

Health Ministry Announced on Tuesday That the Number of Deaths From the Coronavirus Pandemic in Iran Increased to **144,221** With **22** More Iranians Killed by the Virus Over the Past 24 Hours

# IRAN NEWS

Iranian Minister of Interior Ahmad Vahidi Said That as Many as 3m Iranians Have Left the Country for Iraq So Far for the Arbadeen Pilgrimage as the Number of Pilgrims Who Intend to Go to Iraq Is Increasing

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2

## DOMESTIC

Families of Iranian Victims of Terror Slam Albania  
> SEE PAGE 2



3

## DOMESTIC

Tehran, Brasilia Broadening Their Trade Ties  
> SEE PAGE 3



4

## INTERNATIONAL

Ukraine Recaptures More Ground as Russia Strikes Back  
> SEE PAGE 4



8

## SPORTS

Alcaraz Wins US Open To Become World No.1  
> SEE PAGE 8



## President Urges Armenia, Azerbaijan For Restraint, Dialogue

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - President Ebrahim Raisi and Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan held a phone talk on Tuesday on recent military tension in the South Caucasus region.

"The Caucasus region is going through special situations and unfortunately, peace has not yet returned to this region," said the Iranian President in the phone talk with Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan.

He also pointed to the Zionist regime's influence in the region, describing its presence as a threat to the entire region, including its hosts.

Stating that Iran is carefully following the developments in the region, Raisi said that the region cannot tolerate another war.

Security in the Caucasus region is very important for the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Iranian President underlined, adding that the signatories of the tripartite ceasefire statement should adhere to its provisions and refrain from any action to create tension in the region.

See Page 7

## Iran Itself Victim of Terrorism and Cyberattacks



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Judiciary Spokesman said that Iran has always been one of the biggest victims of various forms of terrorism, including various types of cyber-attacks.

Speaking at a weekly presser held on Tuesday, Judiciary Spokesman Massoud Setayeshi touched upon U.S. terrorist activities aimed at imposing sanctions on the Iranian Ministry of Intelligence and stressed: "During the past years, Iran has always been one of the biggest victims of various forms of terrorism, including various types of cyber-attacks."

"These attacks were designed and carried out by the US administration and the Zionist regime, and in these attacks, Iran's important infrastructure was damaged, which could have claimed people's lives and destruction of properties, but it was neutralized by the measures of Iranian experts, He added."

Setayeshi further stated: "The Americans are brazenly trying to apply a new pressure against Iran with a label that has always been abused by them, which is definitely doomed to failure and disgraceful for them."

Albania cut diplomatic ties with Tehran after accused Iran of hacking government digital services and websites.

Iran has rejected the accusation that it was behind the attack as "baseless," calling Albania's decision to sever diplomatic ties "an ill-considered and short-sighted action."

The two countries have been bitter foes since the Balkan state began hosting members of the terrorist "Mojahedin-e-Khalq (MEK)" on its soil over Washington's request.

He added that this action had been born in line with protecting Iran's national interests. Based on this, the document on ownership of the Greater and Lesser Tunbs and Bu Musa Island was issued under the name of the Islamic Republic of Iran government.

Iran reiterated its sovereignty over the three islands of Bu Musa, the Greater Tunb, and the Lesser Tunb in the Persian Gulf.

The islands of the Greater Tunb, the Lesser Tunb, and Bu Musa have historically been part of Iran, proof of which can be found and corroborated by countless historical, legal, and geographical documents in Iran and other parts of the world.

The Spokesman said that the assassins of Martyr Sayad Khodayi had been arrested, and legal order had been issued for them.

IRGC's Colonel Sayyad Khodaei, a Military advisor for the Syrian Army and one of the Holy Shrine Defenders, was assassinated in an armed attack by two motorcyclists on Mojahedin-e-Eslam Street in Tehran in May.

The Spokesman, referring to the U.S. and the West's procrastination toward the Vienna talks aimed at removing anti-Iran sanctions, called the move a U.S. artificial respiration to terrorist groups.

He further emphasized: "We expect the political institutions to stand up and deal decisively with appropriate and international legal provisions and measures."

He also said that efforts are ongoing to release the Iranian Hajji, who was detained innocently by the Saudi government. Saudis arrested Khalil Dargmand because he took a selfie photo next to Kaaba while holding a picture of Martyr Lt. Gen. Qassem Soleimani.

## Venezuela Offers 5m Hectares for Agricultural Investment From Iran

CARACAS (Dispatches) - Venezuelan Agriculture Minister Wilmar Castro Soteldo says Caracas has offered at least five million hectares of land following agricultural investment agreements with producers from Iran and other countries.

He made the remarks on Monday at a presentation ahead of the Iran-Venezuela scientific, industrial and technological expo fair, which is planned to open in Caracas on Wednesday.

"We are making available five to seven million hectares [of land] that our country has to develop to reach 30 million cultivable hectares," the minister said.

He added that Venezuela is offering the farmlands to foreign producers to grow crops in the South American country.

Since the beginning of its term, the current Iranian administration has seriously pursued effective measures to improve the agricultural sector and ensure the country's food security, including through farming overseas.

For a long time, one of Iran's aspirations has been self-sufficiency in strategic agricultural products such as wheat, oilseeds and livestock inputs, which require sufficient water resources, but successive droughts in recent years and the lack of water resources have made it a far-fetched goal, giving weight to the idea of overseas cultivation.

Overseas farming could lead to the entry of virtual water into the country by the cultivation of water-intensive products in other countries. In May, Russia offered to provide 100,000 hectares of land to Iran for cultivation. Other countries, including Armenia and Ghana, have also offered land to Iran for cultivation. A Ghanaian delegation proposed 5,000 hectares of land for production of livestock inputs during a recent visit.

See Page 7

## ViewPoint

By: Hamid Reza Naghashian



## Time to Silence the Zionists

In recent weeks the Zionist regime has intensified its boasts and threats against the Islamic Republic of Iran and it seems this regime requires a proper response and Iran needs silence this arrogant and fake regime to stop hollow claims.

On Sunday a high-ranking Iranian military commander said Iran has developed an advanced drone designed to target the coastal cities of Tel Aviv and Haifa in the Israeli-occupied territories in case of a military confrontation with the regime.

The Arash-2 drone, which is a newer version of the previously unveiled Arash-1 aircraft, has been developed by the Iranian Army's Ground Force, the force's commander, Brigadier General Kioumars Heydari, told the state-run IRIB TV1 television channel during an interview broadcast late on Sunday.

The new drone enjoys unique specifications and capabilities, and can successfully retrieve information multiple times before it strikes and destroys the designated target, Heydari explained.

"The drone has been specifically designed to target Haifa and Tel Aviv," he said, hailing it as a "peerless" aerial vehicle.

It has already been added to the Iranian Army's inventory, and its capabilities will be showcased during future military exercises, Heydari added.

Heydari said that the Army's Ground Force is the most unrivaled compared to similar forces in the region given its aerial combat and offensive power and because it has the largest fleet of military helicopters.

This news was a good reaction to recent boasts and bullies of Israeli officials who have been constantly threatening Iran of devastating attacks. So the unveiling of this drone can at least silence the Zionist regime for a while and it will have to stop continuing such baseless claims against Tehran.

Arash-1 drone is a kamikaze and radar-evading unmanned aerial vehicle first launched during the Iranian Army's massive drone exercises in January 2019 from a portable launcher installed on the Makran coast in the southeastern part of the country.

It flew a distance of more than 1,400 kilometers (869 miles) before it hit the designated target in the central Iranian province of Semnan.

Arash-1 drone is said to be approximately 4.5 meters long, and its wingspan is estimated to be measuring between 3.5 and 4 meters.

See Page 7

## Iran Economy Grows 3.8% In Q1 Fiscal Year

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Figures by the Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) show the country's economy grew by 3.8% in the first quarter of the calendar year that started late March.

SCI figures published showed that Iran's gross domestic product (GDP) had reached 1,887 trillion rials (\$150.9 billion) in the three months to June 21, up from 1,818 trillion rials reported over the June quarter last year.

The SCI considers 2011, when one US dollar was equal to 12,500 Iranian rials, as the baseline year for calculation of economic growth rate in Iran. That comes as the current market price of US dollar in the country is 311,000 rials.

SCI figures showed that Iran's GDP without oil had expanded by 4.3% year on year in May-June to reach 1,614 trillion rials.

The figures showed that the manufacturing sector was the best performer in the Iranian economy in the June quarter as the sector's GDP rose by 4.2% compared with the same quarter last year. The Iranian services sector grew by 3.9% in the three months to late June while the agriculture sector contracted by 0.8% over the same period, said the SCI.

See Page 7

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## Iran, Syria to Develop Education-Research Cooperation

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research of Syria Bassam Bashir Ibrahim and the Iranian Ambassador to Damascus Mahdi Sobhani reviewed developing cooperation in the field of education and research.

According to Syrian media, Bashir Ibrahim stressed the importance of activating the executive plan signed between the two countries, mutual scientific trips, holding seminars and conferences, exchanging experiences, and doing joint scientific research by Syrian and Iranian universities.

Meanwhile, Sobhani emphasized Tehran's support for Damascus, strengthening scientific cooperation between the two countries, starting joint scientific activities, and forming joint committees to follow up all issues that serve the interests of the two countries.

## Families of Iranian Victims of Terror Slam Albania

**TEHRAN (PressTV) - In a letter to the Albanian people, the families of the Iranian terror victims have criticized Tirana for hosting an anti-Iran terrorist group best known as the Mujahedin-e-Khalq Organization (MKO).**

They referred to what they called a secret deal between the US and Albania almost ten years ago when the latter accepted to take in more than 2,000 MKO members in return for \$20 million after they were expelled from Iraq and other countries, including the US, refused to provide them with refuge.

However, the letter said, Albania violated its commitment to not allowing the MKO to take anti-Iran measures while on Albanian soil and instead turned into a hub of interference by the terror group and countries hostile to Iran.

