

# Iran Steel Ingots Production Surpasses 14mn Tons in 6 Months

TEHRAN (Dispatches) – Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation (IMIDRO) has reported that Iran production steel ingot exceeded 14 million tons in the first half of the current calendar year (ending on September 21).

The figure shows a 10% growth compared to the same period in the year before.

The report added, the country's steel companies produced 14.39 million tons of steel ingots (billets, bloom, and slabs) in the first half of the present year, which is 13.8 million tons more than the production level in the same period last year.

Also, the production of steel products (beams, rebars, and etc.) during the first 6 months of this year stood at 11.03 million tons, indicating 8 percent growth compared to the same period last year when the figure stood at 10.1 million tons.



The amount of sponge iron production in the first six months of this year was 15.5 million tons, which shows a 10 percent increase compared to the produced level in the same period last year, which stood at 14.1 million tons.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is

the world's top 10 steelmakers. With the studies made, it is targeted that the Islamic Republic of Iran will produce 55 million tons of steel in the 2025 Outlook Plan.

Of a total of 55 million steel production volumes, it is predicted that between 30 and 35 million

tons of which will be used in the country while the rest will be exported.

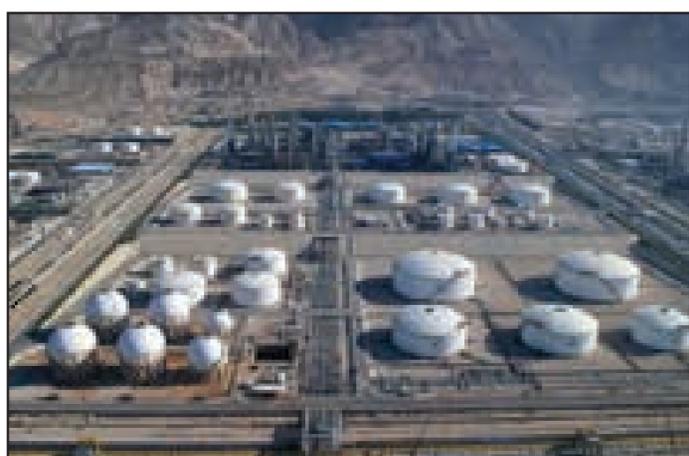
Export statistics in the industrial and mineral sectors indicate that the steel sector accounts for 40-45 percent of total export share in the industrial and mineral sectors.

In the early 1990s, Iran imported an average of five to seven million tons of steel annually but now, the country imports several hundred thousand tons of special steels, the rate of which shows that Iran's steel import has decreased dramatically.

In this respect, the Islamic Republic of Iran exported about 10 million tons of steel in 2019.

A review of last year's statistics shows that about seven million tons of steel ingots and three million tons of steel products have been exported to several target markets, IMIDRO added.

## Noori Petrochemical Plant Sets New Output Record



TEHRAN (Shana) -- Noori Petrochemical Company has set a new record in its production by supplying 2.442 million tons of petrochemicals in the first 6 months of the current calendar year, the plant's Public Relation Office said.

The office added, in the first 6 months of this year, this complex managed to set various production records, including supply of paraxylene and benzene at 106 and 111 percent of its rated capacity.

The plant's output rose by 26.5 percent in the period year-on-year and operated at 107% of its nameplate capacity.

It also yielded produced that were 114% of its planned productivity.

Noori Petrochemical Company, according to the production indexes of the Persian Gulf Petrochemical Industries Company (PGPIC), was ranked first among the holding's subsidiaries in terms of production.

## Dubai-Lengeh Port Ferry Route Resumes Operation

TEHRAN (Dispatches) – Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Line (IRISL) Group reported the ferry route between Lengeh port in Iran's Hormozgan province and Dubai has resumed operation, after eight months of closure due to the coronavirus pandemic.

IRISL Group said, following negotiations between the Iranian and Emirati sides, the marine line will transport passengers between the two port cities on a

weekly basis with all health protocols in place.

Passengers are required to have a printed negative COVID-19 PCR test certificate to be accepted on board.

Prior to the coronavirus spread, ferry boats were operating regularly between Iran's Shahid Bahonar Port in Bandar Abbas and the UAE's Sharjah as well as between Hormozgan's Bandar Lengeh and Dubai.



## Bank Boss: UK Facing 'Unprecedented Economic Uncertainty'

LONDON (Dispatches) - Bank of England (BoE) boss Andrew Bailey has said the UK faces "an unprecedented level of economic uncertainty."

Britain's economy shrank by 20% in the three months to June as it battled with the coronavirus pandemic, the biggest fall of any large advanced economy.

His remarks come as tighter coronavirus restrictions are imposed across the UK.

Mr Bailey warned that there is significant risk of economic growth continuing to be lower than expected.

The governor told an online event that he expected output at the end of the third quarter to be 10% lower than the end of 2019.

"Of course, that is heightened now by the return of Covid... the risks remain very heavily skewed towards the downside," he said during the video conference for central banks, which was hosted by the Group of Thirty, a panel of economic policymakers and se-



nior bankers.

