

Iran's Economy Minister Abdolnaser Hemmati Has Held Talks With His Russian Counterpart Maxim Reshetnikov, Focusing on the Strengthening of Economic Ties Between the Two Countries

# IRAN NEWS

Deputy Foreign Minister Highlighted the Efforts the Iranian Officials Have Made at the UN General Assembly to Draw the International Community's Attention to the Israeli Regime's Atrocities Against Palestine and Lebanon

VOL. XXIX, No. 8093 TEHRAN Price 50,000 Rials

www.irannewsdaily.com

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 2, 2024 MEHR 11, 1403

2

DOMESTIC

## Lifting Financial and Banking Restrictions for Iranian and Armenian Traders

> SEE PAGE 2

3

INTERNATIONAL

## Israel Ignores Int'l Call for De-Escalation, Launches Ground Raids in South Lebanon

> SEE PAGE 3

## Point-to-Point Inflation Rate Drops From 100% to Less Than 25%



TEHRAN – Iran's Central Bank Governor Mohammadreza Farzin, in response to the report from the Industries and Mines Commission regarding the performance of agencies responsible for meeting the foreign currency needs of the country's industrial and production units, stated: "The central bank's currency policy must broadly serve macroeconomic indicators, and if we are setting regulations, we are intervening in terms of quantity and price. Foreign currency is a very important factor in the inflation of goods and services, and it must be able to preserve the value of the national currency."

The Governor of the Central Bank of Iran added: "Last year, we formed a committee called the Currency Provision and Allocation Committee. Additionally, three ministries—Industry, Mines and Trade; Agriculture; and Health—play a crucial role in currency allocation."

He reminded: "This issue was included in Article 4 of the budget law, which led to the formation of a committee under the supervision of the First Vice President to oversee this process, particularly regarding preferential currency. Since the beginning of this year, we have held meetings with the three aforementioned agencies regarding other currencies circulating in the country's economy to determine each entity's allocation."

Farzin added: "This year, based on the committee's decisions, we allocated \$36 billion to the Ministry of Industry, \$15 billion to the Ministry of Agriculture per Parliament's approval, and \$4 billion to the Ministry of Health. In total, \$55 billion was allocated, and we monitor registration, allocation, and provision on a monthly basis."

The Governor emphasized: "The latest data shows that as of October 30th, we were supposed to provide \$36 billion for the Ministry of Industry, which was required to allocate this amount. Out of this, \$22.2 billion, or 61.6%, has been provided. For the Ministry of Agriculture, \$8 billion out of \$15 billion, or 53.3%, has been provided, and for the Ministry of Health, \$2.2 billion out of \$4 billion, or 55%, has been provided. In total, \$32.4 billion, or 59%, has been allocated, and overall, 80% of the allocation has been secured, with hopes to exceed 80%."

## Eurasian Economic Union and Iran Forecast \$12b in Trade



TEHRAN - The Minister of Trade of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) stated that, given the capacities, there is potential for the trade turnover between the union and the Islamic Republic of Iran to grow to \$12 billion in the near future.

According to the secretariat of the EAEU in Moscow, Andrey Slepnev made these remarks on Monday during a business dialogue between Iran and the EAEU, held on the sidelines of the union's economic forum in Yerevan, the capital of Armenia. The meeting was attended by Seyed Mohammad Atabak, Iran's Minister of Industry, Mines, and Trade. The EAEU's trade minister expressed hope for the growth of trade exchanges between the union and Iran.

At the meeting, attended by the head of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines, and Agriculture, as well as officials from member states, including Armenia's Minister of Economy, Russia's Deputy Minister of Economic Development, the heads of industry and entrepreneurship unions from Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan, Slepnev said: "Regular business meetings and establishing trade infrastructure, such as trade houses, are practical solutions for identifying opportunities to expand cooperation and achieve \$12 billion in trade between the parties."

## Joint Iran-Russia Projects Key to Countering Sanctions



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iranian President Masoud Peshkian says the implementation of critical projects between Iran and Russia will produce a huge capacity to counter cruel Western sanctions against the two countries.

Peshkian made the remark in a meeting with Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin of Russia who arrived in Tehran for an official visit on Monday, amid heightened tensions in the region.

Mishustin was accompanied by a high-ranking delegation of officials and heads of economic organizations.

Peshkian said the agreement to turn Iran into a transit and gas hub in the region is a prime example of joint cooperation aimed at securing common interests and achieving sustainable development, convergence and economic leap in the region.

He said the exchange of diplomatic delegations between Iran and Russia will boost bilateral interaction.

Peshkian further said regional cooperation within international organizations such as BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) will boost the power of independent countries, including Iran, Russia and China, to counter US unilateralism.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters on Monday that Moscow's trade links with Tehran were developing.

"The only thing I can say is that our trade and economic relations with Iran are developing. They are developing in all areas, and in trade too. The volume of trade is growing mutually," he said.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the Iranian president warned that Israel is intensifying tensions with the direct support of the United States in order to prepare the ground for increasing the presence of the United States in the region.

This poses a "common threat to the interests of the regional countries and nations," he said. The Russian prime minister, for his part, said Moscow is keen to improve interaction with Iran, particularly in the fields of energy, industry, transportation, agriculture, health and cultural issues.

Mishustin said the two countries have succeeded in increasing trade exchanges but still they

enjoy enormous capacities to secure common interests.

He underscored the importance of strengthening bilateral cooperation in line with efforts to build a new world order which will be beneficial to everyone.

He invited the Iranian president to take part in the BRICS summit in Russia next month.

The Russian premier expressed concern over the escalation of tensions in the region and said the US supports mounting conflicts in different parts of the world with the purpose of securing its own interests.

Therefore, he emphasized, independent countries like Iran and Russia, should accelerate cooperation to counter such measures.

In a meeting with Mishustin, First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref said Iran's principled policy is to promote cooperation with Russia.

"Expansion of cooperation with neighboring countries, including Russia, figures high on the foreign policy agenda of the Islamic Republic of Iran," Aref stated.

He stressed the importance of accelerating the implementation of the memoranda of understanding signed between the two countries.

He also condemned the crimes of Israel in the besieged Gaza Strip and Lebanon as well as the regime's cowardly move to assassinate Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, the longtime leader of the Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah, in a massive airstrike on southern Beirut on Friday using American-supplied bunker-buster bombs.