The open letter, published on Monday, was written in the wake of the Albanian government's recent move to sever diplomatic ties with the Islamic Republic after accusing Tehran of orchestrating a "cyberattack" against Tirana.

It also criticized Albanian officials for visiting with the MKO head, warning that "Tirana has put itself among the enemies of Iran without having a clear understanding of the capability of an Iranian response."

These visits, it added, show that "the Albanian government is knowingly taking steps in a hostile path against their country and is cooperating on planning and implementing acts of sabotage against Iran."

Simultaneous with those meetings, MKO-led cyberattacks against Iran and the group's terror activities against different Iranian centers and locations increased, it said.

Referring to Albania's recent decision to sever diplomatic ties with Iran, the letter stated that the move was taken under the influence of certain countries, as well as the MKO terror group.



The letter also said that the Albanian government is rapidly turning the country into a center for creating security crises for Europe, the Balkans and Iran, adding that the Albanian authorities seem to have forgotten that they are backing a terror group that has taken responsibility for killing more than 12,000 Iranian people and officials.

It further rejected the claim by the Albanian authorities that their country is hosting "the Iranian opposition" members, denouncing the claim as an attempt to deceive the general public to justify hosting a terrorist group.

The letter also warned Albanians of the threats and repercussions of the presence of the MKO terror group in their country saying that other countries in the world have refused to play host to the terror group as they are aware of the security threats and legal consequences it posed.

The letter concluded that to establish peace and security, all terrorists should be contained and brought to justice.

In 1986, Iran asked France to expel the group from its base in Paris, following which it moved its base to Iraq.

The group members spent many years in Iraq, where they were hosted and armed by the former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein. They sided with Iraq during the 1980-88 war against Iran and then helped the Iraqi dictator quell uprisings in various parts of the Arab country.

Albania started hosting the terrorists after the cult was shunned by the government of former Iraqi prime minister Nouri al-Maliki.

## Azerbaijan, Armenia Urged to Exercise Restraint

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran has voiced concern over the latest border clashes between Azerbaijan and Armenia, urging the two neighbors to exercise restraint and find a peaceful solution to their differences in accordance with international law.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani said on Tuesday that the country would not accept any change in geographical borders between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

He said Iran closely monitors all the developments pertaining to the issue and underlined the need to respect the territorial integrity of the two countries.

Kanaani also expressed Tehran's readiness to help the two Caucasian states settle their dispute through peaceful channels.

Azerbaijan's Defense Ministry announced in the early hours of Tuesday that a number of its forces have been killed in the exchange of fire with Armenian forces along the two countries' border.

It accused Armenia of "large-scale subversive acts" near the districts of Dashkesan, Kelbajar and Lachin on the border, adding that its army positions "came under fire, including from trench mortars."

## Decrease in Water Level of Caspian Sea Poses a Problem

TEHRAN (IFP) - The average annual water level of the Caspian Sea decreases by about 20 centimeters and this rings the alarm for Iran's northern ports.

That's according to the maritime deputy of Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization.

Majid Alinazi said the decrease in the water level of the Caspian Sea poses a problem and Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization has worked out measures to tackle this issue.

Alinazi added that the strategic document for dredging northern Iranian ports envisions the construction of one hyper-suction vessel and two dredging ones.

He described the construction of the north-south corridor in cooperation with Russia as a key item on the agenda of the Ports and Maritime Organization.

Alinazi said Russia is calling for the establishment and launching of this corridor, adding that several meetings have been held over the matter.

He added that Iran and Russia have also formed joint specialized working groups and also provided the necessary platforms to construct the north-south corridor.

## No Limit for Expansion of Iran-Tunisia Ties

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian hailed Iran-Tunisia relations, saying there are no limits for promoting cooperation between the two countries.

Amirabdollahian made the remarks in a meeting with the outgoing Tunisia's ambassador to Iran, Samir Al Mansar.

He stressed the two countries' commonalities in various regional and international issues.

He also urged the two sides to try to enhance bilateral relations.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Amirabdollahian appreciated the positive and constructive stance taken by the Tunisian



government and people in line with supporting Palestinians and opposing the Zionist regime's membership as an observer member in the African Union.

Referring to the current developments in Tunisia, he expressed confidence that with the Tunisian officials' wisdom and with the unity of the Tunisian government and

nation, Tunisia will prosper in all fields.

Meanwhile, al-Mansar underlined mutual efforts for holding the joint commission successfully.

We will always stand by the people and government of Iran and will not spare any efforts to protect the great bilateral cooperation, he said.

## Iran, Germany to Expand Cooperation on Paleoclimatology, Geochemistry

TEHRAN (IRNA) - A German and an Iranian institute have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to expand collaborations on paleoclimatology and geochemistry.

The Geological Survey and Mineral Exploration of Iran (GSI) and the Center for Marine Environmental Sciences (MARUM) affiliated to University of Bremen inked the MoU on Tuesday via video link.

Director of MARUM Michael Schulz and Head of GSI Alireza Shahidi, who is also the deputy minister of industry, mine and trade, signed the document.

They declared the exchange of scientific and technical capabilities in paleoclimatology and geochemistry in both Germany and Iran as the goal of the agreement.

The MoU entails offshore and onshore scientific drillings in both countries.

MARUM is committed to fundamental and unbiased research in the interests of society and the marine environment, and in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations.

In 2018, Iran and Germany reached an agreement to implement 24 academic projects financed by German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft).

## Lebanon Seeks Boosting Agricultural Cooperation With Iran

BEIRUT (IP) - The Minister of Agriculture of Lebanon met with the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Beirut and discussed the expansion of cooperation between the two countries.

On Monday, in a meeting with Mojtaba Amani, Iran's ambassador to Beirut, Al Hajj Hassan Abbas, called for a dialogue on the problems of Lebanon's agricultural sector and its solutions and to expand cooperation between the two countries in this field.

The Minister of Agriculture of Lebanon then said in an exclusive interview with the Iran press correspondent in Beirut that the relations between Iran and Lebanon in the agricultural sector are very old and imports and exports are carried out between the two countries.

The Minister of Agriculture of Lebanon stated that the meeting with the Iranian ambassador in Beirut was friendly, during which the memorandums of understanding between the two countries in the field of expanding agricultural cooperation were discussed.

Abbas said the Ministry of Agriculture of Lebanon and the Ministry of Agriculture of Iran has a mission to investigate the mechanism of expanding cooperation by drawing a new perspective so that the memorandums become a cooperation document in the framework of the consultation of the technical committees.

The Minister of Agriculture of Lebanon emphasized that the Lebanese government is looking for the best relations with the countries of the region, and with no doubt, the Islamic Republic of Iran is a friend of Lebanon and the expansion of cooperation between the two countries is in the interest of the Lebanese people.

## New UNESCO Envoy Meets FM

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Newly-appointed director of the UNESCO Tehran Cluster Office (UTCO) Golda El-Khoury, in the beginning of her mission, met with Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian on Tuesday.

Singling out Iran's capability in education, higher education, and technology, especially for women, Amirabdollahian congratulated Ms. El-Khoury and said that UNESCO and Iran have had close relations in such areas as cultural heritage register.

The foreign minister criticized the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for overlooking local identities and cultural realities of countries, leaving them in trouble with implementing the document.

The Islamic Republic of Iran considers the document in accordance with its own internal laws and cultural characteristics, he noted.

El-Khoury briefed Amirabdollahian on her plans for the UNSECO office in Tehran and vowed to do her best to improve its status.

The UTCO also coordinates UNESCO's activities in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Turkmenistan.



## Uzbekistan Summit to Decide On Iran's Full SCO Membership

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Mehdi Safari, Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Economic Diplomacy said on Monday that the fate of the country's full membership at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization will be determined at its Wednesday summit in Samarkand, Uzbekistan.

President Ebrahim Raisi is set to attend the summit in the southeastern Uzbek city, which marks the 22nd gathering of heads of states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

Safari said that the SCO is a key bloc in terms of different factors, including transit and energy; both of them having key importance for Iran.

He said that President Raisi will also hold bilateral meetings with Uzbek officials, adding that almost two dozen contracts are set to be signed by the two sides to boost mutual cooperation, including on energy.

Back in September 2021, Iran's bid to become a full member of the SCO was approved by the organization's seven permanent members which are Russia, China, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, India and Pakistan.

Iran currently holds an observer status at the SCO which accounts for nearly one-third of the world's land and is regarded as the largest regional organization in the globe.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization covers more than 30% of global GDP.

## Tehran Hosts 5th Ifarm Int'l Expo

TEHRAN (IP) - The 5th edition of the Ifarm International Exhibition is underway in Iran's capital city of Tehran, showcasing farming and gardening equipment and machinery.

In the exhibition kicked off on Monday, the participating companies displayed their achievements in the horticulture field, greenhouses' construction and equipment, machinery, agricultural UAVs, modern irrigation systems, inputs (fertilizers, poisons, and seeds), flowers and ornamental plants, and farming products.

The expo is underway in an area of 15,000 square meters, seeking the elevation of Iran-made products and the introduction of the country's capabilities to the world while pursuing an export-oriented approach.

Consultation, planning, and coordination with the Iranian embassies and consulates, especially in Iraq, Qatar, Oman, UAE, Kuwait, Russia, Netherlands, Germany, Turkey, China, Afghanistan, and Eurasian countries, to invite the countries' trade officials to Iran along with the holding of specialized workshops, educational start-ups, and exhibition tours, as well as visiting large industrial complexes are among the programs of the international event.

