.

The United Nations chief has called them a “climate catastrophe”.

“This is not a freak accident,” said Nabeel Munir, Pakistan’s ambassador to Seoul and chair of the largest negotiating bloc of developing nations at UN climate negotiations.

“The science proves the frequency and the impact of these disasters is only going to increase and we have to be prepared for that.”

The human and economic impact is already staggering and “this is an ongoing disaster; the rains are still going on”, he told AFP.

Countries like Pakistan that have contributed the least to global warming are often battered by the worst impacts, observers say.

Pressures are mounting for UN negotiations in November to ringfence specific “loss and damage” funding for countries slammed by increasingly extreme and expensive climate impacts.

The issue will be thrown into sharp relief with Pakistan fronting the important G77+China bloc -- representing more than a hundred nations and a significant proportion of the global population -- as it reels from weather disasters.

Munir said wealthy nations that have contributed the most to climate change from burning fossil fuels should recognise their role and provide more funding to help vulnerable countries, adding that the UN process so far had produced “not even peanuts” for loss and damage.

“We will continue the moral pressure. But I think a lot of the political and moral pressure has to come from within these countries,” he said.

Pakistan has contributed less than 0.5 percent of heat-trapping emissions pumped into the atmosphere since the Industrial Revolution, said Kristina Dahl, principal climate scientist at the Union of Concerned Scientists. The United States is responsible for 25 percent.

“Understanding the forces behind disasters like Pakistan’s current floods is an important step toward holding developed nations accountable for the changes they have wrought,” she told AFP.

In March a blistering hot spell began to develop across parts of South Asia, with Pakistan registering record temperatures.

Scientists from the World Weather Attribution climate group estimated that climate change had made the heatwave 30 times more likely.

The region’s “breadbasket” in northwestern India and south Pakistan was particularly affected. Crops wilted, while sheep collapsed and died of heatstroke.

In May the temperatures were still spiking.

“We had temperatures in the cities touching 50 degrees (Celsius, 122 degrees Fahrenheit), can you even imagine?” said Munir.

“There are cities which might become unliveable because of the temperatures they will regularly have.”



And the heat had another devastating effect in a country home to more than 7,000 glaciers, the largest number for any region outside the poles.

Quickly melting glaciers can saturate the landscape and cause glacial lake outburst floods, unleashing torrents of ice, rock and water.

That can lead to a “compound effect where we’ve got higher than average river levels, on top of higher than average rainfall”, said Helen Griffith, a researcher of hydrology and environmental science at the University of Reading.

While Pakistan suffered severe flooding in the heavy monsoon of 2010, she said rainfall this year was “unprecedented” and deluging areas where people would never have experienced rains on this scale. In Balochistan province rainfall was 466 percent higher than normal, Munir said, while the country itself has had three times the national average.

So far the floods have affected around 33 million people, destroyed nearly a million homes and wiped out almost 200 bridges and 3,500 kilometres (2,200 miles) of roads, hampering efforts to reach those in need.

Some 800,000 livestock and two million acres (809,000 hectares) of farmland have been “washed away”, Munir said, threatening food security in the coming months.

The UN is trying to raise \$160 million for humanitarian relief.

But that money is for people in immediate crisis -- and there is no guarantee it will come. Meanwhile, Pakistan’s government has put the estimated rebuilding costs at around \$10 billion.

While humanitarian aid following disasters like the Pakistan floods can assist, “developing countries need to be able to rely on a longer-term and consistent source of resources as the impacts of climate change mount,” said Dahl.

High-income emitters, particularly the US and European Union, have “consistently undermined” efforts to address loss and damage, she said.

After richer nations failed to meet a promise of \$100 billion a year by 2020 to help developing countries adapt to future climate impacts, finance and global inequality will be a key flashpoint at November’s UN talks in Egypt.

A recent study, based on climate models, predicted that exceptionally wet monsoons in the Indian subcontinent would become six times more likely during the 21st century, even if humanity ratchets down carbon emissions.

“It’s an established fact: this is happening because of climate change,” Munir said. “So the funding has to come from somewhere and you know where that somewhere is.”

## Young Stars, Fragile Families to the Fore at Maskless Venice

VENICE (Dispatches) - The Venice Film Festival opened on Wednesday with all health limitations lifted, but with the emotional fallout of the pandemic echoed in the many films exploring families facing trauma, which highlight a new generation of talent.