"Russia's measures in the United Nations Security Council can be very effective in preventing war and killing innocent people in Gaza and Lebanon," Aref said.

He said both Iran and Russia share a similar experience in the face of the Western sanctions and underscored the need to expand cooperation at all levels to thwart these sanctions.

In a statement on Saturday, Russia's Foreign Ministry said Israel would "bear full responsibility" for the "tragic" consequences of Nasrallah's killing for the region.

## Call for Deepening Scientific and Technological Cooperation Between Iran and Japan

TEHRAN - During a meeting with the Iranian Minister of Science, Research, and Technology, the Japanese ambassador highlighted the scientific and technological capabilities of both countries. He mentioned that Iran ranks fifth and Japan ranks fourth globally in nanotechnology research, and with cooperation in this field, the two countries could lead the world.

According to ISNA, citing the Ministry of Science's Public Relations, on the eve of the Iranian Minister of Science's visit to Japan to participate in the "21st Global Science and Technology Forum in Society," Tsukada Tamaki, the Japanese ambassador to Iran, met with Dr. Simaei at the Ministry of Science.

In this meeting, the Minister of Science, in addition to congratulating Japan's newly appointed Prime Minister, stated: "The history of relations between the two countries dates back to centuries ago, and there has always been a friendly and positive relationship between them."

Simaei noted that scientific cooperation between Iran and Japan, like other relations, has been ongoing for years, with several of Iran's executive and academic managers being graduates of Japanese universities. He expressed hope that this mutual cooperation would continue in the future.

The Minister of Science added that Iran is ready to accept Japanese students in fields such as humanities, including Islamic studies and Persian language, as well as other subjects of interest to Japanese students.

Referring to the teaching of the Japanese language at the University of Tehran, he expressed hope that the Persian language programs, previously offered at Japanese universities, would be revitalized with full strength, stating that Iran is prepared to send Persian language instructors and provide content for this purpose.

Simaei also mentioned the environment as another area for cooperation between the two countries and emphasized that unjust sanctions should not hinder the improvement of scientific

relations between Iran and Japan.

He further remarked that both Iran and Japan share a similar perspective on scientific matters, as both countries place humanity at the center of scientific endeavors.

The Minister of Science emphasized the importance of Japan, saying that his first international visit as the Minister of Science was to Japan, reflecting the importance of the country to the Iranian government and people.

Japanese Ambassador: The Minister of Science's Presence at the Global Science and Technology Forum is an Opportunity for

Global Scientific Engagement

Tsukada Tamaki, the Japanese ambassador to Iran, stated that the Iranian Minister of Science's participation in the 21st Global Science and Technology Forum provides a suitable opportunity to present Iran's scientific ideas and innovations to the world and strengthens the potential for scientific cooperation with Japan.

He added that Japan has already cooperated with Iran in the environmental field, and this collaboration can be expanded.

Omid Rezaee Far, the head of the Ministry of Science's Center for International Scientific Cooperation, mentioned during the meeting that there are numerous areas of cooperation between Iran and Japan, and suggested that by signing a memorandum of cooperation, the two countries could seriously pursue their shared interests.

He also highlighted the Ministry of Science's international activities, noting that given Iran's successful experience in indexing scientific articles and the smart management of research, education, and technology systems, there are opportunities for cooperation with Japan.

Finally, Alireza Zarasvandi, head of the Iranian International Science and Technology Park, stated that 400 tech and knowledge-based companies are stationed in the park, offering opportunities for cooperation with Japan in this sector.

He invited the Japanese ambassador to visit this significant scientific and technological capacity in Iran.

## Iran Spending \$4-5b Per Year on Imports of Cooking Oil, Oil Seeds



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's imports of cooking oil and oil seeds reached some \$4.329 billion in the calendar year to late March, according to a report which shows that the country has a long way to go to become self-sufficient in production of those commodities.

The Monday report by the Tasnim news agency showed that Iran had relied on imports from Brazil, Russia and Indonesia for 90% of its demand for cooking oil and oil seeds in the past decades.

The report said that total lands dedicated to oilseed farming in Iran had increased by nearly 50% to 155,000 hectares in the current calendar year starting in late March. The report said that rapeseed production in the country would hit a target of 275,000 metric tons (mt) this calendar year, up from 160,000 mt reported last year.

However, it said that the amount of rapeseed produced in Iran in the year to late March was enough to meet only 10% of the demand in the domestic cooking oil industry.

That comes as the cooking oil consumption per capita in Iran is 23 kilograms, nearly double the international levels.

To encourage more cultivation of crops like rapeseed and soybean, the Iranian government has been allocating heavy subsidies to domestic purchases of oilseeds.

Domestic cooking oil producers are also obliged to purchase crops from domestic farmers in order to be able to use subsidized currency for imports of cooking oil and oilseeds.

Experts say a major increase in domestic oilseed production in Iran in the years to come would allow the country to meet some 50% of its need for the crop.

## Yemeni Forces Strike Israeli Targets in Eilat, Tel Aviv Using Combat Drones



SANAA (Dispatches) - The spokesman for the Yemeni Armed Forces says the country's aerospace units have conducted two operations against strategic positions in the Israeli-occupied territories in retaliation for the Tel Aviv regime's ongoing atrocities in the Gaza Strip and its unrelenting strikes across Lebanon.

Brigadier General Yahya Saree said in a televised address on Tuesday morning that Yemeni forces struck a vital target near the coastal city of Tel Aviv, using a homegrown and long-range Yafa kamikaze drone.

They also pounded military installations at the Port of Eilat in the southernmost part of the occupied lands with four domestically-developed Sammad-4 (Invincible-4) combat drones.

The Yemeni spokesman said both operations successfully achieved their desired objectives.

He noted that Yemeni Armed Forces salute resilient Palestinian and Lebanese resistance fighters as they are defending their nations and confronting the US-backed Israeli aggression, and reaffirm their practical support for Palestine and Lebanon until Israel is defeated and all its criminal plots and expansionist conspiracies are thwarted.

The Yemeni army calls upon all Arab and Islamic nations to break their silence and participate actively in this fateful battle, as the first anniversary of the beginning of the Gaza war is approaching, he said.

"We will continue our struggle with God's help until the promised victory is achieved," Saree concluded.