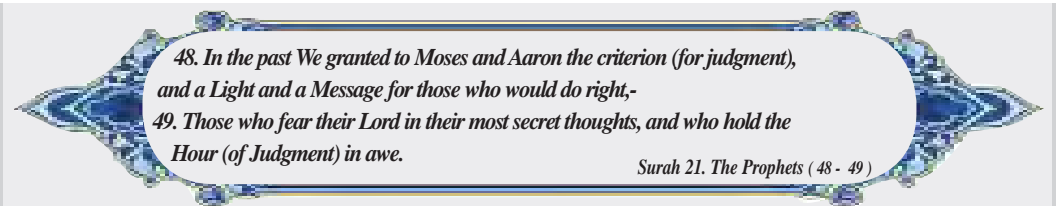
The expo is underway until September 15.





## PRAYER TIME

■ Noon (Zohr)	12:59
■ Evening (Maghreb)	19:31
■ Tomorrow's Dawn (Fajr)	05:22
■ Tomorrow's Sunrise	06:47



# Tehran, Brasilia Broadening Their Trade Ties

**IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK**

**TEHRAN – Ambassador of Brazil to Tehran Mr. Laudemar Goncalves de Aguiar Neto during his meeting with Iranian business activists in Qom Chamber of Commerce said that the statistics show that the trade between Iran and Brazil is growing and called for its expansion.**

In the meeting, Head of Qom Chamber of Commerce Mr. Abolfazl Khaki said that the statistics show that the trade between Iran and Brazil has improved as the amount of imports from Brazil is \$554m and the amount of exports to Brazil has been around \$180m.

He added that Iran imports meat, citrus, sugar, coffee seeds and some medicines from Brazil and in return it exports to Brazil potassium, mineral fertilizers, aluminum sulfate, olive seeds, industrial oil and oil derivatives.

Khaki then stipulated that trade capacity of Qom Province is in the fields of olive oil, chemical products, shoes, steel industries, home appliances, plastic industries, petrochemical related industries, cellular industries and agro products.

He also said existence of over 2700 small and big production units in Qom Province is a very good opportunity for supplying needs of Brazil and emphasized that capacity of Qom Province in providing animal feed as well as joint investment between traders of the two countries in the field of agriculture are very good opportunities for broadening economic relations between the two states.

He also pointed to the issue of tourism in Qom and rich mines in this province which are favorable ground for investment, adding that International Exhibition of Qom Province has provided possibility for identifying investment and economic opportunities between the two countries in holding the exhibition and launching specialized pavilions.



Khaki noted that with using the capacity of the international exhibition of the province and launching Iran pavilion in the exhibitions of Brazil, Qom Province can help Qom production units to be identified much better.

In the meeting, Brazilian Ambassador Mr. Neto expressed his interest for continuing such meetings and visits to Qom Province and said that exhibition was a showcased which displayed economic capabilities of Qom Province that there is favorable capacity in the field of economy and trade ties between the two states.

He expressed hope that they witness broadening of bilateral ties in the upcoming years with the launch of specialized companies in Brazil for easing ties between countries as well as capabilities of Qom Province in the field of production of food stuff and other capacities.

Neto added that sanctions in recent years have been unable to create hurdle in way of trade exchanges between Tehran and Brasilia and said that senior officials of both countries have decided strongly for broadening ties and during recent visit of Iran's agriculture minister to Brazil it has been once again emphasized.

He noted that there has been good relation between Iran and Brazil in the past 100 years and it is an honor that next year both countries will celebrate 120th anniversary of their ties.

Neto then pointed to the launch of Iran-Brazil Joint Chamber which was opened in Sao Paulo and using the capacity of Embassy of Brazil in Iran and said that these two capacities are some part of connection routes for restoring relation between the traders.

He then said that in order to clean the negative propagation against Iran, he calls on active presence of Qom's economic activists in the exhibitions in Brazil.

## Iran Trade Balance With Russia Turns Positive

TEHRAN (MNA) - Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) announced that the country's trade balance with Russia has turned positive, the TPO portal reported.

Alireza Peyman-Pak made the announcement in a meeting of the Government's Economic Coordination Headquarters which was chaired by President Ebrahim Raisi.

In this meeting, Peyman-Pak presented a report on Iran's trade with Russia and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) in the second quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21).

"The volume of trade between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the countries of the Eurasian region, especially Russia, has grown significantly since Khordad [the third Iranian calendar month (May 22-June 21)] when the Government's Economic Coordination Headquarters delegated new authorities to TPO to promote trade with the region," the TPO head said in his report.

## 20% Rise in Gasoline Production in Persian Gulf Star Refinery



**IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK**

TEHRAN – The Operation Director of Persian Gulf Star Company says gasoline production in Persian Gulf Star Refinery, as the main gasoline supplier of the country, has increased by 20% comparing to the same period last year.

Soroush Ziglari said that of the major steps and important achievements of Persian Gulf Star Company as the gem of national refining industry in the first half of the current Iranian year, he can mention the increase in production of strategic product of gasoline in a way that despite rise in the number of summer travels and rise in daily gasoline consumption, no problem has happened in production and supply of gasoline in the country.

He pointed to the cruel sanctions of world arrogance, enemies of the country and nation, and designation of the company on the sanctions list which was aimed at creating chaos and disrupt in fuel supply in the country and crippling the country, and noted that one of the macro goals of Persian Gulf Star Refinery is to produce clean and high quality products with observing all environmental standards of Euro5 standards in the world class.

He added that due to the success of the refinery, enemies decided to slap the refinery with sanctions to harm the health of the people and environment.

Ziglari went on to say that with implementing new developmental projects, the refinery will turn into the biggest and most modern petro-refinery of the region which will meet the domestic demands and create more value added.

He then hailed the personnel of the refinery which do their best for self-sufficiency and supplying energy for the country as well as the independence of Iran. He added that despite all-out sanctions, the personnel of the refinery turned the threats into unique opportunities based on their unique capacities and reliance on the domestic knowledge-based capacity.

Ziglari went on to say that the refinery produces some 40% of the fuel in the country and it has turned into one of the biggest gas condensate refinery of the world.

## Venezuela Invites Iran Investors To Partake in Mining Sector



TEHRAN (MNA) – Venezuelan Minister of Transportation Ramón Velásquez invited Iranian experts and investors to participate in mining and mineral sector of his country.

According to the Public Relations Department of Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO), the visiting Transport Minister of Venezuela in a meeting with a member of Board of Directors of IMIDRO Jamshid Molla Rahman, held at the compound of the Organization in Tehran on Monday evening, invited Iranian investors to attend the mining and mineral sector of this country.

He pointed to Iran's salient progress in the field of mining and mineral sector as well as lack of dependency of the country on oil and added that Venezuela has taken Iran as a role model for achieving a non-oil economy and it will make its utmost efforts to take advantage of the technical know-how and knowledge of Iranian engineers for the development of Venezuela's mining and mineral industries sector.

Member of the Board of Directors of IMIDRO Molla Rahman, for his part, pointed to the amicable and friendly relations between Iran and Venezuela and said that good political relations are a prerequisite for the development of economic relations of countries and fortunately, the amicable relations between the two countries of Iran and Venezuela have paved the suitable way for the development and economic cooperation between the two countries.

## Bangladesh Offers Incentives for Iranian Investors

**IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK**

TEHRAN – Commercial Councillor of Embassy of Bangladesh during her meeting in the North Khorasan Chamber of Commerce in Bojnurd said that Bangladesh offers good incentives for investment to the investors in her country.

Speaking among the officials of the chamber and some economic activists of the province, Dr. Julia Moin said that she is in the North Khorasan Chamber of Commerce to get more information about the different capacities of investment in this province.

She noted that ornamental and marble stones are some goods which are required by her country although currently some Iranian companies are busy with exporting these types of stones to Bangladesh. She further said that some agro products like red onion, grape and raisins are exported to Bangladesh which meet the demands.

Moin added that Bangladesh offers good incentives to investors that tax and custom exemptions are some of them. She noted that one of the good advantages of Bangladesh is its membership in the WTO that Iran can take advantage of it. She said Iranian trade companies can take advantage of Bangladesh's presence in the WTO and enter the Southeast Asia market.

She went on to say that the value of Bangladesh's exports to Iran in the current year has been over \$40m and its imports from Iran have been \$66m and it shows the fact that the trade balance is positive in favor of Iran.



Moin also said that Bangladesh requires some products like iron, copper, bitumen, different fertilizers, agro machineries, motorcycle, carpet and milk powder that some of them are provided from Iran.

She went on to say that Bangladesh is one of the biggest garment producers in the world and it is eighth cotton exporter in the world and is ready to cooperate with Iranian investors in this field.

Moin also called on Iranian investors to invest in the field of creating processing

and complementary industries and added that the Bangladesh government offers considerable incentives to the investors like land.

She said there is no limit for investment in Bangladesh and the investor immediately get residence permit and whenever the investor wants to withdraw its capital, it is easily approved by the officials.

She reiterated that kenaf (Hibiscus cannabinus fiber) is the major export of Bangladesh to Iran which is used in Iran's carpet weaving industry.

Moin noted that exports from North Khorasan should be good quality to enter Bangladesh market and the condition for its transportation to Bangladesh should be provided and this needs more cooperation.

## Iran Gives 5-Year Residence Permit To Foreign Entrepreneurs

TEHRAN (IFP) - Iran's cabinet has issued an enactment to grant a 5-year residence permit to foreign specialists and entrepreneurs. Per the enactment, the specialists and entrepreneurs that are elites will enjoy Iranian citizenship rights and privileges.

Under the program, over 450 foreign specialists have been identified in Iran and nearly 300 applicants have been informed of the support reserved for non-Iranian entrepreneurs.

The enactment stipulates that Iran's vice president for science and technology must present the elite recognition criteria within 3 months from the date of signing for approval to the Cabinet and the relevant body in the interior ministry concerning the enjoyment by non-Iranians of these privileges.

## IRISL Sets New Record for Container Transit in North-South Corridor

**IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK**

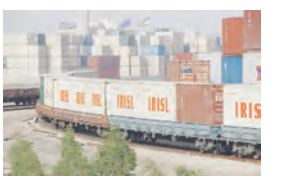
TEHRAN – The Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines Group (IRISL) in the first four months of the current year transited 27,500 TEU containers via the North-South Corridor which is a new record.

