

## Released Assets to Be Used for Boosting National Currency

TEHRAN (Tasnim) - An official at the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) said that Iran's assets released from South Korean banks will be used for improving the value of the national unit of currency "rial". In a Tuesday post on X, formerly known as Twitter, Manager of the Public Relations Department of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Mostafa Ghamarivafa wrote that Iran's foreign exchange resources released from South Korea are now in the accounts of six Iranian banks in Qatar. With the special emphasis of the governor of the Central Bank of Iran, all financial resources are considered as foreign exchange reserves (FOREX) of the bank and will be used for strengthening the value of the national currency, he stated. He put the country's currency resources released from South Korean banks at €5,573,492,000. It is emphasized that all financial resources are the foreign exchange reserves (FOREX) of the Central Bank of Iran and will be used for the appreciation of "rials" according to the national interests, Ghamarivafa added.

# IRAN NEWS

## Iran Seeking to Export Petchem Services to Venezuela, Brazil

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - The production control manager of Iran's National Petrochemical Company (NPC) said the company has outlined a plan for exporting technical services to Venezuela and Brazil. Bijan Chegeni added customers from Africa, Asia, Europe, and the U.S. have welcomed Iran's petrochemical products, and now NPC has started to get into the Latin American market as part of the 13th (incumbent) administration's energy diplomacy, SHANA reported. He said Iran's petrochemical industry is turning 60, adding that the country's presence in various international petrochemical markets shows its economic power. The petrochemical industry has turned into Iran's strong point at a time when "our market rivals' political attitudes and sanctions are aimed at bringing us to our knees", he noted.

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## Enemies on Road to Political ICU



TEHRAN (Tasnim) - The enemies of Iran are on the wane and heading towards a political intensive care unit, Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Major General Hossein Salami said. The enemies of the Islamic Republic confess that they are falling into decline, the IRGC commander said at a conference at the University of Tehran on Tuesday. He said the enemies are impotent and moving to the "political ICU". While the adversaries are unable to resolve domestic and international problems, Iran is making progress and getting stronger, he added. Highlighting Iran's "incredible advances" in the military and defense sectors, the general said the Islamic Republic is among the major world powers in many fields. In remarks on Monday, the Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces said the country's great military preparedness and power have discouraged the enemies from daring to launch an onslaught. Major General Mohammad Hossein Baqeri said Iran has amassed such formidable military power that the enemies would not even imagine the possibility of an attack, let alone take an act of aggression.

## Iran Successfully Launches Nour-3 Satellite Into Orbit



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Aerospace Force successfully launched the homegrown imaging satellite Nour-3 into orbit on Wednesday morning. Nour-3 (Light-3) was launched by satellite carrier Qased (Messenger) and was placed into an orbit 450 kilometers (280 miles) above the Earth's surface. "With the efforts of IRGC Aerospace Force specialists, a few moments ago, the Nour-3 imaging satellite was successfully placed into a 450 km orbit of the earth with the Iranian Qased satellite carrier," Minister of Communications and Information Technology Issa Zarepour said via X, formerly known as Twitter. "I congratulate all [Iranian] people, those active in the country's space industry, and the IRGC's space experts for this success. God willing, this year will be a fruitful year for the country's space industry," he added. Last month, Iranian Defense Minister Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Ashtiani announced that the country would launch at least two domestically-made satellites into orbit this year. "We are involved in the development and launch of satellites. Under our plan, we will have 2 to 3 satellite launches this year, something we hope to be successful," Ashtiani said on August 22. Despite sanctions imposed by Western countries in recent years, Iran has managed to take giant strides in the civilian space program. It is among the world's top 10 countries capable of developing and launching satellites. Back in March last year, the IRGC Aerospace Force launched Nour-2 into orbit using the Qased satellite carrier, two years after it placed Nour-1 into orbit.

## Unofficial Reports on Sanctions-Removal Talks Lack Credibility



TEHRAN (IRNA) - The Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has discredited media reports signaling a potential policy shift in how Tehran might pursue negotiations with the West aimed at reviving the 2015 nuclear deal and removing the sanctions against the country. The Iranian foreign ministry's Public Relations released a statement on Tuesday in response to rumors by a media outlet that Iranian authorities had granted negotiators permission to enter direct talks with the United States. "This type of news sensationalism and media games, which is often used to create a political atmosphere, lacks credibility," the statement said. The United States in 2018 unilaterally withdrew from the nuclear agreement with Iran, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and re-imposed harsh economic sanctions against the country. Iran and the other signatories of the deal-- China, France, Germany, Russia and the United Kingdom-- began a diplomatic push in 2021 to bring the US back into compliance with the accord and get it to remove its sanctions against Iran. But negotiations have been stalled since last August, with Iran blaming the US for refusing to lift the sanctions and also provide a guarantee that it would not abandon the deal again.