Yemenis have declared their open support for Palestine's struggle against the Israeli occupation since the regime launched a devastating war on Gaza on October 7 last year, killing at least 41,615 Palestinians to date.

The Yemeni Armed Forces have said that they won't stop their attacks until Israeli ground and aerial attacks in Gaza end.

# IRAN NEWS



## All Obstacles in Way of Exporters Must Be Removed

TEHRAN (ILNA) - Abdolnaser Hemmati, the Minister of Economy and Finance, emphasized the importance of exports during a press briefing at the Iranian Chamber of Commerce tonight. He stated that exporters play a significant role in the country's economy, and he stressed that all existing barriers to their activities must be eliminated.

He added that trade, currency, tax, and customs policies are crucial areas that need to be reformed, and steps have already been taken in this direction. The Minister of Economy further remarked that in taxation matters, the government is particularly focused on the production sector, especially export-oriented production. He said, "Let's proceed gradually and see what can be done."

## Start of Negotiations for Establishing a Joint Financial Channel Between Islamic Countries



TEHRAN - According to the Public Relations of the Central Bank, the governor of Iran's Central Bank Mohammadreza Farzin, on the sidelines of the meeting of the heads of central banks of the member countries of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), said: "The main purpose of attending the meeting of central banks of Islamic countries, held in Istanbul, Turkey, is to discuss and deliberate on the development of monetary and banking relations with the OIC member countries. Additionally, negotiations will also take place with the central bank officials of member countries, including Turkey."

Referring to the fact that Iran's trade with OIC member countries has seen good growth in the past six months, he emphasized, "The use of methods to facilitate money transfers for tourists, traders, and clearinghouses is another topic being pursued in this meeting."

Farzin continued by stating, "Another topic raised in this meeting is the use of artificial intelligence. Iran has good experience in this area, and an AI unit has been established in the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which can be used in areas such as anti-money laundering and monitoring suspicious transactions. In this regard, we will both utilize the experiences of other countries and share the experiences of the Central Bank of Iran."

The Governor of the Central Bank also spoke about the establishment of a joint financial channel between Islamic countries and the use of national currencies in trade exchanges, saying: "This issue has not yet been raised multilaterally, but it has previously been discussed bilaterally with members of the BRICS countries, and we plan to follow up and implement it with the OIC member countries as well."

## Russia's Growing Demand for Iranian Butter



TEHRAN - In an interview, it was stated that the increase in dairy product prices is a violation, and Russia's demand for Iranian butter is growing.

According to the CEO of the Iranian Dairy Cooperatives Union, any price increase for pasteurized dairy products before being officially approved by the Ministry of Agriculture is considered illegal.

Ali Ehsan Zafari, CEO of the Iranian Dairy Cooperatives Union, in an interview with ILNA, provided an overview of the latest dairy market situation. He explained: "Following the Minister of Agriculture's announcement, the price of raw milk has risen by 20%, which will result in a 20 to 25% increase in various dairy product prices. However, it is important to note that this price increase is based on June 2023 price levels, and any manufacturer who has already increased prices since then has committed a violation. If they raise their prices again now due to the raw milk price increase, it will be considered another violation. Furthermore, if a producer increases prices by more than 25%, it is still a violation."

He added: "Price increases in dairy products following raw milk price hikes are only legal once the relevant resolution is communicated. So far, the Ministry of Agriculture has not issued this resolution, and thus, any price increase is currently unauthorized."

When asked whether traditional dairy producers are also required to follow the same guidelines, Zafari clarified: "Traditional dairy products are not licensed for production, and I will not comment on their products."

The CEO also mentioned that the per capita annual dairy consumption in Iran has dropped to 50 kilograms, and rising prices without corresponding income increases are reducing the presence of dairy products in household budgets. In 2010, per capita consumption was 130 kilograms.

He further reported on the growing demand from Russia for Iranian animal-based butter, stating: "Western sanctions on Russia have made it impossible for them to source fats from European producers, leading them to turn to products from Iran, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. While this is beneficial for Iranian producers and exporters, unregulated export growth could disrupt the domestic butter market. Therefore, by increasing export tariffs on this product, we should regulate the amount leaving the country."

## Lifting Financial and Banking Restrictions for Iranian and Armenian Traders

TEHRAN - Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade (IMT) and the Eurasian Economic Union's Minister of Trade emphasized the development of economic and trade relations following the approval of the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union in their respective parliaments. They agreed to form joint committees to resolve customs, financial, banking, and standardization issues in the near future.

According to the Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade, Seyed Mohammad Atabak, during his visit to Armenia and Yerevan, held multiple meetings with Armenian officials and the Eurasian Economic Union. He inaugurated the Iranian Trade Center and is expected to speak at the Iran-Eurasia Economic Forum.

In the meeting between Iran's Minister of Industry, Mine, and Trade and the Eurasian Economic Union's Minister of Trade, both sides expressed hope for the approval of the FTA and emphasized the high potential for developing economic and trade relations.

Additionally, at the suggestion of the Iranian minister, it was decided that joint committees would be formed to address customs, financial, banking, and standardization issues in the near future.

During a meeting between the Armenian Minister of Economy, Papoyan, and Iran's Minister of IMT, both sides stressed the need to remove financial and banking restrictions, particularly guarantees for Iranian engineering and technical contractors in Armenia, as well as addressing other customs, standards, and logistical limitations. Both ministries agreed that their deputies would continuously follow up on these issues.

The Armenian Minister of Economy highlighted Iran's importance in the North-South International Corridor and announced the Armenian government's decision to invest in and participate in Chabahar Port. He also expressed the desire to establish an Armenian Trade Center in Iran, a proposal welcomed by the Iranian minister.

With the presence of Iran's Minister of Industry, Mine, and Trade, Armenia's Minister of Economy, members of Iran's parliament, and hundreds of businesspeople from Iran and Armenia, the largest Iranian Trade Center in the world was inaugurated in Yerevan. This center, covering an area of 80,000 square meters, hosts more than 100 major Iranian companies.

At the official opening ceremony, both sides emphasized the significance of establishing trade centers to facilitate the presence of private and public sector economic players in both countries, with strong government support for expanding commercial infrastructure.

In another meeting between Iran's Minister of IMT and Armenia's

Minister of Infrastructure, the two sides emphasized industrial and mining cooperation. The Iranian minister underscored Iran's exceptional production and industrial capacities and expressed a strong will to participate in Armenia's infrastructure projects and transfer mining knowledge and technologies to the country.