For movie fans it will be a welcome return to normal at the world’s oldest film festival, as they are once again able to greet stars arriving at the Lido red carpet for the 11-day festival.

“We missed the atmosphere, the mood, the joy of the people watching the talent on the red carpet,” festival director Alberto Barbera told Reuters.

Regarded as a launch pad for Oscar contenders, Venice has become increasingly important for production houses looking to showcase some of their most eye-catching movies, which this year feature a younger-than-usual line-up of budding A-listers.

Timothée Chalamet, Ana de Armas, Sadie Sink, Harry Styles and Florence Pugh are just some of the new generation of stars, who will be rubbing shoulders with more established festival favourites such as Penelope Cruz, Cate Blanchett, Tilda Swinton, Christoph Waltz and Sigourney Weaver.

“I think that we are facing a sort of renovation of the generation of the talent and the filmmakers as well,” said Barbera. “This is the cinema of tomorrow, of course.”

While Venice draws together movies from vastly different countries and cultures, many appear to have a similar theme coursing through them -- dysfunctional families struggling to overcome trauma and chaos.

“The pandemic created a lot of problems inside the families ... and most of the films that we are showing in the festival are reflecting this situation,” said Barbera. “The tone is pretty dark, actually.”

## Pakistani Traders Urged to Benefit From Iran Deal

ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) - A barter trade agreement with neighboring Iran has been signed thanks to the relentless efforts of the local trader community and businessmen from across the country should take advantage of the deal.

This was claimed by Pakistan’s President Quetta Chamber of Commerce and Industry Fida Hussain Dashti. He added that due to this trade the business communities of both the countries would benefit greatly.

He noted that they had made a promise and it had been turned into a reality which is a great opportunity for the traders in the province.

The initiation of barter trade between the two neighboring countries will provide employment to the jobless and improve the economic condition of the country and the province, said Fida Hussain.

He said that those interested in barter trade should register with the Quetta Chamber of Commerce and Industry and start their business.

He was talking to various delegations at the Chamber. Fida Hussain Dashti, Muhammad Ayub Mariani and Amjad Ali Siddiqui said that Pak-Iran Barter Trade Agreement was signed and necessary steps were also taken in this regard with close assistance of

relevant departments and institutions to successfully implement the deal.

“The business leaders worked together with the authorities, as a result of which ID (Barter Trade Module) has been allotted to the Quetta Chamber of Commerce by Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) for barter trade and wayback automation. The system has come into effect, after which Pak-Iran barter trade is going to start,” he added.

“We are happy that the Chamber of Commerce has consulted with the stakeholders in industry and commerce,” he said, adding that another promise has been fulfilled.

He said that this has been a longstanding demand of the business community of the province as the start of barter trade will help eliminate unemployment in the province and improve the economic condition of the country and the province.

He said that it was a good news for the business community across the country that now they can do barter trade with Iran.

“Those interested in barter trade could consult and register with Quetta Chamber of Commerce and Industry to take advantage of this opportunity,” he concluded.

## Swiss Launch Energy Conservation Drive, Plan Rationing Moves



ZURICH (Dispatches) - The Swiss government launched a voluntary campaign to urge consumers and businesses to conserve energy as shortages of gas and power loom this winter that could lead to rationing in a worst-case scenario.

More than 40 partners from the public and private sector are backing the drive with the motto “Energy is scarce. Let’s not waste it”, the government said.

“The aim is for as many people as possible to participate voluntarily - and to help prevent Switzerland from getting into a shortage situation in the first place,” it said.

The campaign is scheduled to last until April and features tips on how to cut demand, for instance by turning down thermostats, using less hot water, and turning off appliances and lighting when not in use.

The government plans a series of increasingly strict steps, including bans and rationing, should conservation fail to head off shortages.

A draft decree under discussion calls for banning gas for heating vacant buildings, swimming pools, spas or saunas. Gas could not be used in fireplaces or heated tents.

Rooms heated with gas cannot be warmed greater than 19 degrees Celsius (66.2°F), with water heaters capped at 60 degrees.

Households and services such as hospitals, homes for the elderly, police, firefighters, sewage treatment and trash collection would not be subject to rationing under a proposal the government sent out for three weeks of consultations.

Last week, Switzerland set a voluntary gas savings target of 15% for the winter as Europe faces a potential gas shortage as a consequence of the Ukraine war.

### Iran Not to Leave...

FROM PAGE 1

Gharibabadi slammed the US as the “prime culprit” in several losses of innocent lives in Iran due to the sanctions-hit country’s lack of access to life-saving medical supplies.