The Iranian officials have for years ruled out the possibility of direct talks with the United States, as the two countries do not have diplomatic relations.

## Historic Iraq-Iran Railway Link Ready in 18 Months



BAGHDAD (Dispatches) - Iraq hopes to complete its first railway link with neighbouring Iran within 18 months, largely to help facilitate the transport of millions of pilgrims that visit Shi'ite Muslim shrines in Iraq each year, a senior transport adviser said. The roughly 30-kilometre (18.64 miles) line will run between Iraq's southern city of Basra and the Iranian border-town of Shalamja, linking nations with ties that have deepened since the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq, after which pro-Tehran Shi'ite Muslim parties enhanced their influence in Baghdad. "We should see the trains moving in about 18 months because it's a small distance," Nasser Al-Asadi, transport advisor to the Iraqi prime minister, told Reuters. He added the government also planned a metro link between Karbala and Najaf, the seat of Iraqi Shi'ite clergy. Iraq and Iran fought a devastating eight-year war in the 1980s, during which much of the border area was heavily mined. But since the U.S. toppled former leader Saddam Hussein in 2003, Shi'ite Muslim parties close to Tehran have become key political players in Baghdad and economic and religious ties between both nations have expanded. Asadi said work was underway to clear the area before ground work could begin on the rail link. Regularly, the world's largest annual religious gathering of up to 20 million mostly Shi'ite Muslims takes part in the 'Arbaeen' pilgrimage to Iraq's holy city of Karbala to commemorate the slaying of Imam Hussein (A), grandson of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH). Many pilgrims walk hundreds of kilometres from the Iran-Iraq border to Karbala, or drive there in overcrowded cars and buses, and deadly accidents have been frequent. Asadi said the rail link would reduce the risk of such accidents and allow Iraq to benefit financially from ticket sales. The projects are part of major transport-sector development planned by the government, including an overhaul of Baghdad's international airport and a 1,200-kilometre (745.65-mile) rail, road and services project from a major commodities port in the south to its border with Turkey.

## Iran to Hold Culture Week With Neighbors



TEHRAN (IP) - Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance reports about the agreements reached with Qatar and Pakistan to hold joint cultural programs in the countries. Mohammad-Mahdi Esmaili told Iran Press correspondent on Wednesday that soon Iran will hold a magnificent cultural week in Qatar and that Qataris have welcomed the event. Esmaili said: "For cultural cooperation, we met with other countries' officials, mostly Central Asian and North African countries, and overall, despite the shortness of the trips, we had good meetings." Also, Iranian arts will be taught in Pakistan following the relevant talks, he added. Three days ago, the Iranian and Pakistani Ministers of Culture reviewed the ways to develop the cultural relations between the two countries, including the relations in the art area. Pakistani Minister of Culture Jamal Shah, for his part in the meeting, said that Islamabad was interested in bringing Iranian arts such as calligraphy, to be taught in Pakistani schools.

## Iran a Trailblazer in Drone Technology

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK



TEHRAN - A top commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) has praised Iran's military capabilities and cutting-edge defense technology, saying the country has become a "trailblazer" in the field of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

Brigadier General Amir-Ali Hajizadeh, the commander of the IRGC's Aerospace Division, said in a Tuesday ceremony on the anniversary of Iraq's imposed war on Iran in the 1980s that the Islamic Republic has become more than a regional power. "Iran is at a world level in the field of drones and has become a trailblazer in the field of techniques and tactics," Hajizadeh said, stressing that many world countries use Iran's expertise as a model in manufacturing drones. "Today, we use drones not only for reconnaissance, surveillance, combat and defense missions, but we can use them for dozens of missions," the IRGC commander added. Hajizadeh also pointed to Iraq's foreign-backed war against Iran in the 1980s and hailed the resistance of the Iranian nation. "About 30 countries stood up to us to destroy this [Islamic] establishment and disintegrate Iran, but thanks to God's grace and the nation's resistance, we not only overcame their war machine, but we did not lose a single square meter of our homeland and imposed our will on them," he asserted. Iraq waged the war against Iran more than one and a half years after the victory of the 1979 Islamic Revolution, which toppled the US-backed Pahlavi regime. The eight-year Iranian defense set up the foundation for the emergence of Islamic resistance in West Asia. Iranian military experts and engineers have in recent years made remarkable breakthroughs in manufacturing a broad range of indigenous equipment, making the armed forces self-sufficient. Iranian officials have repeatedly underscored that the country will not hesitate to strengthen its military capabilities, including its missile power, which are entirely meant for defense, and that Iran's defense capabilities will be never subject to negotiations.