The Iranian minister also invited the Armenian Minister of Infrastructure to attend Iran's Mining and Industry Exhibition in December and reiterated the readiness of Iran's public and private sectors to collaborate in Armenia's industrial and mining sectors.

The Armenian Minister of Infrastructure emphasized the importance of removing logistical barriers, especially transit truck tariffs, and highlighted the Armenian government's commitment to expanding comprehensive relations with Iran. He accepted the official invitation and announced an upcoming visit to Iran, leading a specialized delegation.

Iran's Minister of IMT invited the Eurasian Economic Union's Minister of Trade to attend the third Eurasia Exhibition in Tehran.

Atabak also met with Andrey Slepnev, the Eurasian Economic Union's Minister of Trade, to discuss increasing trade exchanges between Iran and the union and the approval of the FTA.

One of the key negotiation points was the standardization of regulations between the union's member states and Iran.

Another topic was the establishment of an insurance company under the union to provide guarantees and necessary insurance for the technical and engineering sectors of both sides.

Iran's Minister of IMT invited the Eurasian Economic Union's Minister of Trade to visit the third Eurasia Exhibition in Iran.

The periodic Economic Forum of the Eurasian Economic Union will be held on October 9-10, 2024, in Yerevan, Armenia, with Iran as the special guest. The third Eurasia Exhibition will take place from December 3 to 6, 2024, in Tehran at the Permanent International Fairgrounds.

The Armenian Minister of Economy, Gevorg Papoyan, emphasized Armenia's interest in establishing a trade office in Tehran.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony of the Iranian Trade Center in Yerevan, Papoyan highlighted the close trade, economic, and political relations between the two countries. He also noted that there is great potential to further develop economic ties between Armenia and Iran.

The trade volume between Armenia and Iran exceeded \$700 million last year, with both countries aiming to raise this figure to \$1 billion and eventually \$3 billion, facilitated by new trade missions.

## Exchange of Experiences between Iran and Tajikistan in Irrigation and Drainage



TEHRAN - During a meeting attended by the Director-General of Irrigation and Drainage Network Development at the Ministry of Agriculture and some members of Iran's National Irrigation and Drainage Committee, Mehrzad Ehsani, the Secretary of Iran's National Irrigation and Drainage Committee, introduced the role of the committee. He mentioned that, in addition to holding at least 50 meetings annually under the committee, they have signed cooperation agreements with the national committees of Turkey, Indonesia, Germany, and Egypt. Except for Egypt, all agreements have been implemented.

Ehsani stated that delegations from these countries visited each other's facilities, capabilities, and capacities under these agreements. He expressed hope that today's meeting with senior officials of Tajikistan's Irrigation and Land Reclamation Institute would also lead to a cooperation agreement.

Referring to the long-standing activities of the Iranian committee, Ehsani highlighted that Iran's committee has been selected as the best national committee on the international stage three times. The committee has won awards in 2020, 2021, and 2022 in areas such as technology, management, youth, and agriculture.

Ehsani added that the committee has hosted 12 major national annual conferences, 80 technical workshops, 6 international events, and conducted 60 field visits. Additionally, they have published 60 books and translated 62 others, released 65 article collections, developed 6 software programs, and issued 161 quarterly newsletters.

He pointed out the committee's efforts in publishing various works, such as 21 books on drainage, 14 on the history of irrigation, 14 on

irrigation methods, 7 on operation and maintenance, 6 on irrigation management, and 5 on flood management.

Ehsani also mentioned that Iran's scientific achievements in irrigation include pioneering initiatives in areas like farmer participation in irrigation management, performance evaluation of irrigation projects, environmental impact assessments, and water productivity.

Over the years, Iran has accumulated significant scientific and technical experience, Ehsani emphasized. He suggested that Iran's rich history of water management could provide a solid foundation for sharing knowledge with Tajikistan.

He highlighted that the cultural and historical ties between the two nations could foster constructive dialogue in water and agriculture sectors. More importantly, both countries are eager to exchange experiences, with ample potential for collaboration.

During the meeting, Rahnam Ghafoorzadeh, Director-General of Tajikistan's Irrigation and Land Reclamation Institute, recognized Iran's extensive knowledge and technology in irrigation and drainage. He emphasized that Tajikistan, a young member of the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID), looks to benefit from Iran's 30 years of experience in the field.

Ghafoorzadeh noted that 93% of Tajikistan is mountainous, with 1.5 million hectares of agricultural land. Of this, 750,000 hectares are currently under cultivation, with most irrigation relying on surface water. However, drainage systems in the country are in poor condition and need significant renovation.

## Foreign Investors Invited to Enter Imam Khomeini Airport Free Zone



TEHRAN - Saeed Chalendari discussed investments at Imam Khomeini Airport and attracting domestic and foreign investors. He stated that section 57 of the Seventh Development Plan addresses the privatization of airports, excluding Imam Khomeini and Mehrabad airports, which creates an opportunity to utilize this legal capacity.

He noted that airports can either be attractive or unattractive to the private sector, depending on the approaches taken. He asked whether the policy is to encourage private sector involvement in airport operations. For example, if the policy is to privatize airports like Sirjan, it wouldn't be attractive to the private sector since it's loss-making. However, the privatization of smaller airports like Ramsar, Nowshahr, and Rafsanjan could be beneficial, especially as these airports can be highly appealing for training flights, leading to a win-win situation for both the government and the private sector.

The CEO of Imam Khomeini Airport City stated that the Airports Company must prepare investment packages through expert consultations with traders and specialists in the field. These packages should include both attractive airports and less attractive ones to create a balanced offer for potential investors.

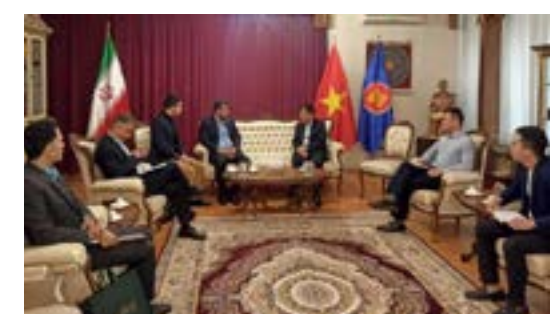
Chalendari added that although Imam Khomeini Airport is not included in the privatization plan, efforts have been made in the airport's free zone to create incentive packages for attracting private sector investments. All the advantages of free zones can be utilized at Imam Khomeini Airport's free zone.

