



State Information Service
Economy during the week
(29 July- 4 August)
By: Samia Galal

Sisi met with PM, governor of CBE and ministers



President Abdel Fattah El Sisi met on Sunday with the prime minister, the governor of the Central Bank of Egypt (CBE), and ministers of defense, interior, justice, finance, and supply.

The president underscored that the bodies concerned should be committed to implementing the new bread subsidy program, said presidential spokesman Alaa Yousef.

The meeting also touched on reviewing the outcome and recommendations of the fourth Youth Conference held at Bibliotheca Alexandrina.

Meanwhile, Presidential spokesman Alaa Youssef said that they reviewed steps to be taken for establishing the general agency for Upper Egypt development, which was announced during the activities of the third Youth Conference, held in Aswan in January.

The move aims at improving services provided to Upper Egypt residents and creating jobs for them.

Sisi highlighted the necessity of completing measures on establishing the body as soon as possible.

Regarding the plan on restructuring the bread subsidy program, Sisi underscored the importance tightening the control on the new system and the bakeries, improving bread quality, and ensuring the stability of its prices without any increase, Youssef said.

During the meeting, the governor of the Central Bank of Egypt and finance

minister reviewed the measures taken to increase the foreign currency reserves as well as the file on exchange rates.

Sisi calls for developing IT sector



President Abdel Fattah El Sisi has stressed the importance of developing the information and communication technology sector in Egypt, describing it as a "promising sector".

During a meeting with Communications and Information Technology Minister Yasser el Qady on Tuesday, Sisi called for going ahead with a plan to establish more smart cities and technological zones across the nation.

The meeting tackled efforts exerted by the ministry to develop the IT sector and establish specialized technological zones in various governorates, presidential spokesman Alaa Youssef said.

The minister briefed the president on the latest developments of the knowledge city, which is established in the New Administrative Capital, the spokesman noted.

Technology zones currently established in Assiut, Borg El Arab, Beni Suef and Sadat will contribute to boosting the development process in these cities, the minister said.

He also spoke of an Arab initiative to establish more electronics factories in the technological zones.

Speaking about his recent visit to France, Communications and Information Technology Minister Yasser el Qady said he discussed with heads of French IT companies means of boosting cooperation between Egypt and France in the field of technology and entrepreneurship.

The ministry is currently working on a number of initiatives to support the state's policy to accelerate digital transformation, Qady stressed.

Cabinet convenes weekly meeting



Meeting under Prime Minister Sherif Ismail, the Cabinet probed a number of political, economic, social and security files during a meeting here on Wednesday.

The meeting's agenda includes reports on the quality of services offered to citizens and efforts to secure basic commodities at suitable prices and to control the market.

The ministers will also discuss measures to reduce the impact of inflation through activating the role of control authorities.

They will also tackle efforts to expand social protection networks to guarantee subsidy reaches those really in need.

PM attends signing of agreements to set up projects in SCZone



Prime Minister Sherif Ismail attended on Tuesday the signing ceremony of agreements with six companies to set up projects on an area of 16.2 million square meters in the southern part of the Suez Canal Economic Zone (SCZone).

Speaking at a press conference held at the Cabinet headquarters, Investment and International Cooperation Minister Sahar Nasr expressed her ministry's keenness on removing hindrances facing investors to help increase investments in the SCZone.

The Investment Ministry is working on luring local and foreign investors to do business in the country in the coming period, Nasr added.

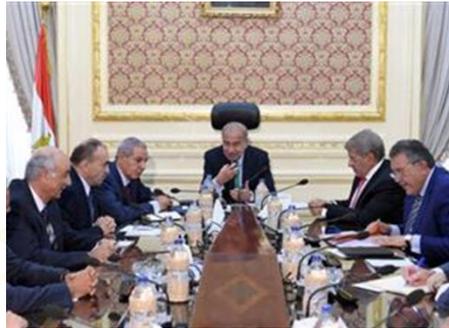
For his part, Businessman and CEO and Chairman of "Egyptian Steel" Ahmed Abou Hashima signed an agreement with Chairman of Suez Canal Authority Mohab Mamish to establish a steel factory at a total cost of 5.5 billion dollars. The factory will be the second eco-friendly steel plant in Egypt. The first one was established in Beni Suef.