## Iran Urges World to Stand Up to Israel's Nuclear Rhetoric

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran has called on the international community to stand up to "nuclear rhetoric" by the Israeli regime, which recently called for a "nuclear threat" against the Islamic Republic. Iran's permanent mission to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva made the call on Tuesday, on the occasion of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. "September 26, marks the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. Iran, as the victim of WMD (weapons of mass destruction) in contemporary history, is committed to this end and decisively, along with other peace-loving nations, will follow the cause of a Nuclear Weapons Free World," the Iranian mission wrote in a post on X, the social media network used to be known as Twitter. Days earlier, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had addressed the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), calling for a "credible nuclear

threat" against Iran. "The international community should reject and condemn any normalization of nuclear rhetoric and, in particular, the threat of use of nuclear weapons, as made at #UNGA78 by the Israeli regime prime minister, which only serves to undermine the international peace and security," the Iranian mission added. The int'l community should reject and condemn any normalization of nuclear rhetoric and, in particular, the threat of use of nuclear weapons, as made at #UNGA78 by the Israeli regime Prime Minister, which only serves to undermine the int'l peace and security. 2/2#IDTENWDuring his speech, Netanyahu warned about the "curse of a nuclear Iran," alleging "...as long as I'm prime minister of Israel, I will do everything in my power to prevent Iran from getting nuclear weapons." Iran's diplomatic delegation at the UN dismissed Netanyahu's speech as a "comedy show," saying "The baseless allegations made by Israeli officials no longer fool anyone."

## 100 Killed in Fire During Wedding in Northern Iraq

QARAGOSH (Dispatches) – At least 100 people were killed and more than 150 injured when a fire broke out during a wedding at an event hall in the northern Iraqi town of Hamdaniyah, officials said early Wednesday. At the main hospital in Hamdaniyah – a predominantly Christian town east of Mosul that is also known as Qaraqosh -- an AFP photographer saw ambulances arriving with sirens blaring and dozens of people

gathering in the courtyard to donate blood. Others could be seen gathering in front of the open doors of a refrigerated truck loaded with black body bags. Health authorities in Nineveh province, where the town is located, “have counted 100 dead and more than 150 injured in the fire at a marriage hall in Hamdaniyah”, the official Iraqi press agency INA reported, citing a “preliminary tally”.



## China Says Drills Near Taiwan Target Arrogance of Separatists

BEIJING (Dispatches) - China said its recent series of drills near Taiwan aimed at combating the “arrogance” of separatist forces, while the frontrunner to be Taiwan’s next president said China was trying to “annex” the island. Taiwan, which China claims as its own territory, has said this month that it had observed dozens of fighters, drones, bombers and other aircraft, as well as warships and the Chinese aircraft carrier Shandong, operating nearby. The increased frequency of China’s military activities has raised the risk of events “getting out of hand” and sparking an accidental clash, the island’s defence minister has warned. Asked about the spurt in drills, and Taiwan’s concerns about increased risk, Zhu Fenglian, the spokeswoman of China’s Taiwan Affairs Office, acknowledged the drills by the People’s Liberation Army. “The purpose is to resolutely combat the arrogance of Taiwan independence separatist forces and their actions to seek independence,” Zhu told a regular news briefing in Beijing. “The provocation of Taiwan independence continues all day long, and the actions of the People’s Liberation Army to defend national sovereignty and territorial integrity are always ongoing,” she added. She urged people in Taiwan to distinguish between “right and wrong”, resolutely oppose independence for the island, and work with China to maintain peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait. China has a particularly strong dislike of William Lai, the frontrunner to be elected president at the island’s January elections for previous comments in support of independence. However, he says he does not seek to change the status quo and has offered talks with Beijing. The situation



across the Taiwan Strait had “not improved due to the passage of time”, said Lai, now the island’s vice-president. “China’s attempts to annex Taiwan have not changed,” he said at an event in Taipei on Wednesday for the 37th anniversary of the founding of the ruling Democratic Progressive Party, or DPP. China’s armed forces have not explicitly mentioned or commented on the drills at a time when Chinese Defence Minister Li Shangfu has gone missing from public view. Sources have told Reuters he is being investigated for corruption. Taiwan’s democratically elected

government says only the island’s people can decide their future, and has repeatedly offered talks with China, which Beijing has rejected. On Wednesday, Taiwan’s defence ministry reported further Chinese military movements, saying it had detected and responded to 16 Chinese aircraft entering the island’s air defence identification zone over the prior 24 hours. Of those, 12 crossed the median line of the Taiwan strait, which had served as an unofficial barrier between the two sides until China began regularly crossing it in August last year.