He emphasized that nine projects have reached the final stage of contracting with investors, bringing in over 19 trillion tomans in investment. These projects are set to begin soon. Additionally, there are requests for over 35 trillion tomans worth of projects under review. One of these projects is the establishment of a gold processing complex, while other proposals include creating a showroom for the construction industry and a science and technology park.

Regarding foreign investment, Chalendari mentioned that in addition to the development of the second phase of Imam Khomeini Airport with the participation of domestic and foreign companies, two foreign companies have submitted investment proposals, which are currently under review. One foreign company has proposed establishing medical tourism facilities at Imam Khomeini Airport, including a medical complex for foreign patients to undergo surgeries, particularly cosmetic surgeries. Patients could travel to Tehran, receive medical services, stay at the airport's hotel or suites, and return to their home countries after recovery.

Chalendari also mentioned that an investor from one of the Gulf countries has requested to establish a horse breeding center, focusing on breeding expensive horse breeds. He noted that Turkmen horses from Iran are internationally recognized. Horses bred at the airport would be subject to free zone regulations, allowing for more streamlined export processes.

## Vietnam Visa Process for Businesspeople Has Been Facilitated



TEHRAN - The head of the Khorramshahr Chamber of Commerce met with the Vietnamese ambassador in Tehran at the Vietnamese Embassy, Seyed Mostafa Mousavi, in explaining this meeting, said: "The discussions with the Vietnamese ambassador in Tehran were aimed at creating a foundation for expanding trade and economic cooperation between the business communities of both countries."

The head of the Iran-Vietnam Joint Chamber of Commerce continued: "In this meeting, important agreements were reached to improve trade conditions and further introduce the economic capabilities of both countries to their respective business sectors."

## Erdogan Says UN Should Recommend Use of Force If Israel Not Stopped

ANKARA (Dispatches) - Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan said on Monday that the United Nations General Assembly should recommend the use of force, in line with a resolution it passed in 1950, if the U.N. Security Council fails to stop Israel's attacks in Gaza and Lebanon.

NATO member Turkey has denounced Israel's devastating attack in Gaza against Palestinian militant group Hamas, and condemned its recent attacks in Lebanon targeting Hezbollah militants. It has halted all trade with Israel and applied to join a genocide case against Israel at the World Court, which Israel rejects.

"The U.N. General Assembly should rapidly implement the authority to recommend the use of force, as it did with the 1950 Uniting for Peace resolution, if the Security Council can't show the necessary will," Erdogan said after a cabinet meeting in Ankara.

The resolution says the U.N. General Assembly can step in if disagreements among the Security Council's five permanent veto-wielding powers - Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States - mean they fail to maintain international peace.



## Sheinbaum to Take Office as Mexico's First Woman President



MEXICO CITY (Dispatches) - Almost four months after her landslide election victory, Claudia Sheinbaum was to be sworn in Tuesday as Mexican president, taking over as the Latin American nation's first woman leader at a time when it is wracked by criminal violence.

The 62-year-old former Mexico City mayor and ruling party heavyweight will take office in the presence of foreign dignitaries including Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and US First Lady Jill Biden.

"It's time for women and transformation," Sheinbaum has said on several occasions, in a nation with a history of gender-based discrimination and violence, with around 10 women or girls murdered every day.

But having a woman president is no guarantee of a greater focus on women's rights, said Maria Fernanda Bozmoski, deputy director of the Adrienne Arsht Latin America Center at US-based think tank the Atlantic Council.

"When we think of other women leaders in the region, that hasn't necessarily translated into women's issues being a priority," she told AFP, noting that Sheinbaum also faced other pressing issues such as security, energy and foreign policy.

Sheinbaum will take the oath of office in Congress -- officially becoming leader of the world's most populous Spanish-speaking country, home to 129 million people -- before a celebration in Mexico City's main square.

One high-profile figure who will be conspicuous by his absence is Spanish King Felipe VI, whom Sheinbaum refused to invite, accusing him of failing to acknowledge harm caused by colonization.

In response, Spain announced it would boycott the inauguration, despite its strong economic and historic links with Mexico.

A scientist by training, Sheinbaum swept to victory in June with a vow to continue the left-wing reform agenda of outgoing leader Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, a close ally.

Lopez Obrador leaves the presidential palace after six years due to the country's single-term limit, despite an approval rating of around 70 percent, largely thanks to his policies aimed at helping poorer Mexicans.

## North Korea Appears to Dismiss Return to Personal Diplomacy With U.S.



UNITED NATIONS (Dispatches) - North Korea appeared on Monday to dismiss the possibility of a return to the personal diplomacy its leader Kim Jong Un had with former President Donald Trump, no matter who wins the Nov. 5 U.S. presidential election.

"Whoever takes office in the U.S., we will only deal with the state entity called the U.S., not the mere administration," Pyongyang's ambassador to the United Nations Song Kim told the annual U.N. General Assembly, in New York.

"Likewise, any U.S. administration will have to face the DPRK, which is different from what the U.S. used to think," he said, referring to North Korea by the initials of its official name.

A senior North Korean diplomat who defected to South Korea told Reuters recently that North Korea wants to reopen nuclear talks with the United States if Trump is reelected and is working to devise a new negotiating strategy.

Trump engaged in both fiery brinkmanship and unprecedented diplomacy with North Korea during his previous term that ended in 2021.

The defecting diplomat, Ri Il Gyu, said Pyongyang's diplomats were mapping out a strategy should Americans elect Trump over Vice President Kamala Harris, with the goal of lifting sanctions on its weapons programs, removing its designation as a state sponsor of terrorism and eliciting economic aid.

## Israel Ignores Int'l Call for De-Escalation, Launches Ground Raids in South Lebanon

BEIRUT (Dispatches) - The Israeli military said that troops have started "ground raids" in villages in southern Lebanon, after militant group Hezbollah said it had targeted "enemy soldiers" at the countries' border.

A Lebanese security official said Israel had also conducted at least six strikes on south Beirut after Israel's army ordered residents in the Hezbollah stronghold to evacuate.

Despite international calls for de-escalation, Israel earlier vowed to keep fighting Hezbollah and sealed part of the border after killing the Iran-backed group's leader.

Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant warned the battle was not over even after the massive strike on Beirut that martyred Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah on Friday, dealing the group a seismic blow.

The military said troops backed by airstrikes and artillery launched ground raids "a few hours ago" targeting militant group Hezbollah "in villages close to the border".

Israel informed its main weapons supplier Washington of the incursions, US State Department spokesman Matthew Miller told journalists.

US President Joe Biden earlier on Monday indicated he opposed an Israeli ground operation.

"We should have a ceasefire now," he said.

Hezbollah fighters were "ready if Israel decides to enter by land", the group's deputy leader Naim Qassem said in a first televised address since Nasrallah's death.

In a statement, Hezbollah said it "targeted" Israeli troops carrying out "movements" in orchards near the border, with a source close to the group saying the soldiers were "right on the border".

There was no immediate comment from Hezbollah following the Israeli army's announcement of the ground raids, but the group's al-Manar television reported the Israeli statement announcing the raids on its Telegram channel.

Lebanon's national army, dwarfed by Hezbollah's military power, was "repositioning" troops farther from the border, a military official told AFP.

World leaders have urged de-escalation, with United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres's spokesman Stephane Dujarric saying: "We do not want any sort of ground invasion."

Earlier this month, Israel launched a wave of deadly air strikes aimed at Hezbollah across Lebanon, the latest of which killed

95 people yesterday, according to Lebanon's health ministry.

Yesterday evening, the Israeli military called on people in three districts of southern Beirut to evacuate.

"You are located near interests and facilities belonging to the terrorist Hezbollah group," Israeli military spokesman Avichay Adraee said.

"For your safety and the safety of your family members, you must evacuate the buildings immediately and stay away from them."

AFP correspondents in the capital heard explosions and saw a flash around ground level.

As Israel announced its ground raids, Syria's official news agency SANA said the country's air defence systems were intercepting "hostile targets" in the Damascus area.

There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military, which has carried out hundreds of strikes on Syria in recent years.

He said the killing of Nasrallah was "an important step, but it is not the final one".

Hezbollah began low-intensity strikes on Israeli troops a day after its Palestinian ally Hamas staged its unprecedented attack on Israel on October 7, which triggered Israel's devastating assault on the Gaza Strip.

The border clashes rapidly escalated this month.

On Monday, the Israeli army declared an area of the border strip a "closed military zone".

Israel's strikes on Lebanon have killed hundreds of people over the past week and forced up to a million to flee their homes, according to Lebanese officials.

Hezbollah and other groups launched rockets, drones and some missiles at Israel over the same period, causing some injuries but no deaths.

Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati called for a ceasefire based on a recent US-French proposal, urging "an end to the Israeli aggression against Lebanon".

Earlier, an Israeli strike hit a building in central Beirut, with an armed Palestinian group saying it had killed three of its members.

The strike, the first in the city centre in years, sparked panic.

Central Beirut resident Kahier Bannout, 42, said it was "supposed to be a safe area—not a war zone".

## Russia Plans to Boost Defense Spending by a Quarter for 2025

MOSCOW (Dispatches) - Russia plans to boost its defense budget by almost 30 percent next year as it diverts resources to its Ukraine offensive, spending more on the military than welfare and education combined, a draft budget showed on Monday.

Moscow had already ramped up military spending to levels not seen since the Soviet Union era, pumping out missiles and drones to fire on Ukraine and paying lucrative salaries to its hundreds of thousands of soldiers fighting on the front lines.

The latest planned increase in spending will take Russia's defense budget to 13.5 trillion rubles (\$145 billion) in 2025, a document published on the parliamentary website showed, up from 10.4 trillion in 2024.

That figure does not include some other resources being directed to the military campaign, such as spending that Russia labels as "domestic security" and some outlays classified as top secret.

Combined spending on defense and security will account for around 40 percent of Russia's total government spending, seen at 41.5 trillion rubles in 2025.

Before sending the draft budget to the Russian parliament, Moscow trumpeted an increase in investment and social welfare alongside higher military outlays.

The "top priority" of the budget was to be "social support for citizens", Finance Minister Anton Siluanov told a televised government meeting on September 24.

"The second is the provision of expenditures on defense and security, providing the resources for the special military operation and support for families of those participating in the special military operation," he added, using Russia's official language for its Ukraine offensive.

But the draft budget suggest that military spending has crowded out spending on other areas of the economy.

Planned spending on "national defense" is more than twice that allocated to areas Moscow labels as "social policy".



Ukraine has also been forced to accelerate its own military spending as it battles the Russian offensive.

Kyiv will allocate more than 60 percent of the country's entire budget to defense and security next year.

But Russia's \$145-billion defense budget dwarfs Ukraine's at \$54 billion, with Kyiv reliant on Western military and financial aid to continue fighting.

The budget announcement came as Russian President Vladimir Putin marked what he calls "Reunification Day" -- the moment when Moscow annexed four southern and eastern Ukrainian regions in 2022.

"The truth is on our side. All goals set will be achieved," Putin said in a combative address on the second anniversary.

Russia claimed to annex the Ukrainian regions of Lugansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson in September 2022 but it does not fully control any of them.

On Monday evening, three journalists for independent Russian media were arrested outside a concert on Red Square in Moscow to mark the occasion, rights group OVD-info said -- the latest move in a crackdown on critical voices since the beginning of the offensive in Ukraine.

In recent months the Kremlin has pursued a relentless assault on its neighbour's east, pressing its advantage as Kyiv's soldiers grapple with exhaustion and continuous bombardment.

On Monday, the Russian army said its troops had "liberated" the Ukrainian village of Nelipivka, which had a population of around 1,000 before the conflict began in February 2022.

The village is one of several dozen that Russia claims to have captured in recent months, pressing forward even as Kyiv mounts a cross-border counteroffensive into Russian territory.

Nelipivka lies just north of the Ukrainian town of New York, where Kyiv claimed to have made rare gains earlier in September.

Ukrainian shelling in areas under Russian control killed a teenager and wounded eight other people including three children, said the Moscow-installed Donetsk regional governor Denis Pushilin.

## Rutte Takes Reins at NATO as U.S. Vote Looms

BRUSSELS (Dispatches) - Former Dutch prime minister Mark Rutte took over as NATO's secretary general on Tuesday as the Western military alliance reaches a critical juncture weeks from a momentous U.S. election.