The right official said that if the US wishes to stand up for the Iranians’ rights, it should remove the sanctions.

“Tens of Iranians were arrested in the US on charges allegedly related to schemes to evade the sanctions and are imprisoned, we ask for the freedom of these innocent people,” he added.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Gharibabadi described the assassination of the top Iranian anti-terror commander General Qassem Soleimani as a “stain of shame” for the US and a “great crime.”

“All those who were involved in this crime must be tried and Iraq’s judicial system should take on its responsibility in this regard,” he added.

General Soleimani, the commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Quds Force, and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, the second-in-command of Iraq’s Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), were assassinated along with their associates in a US drone strike near Baghdad International Airport on January 3, 2020.

The strike was authorized by the US president.

### IRGC...

FROM PAGE 1

The ship was released, as ordered by the commander of the IRGC support ship, after the Iranian naval forces established the American fault, made sure there was no threat to Iran’s security and interests, and gave the necessary warnings to the US navy fleet — which arrived at the scene — not to repeat the unlawful behavior again, it added.

“As repeatedly emphasized, the presence of the terrorist forces of the US army in the Persian Gulf has constantly been endangering lasting stability and security in this sensitive and strategic region,” the statement said.

Earlier, Nour News, a website close to Iran’s Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) had shed light on the circumstances surrounding the incident in a report.

### Iran Ready to...

FROM PAGE 1

He noted that Iran has developed a variety of products in different fields of defense by relying on its own youths despite all the restrictions, sanctions and acts of sabotage by foreign powers against the country.

Salami added that some top powers in the world have purchased military and defense equipment from Iran and are now using them.

Iranian military experts and technicians have in recent years made substantial headway in manufacturing a broad range of indigenous equipment, making the armed forces self-sufficient in the arms sphere.

Iranian officials have repeatedly underscored that the country will never stop working to strengthen its military capabilities for defense purposes.

The Iranian Army’s cutting-edge drones late last month successfully hit and destroyed a set of “sensitive and vital” mock enemy targets using state-of-the-art weapons with pinpoint accuracy on the second day of massive countrywide drills.

### Pakistan...

FROM PAGE 1

In turn, Amirabdolahian has announced the Islamic Republic’s readiness to reopen border markets with Pakistan as part of the Iranian government’s plans to strengthen trade and border security, according to a statement released by the Iranian Foreign Ministry.

Following the devastating floods in different parts of Pakistan, Tehran last Wednesday made the first shipment of humanitarian aid to the victims. The UN also issued a Response Plan of more than 160 million dollars, which seeks to meet the needs of the Pakistani people.

### Iran’s August Non-Oil...

FROM PAGE 1

The UAE, the largest re-exporting hub in the Persian Gulf, was the main supplier of goods and commodities to Iran in August with \$1.199 billion worth of exports, showed the figures.

The Iranian customs office said that China’s and Turkey’s August exports to Iran had amounted to \$1.096 billion and \$379 million, respectively.

It said that India had bought some \$162 million worth of Iranian non-oil exports in August, up 37% against last year, adding that India’s exports to Iran had increased by 362% over the same month to reach \$300 million



## Balotelli Joins Swiss Club Sion on Two-Year Deal

PARIS (Dispatches) - Mario Balotelli signed a two-year contract Wednesday with Swiss side Sion, the 11th club of the mercurial Italian striker's career.

"FC Sion is delighted about the arrival of a world-class forward," the club said in a statement.

Balotelli, 32, has scored 14 goals in 36 appearances for Italy but won his last cap in September 2018. He played at Euro 2012 and the 2014 World Cup.

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## Smith Pushes for LIV Golf Ranking Points

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Reigning British Open champion Cameron Smith said that major tournaments could be harmed if players in the Saudi-backed LIV Golf Series do not receive world ranking points.

The world number two from Australia, who made the move Tuesday, spoke ahead of his Friday debut at the LIV Golf Invitational Boston. "It's really a shame we're not getting world ranking points out here," Smith said. "To the fans of major championship golf, it may be a little bit unfair on them."

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SPORTS

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 3, 2022

# Nadal Wins Ugly U.S. Open Match Against Fognini

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Rafa Nadal overcame a horrid start and a bloody nose to beat Fabio Fognini 2-6 6-4 6-2 6-1 and reach the third round of the U.S. Open.