According to the public relations of the IRISL Group, the IRISL fleet has succeeded in setting a new record for transportation of transit cargos via the North-South Corridor.

According to this report, some 27,500 TEU containers with total weight of 337,000 tons have been transported by the IRISL fleet.

It is worth noting that since the beginning of the project for revival of the North-South Corridor, only two transit routes between ports of India and the UAE and Russia had been defined and in recent two months the number of routes has increased very fast to 14 routes in different ports of the world.

The group has announced that the major transit destinations from the mentioned ports of embargo have been the CIS states and Russia, adding that the cargos are delivered to their owners based on the door to door system with using the facilities of this group in these transit routes. By the way the group has focused one of its strategies on multilateral transportation of goods, and regarding the current very good capacities in Iranian ports, the group has tried to increase its container capacity in the Khazar Sea Shipping Lines Company through ordering the domestic builders manufacture of four vessels to the domestic producers. The group is also expanding its land transportation fleet capacities.





# Majority of Thais Want An Early Election

BANGKOK (Dispatches) - More than 60 per cent of Thais want the government to dissolve parliament and call an early election, according to a recent opinion poll, as the country’s Constitutional Court considers the future of suspended Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha.

Prayuth, 68, was suspended from duty by the court last month over a petition filed by the main opposition Pheu Thai party that argued Prayuth’s time spent as head of a military junta after a 2014 coup should count towards his constitutionally stipulated eight-year term limit. The suspension left Deputy Prime Minister Prawit Wongsuwan as the country’s acting leader while Prayuth remains in the cabinet as defence minister.



# Japan Gov’t to Waive Tourist Visa Requirements

TOKYO (Dispatches) - Japan’s government is planning to waive tourist visa requirements from some countries as part of a further easing of border controls enacted to stop the spread of Covid-19, Fuji News Network reported.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida may decide as early as this week on the easing, which would also allow individual travellers to visit Japan without travel agency bookings, FNN reported. Japan did not require tourist visas for 68 countries and regions before the pandemic.

The government may scrap a daily cap on arrivals by October, the Nikkei newspaper reported on Sunday.



# Ukraine Recaptures More Ground as Russia Strikes Back



KRAMATORSK (Dispatches) - Ukraine forces said their lightning counter-offensive took back more ground in the past 24 hours, as Russia replied with strikes on some of the recaptured ground.

The territorial shifts were one of Russia’s biggest reversals since its forces were turned back from Kyiv in the earliest days of the nearly seven months of fighting, yet Moscow signaled it was no closer to agreeing a negotiated peace.

“Ukraine has turned the tide in its favor, but the current counter-offensive will not end the war,” US think tank Institute for the Study of War tweeted.

Moscow announced air, rocket and artillery attacks on reclaimed areas in the Kharkiv region on Monday, a day after Kyiv said Russian strikes on electricity infrastructure caused power failures.

The retaliatory fire came as Ukraine said forces had recaptured more than 20 additional settlements, claiming “Russian troops are hastily abandoning their positions and fleeing”.

Kyiv had already announced the recapture of the strategic city of Izyum in the country’s east, one of a series of victories claimed against Russia’s army.

Ukraine said on Monday its forces recaptured 500 square kilometers (193 square miles) in the southern Kherson region which were in addition to the huge gains in the east over the weekend.

Moscow conceded having lost territory, which experts saw as a serious blow to its war ambitions, but Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov saw no prospects for negotiations.

The special military operation continues and will continue until the objectives that were originally set are achieved,” he added, using Russia’s terminology for the internationally condemned war.

Eastern parts of Ukraine were hit with widespread electricity blackouts on Sunday evening, which President Volodymyr Zelensky said deliberately hit civilian infrastructure. He blamed “Russian terrorists”.

“A total blackout in the Kharkiv and Donetsk regions, a partial one in the Zaporizhzhia, Dnipropetrovsk and Sumy regions,” Zelensky said in a statement on social media.

“No military facilities,” he added. “The goal is to deprive people of light and heat.”

Local Ukrainian authorities pointed to Russian strikes on their power infrastructure, but some districts reported later that power had been restored.

In Kharkiv region, a Russian strike on a power station killed one employee, Governor Oleg Synegebov said. He added that power had been partially brought back.

Ukraine’s foreign ministry spokesman Oleg Nikolenko said the Russian attacks were an “act of desperation following Russia’s immense losses and retreat in eastern Ukraine”.

The Russian strikes hit 15 locations on Sunday, from Kramatorsk in the east to Mykolaiv in the south and Dnipro in between, Ukraine’s military said.

The blackouts hit regions with an estimated combined population of nine million people -- including territory controlled by Russia.

The Russian attacks also disrupted railway services. Ukraine’s national train service announced delays throughout the east including the country’s second-largest city, Kharkiv.

Ukraine had already lost all power from the Russian-controlled Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant.

The country’s nuclear energy agency said the final reactor at the plant, Europe’s largest nuclear power station, had been shut off as a safety measure.

The speed of Ukraine’s fightback has apparently caught Russia’s military off-guard, bringing swathes of territory Moscow had controlled for months back into Kyiv’s fold.

# Swedish Voters Hand Anti-Immigration Sweden Democrats Influential Role

STOCKHOLM (Dispatches) - Sweden’s right bloc appeared in pole position today to form a government for the first time in nearly a decade, helped by a wave of voter anger over gang violence which could give an anti-immigration populist party a share in power for the first time.

Sunday’s national election remained too close to call on Monday with about 5 per cent of election districts yet to be counted, but early results gave right-wing parties 175 of the 349 seats in the Riksdag, one more than the left bloc.

Overseas postal ballots were still to be counted and while they have historically tended to favour the right, this means a full preliminary result is not due until Wednesday. All votes are then counted again to provide a final tally.

If the results are confirmed, Sweden, which has long prided itself on being a bastion of tolerance, will become less open to immigrants as the Russian invasion of Ukraine continues to force people to flee and climate change is pushing many to leave Africa.

Political observers say Moderate leader Ulf Kristersson is likely to become prime minister in a minority government supported by the anti-immigration Sweden Democrats who are poised to become the largest party on the right and will

have a big say on the new administration’s program.

The party, which has white supremacists among its founders, is expected to stay formally in opposition, however, with many voters and politicians across the political spectrum uncomfortable with seeing it in government.

“It is the Sweden Democrats who have driven the right-wing bloc along, both in terms of shaping the political content and in attracting voters to the constellation,” the independent liberal newspaper Goteborgsposten wrote.

“For Sweden, a new political era awaits.” What’s unlikely to change is Sweden’s path towards NATO membership, which has broad support in the wake of Russia’s actions in Ukraine, as well as the country’s plans to boost defense spending.

Andersson, who has yet to concede the election, pledged in March to increase the military budget to 2% of gross domestic product in response to a deteriorating security situation in Europe following what Moscow calls its “special operation”.



## UN Presses Sri Lanka to Advance Human Rights

COLOMBO (Dispatches) - Sri Lanka should improve human rights and strengthen institutions to tackle the humanitarian challenges that have sprung from its worst financial crisis in seven decades, a top U.N. Human Rights official said.

U.N. member states and international financial institutions should support Sri Lanka as it tries to assist millions struggling with food, fuel, power and medicine shortages, said Nada Al-Nashif, U.N. Acting High Commissioner for Human Rights.

“I encourage the new government to embark on a national dialogue to advance human rights and reconciliation and to carry out the deeper institutional, democratic and security sector reforms needed to restore the independence of key institutions, to combat impunity, to prevent the recurrence of human rights violations, and to tackle the economic crisis,” Al-Nashif told the 51st Session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva.

She also urged Sri Lanka’s new government led by President Ranil Wickremesinghe to end the use of security laws to arrest protest leaders who helped oust former President Gotabaya Rajapaksa in July.

Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Ali Sabry told the same meeting the government was committed to working with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on improving human rights, but would object to any international judicial intervention that it sees as anti-constitutional.

Al-Nashif said Sri Lanka must make more progress towards establishing a credible investigation into alleged war crimes during the civil war that ended in 2009 and promote demilitarisation of the island’s north and eastern regions.

The United Nations and rights groups have accused the Sri Lankan military of killing thousands of civilians, mostly ethnic Tamils, during the final weeks of the war and have pressed for justice for the families of those who disappeared. In 2021, OHCHR launched a new ‘accountability project’ that could one day be used as part of a potential international judicial process.

## King Charles Leads Procession Behind Queen’s Coffin in Edinburgh

LONDON (Dispatches) - Large crowds gathered in Scotland’s capital as King Charles III led the British royal family in a procession behind the coffin of his mother when it travelled to an Edinburgh cathedral to allow the public to pay their respects.

Queen Elizabeth II’s coffin was taken from the Palace of Holyroodhouse on Monday to nearby St Giles’ Cathedral where her family, and a congregation drawn from all areas of Scottish society, attended a service of thanksgiving for her life.

King Charles III, dressed in army uniform, along with Princess Anne, Prince Andrew and Prince Edward, walked behind as the hearse travelled to St Giles’ Cathedral flanked by a bearer party of the Royal Regiment of Scotland and a detachment of The King’s Body Guard in Scotland, the Royal Company of Archers.

The coffin will remain at the cathedral until Tuesday so members of the public can pay their respects before it is taken to London to lie in state at the Houses of Parliament Palace from Wednesday afternoon until the morning of the funeral on September 19.

One man appeared to shout angrily at the hearse as it passed, while others called out: “God save the king!” But the procession was greeted mostly with a respectful silence under blue skies flecked with white clouds.

Earlier, a car carrying Charles and his wife Camilla passed the huge crowds of people who were packed behind metal barriers along the Royal Mile, the road between Holyroodhouse and St Giles’ Cathedral. Onlookers clapped and waved as the king’s limousine passed.