The straight-talking 57-year-old replaces Jens Stoltenberg, whose decade at the helm has seen NATO grapple with Russia's war on Ukraine, China's rising might -- and Donald Trump's first term in power in Washington.

The two veteran politicians will lay a wreath at NATO's Brussels headquarters to soldiers fallen during the alliance's 75-year history, before a ceremonial Icelandic gavel is used to mark the official handover.

In opting for Rutte, a staunch US ally and stalwart backer of Ukraine, NATO's 32 nations have picked a leader expected to keep pushing support for Kyiv and efforts to bolster the alliance's own defenses in the face of Russia.

"There might be nuances, changes of emphasis possibly -- but there's going to be a lot of continuity as well," a senior NATO diplomat told AFP.

The November 5 vote in the United States represents the first major test for Rutte, and will shape his initial four-year term at the helm.

On the campaign trail, Trump has threatened not to protect NATO members who do not spend enough on defense and promised he can cut a quick deal with Russian President Vladimir Putin to end the war in Ukraine.

Rutte -- known for his astute handling of Trump -- has told fretful European countries to stop "whining" about a potential comeback for the volatile reality TV star.

"We have to work with whoever is on the dance floor," he said in February.

But the uncertainty over future Western support for Ukraine comes as Russian forces



advance on the battlefield more than three-and-a-half years after the Kremlin's all-out invasion.

NATO, whose members have supplied 99 percent of all foreign weaponry to Ukraine, agreed at a summit in July to play a bigger role in delivering those arms and Rutte will be key in stewarding support.

Another central task for Rutte will be to keep pushing NATO members to spend more on their militaries to counter any potential menace from Moscow.

Spurred on by the war in Ukraine -- and pressure from Washington -- European countries have already ratcheted up their defence spending.

This year, 23 countries are set to reach NATO's target of spending two percent of gross domestic product on their militaries.

But with the threat from Russia expected to last for years -- whatever the outcome in Ukraine -- there is a clear understanding that more will be needed.

That could prove a tough sell for Rutte -- who only saw the Netherlands reach the goal in his fourteenth, and final, year, in office.

Even if he wanted to change NATO's direction, Rutte would likely struggle to shake up an alliance based on careful consensus between its members.

Stoltenberg, whose mandate was extended three times, trod a careful balancing act as NATO emerged reenergized in the face of Russia's aggression.

And the former Norwegian premier has told his successor that the greatest challenge he faces is keeping all of NATO's sometimes truculent leaders on the same page.

"That's a big family, a great family, but sometimes what is a challenge, to keep them all happy at the same time," Stoltenberg said in his final speech.

## Alcaraz Advances to Semis in Beijing

BEIJING (Dispatches) -Third-ranked Carlos Alcaraz recorded a 7-5, 6-2 win over seventh-seeded Karen Khachanov of Russia to advance to the semifinals of the China Open in Beijing. Alcaraz converted four of 12 break points to dispatch Khachanov in 96 minutes and move one spot to No. 2 in the rankings, surpassing Alexander Zverev. The Spaniard will square off against third-seeded Russian Daniil Medvedev, who had five aces en route to a 6-2, 6-4 win over Flavio Cobolli of Italy. Also on Monday, fourth-seeded Andrey Rublev toppled Alejandro Davidovich Fokina 6-4, 7-5 in a match that was continued from because of a rain delay. Rublev, however, was unable to extend his good fortune and fell to Chinese wild card Bu Yunchaokete. Yanchaokete will face a tall task in the next round in the form of top-seeded Jannik Sinner, who secured a 6-2, 7-6 (8) win over Jiri Hecke of the Czech. Meanwhile Arthur Fils fought through two nervous tiebreaks to beat Holger Rune 7-6(8) 7-6(10) to reach the final of the Japan Open, setting up a clash with fellow Frenchman Ugo Humbert in Tokyo. Fils, 20, will aim for his second title of the year in Tuesday's final, while Humbert, who beat Czech Republic's Tomas Machac 6-3 3-6 6-2 in the first semi-final earlier in the day, will look to win his third hardcourt trophy this year. A close line call did not go Fils' way when he had a set point in the first tiebreak, with Rune winning the

replayed point to make it 6-6. But Fils held his nerve and won the set with a light-touch backhand that left a frustrated Rune slamming his racket onto the court. Fils broke early in the second set to take a 2-0 lead, but world number 14 Rune broke back in the next game and almost led 4-3 before Fils saved a break point to stay even as the second set went to a tiebreak as well. The world number 24 Fils took a 6-3 lead, but Denmark's Rune saved five match points in the seesawing battle before Fils finally took victory with a precisely timed forehand, reaching the fourth ATP final of his career. Fils' opponent in the final, world number 19 Humbert, bounced back from a second-set stumble against Machac earlier, controlling the third set with a superior first serve, hitting four aces and winning 13 of his 14 first serve points. Paris Olympics mixed doubles gold medalist Machac was unable to score a single point in his last two service games, with Humbert converting match point with a strong forehand. Humbert, who has won all six of his finals on the ATP tour, beat Fils in all their previous meetings, including twice this year.



## Hamilton Reveals Long Battle With Depression in Times Interview



LONDON (Dispatches) - Seven-time Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton battled with depression for years from an early age as he dealt with the pressure of pursuing a career in motor racing and faced bullying at school, the 39-year-old told The Times in an interview. Hamilton, who has been racing competitively since he was six, said he has also battled with depression as an adult, and has found it difficult to open up about his journey. "I think it was the pressure of the racing and struggling at school. The bullying, I had no one to talk to," Hamilton said in the interview published on Saturday. "I've struggled with mental health through my life, depression from a very early age when I was, like, 13... when I was in my twenties I had some really difficult phases." Hamilton made his Formula One debut in 2007 when he was 21, becoming the first Black driver in the series. He won the championship next year and matched Michael Schumacher's record of seven championships in 2020. The Briton said he felt more mature today than he was earlier in his career. "You're learning about things that have been passed down to you from your parents, noticing those patterns, how you react to things, how you can change those," he said. "So what might have angered me in the past doesn't anger me today. I am so much more refined." Hamilton said he has tried silent retreats to improve his mental health, and while talking to a therapist years ago did not help, he would like to find one in the future.