## World Bank Chief Vows to Tackle Dysfunctionality at Development Lender



WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - World Bank President Ajay Banga said Tuesday that he is working to reform “dysfunctionality” among the leadership of the development lender, and pledged to refocus its mission to better address the challenges posed by climate change. The former Mastercard chief executive told the Council on Foreign Relations in New York that the bank should alter its current twin mandate of poverty alleviation and boosting shared prosperity to include climate change. “I think the twin goals have to change to being elimination of poverty, but on a livable planet, because of the intertwined nature of our crises,” he said. He added that he was working to redefine the World Bank’s business around what he called five key knowledge “verticals”: people, prosperity, planet, infrastructure and digital. Banga’s comments in New York come shortly before global leaders are due to gather for the World Bank and International Monetary Fund’s (IMF) annual meetings, which will take place this year in the Moroccan city of Marrakesh. Banga, an Indian-born naturalized US citizen, was nominated to lead the World Bank earlier this year by President Joe Biden, and began his new role in June. The bank has historically been led by an American, while the IMF has been managed by a European -- a controversial arrangement that has existed since the two institutions were founded in the aftermath of the second World War. Banga has already made a number of changes to the bank’s management since taking over, setting up a new 15-person private sector advisory board, and pledging deeper cooperation with regional development banks to tackle shared challenges. On Tuesday, Banga vowed to “fix the plumbing” at the bank, which he said suffered from “dysfunctionality” in the boardroom. The World Bank’s board is made up of 25 executive directors appointed by its 189 member countries, who must balance the interests of the development lender with those of the states they represent. “I want people to say when I’m gone that I left the bank working much better than when I got it, because then my successor will not have to deal with what I’m dealing with,” he said. Proposals to reform the World Bank’s balance sheet from countries including the US and Saudi Arabia could add as much as \$125 billion in extra lending capacity if they come to pass, Banga told the audience in New York. This would be a significant increase for the development lender, which mobilized just over \$100 billion in financing last year. Banga has previously called on the World Bank to collaborate more closely with the private sector to meet the enormous costs associated with climate change mitigation and adaptation. On Tuesday, Banga said the bank should carefully target where it wants to encourage private investment to help cap carbon emissions in order to have the biggest impact. “We need to focus on 10 countries where the growth of emissions will be so high if we don’t change to renewables that all the work we do in the developed world to reduce the use of emission-heavy energy will be lost,” he said, without naming them. These middle-income countries are states “where there is some hope for the private sector, both in terms of scalable models and the like, that renewable energy could make money,” he added. In order to invite the private sector to participate, the World Bank should offer to manage some of the political risks associated with climate-related investments in these countries, along with the risk of currency fluctuations, Banga said. The World Bank group already has a political risk agency, but the foreign exchange risk is an issue that still needs to be resolved, he told the audience in New York. “That’s the way to involve the private sector,” he added.



## Russia Mulls Joining China in Banning Japanese Seafood Imports

MOSCOW (Dispatches) - Russia may join China in banning Japanese seafood imports after Japan released treated radioactive water from the wrecked Fukushima nuclear power plant into the sea, and Moscow is seeking talks with Japan, a Russian regulator said. Japan started releasing the water from the plant into the ocean last month, drawing strong criticism from China. In retaliation, China imposed a blanket ban on all aquatic imports from Japan. Russian food safety watchdog Rosselkhozadzor on Tuesday said it had discussed Japanese food exports with its Chinese counterparts. Russia is one of the biggest marine product suppliers to China and is seeking to increase its market share. “Taking into account the possible risks of radiation contamination of products, Rosselkhozadzor is considering the possibility of joining with Chinese restrictions on supplies of fish products from Japan,” Rosselkhozadzor said in a statement. “The final decision will be made after negotiations with the Japanese side.” So far this year, Russia has imported 118 tonnes of Japanese seafood, the regulator said. Rosselkhozadzor said it had sent a letter to Japan on the need to hold talks and requesting information on Japan’s radiological testing of exported fish products by Oct. 16, including tritium. Japan will scrutinise Tuesday’s announcement by Russia, the top Japanese government spokesperson Hirokazu Matsuno said on Wednesday. Japan says the water is safe after being treated to remove most radioactive elements except tritium, a radionuclide difficult to separate from water. It is then diluted to internationally accepted levels before being released. Japan has said criticism from Russia and China was unsupported by scientific evidence. “We strongly ask Russia to act based on scientific evidence,” Matsuno told a Wednesday press conference, adding that Russia was a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)’s Fukushima expert team, which in July greenlighted the water release plan. On Monday, in its latest report on water testing, Japan’s Ministry of Environment said analysis results of seawater, sampled on Sept. 19, showed the tritium concentrations were below the lower limit of detection at all 11 sampling points and would have no adverse impact on human health and the environment. Russia has also detected no irregularities in marine samples used for tests in Russian regions that are relatively close to where the treated water was released, Rosselkhozadzor’s far eastern branch said on Tuesday, Interfax reported. Russia exported 2.3 million metric tons of marine products last year worth about \$6.1 billion, around half its overall catch, with China, South Korea and Japan being the biggest importers, according to Russia’s fisheries agency.