Charles and Camilla got out of their car at Holyroodhouse and greeted people, and looked at floral tributes before a gun salute boomed from Edinburgh Castle.

Earlier on Monday, the king addressed lawmakers in Parliament in London, telling them: “I cannot but help feel the weight of history which surrounds us.”

Charles told members of the House of Commons and House of Lords that he would follow his late mother in upholding “the precious principles of constitutional governance” that underpin the UK’s political system.

He paid tribute to his mother, saying: “As Shakespeare said of the earlier Queen Elizabeth, she was a pattern to all princes living.” Earlier on Monday, Prince Harry paid an emotional tribute to his “granny” in his first public comments since her death, saying she would be sorely missed not just by the family, but the world over.

“Granny, while this final parting brings us great sadness, I am forever grateful for all of our first meetings – from my earliest childhood memories with you, to meeting you for the first time as my commander-in-chief, to the first moment you met my darling wife and hugged your beloved great-grandchildren.”

## Pakistan Races to Keep Floodwaters out of Power Station

DADU (Dispatches) - Authorities in Pakistan are scrambling to protect a vital power station supplying electricity to millions of people against a growing threat of flooding, officials said.

Floods from record monsoon rains and glacial melt in the mountainous north have affected 33 million people and killed almost 1,400, washing away homes, roads, railways, livestock and crops, in damage estimated at \$30 billion.

Both the government and U.N. Secretary General Antonio Guterres have blamed climate change for the

extreme weather that led to the flooding that submerged huge areas of the nation of 220 million.

The electricity station in the district of Dadu in the southern province of Sindh, one of the country’s worst affected areas, supplies power to six provincial districts.

Troops were busy strengthening a dike built in front of the station, a visit to the site showed on Sunday.

“All preventive measures have been taken already to save the grid in case any flooding happens,” Syed Murtaza Ali Shah, a top district official, told Reuters on Monday.

## Pakistan Court Extends Imran Khan’s Bail in Terrorism Case

ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) - A court in Pakistan has extended the pre-arrest bail of former Prime Minister Imran Khan in a “terrorism” case till September 20.

Khan on Monday appeared before the anti-terrorism court in the capital Islamabad that adjourned the case until September 20 after the state prosecutors asked for more time to prepare their arguments.

Khan who heads the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, was charged with “terrorism” for remarks made at a public rally on August 20 against police officials and a female judge who had ordered the arrest of one of his top aides, Shahbaz Gill.

In his speech, Khan had allegedly threatened “action” by taking legal recourse against top Islamabad police officials and Judge Zeba Chaudhry, who had approved Gill’s two-day detention.

Gill was arrested on August 9 and charged with sedition after he was accused of inciting a mutiny in Pakistan’s powerful military during a TV show. Khan’s PTI alleges Gill was tortured in custody.

The cricketing icon-turned-politician denied he threatened the officials in his speech, saying his words were taken out of context.

The same speech also resulted in Khan being charged with contempt of court and unlawful assembly, with charges in the contempt case set to be framed on September 22.

In brief remarks before entering the courtroom on Monday, Khan told he has become “very dangerous” to the government.

During Monday’s hearing, state prosecutor Raja Rizwan Abbasi told the court that Khan refused to appear before the investigation team despite being issued three notices.

In response, Babar Awan, Khan’s lawyer, said his client’s statement had already been provided to the investigating officer.

In a hearing that lasted less than an hour, the court instructed the two parties to determine when and where should Khan become part of the investigation.

Awan, who had earlier raised safety concerns for Khan during the hearing, told reporters outside the court that the charges against Khan were a ploy by the government to “minus Imran”. “It will fail,” he said.

Khan’s government was removed through a parliamentary vote of no-confidence in April. Since then, he has been holding public rallies across the country demanding fresh elections, which are otherwise due late next year.





However, challenges remain and tourist infrastructure is still basic in Iraq, a country now in on the ravaged by decades of fighting.





## Argentina's Inflation Rate Expected to Hit 95% This Year

BUENOS AIRES (Dispatches) - Economists hiked their estimate for annual inflation in Argentina this year to 95%, a monthly poll published by the central bank showed, as the country struggles to overcome a prolonged economic crisis marked by soaring prices.

The latest forecast for surging consumer prices is 4.8 percentage points higher than the previous month's estimate. Analysts estimated that Argentine inflation rose 6.5% in August.

By next year, the South American nation's annual inflation rate is expected to reach 84%, and drop to 63% in 2024, according to the poll.



## Bangladesh's Economy Has Come of Age, Now Attracts Foreign Players

DHAKA (Dispatches) - Economic liberalization has put Bangladesh on a solid foundation since the current Awami League government has been in power for a long time.

Once called the bottomless basket of the world, Bangladesh's economy has now come of age, and the country's resilient economy now attracts foreign players, reported Bangladesh Live News.

Even the nations that had marked Bangladesh as a bottomless basket are now interested in developing close relations with Bangladesh. Notably, the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund Spring Meeting in 2022 lauded Bangladesh for successfully implementing its policies to combat the COVID-19 pandemic and economic recovery from its effect, reported Bangladesh Live News.

Bangladesh has come of age and with the broad-basing of its manufacturing sector and spur in infra projects, it can be an economy to watch out for in Asia.

Since when (US Secretary of State) Henry Kissinger called it a 'basket case' in 1971, Bangladesh has come a long way. The recently inaugurated Padma bridge is a case in point. The international agencies that had refused to fund it are now congratulating Bangladesh on its completion.

Linking the southwest of the country to the northern and eastern regions, the road-rail bridge (Padma Bridge) built for \$3.6 billion was inaugurated by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on June 25.

Besides, entry into the era of metro rail, express highway, Karnaphuli tunnel, elevated expressway, radical renovation of the dilapidated railway sector which has gradually shrunk after independence, expansion of rail network, the establishment of direct rail network between Dhaka and Cox's Bazar, the establishment of the rail network with the southern and southwestern region through Padma bridge.

Construction of the third terminal of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, modernization and expansion of Cox's Bazar Airport, and renovation of Mongla Sea Port, Payra Shallow Sea Port, and Matarbari Deep Sea Port will bring great changes in the communication and infrastructure sector of Bangladesh, which is one of the successes of the government.

The current government has improved the power generation record by overhauling the fragile power system left by the previous government, reported Bangladesh Live News.

In 2006, the total power generation capacity in the country was 3,378 MW. So far, Bangladesh's highest power generation capacity is 26,700 MW, and the maximum production in one day is 14,782 MW. Payra thermal power plant and Ruppur nuclear power plant will now provide interrupted power supply to Bangladesh.

After China, Bangladesh's position in the ready-made garment industry is very strong. Moreover, the present government has created Special Economic Zones, easy business-friendly policies, reported Bangladesh Live News.

## ECB Governors See Rising Risk of Rate Hitting 2% to Curb Inflation

PRAGUE (Dispatches) - European Central Bank policymakers see a rising risk that they will have to raise their key interest rate to 2% or more to curb record-high inflation in the euro zone despite a likely recession, sources told Reuters.

With inflation hitting 9.1% in August and seen above the ECB's 2% target for two years to come, the central bank has been raising its interest rates at record speed and urging governments to help bring down energy bills that have ballooned since Russia invaded Ukraine.

The ECB raised its deposit rate from zero to 0.75% on Thursday and President Christine Lagarde guided for another two or three hikes, saying rates were still far away from a level that will bring inflation back to 2%.

Five sources close to the matter said many policymakers saw a growing probability that they will need to take the rate into "restrictive territory", jargon for a level of rates that causes the economy to slow, at 2% or above.

The sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity because policy deliberations are private, said this would most likely happen if the ECB's first inflation projection for 2025, due to be published in December, is still above 2%.

An ECB spokesman declined to comment.

The ECB currently sees inflation at 2.3% in 2024, though one source said an internal forecast which was presented at Thursday's meeting put it closer to 2% after taking into account the latest gas prices.

Dutch central bank governor Klaas Knot and Belgium's Pierre Wunsch were the first to openly talk about going into restrictive territory late last month, at a time when most of their colleagues felt interest rates just needed to go back to between 1% and 2%.



The sources said policymakers were bracing for a recession this winter and weaker economic growth next year than the ECB's official projection of 0.9%. But some took comfort from the strong labor market, which should cushion the impact of the higher rates, they added.

At Thursday's meeting, policymakers also began a discussion about the tens of billions of euros that the ECB is liable to pay out to banks on their excess reserves now that the deposit rate is positive again, the sources said.

Policymakers judged that current proposals, including one for a "reverse tiring system" that caps remuneration on some reserves, needed more work, the sources said. One added a decision might still come before the ECB's next policy meeting on Oct 27.

## Uzbekistan's Road Map For Future Investors

TASHKENT (Dispatches) - The increased transparency and bold reforms of the last five years have seen Uzbekistan's economy grow at a speed few predicted. But can President Shavkat Mirziyoyev achieve his dream to create the Commonwealth of Independent States' second highest economy after Russia?

Only after significant investment, both at home and internationally. At an open dialogue event held in Tashkent on August 22, Mirziyoyev made clear his determination to allay any concerns for potential investors, to tame inflation and to push the country's sovereign rating higher.

The event was attended by heads of ministries and departments responsible for the economy, trade, construction and investment, as well as business executives.

In the 12 months since President Mirziyoyev declared that August 20 would become a national 'Day of Entrepreneurs' as part of an ongoing drive to attract foreign investment, the country has seen a record amount of new businesses opening – more than 55,000. Some 26,000 of these enterprises have revenues of over US\$1 million.

"We are entering a very important and decisive stage on the path of building a New Uzbekistan," President Mirziyoyev told those present at the event. "Your selfless work, innovative thinking and approach are more important today than ever, and I believe that you will set an example for the representatives of all spheres."

The idea of the open dialogue is to address current and potential entrepreneurs' concerns, in nine thematic sessions.