The veteran Italian came out flying to build a set and a 4-2 lead as Nadal struggled to find a rhythm, raising the possibility of an upset like the one Fognini memorably pulled off against the Spaniard at Arthur Ashe Stadium seven years ago.

Momentum shifted in Nadal's favour in the third set when he raced down an overhead and crushed a forehand down the line to break Fognini and take a 4-2 lead.

He broke the fading Fognini again to capture the third set and appeared to be cruising to the finish line when, while leading 3-0 in the fourth set, his racket bounced off the court and struck him sharply on the bridge of his nose

That led to a medical time out where the 22-time Grand Slam champion lay on his back with his eyes closed as a pink bandage was applied to stop the bleeding.

Nadal regrouped and with the backing of the partisan crowd sealed the win on Fognini's 60th unforced error to end the ugly affair in which the players combined for 15 breaks of serve and 11 double faults.

"For more than one-and-a-half hours I was not competing, it was one of my worst starts ever," Nadal said in an on-court interview.

"When this happens, hopefully not too often, you have to stay positive and stay patient. The match is long."

Talking to reporters after the match, Nadal said the blow from the racket left him dizzy and in pain.

"Was just a strong hit," he said.

"At the beginning I thought I broke the nose because it was a shock at the beginning.

Was very painful.

"Seems like is not broken. I am not sure yet. I don't know. I think it's getting bigger and bigger."

With the win, Nadal avenged his loss to Fognini at the 2015 U.S. Open when the



Italian roared back from two sets down. Nadal is now 14-4 against Fognini lifetime.

Next up for Nadal is Richard Gasquet, who defeated Serbia's Miomir Kecmanovic 6-2 6-4 4-6 6-4 earlier in the day.

Nadal is a commanding 18-0 lifetime against the Frenchman.

Meanwhile geopolitical tensions simmered at the U.S. Open as Ukrainian Marta Kostyuk refused the customary handshake at the net when Belarusian Victoria Azarenka defeated her 6-2 6-3 in the second round.

The pair exchanged a quick tap of the racket on Court 17 after Kostyuk whacked the ball into the net on the third match point and the three-time Flushing Meadows finalist let out a triumphant roar.

"Well, I wasn't surprised. I don't believe that making a big deal out of it is important. I always shake hands with my opponents," said Azarenka, who added that Ukrainian Dayana Yastremska had done the same in Washington, D.C., last month.

"I cannot force anybody to shake my hand. It's their decision. How did it make me feel? It's not the most important thing in the world right now."

It marked the latest uneasy moment at the year's final major, where Russians, Belarusians and Ukrainians compete alongside one another against the backdrop of military conflict.

## Tuchel Fined for Referee Criticism



LONDON (Dispatches) - Thomas Tuchel was fined £20,000 (RM102,948) and warned about his future behavior after the Chelsea manager suggested referee Anthony Taylor should not be allowed to take charge of the club's matches.

Tuchel admitted a Football Association charge of improper conduct following his comments about Taylor after Chelsea's stormy 2-2 draw with Tottenham in the Premier League in August.

"An independent regulatory commission has ordered Chelsea's Thomas Tuchel to be fined £20,000 and warned about his future conduct for breaching FA Rule E3.1 during a post-match press conference on Sunday, August 14 2022," an FA statement said.

"The manager admitted that his comments after their Premier League match against Tottenham constitute improper conduct as they imply bias, question the integrity of the match referee, and bring the game into disrepute." Tuchel was furious after two key decisions by Taylor went against Chelsea and led to Tottenham goals in the London derby.

## PSG Loan Paredes To Juventus

MILAN (Dispatches) - Paris Saint-Germain midfielder Leandro Paredes has been loaned to Juventus for the rest of the season, both clubs announced.

Juventus said in a statement that they will be obliged to make the deal for Argentina star Paredes permanent for €22.6 million (RM101.6 million) at the end of the season "subject to the achievement of certain given sporting objectives".

The Serie A outfit added that they also have the option to buy the 28-year-old should the obligatory purchase not be triggered, and that the fee could be increased by a further three million euros "upon achievement of further performance objectives".

Paredes follows in the footsteps of his international colleague Angel Di Maria, who moved from Paris to Juventus under freedom of contract during the close season.

Juve has also brought in France star Paul Pogba in a busy summer for Massimiliano Allegri's side.

Italian media report that Paredes could be present at the Allianz Stadium in Turin on Wednesday night for Juve's Serie A fixture with Spezia.