The factory will secure from 5,000 to 6,000 direct and indirect jobs and will produce 830,000 tons of steel billets and 550,000 tons of reinforcing steel, Abu Hashima said. The factory will be opened in December, he added.

Also, Chairman and Managing Director of RAYA company Medhat Mokhtar Khalil said that he agreed with Mamish on obtaining two pieces of land stretching over an area of 300,000 meters in the southern part of the Suez Canal Economic Zone.

A coal warehouse will be established on the first piece of land which is stretched over a 100,000-meter area, Khalil said. Two factories will be set up on the second plot of land, he added.

Cabinet approves bill to establish golden triangle economic zone



The Cabinet under Prime Minister Sherif Ismail approved a bill to establish the Golden Triangle Economic Zone.

The zone will be affiliated to the Cabinet and will be located in Safaga.

The move came as part of the government's efforts to proceed with this national project, which will contribute to investing natural resources in this promising area.

The Cabinet, meanwhile, also approved a bill to amend the regulations of the environment law.

Investment Ministry's activities during the week

Immigration, investment ministers to ink cooperation protocol to encourage Egyptian expats' investments



Minister of Immigration and Egyptian Expatriate Affairs will sign later Sunday a cooperation protocol with Investment Minister Sahar Nasr to encourage Egyptian expats to pump investments into their homeland.

Makram said she held a recent meeting with Nasr on means of offering needed

facilities for Egyptian expats to do business in Egypt, especially online procedures for founding companies via the ministry's website.

The meeting also addressed means of getting Egyptian expats to trade in the Egyptian bourse and organizing awareness sessions for youths in various governorates on the dangers illegal immigration.

Makram and Nasr agreed to link the two ministries' websites, announce the joint services offered by the two ministries and launch promotion campaigns for investment in Egypt.

The two ministers agreed that the executive statute of the investment law should pinpoint the incentives and guarantees to be offered to Egyptian expats.

Nasr: UAE's Emaar plans to pump new investments in Egypt



Investment and International Cooperation Minister Sahar Nasr had a meeting on Monday with Mohammed Alabbar, the founder and Chairman of Emaar Properties PJSC, to discuss pumping new UAE investments in Egypt.

During the meeting, Alabbar expressed keenness on beefing up investments in Egypt, particularly in the new administrative capital and the new El Alamein city, within the coming period, as well as setting up new projects in Cairo and South Sinai.

Alabbar also voiced keenness on shoring up Egypt's economy and securing jobs for youth.

For her part, Nasr lauded Emaar company's investments in Egypt and its role in achieving development and securing job openings.

The Investment Ministry will soon announce an investment map that includes nearly 600 investment opportunities in the country, Nasr said.

She further stressed that her ministry took measures to improve the investment climate and help lure more foreign and Arab investments to the country.

The two sides also agreed on coordinating with other ministries on projects planned by Emaar in the new administrative capital, the new El Alamein city, as well as Cairo and South Sinai governorates.

Egypt's investment minister solicits support for impact investment in Africa



Minister of Investment and International Cooperation Sahar Nasr emphasized Monday Egypt's support for impact investments in African countries.

Nasr's statements came during her opening speech at the Africa impact investment meeting which was organized by the ministry of investment in partnership with the United Nations Development programme (UNDP) over two days to support projects that contribute to the development of social housing, education and private sector enterprises in Africa.

Two months ago, Egypt and the UNDP signed a letter of intent to establish the first National Impact Investment Fund which, according to Nasr, will act as an incubator of youth enterprises.

The fund also aims to promote impact investments in Egypt, and support the growth of impact-oriented start-ups, encouraging investments that contribute to the achievement of development goals in various areas such as poverty reduction, job creation and reliance on renewable energy.

The meeting was attended by Country Director of the UNDP in Egypt Randa Abul Hassan, Special Adviser to the Private Sector Unit and Inclusive Sustainable

Development Cluster Tomas Sales, Executive Director of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development for the Southern and Eastern mediterranean region Janet Hackman, as well as representatives of the African Development Bank.

The meeting discussed means to enhance impact investment through forming an operational, legal and financial structure.

On her part, Country Director of the UNDP in Egypt Randa Abul Hassan said that the long-awaited agreement will pave the way for a new investment network aligned with the goals of sustainable development in Africa, stating that the meeting seeks to find innovative sources of investment to create both economic and social returns.