The number of appeals from business owners has almost halved (8,500 in 2022, down from 15,000 in 2021), and it is clear many issues have already been resolved in the government's drive to streamline bureaucracy, simplify legislation and protect businesses over the last year.

Different ways in which support would be given to local businesses and foreign investors were discussed. A key session covered property, ownership and the division of buildings, since many of the issues raised by entrepreneurs related to this.

Islam Zhasimov, first deputy chairman of Uzbekistan's Chamber of Commerce and Industry, had reassuring words for those present. "Our most important task is to increase the freedom of entrepreneurship in Uzbekistan," he said. "This is a very important indicator that determines the attractiveness of entrepreneurial activity. And how free do our entrepreneurs feel, free to get a loan, to get land, to buy a building, to export, to protect their property and interests?"

Among the initiatives introduced at the event were a lower flat rate of tax for small businesses, with extra tax incentives during the first 12 months. Around 370,000 entrepreneurs would stand to benefit from this at present.

Financing for small businesses has also been announced, and guarantees from the country's Entrepreneurship Fund are to be doubled. This will enable at least 15,000 entrepreneurs to secure loans.

## Japan Urged to Take Steps Against Excessive Yen Moves



TOKYO (Dispatches) - Japan's government must take steps as needed to counter excessive declines in the yen, a senior government official said, as the currency slides to its weakest level against the dollar in 24 years.

The comments from Seiji Kihara, the deputy chief cabinet secretary of Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's government, are the latest to highlight authorities' deep concern about the yen's slide.

Kihara also said the government will consider "in the not so distant future" relaxing strict border measures to further open Japan's borders to overseas visitors, such as by scrapping a cap on the daily number of entrants.

"As for excessive, one-sided currency moves, we will closely watch developments and must take steps as needed," Kihara told a television programme, when asked about the yen's recent falls.

The yen has been hammered against the dollar as investors focus on the widening divergence between the U.S. Federal Reserve's aggressive interest rate hikes and the Bank of Japan's (BOJ) pledge to maintain ultra-low rates.

"I won't comment on monetary and interest-rate policy, as they fall under the jurisdiction of the BOJ," Kihara said.

The government is considering scrapping the cap on visitors to Japan by October, the Nikkei newspaper reported on Sunday. The government would also remove current restrictions on visitors who are not on package tours, the Nikkei said without citing the source of its information.

"A weak yen is most effective in attracting inbound tourism," Kihara said, adding that further steps must be taken to draw in more foreign tourists into the country.

Japan eased border controls from Sept. 7 by raising the ceiling for daily entrants to 50,000 and freeing entry for travellers on package tours without the need for guides.

## Flood Losses Likely to Slash Pakistan's GDP Growth to 3% From 5%

ISLAMABAD (Dispatches) - The massive losses from the catastrophic monsoon rains and floods in Pakistan, the war in Ukraine and other factors may force it to slash its GDP growth rate for the financial year 2022-2023 from five per cent to three per cent, according to media reports on Saturday. Chairman of the National Flood Response and Coordination Centre (NFRCC), Major General Zafar Iqbal, during the joint briefing for Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and UN Secretary-General Antonio

Guterres, said that at least one-third of Pakistan was inundated, while the overall damages would amount to over USD 30 billion.

The state-run Associated Press of Pakistan news agency quoted Iqbal as saying that Pakistan expected a two per cent cut in the Gross Domestic Product growth figure due to a combination of crises, chief among which were the floods, the delayed approval of IMF funds, and the economic situation emerging in the wake of the Russia-Ukraine war. Separately, the Dawn newspaper reported that the minister said that while the Super Floods' in 2010 had affected around 20 million, the impact of the current flash floods had been felt by more than 33 million people across the country, of which over 0.6 million were housed in relief camps.

Mountain torrents proved to be a challenge amid a lack of efficient infrastructure to deal with the disaster, which resulted in heavy losses to human life, infrastructure, livestock, and crops, he said. The NFRCC official said that coordinated efforts among civil government, military, and NGOs including the UN aid bodies were in full swing, adding that an assessment survey on relief operations in the provinces started by Monday.

Meanwhile, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) reported that the death toll from the deadly floods had climbed to 1,396, while the total number of injured stood over 12,700. The cumulative number of homes damaged by flooding either partially or fully was over 1.7 million, while over 6,600kms of roads and 269 bridges had been damaged, according to the NDMA's latest situation report.

Its data indicates that a total of 81 districts (32 in Balochistan, 23 in Sindh, and 17 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) remained categorized as calamity-hit'. Also, the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, who is on the last day of his two-day trip to Pakistan, is expected to visit the flood-hit areas in Sindh and Balochistan provinces to review the ongoing rescue and relief efforts and the damages caused by the calamity.



# U.S. Seeking to Create Drone Network in ME

# Germans Switch to Costly Fan Heaters as Gas Shortage Fears Bite

FRANKFURT (Dispatches) - Germans could overload their power grid as they switch to inefficient electric heaters in an attempt to avoid gas shortages this winter, utilities warned in an article published on Monday.

Households have been stocking up on electric fan heaters, including portable devices, sales figures show, amid fears that Russia could cut or further limit gas supplies in the wake of its war in Ukraine.

The managing director of the German association of energy and water utilities, BDEW, told daily Handelsblatt that customers could be left with even heftier power bills if they do not use the devices sparingly.

“And they can overburden the power grids, for instance when many households switch on their fan heaters in one part of town at the same time on a cold winter’s night,” BDEW director Kerstin Andreae was quoted as saying. She said she understood people’s fears of cold homes, but some of the coping mechanisms could backfire.

Germany, along with other European Union countries, is scrambling to support homes and industries burdened by a further surge in energy prices after Russia halted supplies through the Nord Stream 1 natural gas pipeline.

The German government has pledged that industrial users would be the first to be rationed in case of a shortfall and that private households would be spared any cuts.

The president of Germany’s federal network agency also said local power blackouts could result from peaks in fan heater use, according to a Saturday interview with newspaper Tagesspiegel.



Klaus Mueller added that even amid “very high” gas prices, electric heaters would still cost users more than gas-based central heating, which is the most common form of residential heating in the country.

Germans bought 600,000 electric heating devices during the first half of the year, up almost 35% from a year earlier, according to data by market researcher GfK.

# UN Official Urges Removal of All Unilateral Anti-Iran Sanctions

TEHRAN (IFP) \_ UN Special Rapporteur Alena Douhan has released the final report on her visit to Iran, criticizing sanctions on Iran and demanding the removal of all unilateral coercive measures (UCMs) against the country.

She then urged the UN to come up with required mechanisms to give reparations to victims of such acts.

Douhan paid an 11-day visit to Iran in May and met with human rights officials and members of nongovernmental organizations in the Islamic Republic.

“Since 1979, the US has imposed economic, trade and financial sanctions, with a comprehensive trade ban since 1995 and significant measures to isolate Iran from the international commercial and financial system... However, since the mid-2000s, a series of executive orders and specific laws have created a broad and complicated framework of prohibitions and bans, which intensified after 2010 and extended to the energy sector and other key economic sectors”, said the UN special rapporteur in her report.

Douhan also criticized sanctions on Iran by US allies, including the European Union, Australia, and Canada after 2010.

She said the use of such bans, secondary sanctions and over-compliance has an overall adverse effect on the broad spectrum of human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural, including the right to life and the right to development.

The UN official also touched on the medical ramifications of the US sanctions, saying, “Iran produces around 95% of its medicines and basic vaccines to mitigate the impact of unilateral sanctions, with good manufacturing and quality assurance systems but Iranian pharmaceutical companies have difficulty procuring raw materials and ingredients of necessary quality, with increased costs affecting purchases from abroad”.

The US has so far defied all calls to remove the unilateral anti-Iran sanctions, which it claims are not targeting ordinary Iranians.

# Robots Need to Move Faster to Save the World

LONDON (Dispatches) - Not so long ago authors were churning out dire books on how “The Rise of the Robots” would lead to “The Jobless Future”, amid authoritative forecasts that half of all U.S. jobs would be at risk from automation starting right about now.

Recent jobs reports, however, raise a different threat: not whether robots will replace human labor, but whether they will get here fast enough to save the world economy from worker shortages.

Worldwide unemployment is at 4.5 per cent, the lowest since global records began in 1980. Labor shortfalls are at historic highs in advanced economies, including the UK and US. There are now 11.2mn openings for 5.6mn job hunters in the US, the widest gap since the 1950s. Millions of workers who quit during the pandemic have yet to return, adding to the desperation of bosses.

These pressures are boiling up now in large part because growth in the working-age population — those between 15 and 64 — has started to decline, while the share of the elderly swells. Accelerated ageing is in turn a delayed result of societal shifts that started decades earlier: women having fewer children and science extending the average lifespan.

The working-age population is shrinking in nearly 40 nations, including most of the major economic powers, up from just two in the early 1980s. The US is declining less precipitously than most, but is in the same basic fix. More than any other factor, fewer workers all but guarantee slower economic growth, so most nations will need more robots just to keep growth alive.

Techno-pessimists still sound the alarm, saying the specter of robots stealing jobs and undercutting wages will resurface as the pandemic fades and job-quitters return to work, which they may ... or may not. Either way, underlying demographic trends foretell continuing shortages.

Among the hardest hit nations are China, Japan, Germany and South Korea — all are expected to see the working age population drop by at least 400,000 a year through to 2030. Not coincidentally, these countries already host high concentrations of robots, and are rolling out more. Japan’s manufacturers deploy nearly 400 robots per 10,000 workers, up from 300 just four years ago.

China, in its top-down way, is heavily subsidizing robot makers, aiming to boost their output by 20 per cent a year



through 2030. Even at that pace, Bernstein analysts predict, robots cannot fill all the holes in the labor force, which China expects will shrink by 35mn workers in the next three years.

Governments can respond to labor shortages in other ways — by paying bonuses to parents to have more children, encouraging women to enter or return to work, welcoming immigrants or raising the retirement age. But all these steps trigger human resistance, particularly in an angrily populist era.