## Russian Commander Shown on Video Call After Ukraine Said It Killed Him



MOSCOW (Dispatches) - Admiral Viktor Sokolov, the commander of Russia’s Black Sea Fleet, was shown on Russian state television on Tuesday attending a defence leaders’ meeting remotely, a day after Ukrainian special forces said they had killed him. In video and photographs released by the defence ministry, Sokolov was shown as one of several fleet commanders on video apparently joining an in-person meeting of Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu and other army chiefs, although not speaking. It was not clear when the video was filmed. Ukraine’s special forces said on Monday that Sokolov had been killed along with 33 other officers in a missile attack last week on the headquarters of Russia’s Black Sea Fleet in the port of Sevastopol in Crimea, seized from Ukraine in 2014. In response to the Russian video, the Ukraine special forces said on Telegram: “Since the Russians were urgently forced to publish a response with Sokolov allegedly alive, our units are clarifying the information.” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov had declined to comment on the Ukrainian claim, referring reporters to the ministry. Ukrainian Defence Minister Rustem Umerov, interviewed by CNN, neither confirmed nor denied Sokolov’s death, but said his demise could only be a good

thing for all concerned. “He is in our temporary occupied territories ... he should not be there at all,” CNN quoted Umerov as saying on its website. “So, if he’s dead, it’s good news for everybody that we are continuing to de-occupy our territory.” In the video, Shoigu said more than 17,000 Ukrainian soldiers had been killed in September and that more than 2,700 weapons, including seven American Bradley fighting vehicles, had been destroyed. Reuters could not independently verify battlefield claims. “The Ukrainian armed forces are suffering serious losses along the entire front line,” Shoigu said, adding that the Ukrainian counteroffensive had so far produced no results. “The United States and its allies continue to arm the armed forces of Ukraine, and the Kyiv regime throws untrained soldiers to the slaughter in senseless assaults,” Shoigu said. Kyiv’s counteroffensive has yet to seize much territory from Russian forces, which control about 17.5% of Ukraine’s internationally recognised territory. According to a Sept. 19 scorecard by the Belfer Center at Harvard’s Kennedy School, Russia has gained 35 sq miles (91 sq km) from Ukraine in the past month while Ukrainian forces have taken 16 sq miles (41 sq km) from Russian forces.

## Pyongyang Says No Choice But to Accelerate Building Its Self-Defense

UNITED NATIONS (Dispatches) - North Korea’s United Nations envoy accused the United States and South Korea on Tuesday of pushing the Korean peninsula closer to the brink of nuclear war, telling the U.N. General Assembly that as a result his country had no choice but to further accelerate a build-up of its self-defense capabilities. “The year 2023 has been recorded as an extremely dangerous year,” Ambassador Kim Song told the last day of the annual U.N. gathering of world leaders. “The Korean peninsula is in a hair-trigger situation with imminent danger of nuclear war breakout.” “Given the prevailing circumstances, the

DPRK (North Korea) is urgently required to further accelerate the build-up of its self-defense capabilities to defend itself impregably,” Kim told the 193-member General Assembly. North Korea has tested dozens of ballistic missile in the past 18 months. The United States has long warned that Pyongyang was ready to carry out a seventh nuclear test. Pyongyang says it is exercising its right to self-defense with its ballistic missile tests to safeguard its sovereignty and security interests from military threats. “The DPRK remains steadfast and unchanged in its determination to firmly defend the national sovereignty, security interests and

well-being of the people against the hostile threats from outside,” Kim said. North Korea - formally known as the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) - has been under U.N. Security Council sanctions for its missile and nuclear programs since 2006. The measures have been steadily strengthened over the years. However, for the past several years the 15-member Security Council has been divided over how to deal with Pyongyang. Russia and China, veto powers along with the United States, Britain and France, have said more sanctions will not help and want such measures to be eased.