Mr Bailey said that it was best for policymakers to act aggressively, rather than cautiously, in the face of uncertainty,

He also touched on the ongoing debate over setting negative interest rates, which would bring the cost of borrowing below zero.

"Our assessment of negative interest rates, from the experience elsewhere, is that they probably appear to work better in a more

wholesale financial market context, and probably better in a nascent economic upturn," he said.

If interest rates are negative, the BoE charges for any deposits it holds on behalf of the banks. That encourages banks to lend the money to business rather than deposit it.

But with interest rates already low, it is not clear how much negative rates would help spur new activity.

## Pandemic Could Cost U.S. Economy Its Entire Annual Output -- Survey

MOSCOW (RT) - The U.S. economy may lose a whopping \$16 trillion due to the devastating impact of the Covid-19 outbreak, both in output and people's lives, new research has found.

While most studies assess the costs of the deadly virus by its impact on the national gross domestic product (GDP), a paper published in the Journal of the American Medical Association earlier this week offered a different approach.

The authors of the study – former Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers and Harvard University economist David Cutler – also took into account losses associated with those who have died due to the virus, in addition to the purely economic costs.

With the number of coronavirus infections in the U.S. nearing eight million and deaths surpassing 215,000, the researchers believe that the outbreak may result in an estimated 625,000 cumulative deaths in the country through next year. Given the theoretical

## IMF Reveals 2021 Forecasts for Oil Prices, Mideast Economy

DUBAI (CNBC) — The International Monetary Fund downgraded its outlook for Middle East and Central Asian economic recovery, predicting a 4.1% contraction for the region as a whole — 1.3 percentage points worse than its previous assessment in April — in its latest regional outlook report released Monday.

Jihad Azour, director of the IMF's Middle East and Central Asia department, noted a large disparity in economic loss between oil importing and exporting countries as the region has been hit by the coronavirus pandemic and a plunge in oil prices.

"Combined together, those two shocks led to a sharp decline in economic activity that is different between oil exporting and oil importing countries," Azour told CNBC's Hadley Gamble via video call on Sunday. "On average, we will see growth going negative by 6.6% for oil exporting countries, and negative growth of 1% for all importing countries," he said, adding that there will be differences between the countries within each group.

Oil prices will be the most important factor for oil exporters' recovery, particularly states like Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, the UAE, Bahrain and Kuwait, for whom the commodity makes up the majority of their revenue. While prices have recovered from their historic plunge in March of this year, international benchmark Brent crude is still trading nearly 40% below pre-pandemic levels. Brent stood at \$42.87 per barrel on Monday morning in London.

And the IMF doesn't see oil prices staging a dramatic recovery anytime soon, predicting prices in the \$40 to \$50 range in 2021. That's still half the \$80 per barrel figure OPEC kingpin Saudi Arabia needs to balance its budget, according to the fund.

"The projections for oil prices are in the corridor between \$40 to \$45 for ... early next year, and will be between \$40 to \$50" next year overall, Azour said. "I think what is going to be also important to watch is the recovery in demand. That proved to be an important factor in what we saw this year, in addition to the supply that could come from alternative energies."

The oil demand outlook remains grim amid new waves of coronavirus gripping regions of the world and uncertainty about U.S. fiscal stimulus and the U.S. presidential election. The International Energy Agency in September cut its outlook for worldwide oil demand to 91.7 million barrels per day this year, a daily contraction of 8.4 million barrels year-on-year and more than the contraction of 8.1 million predicted in the agency's August report.

OPEC posted an even worse outlook for this year, slashing its view for global oil demand last month to an average of 90.2 million barrels per day in 2020, a contraction of 9.5 million barrels per day year-on-year. The group of 13 oil-producing countries described the outlook for the commodity's demand as "anemic," and warned that risks remain "elevated and skewed to the downside."

Azour stressed diversification and continued coronavirus safety measures as key to strengthening the region's economies, with a focus on providing opportunities for its youth population.

"I think what is important for the region going forward is we have now a situation where it's clear that diversifying the economy is the best way to get out of this crisis," Azour said.

Diversification will be a particular challenge given the blow to some of the region's most vital non-oil sectors: tourism, transportation, retail and real estate. Air travel alone isn't expected to rebound to pre-pandemic levels until at least 2023.

Real GDP growth for Persian Gulf states averaged 4.7% from 2000 to 2016, of which non-oil growth made up a mere 6.4%, according to the IMF's report. But the oil-reliant Persian Gulf states are now expected to see a 6% real GDP contraction this year, with non-oil sectors comprising 5.7% of that loss.



"conservative value of \$7 million per life," premature deaths linked to the coronavirus could wipe out nearly \$4.4 trillion, according to their calculations.

The virus is believed to have long-term effects on health, especially for survivors with severe or critical disease. As those complications lead to increased risk of premature death, they also have far-reaching consequences for the entire economy, with losses amounting to another \$2.6 trillion

for cases forecast through the next year, the authors noted. Even those who did not contact the deadly virus could also be affected by it, the paper adds. Suffering caused by the possible death of loved ones, as well as the effects of isolation and loneliness, may lead to deteriorating mental health conditions. This also takes its toll on the economy, which could lose approximately \$1.6 trillion due to mental health impairment, according to the research.