Robots provoke a different reaction, a vague fear of machines and artificial intelligence that takes form mainly in books, rarely in protest against stealing jobs. Meanwhile, robots arrive quietly at the loading dock, unchallenged.

Like previous innovations, robots kill off some professions and create others. The gas engine made the horse-drawn buggy driver obsolete but spawned the taxi driver. About a third of the jobs created in the US are in fields that did not or barely existed 25 years ago. And a third “will change fundamentally over the next 15-20 years”, according to the OECD. Technology brings disruption, not destruction followed by nothing — as the “jobless future” implies.

Each robot can replace three or more factory workers, the hardest hit group. But the degree of disruption depends on the often-exaggerated pace of change. Forecasters have been predicting since the 1950s that full-blown AI would arrive in 20 years, but it is not here yet. Dire warnings that autonomous vehicles would wipe out one of the most common jobs in America -truck driver — have given way to a trucker shortage.

Now recession is looming, but unemployment is unlikely to rise as high as in previous downturns, owing again to shrinking labor forces. Fewer workers will leave the labor market tighter than usual through the business cycle, even as robots continue to multiply.

They can’t arrive too soon. Owing to an unexpectedly steep drop in birth rates, the UN recently raised its forecast for the pace of population decline, from the US to China. It takes years for births to affect the workforce, but smart governments will act now, by drawing more women, immigrants, seniors and — yes — robots into the workforce. The other option is fewer workers, automated or not, and a growthless future.

# Time to... FROM PAGE 1

Iranian officials have repeatedly warned that the country will not hesitate to strengthen its military capabilities, including its missile power, which are entirely meant for defense, saying the Islamic Republic’s defense capabilities will be never subject to negotiations.



Meanwhile Israel’s intelligence agency Mossad chief David Barnea claimed Israel will not go after Tehran’s proxies but will act against the ones who arm them, with a painful response on Iranian soil.

In his first public speech since becoming head of the spy agency in June 2021, Barnea said at a conference at Herzliya’s Reichman University that Israel would not participate in the “charade” of a renewed nuclear deal between world powers and Iran, warning that the looming accord would “not provide immunity” for Tehran from Mossad’s operations, “even if a deal is signed.”

Barnea’s claims void bully and claim needs to be responded properly because the more Iran or the world community waits for decent behavior from the Zionist regime, the more this regime will get courage to continue its crimes and threats.

The Mossad chief has called Iran a terrorist regime while this is the Zionist regime itself which has been behind many terrorist acts in the world in recent decades and especially against Iran.

As the Supreme Leader has reiterated and some of IRGC commanders have supported, the country should be strong enough to repel any attack or bully from any hostile country and recent military achievements can help the country to stop Israel from boasting.

The Zionist regime should know this fact that Iranian people may have some economic problems inside but they are united against the enemies especially the Zionists or any intruders.

History has shown that Iranians do not tolerate any aggression or invasion and they will fight back with tooth and nail and the Zionist regime should not be fooled by domestic political differences or economic problems because Iranians are fully prepared to silence the enemies especially the Zionists and recent achievements and weapons are ready to punish them in case of any mischief.

Arash 2 is now ready to punish the Israelis if they want to have any ill-intention against Iran and Arash 2 is just as an example of Iran’s military power which is able to bring down the Zionist because there are other weapons especially missiles which are ready to be fired at Israel if the Zionists continue creating problem and military conflicts for Tehran.

People like Barnea are better to keep silent and think of their own businesses and domestic affairs rather than threatening Iran because so far many Israeli officials have threatened Iran but all have gone or perished but the Islamic Republic of Iran has marched ahead with full strength and this advancement will continue and Israel is too weak and small to stop the Islamic Republic of Iran, and other countries are also recommended not to be fooled by the crocodile tears of the Zionist regime which tries to paint an innocent picture of itself for fooling other nations to put pressure on Tehran which seems it is in vain.

# President Urges... FROM PAGE 1

“The historical borders of Iran and Armenia are considered the basis of prosperity, convergence and security of the region, and Tehran is determined to continue cooperation in all fields for the benefit of the prosperity and stability of the region. During the phone talks, Pashinyan, for his part, provided the Iranian President with details of the recent clashes between the two countries. He also said that the Islamic Republic of Iran has always played a constructive and influential role in resolving tensions and crises in the region.

Pashinyan also expressed satisfaction with the expanding relations between Tehran and Yerevan, saying that Armenia seeks to deepen relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran in all fields. Armenia and Azerbaijan have reported new border clashes that left a number of Azerbaijani and Armenian troops dead.

Tensions flared overnight in the latest escalation of decades-old hostilities between the two countries in the south Caucasus over control of the disputed region. Each side blamed the other for the fighting.

The two countries agreed on a ceasefire early on Tuesday to halt a flare-up in hostilities over the Karabakh region, but it fell apart minutes later, Azerbaijani media said.

Conflict first broke out in the late 1980s, when both sides were under Soviet rule and Armenian forces captured swathes of territory near Karabakh, long recognized internationally as Azerbaijan’s territory. About 30,000 people died in the ensuing conflict.

Azerbaijan regained those territories in the 2020 fighting, which ended with a Russian-brokered truce and thousands of residents returning to homes from which they had fled. More than 6,500 people lost their lives in the six-week war.

# Venezuela... FROM PAGE 1

In August, Mohsen Koosheshtabar, Iranian deputy interior minister for economic affairs said Venezuela has agreed to provide one million hectares of agricultural land for Iran’s overseas cultivation projects to secure food.

Iranian lawmaker Mohammad Reza Mirtajodini said on Tuesday that Iran is planning to build two extraterritorial oil refineries in Venezuela and Uruguay.

“Iranian Oil Ministry’s move to sign agreements with Venezuela and Uruguay for setting up extraterritorial oil refineries, feeding them, becoming a stakeholder in them, and transferring technical know-how to these countries is a very important measure.”

Setting up these refineries will guarantee the country’s oil sales amid anti-Tehran sanctions, he said.

# Iran Cooperated With... FROM PAGE 1

Kamalvandi said that the monitoring that is not done today used to be carried out by the Agency according to the nuclear deal which was signed with the P5+1 signed in 2015.

But, the nuclear official said, resuming the monitoring and safeguards according to the Iranian parliament’s law “The Strategic Action to Remove the Sanctions and Protect the Nation’s Rights” requires living up to the commitments by the parties to the nuclear deal and the removal of sanctions on Iran. Also in reaction to the IAEA demand on the safeguards and monitoring of the nuclear site, Mohsen Naziri Asl, who has recently been appointed as Iran’s envoy to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said that the three insignificant safeguard claims raised by the agency are a two-decade-old issue, however, Tehran has appropriately and constructively cooperated with the agency to resolve them.

# Iran Economy... FROM PAGE 1

Figures provided by the SCI and Iran’s central bank (CBI) and confirmed by international economic organizations show that the Iranian economy started to recover from a recession caused by American sanctions in the second half of 2020 more than a year after the sanctions were imposed. However, the pace of economic growth decelerated starting in the last quarter of the calendar year to late March 2022. SCI and CBI figures show Iran’s economy grew by more than 4% over the past calendar year, down from a growth figure of 5.1% reported for the three quarters to late December.



## Lowry Wins BMW PGA Championship Title

LONDON (Dispatches) - Ireland's Shane Lowry produced a masterful third round to win the BMW PGA Championship, his first title since winning the 2019 Open. Lowry found a birdie on the par-five 18th at Wentworth for a blemish-free 65 to reach 18 under for his three rounds, one ahead of Spaniard Jon Rahm who had earlier set the course alight with a dazzling 62. Lowry then had to wait to see whether Northern Ireland's Rory McIlroy could make an eagle on the 18th to match him.

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## Arsenal v PSV Eindhoven Postponed

LONDON (Dispatches) - Thursday's Europa League group L game between Arsenal and PSV Eindhoven has been postponed due to the lack of adequate security personnel following the death of Queen Elizabeth, UEFA said. "This is due to the severe limitations on police resources and organizational issues related to the ongoing events surrounding the national mourning for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II," UEFA said. UEFA added that a new date will be communicated in due course.