## LeBron James Given Life by Playing With Son, Olympic Gold

EL SEGUNDO (Dispatches) - LeBron James said Monday the historic prospect of playing alongside eldest son Bronny for the Los Angeles Lakers has given him a new lease of life ahead of the upcoming NBA season. James, 39, will tie Vince Carter's record of playing 22 seasons in the NBA this year when he suits up for the Lakers after a summer in which he helped the USA defend their Olympic gold medal in Paris. At some point this season, James will make NBA history by playing alongside 19-year-old son Bronny, who was chosen by the Lakers with the 55th pick in the draft in June. James, who turns 40 in December, said he felt reinvigorated by the "pure joy" of being able to go work with one of his children. "It's a lot of excitement, a pure joy, to be able to come to work every day, put in hard work with your son every day and be able to see him continue to grow," James said at the Lakers media day in El Segundo. "We push each other. He pushes me. I push him. We push our teammates, and vice versa. So it's just a very joyous moment not only for myself, but for our family. So it's pretty awesome. Gives you a lot of life." James revealed that he had taken a relaxed approach to guiding his teenage son at home, revealing that Bronny was just as likely to be in his bedroom playing video games as taking advice from his superstar father. "To be honest, if you have kids, at my age and his age, there's not really much interaction going on on a day-to-day basis," James joked. "I mean, he comes down, he eats, he goes to his room,



plays a video game. I'm down there with my wife, watching the movie. "So it's not like, you know, 'Meet me at the table at five o'clock. We need to discuss work tomorrow.' That doesn't happen. "But he's been around the game of basketball since he was born. Obviously, I've played in the NBA longer than he's been alive, so he understands the nuances of it, as far as just being around the game. "But now he's a man, and it's time for him to learn and get better with that." James meanwhile said being part of the USA's gold medal-winning team in Paris, when he formed part of a star-studded line-up alongside the likes of Kevin Durant and Stephen Curry, had convinced him that he still had plenty "left in the tank". "When you're with 11 other unbelievable, great talents, some of the best talent we've ever seen, it gives you a lot of joy to be able to play the game, play it at a high level," James said. "For myself individually, to go out there at my age, the miles that I have, and to be able to play at the level I played at, it gave me like, 'Okay, I do have a lot in the tank, a lot, and I can help a big part of a team win the ultimate.'" James added that the gold medal win had fueled his hunger to play "meaningful basketball" again, four years after his last appearance in the NBA Finals in 2020. "It felt damn good to play meaningful basketball at the highest level," James said, describing hard-fought Olympic semi-final against Serbia and the final against hosts France as like "two game sevens back-to-back."

## Dembele Dropped for Arsenal Clash for the Good of PSG Team



PARIS (Dispatches) - Forward Ousmane Dembele has been left out of the Paris St Germain squad for their Champions League game at Arsenal, after the player failed to meet the needs of the team, manager Luis Enrique said. French media had reported that the manager and player had a discussion after PSG's 3-1 win over Rennes on Friday, and that Dembele was omitted from the squad for Tuesday's game with Arsenal for disciplinary reasons. While Luis Enrique said there was no argument between himself and Dembele, he took the decision for the good of the team.

"If someone doesn't comply with the requirements of the team, it means that they are not ready," Luis Enrique told a press conference. "It means in such an important week, with such an important game coming up, we need every player to be fully available. "My objective is to do the best for the team and that was my decision." The manager was pressed further on making such an important choice, leaving out a player who has scored four league goals in six games, for such a key European game. "You think it is easy to create a team. You press a button and the 11 best players play and everything goes well," the manager said. "No, making a team takes a certain amount of circumstances that can be difficult. Yesterday I had to make a difficult decision but I think it is the best decision without any doubt. "I would make it 100 more times. That doesn't mean the situation is irreversible. But the best situation for the team right now is this, in my opinion." The coach would not give further details on what happened with Dembele, but said that his job is to create a team and that is what he will continue to do. "I am not going to make a soap opera out of it, there was no argument between the player and me. There was a problem with the players responsibility to the team. Nothing else," he said. "I signed for PSG last season to create a team. That is something I can guarantee. Until the last day that I am in Paris, I am going to make a team. "A team that is brave, daring, plays good football or tries to. The first day I cannot do that I will go back home." PSG won their opening Champions League game 1-0 against Girona while Arsenal were held to a 0-0 draw away to Atalanta.

## Evanilson Off the Mark in Bournemouth Win Over Southampton

BOURNEMOUTH (Dispatches) - Bournemouth's record signing Evanilson scored his first goal for the club as the Cherries beat Southampton 3-1 on Monday. The Brazilian international sparked a three-goal blitz from the home side in the opening 39 minutes as Dango Ouattara and Antoine Semenyo also struck. Taylor Harwood-Bellis pulled a goal back for Saints early in the second half, but they remain in the bottom three and without a win since their return to the Premier League. Bournemouth climb above Manchester United into 11th with their second win of the campaign. Evanilson has big shoes to fill as the replacement for Dominic Solanke, who departed to Tottenham for a club record fee last month. The £40 million striker did not get off to a good start as he missed a penalty in a 1-0 defeat to Chelsea in Bournemouth's last home game. However, he banished those memories by latching onto Marcus Tavernier's quickly taken free-kick on 17 minutes. "It is a goal we've been expecting of Evanilson," said Bournemouth assistant manager Tommy Elphick, who was deputising for suspended boss Andoni Iraola. "He is so intelligent and makes such cute runs. We haven't been finding him enough so I'm pleased for him."



Ouattara was then in the right place to deflect Lewis Cook's shot past Aaron Ramsdale. Semenyo has so far filled the void left by Solanke and his fierce drive found the bottom corner for his third goal in six Premier League appearances this season. It was a familiar tale for Southampton as their dominance of possession counted for little in terms of points. Russell Martin's men sit second bottom with just one point from their opening six games. "I am so hurt by the first-half performance after the first goal. I didn't recognise our team," said Martin. "There was no aggression or courage. They were looking around and in self-preservation mode on the pitch. I didn't like it one bit. They showed fight in the second half, but it was too late." Last season all three promoted sides were relegated from the Premier League for the first time since 1997/98. The early evidence of this season also suggests the gulf between the Championship and the top tier is becoming increasingly difficult to breach for teams coming up. Ipswich and Leicester have also failed to register a win in their opening six league matches but do at least sit outside the bottom three.