PSG and Juventus are due to meet in the first game of this season's Champions League group stage next Tuesday.

Signed by PSG in January 2019 from Zenit Saint-Petersburg for a reported €47 million, Paredes now returns to Italy where he previously played for Chievo, Roma and Empoli.

The departure of Paredes comes a day after the Ligue 1 champions signed Spain midfielder Fabian Ruiz from Napoli.

They have also added Portuguese duo Vitinha and Renato Sanches to their midfield over the summer, while Ander Herrera (Athletic Bilbao), Georginio Wijnaldum (Roma) and Eric Junior Diba Ebimbe (Eintracht Frankfurt) have all left on loan too.



# Battling Williams Powers Into US Open 3rd Round

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Serena Williams roared into the third round of the US Open, overpowering second seed Anett Kontaveit with a battling performance to extend her Grand Slam singles career in dramatic fashion.

The 40-year-old tennis icon — who has signaled she plans to retire after the tournament — drew on all her reserves of resilience and sheer fighting spirit to take down Kontaveit with a 7-6 (7/4), 2-6, 6-2 at an electric Arthur Ashe Stadium.

Kontaveit appeared to have gained the upper hand over the 23-time Grand Slam singles champion after levelling the match at 1-1 with a dominant second set display.

But Williams showed her champion's mentality to yank back momentum in the decider, breaking Kontaveit twice before closing out victory to leave a sell-out crowd featuring the likes of golf superstar Tiger Woods on its feet.

"You know this is what I do best," a delighted Williams said after her win.

"I love a challenge and love rising to the challenge. I haven't played many matches but I've been practicing really well and my last few matches it just wasn't coming together... But the last couple of matches here in New York it's really come together."

Williams admitted she had feared the worst after she was unable to respond as Kontaveit upped her game to take the second set.

## Hamilton's Car Took 45G Hit In Spa Crash



LONDON (Dispatches) - Lewis Hamilton's Mercedes took a 45G vertical hit in the first-lap collision with Alpine's Fernando Alonso at last weekend's Belgian Grand Prix, strategy director James Vowles said.

The seven-times world champion had told reporters on Sunday that he almost broke his back when the car pitched high into the air before coming down hard on the asphalt runoff area at Les Combes.

The Briton, who blamed himself for the collision, had been trying to overtake double world champion Alonso for second place.

"It was a large, large impact," Vowles said in a Q&A team debrief of the race at Spa-Francorchamps, the first of a triple-header with Formula One back in action in the Netherlands this weekend.

"It was measured at 45G on the SDR (safety data recorder) in the car which is very big on a vertical load.

"He will be OK, he will be back in Zandvoort fighting," added Vowles, who said Hamilton was mainly frustrated at wasting a podium possibility.

Hamilton was given a formal warning by race stewards for initially refusing to go to the circuit medical centre, which is mandatory when the car's medical warning light is activated.

There was concern also for Hamilton's power unit and gearbox, and possible grid penalties at Zandvoort if damaged — which would be a big setback given how difficult it is to overtake at the seaside circuit.

Vowles said there had been an immediate loss of coolant after the collision.

## Haaland Hits City Treble



LONDON (Dispatches) - Erling Haaland hit a second successive hat-trick as Manchester City crushed Nottingham Forest 6-0, while leaders Arsenal extended their perfect start to the Premier League season with a 2-1 win against Aston Villa.

City and Arsenal have set the early pace, but Liverpool are gathering momentum after snatching a last-gasp 2-1 victory against Newcastle.

Haaland has made a blistering start since his £50 million (\$58 million) move from Borussia Dortmund in the close-season and the Norway striker's latest goal spree set a Premier League record.

Haaland's tally of nine goals after his first five appearances is a new high in the Premier League era, beating the previous mark of eight set by City legend Sergio Aguero and Micky Quinn.

Inspired by Haaland's first-half treble, Pep Guardiola's unbeaten side ran riot at the Etihad Stadium, reaching 19 goals from just five games.

City went ahead in the 12th minute when Phil Foden's cross reached Haaland, who poked home from close range.

Haaland, whose father Alfie played for Forest between 1993 and 1997, struck again from close range in the 23rd minute after Foden's run was halted by a Neco Williams tackle that diverted the ball into the Norwegian's path.

Haaland was impossible for Forest to handle and he sealed his treble eight minutes later with a header from virtually on the goal-line after John Stones nodded across the six-yard box.

Haaland is only the seventh player to score a hat-trick in successive Premier League appearances.