8 IRAN NEWS

SPORTS

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 14, 2022

# Alcaraz Wins US Open To Become World No.1

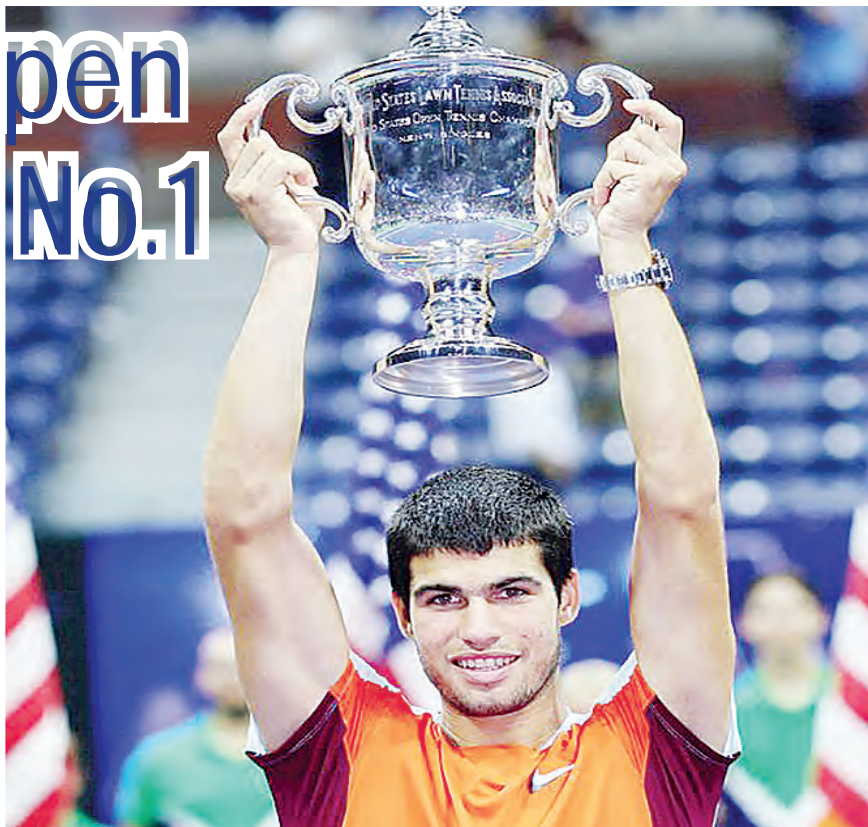
NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Spanish teenager Carlos Alcaraz completed his rapid rise to the top of the tennis world, claiming his first Grand Slam title and taking the number one ranking with a 6-4 2-6 7-6(1) 6-3 win over Norway's Casper Ruud in the US Open final. Alcaraz, 19, fell to his back and cupped his hands to his face before jumping up to embrace Ruud at the net. He then climbed past photographers and into the stands to celebrate in his box with his team. "This is something I dreamed of since I was a kid, to be number one in the world, to be the champion at a Grand Slam," Alcaraz said in an on-court interview. "All the hard work that I did with my team, with my family. I'm just 19-years-old so all of the tough decisions are with my parents and my team as well. "This is something that is really, really special for me." "Bravo Carlitos!" was displayed on a banner inside the stadium for the tennis prodigy from El Palmar. The electrifying Alcaraz, who thrilled fans over the two-week tournament in New York with his explosive speed, booming forehand and acrobatic shotmaking, replaced Russian Daniil Medvedev at the top of the rankings. He is the youngest world number one since the ATP rankings began in 1973, breaking the mark set by Lleyton Hewitt, who was 20 when he became number one in 2001. Alcaraz had a difficult path to the title. He battled from a break down in the fifth set to beat Marin Cilic in the fourth round, played the latest finishing match in tournament history to defeat Italy's Jannik Sinner in the quarters, and faced down American Frances Tiafoe in the semis. "I always say that there is no time to be tired in the final round of a Grand Slam or any tournament," said Alcaraz, who spent 23 hours and 40 minutes on court over his seven matches.

## Tuchel Has Six Options

LONDON (Dispatches) - Thomas Tuchel could take Eddie Howe's job at Newcastle United with Stan Collymore outlining the former Chelsea boss' options. The Blues ownership made the decision to sack Tuchel last Wednesday with various reports citing a breakdown in the relationship between board and manager. Chelsea have made a mixed start to the new season with ten points from a possible 18 in the Premier League while Tuchel's last match in charge came in a 1-0 loss to Dinamo Zagreb in the Champions League. Tuchel was given more responsibility in the transfer market this summer but a report claimed last week that the German had 'done little to prove that he wanted to take a proactive part of' Todd Boehly's new vision and culture for Chelsea.

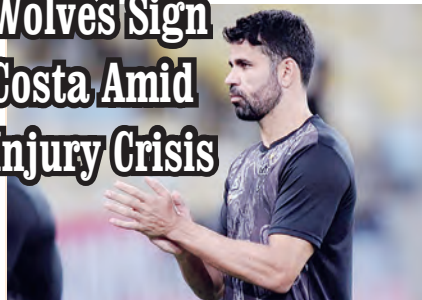
And Boehly very quickly realised that Tuchel was 'perhaps better suited to the more detached management style of the past regime.' The former Borussia Dortmund boss made his devastation at the decision to sack him clear yesterday as he sent a message to the Chelsea fans and his former colleagues.

Tuchel posted on Twitter on Sunday evening: "This is one of the most difficult statements I have ever had to write - and it is one which I hoped I would not need to do for many years. "I am devastated that my time at Chelsea has come to an end. This is a club where I felt at home, both professionally and personally. "Thank you so much to all the staff, the players and the supporters for making me feel very welcome from the start." "The pride and joy I felt at helping the team to win the Champions League and the Club World Cup will stay with me forever. "I am honored to have been a part of this club's history and the memories of the last 19 months will always have a special place in my heart."



competing for both their first Grand Slam title and the world number one ranking. "We knew what we were playing for, we knew what was at stake," said Ruud. "Number two is not too bad either. I will continue to chase for my first Grand Slam and the number one world ranking." Fan favorite Alcaraz rode an early break to take the first set but his serve began to falter in the second and Ruud found the range with his forehand to level the contest. The Norwegian did not have the momentum for long as Alcaraz broke in the first game of the third with a deft drop shot but Ruud responded again, saving a break point on his serve and breaking back on a backhand error by Alcaraz for 2-2. Alcaraz saved two set points in the final game of the third set and fans jumped from their seats when he smashed an overhead to force a tiebreak. Ruud, who had been solid in the second and third sets, blinked in the tiebreak, shanking a couple shots and struggling to make returns as Alcaraz reeled off seven straight points to move a set away from the trophy. Alcaraz, who bellowed "Vamos!" and pumped his fist after big points, continued to crush forehands and aces in the fourth set to wear down Ruud and he sealed the win with a mighty serve on match point.

## Wolves Sign Costa Amid Injury Crisis



LONDON (Dispatches) - Wolverhampton Wanderers have signed Diego Costa on a free transfer, the Premier League club said, with the former Chelsea and Atletico Madrid striker being parachuted in amid an ongoing injury crisis. Austrian striker Sasa Kalajdzic, Wolves' new €18 million recruit, sustained a knee ligament injury on his debut while Mexico forward Raul Jimenez was sidelined with a groin injury. Costa, 33, was a free agent after leaving Brazilian side Atletico Mineiro in January and after passing a medical last week he has signed a one-year deal with Wolves, subject to international clearance. "We are absolutely delighted to welcome Diego Costa to Wolves, and back to the Premier League," Wolves chairman Jeff Shi said in a statement. "A serial winner with a wealth of experience at the highest level, Diego will bring something unique to our dressing room and on the pitch, and we look forward to his impact at Molineux and Compton this season." A striker was the need of the hour for Wolves, who have scored only three goals in six league games — the least among all 20 teams. Costa built a reputation as a formidable number nine at Chelsea between 2014-2017, scoring 59 goals in all competitions and guiding the London club to two Premier League titles after he signed for a £32 million transfer fee.



# English Clubs After Signing Asensio

LONDON (Dispatches) - Arsenal and Manchester United-linked Real Madrid star Marco Asensio is very likely to become a free agent in 2023, according to reports. Asensio is out of contract next summer and his lack of minutes so far this term means his contract extension is 'impossible'. Premier League winners and losers as Spurs beat City again and Arsenal conspiracy continues This is according to Spanish publication Fichajes. The 26-year-old has only played 19 minutes under Carlo Ancelotti in 2022/23. He has been an unused substitute in four of Real Madrid's opening five La Liga fixtures, with his only minutes in the Spanish top flight coming in the 4-1 win at Celta Vigo. The report says Asensio is one of Ancelotti's 'last options' and is willing to consider offloading him in the winter transfer window, six months before his contract runs out.

It is believed the Spanish winger would be open to leaving in January if the right opportunity presents itself. Florentino Perez will have 'no problem' selling the player for a small amount to avoid losing him for nothing in the summer. Arsenal and AC Milan are 'leading' the race to sign Asensio. A Madrid contract extension is said to be 'practically impossible' and 'far from reality'. Asensio was linked with a move to Arsenal and Manchester United in the summer transfer window. Reliable transfer journalist Fabrizio Romano actually revealed the Gunners explored the idea of signing the 26-year-old Spaniard as a "last-minute idea". "Marco Asensio has been offered to many important English clubs by his agent over the past two weeks, including Arsenal and Man Utd," Romano told Wettfreunde in August. Asensio burst onto the scene as a youngster for Real Madrid. He scored his first goal in the Champions League, Copa del Rey and La Liga at the age of 20.

## England Hammer South Africa to Win Series

LONDON (Dispatches) - England thrashed South Africa by nine wickets in the third and deciding Test at the Oval, completing a 2-1 series win in just over two days of action. The home side, who resumed on 97-0, needed just 5.3 more overs to reach a victory target of 130. Zak Crawley was 69 not out and Ollie Pope unbeaten on 11. England have now won six of their seven Tests under their new leadership pairing of captain Ben Stokes and coach Brendon McCullum, having managed just one victory in their previous 17 matches when former skipper Joe Root was in charge. "I'm delighted," said Stokes. "It's been a great series for us as a team. It has been one of those series where we haven't had many individual standout performances, but different people have put their hand up for us throughout and that's what you want in team sport. "You want to be able to turn to people at key times and break the game open with either bat or ball and that's what we've had throughout." Defeat means South Africa have suffered their first Test series loss since Dean Elgar took over as captain last year. England resumed just 33 runs shy of their target after the umpires had halted play on Sunday because of bad light to the disappointment of a capacity crowd.



## Benzema's France Call-Up Hinges On Madrid Derby

MADRID (Dispatches) - Real Madrid boss Carlo Ancelotti says if the injured Karim Benzema is unable to play in next week's La Liga derby against Atletico Madrid it will rule the star striker out of contention for France's Nations League World Cup warm-up games. Benzema, hot favourite to pick up next month's Ballon d'Or, suffered a right thigh injury in last Tuesday's 3-0 Champions League win at Celtic. And Ancelotti said on Saturday: "Karim? We'll see if he can make the derby. What's certain is that if he doesn't play the derby he won't be joining his national team." World Cup winners France continue the preparations for the defence of their 2018 crown against Austria on September 22 and Denmark three days later. Ancelotti added of the French forward: "These are the sort of things that can happen. "There's a minor issue, but last year too he had a physical problem in December and we were able to deal with it. "This year, it'll be the same thing." The 34-year-old striker hobbled off after half an hour of the game at Parkhead with Real going on to run out impressive winners as they kicked off their title defence in style.