Investment minister participated in Botswana



Investment and International Cooperation Minister Sahar Nasr attended meetings of the African group at the World Bank.

Ministers of 54 African countries and WB officials participated in the talks.

Nasr, in her capacity as the first vice president of the African group, chaired a session during the meetings that discussed coordination among African countries regarding economic-related issues.

Egypt to top \$10 billion FDI target this year, minister says



Egypt may exceed its 10 billion-dollar target for foreign direct investment this year as a new investment law comes into force, said Investment and International Cooperation Minister Sahar Nasr.

In an interview with Bloomberg, Nasr said that she had been approached by investors from Saudi Arabia, Singapore, China and the United Arab Emirates -- including Emaar Properties PJSC Chairman Mohamed Alabbar and Al Ghurair Group -- about potential investments.

The pipeline for the fiscal year that began July 1 includes oil and gas, real estate, tourism and logistics investments, she said in an interview published by Bloomberg on Wednesday. Nasr said it was too early to comment on the size of the potential deals.

“With the devaluation, the cost of labour is lower than elsewhere,” Nasr said, adding that even with recent reductions in fuel subsidies, the cost of energy in Egypt remains less than in neighbouring countries or other emerging economies. “Egypt sure has an edge,” added the minister.

“In the oil and gas sector, currency convertibility was an issue, and now with the problem of the arrears being addressed, they are picking up investment at a faster rate,” she added.

Public Enterprise Sector

Bourse to open new department for encouraging more heavy-weight firms listing - official

Egyptian Exchange Deputy Chairman Mohsen Adel said the bourse will open a new department for encouraging more heavy-weight companies - either public or private - to be listed at the bourse.

Adel said the new department will also work on spreading awareness about capital market and financing tools offered by companies or individuals through investment opportunities in the Egyptian bourse.

He added that Investment and Cooperation Minister Sahar Nasr fully supports activating the bourse's role in realizing economic development and bankrolling the economic reform program.

He said the bourse will cooperate with investment banks during promotion campaigns abroad.

Meanwhile, Mohsen said that there are ongoing talks between the bourse and Public Enterprise Sector Minister Ashraf el Sharqawy on offering part of stakes of profitable governmental companies and underway major public companies at the bourse.

Mohsen also noted that the bourse will set up a new department for relations with investors to promote contacts between investors and the bourse

Mohsen will temporarily run the bourse until appointing a new chairman as the term of duty of Bourse Chairman Mohamed Omran will end on August 6.

CBE: Foreign currency reserves exceed \$36bn in July



The Central Bank of Egypt (CBE) said Tuesday the country's foreign currency reserves were up in July and hit 36.03 billion dollars, a record high in seven years.

In June, foreign currency reserves amounted to 31.3 billion dollars.

A CBE statement, a copy of which MENA received, attributed the 4.7-billion-dollar increase achieved in July to a rise in foreign investments in Egyptian Treasury Bills, not to mention that Egypt also received 1.25 billion dollars worth of a second batch of its first loan from the International Monetary Fund.

Dollar prices stable at major Egyptian banks

The exchange rate of the US dollar was relatively stable during morning transactions at major banks on Wednesday.

The dollar exchange rate stood at EGP 17.77 for buying and EGP 17.87 for selling at the National Bank of Egypt.

The dollar rate remained at EGP 17.84 for buying and EGP 17.94 for selling at Banque Misr.

At Banque du Caire, it stood at EGP 17.75 for buying and EGP 17.85 for selling.

At the Commercial International Bank (CIB), the dollar price recorded EGP 17.81 for buying and EGP 17.91 for selling. (MENA)

Volume of trade increases between Egypt, important trade partners in 9 months: CBE

The volume of trade between Egypt and its key trade partners went up in July-March in fiscal 2016/2017 to reach around 34,65 billion dollars in comparison with 34,21 billion dollars within the same period in fiscal 2015/2016.

The volume of Egyptian exports increased to reach 10,1 billion dollars, according to the monthly report of the Central Bank of Egypt (CBE) a copy of which has been obtained by MENA.

The size of Egyptian imports decreased within nine months in fiscal 2016/2017 to reach 24,5 billion dollars, according to the report.

Egypt's important trade partners include the UAE, the US, China, Italy, Saudi Arabia, Germany, Britain, Switzerland, Russia and India.

