

Minister of Interior Ahmad Vahidi Said That the Parliamentary Elections Are on the Agenda of the Ministry in the Current Year and the Related Bodies Will Announce the Qualified Candidates for the Elections

IRAN NEWS

President Ebrahim Raisi Is Set to Visit Tajikistan on November 7-12 at the Same Time as the Iranian Trade Delegation Travels to Dushanbe for Boosting Trade Ties in All Spheres With Tajikistan

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Egypt to Receive Wounded Gazans Through Key Crossing

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World Today United Against U.S. More Than Ever



TEHRAN (PressTV) - The chief commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) says the world today is united against the United States more than ever amid the continuation of the US-backed Israeli regime's heavy attacks against Palestinians. The bloody nature of US policies is now revealed to the world more than any time in the past, Major General Hossein Salami said on Thursday. He described the US, Britain and Israel as "inseparable parts of an obvious conspiracy," emphasizing that they act in three separate geographical parts of the world but with coherently developed policies. The Zionists occupied Palestine some 75 years ago through acts of terror and crime and are currently drawing up plans to spread political ignorance among the youths in the Muslim world, he emphasized. However, the IRGC chief said, the arrogant powers will fail in their bid to deceive the Muslim nations across the world. The enemies would never clinch a victory in the Gaza Strip, the IRGC chief pointed out. He said the developments in Gaza have prompted Muslims to take revenge on Israel for decades of cruelty and oppression and added that the blockade and massacre of a nation amount to a crime not victory. On October 7, Israel launched a full-scale war on the impoverished Gaza Strip, where shortages of food, water, and medicine threaten the lives of Gazans and hospitals are overwhelmed amid incessant Israeli bombings.

Political Initiatives Underway for Immediate Temporary Ceasefire in Gaza



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian says Iran and Qatar are working on political initiatives on establishment of an immediate temporary ceasefire in Gaza as the Israeli genocidal war in claiming more civilian lives. Amir-Abdollahian said his earlier visit to the Qatari capital Doha featured discussion about the truce in the Israeli regime's war. The top Iranian diplomat made the remarks upon return to Tehran from a two-way trip that took him to Qatar and Turkey. "There is talk in Qatar about the idea of truce that could [possibly] lead to extensive transfer of humanitarian aid to Gaza," Amir-Abdollahian said. The brutal war that the Israeli regime has been waging against the coastal territory has so far claimed the lives of nearly 8,800 people, including more than 3,600 children. The regime launched the war after Gaza's resistance groups conducted Operation al-Aqsa Storm, their biggest operation against the occupying entity, after years of suffering under Israeli repression of occupation. "Under the aegis of the truce, we will witness exchange of civilian prisoners between the two sides, which includes the release of all female Palestinians prisoners," the Iranian foreign minister said. The Palestinian resistance, he added, is after the freedom of Palestinian women, adolescents, and children from Israeli prisoners. Amir-Abdollahian said during his meeting with head of Hamas' Politburo, in Doha, Ismail Haniyeh said the Israeli regime's attacks on Gaza had so far resulted in the deaths of some 50 captives held by the Palestinian resistance. "Some of these captives were being held in the basement of hospitals that were thought to be safe," Amir-Abdollahian noted.



President Inaugurates Some Mega Projects in Kordestan Province

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Kordestan province was connected to the country's rail network as the 24th province with the inauguration of the 151 km long Hamadan-Sanandaj railway project by the President. President Ebrahim Raisi, who traveled to Kordestan province in west Iran as part of the second round of provincial trips of his Popular Administration, put the Hamadan-Sanandaj railway project into operation in the first part of the trip on Thursday. The Hamadan-Sanandaj railway project was about 60% advanced during the last 18 years and had been paused because of budget-related problems before President Raisi's government took office in August 2021. The operation to complete this project was resumed last year after the President's visit to Kordestan and the securing of 14 trillion rials of allocated budget. The Hamadan-Sanandaj railway route is nearly 151 km (including 177 km of station lines), with seven stations along the route. Considering the special characteristics of the railway industry, the use of this project will create direct employment, and facilitate the movement of passengers and cargo from the west to the centre of the country and vice versa. The President told reporters at the Sanandaj airport upon his arrival this morning that "Kordestan is the province of culture and art, piety and loyalty to the glorious Islamic Revolution, steadfastness, resistance, standing against the enemies and the province of martyrs, veterans." Raisi pointed out that in the first round of the trip last year, we identified the needs of the province and work were started in different parts of the province, and said, "Reports indicate that many of these plans have been implemented and we can announce to the people that they are done by the hands of the youth and your competent managers." "I hope our trip is also a big step towards the development and solving the problems of the Kordestan province and its people," the president added. Other government projects such as linking Garra Dam to Zrebar Lake in Marivan County and the inauguration of Saqqez Airport are on the agenda of the president and his accompanying ministers. Meanwhile addressing the People of Sanandaj in his public meeting, on Thursday, Raisi referred to the recent developments in Gaza saying: "Today, the recent developments in Gaza can be followed by seeing two scenes: "Showing the ugliness, the cruelty, aggression and injustice along with the bombardments, crimes against humanity, child-killing attitude and genocide which all together build up a dark image representing the truth of Israeli regime." Raisi continued: "On the other side is the image of crying for independence, restoring a nation's rights, defending a nation as well as resistance and steadfastness." He then went on to say: "The US government is the main cause of crimes in the Palestinian land and those who allegedly call themselves as exemplar of human rights are the ones who violate human rights. Raisi then stressed that now after decades the world has realized that the position of the Islamic Revolution regarding the criminal and aggressive nature of the Zionist regime is true which has been rightly stressed by the Late Imam Khomeini and the Supreme Leader of Iran.

Lifting Sanctions Will Help Build Better World

TEHRAN - Iran's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the international organizations in Geneva, who heads the social forum of the Human Rights Council, emphasized that the lifting of sanctions will help the development of science, technology and building a better world. In his speech as the president of this forum, Ali Bahraini said that the coronavirus epidemic and the bitter experiences of the lack of cooperation and solidarity for equal access to what they needed to deal with this epidemic have put "us in front of this moral question". "If the world faces a crisis similar to Corona, will we face the same challenges again?" "If the barriers to the transfer of technologies and their exploitation are removed, technologies, sciences and innovations can help build a better world," he added. The Iranian envoy emphasized the importance of the capacity of countries to develop and participate in building a better world, and said, "If there are no colonial policies and restrictive national laws that are imposed on other countries extraterritorially, all countries have the capacity to meet the development of their countries and the capacity of each country can be a complementary link for the development of the whole world." Bahraini stated that technology by focusing on women and youth can create a better future for everyone. The 15th session of the Social Assembly of the Human Rights Council 2023 started a few minutes ago at the place of the Human Rights Council in Geneva, under the presidency of the Islamic Republic of Iran. In this 2-day meeting, more than 60 participants, including high-ranking officials, diplomats and non-governmental organizations, will discuss the topic of "the role of science, technology and innovation in the promotion of human rights, especially during the recovery period from the coronavirus epidemic in the form of various expert sessions. This meeting was chaired by Ali Bahraini, ambassador and permanent representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Ruhollah Dehghani, the Iranian vice president for science, technology and knowledge-based economy, was also present in this meeting. The Social Forum is an annual meeting convened by the Human Rights Council. It is a unique space for open and interactive dialogue between civil society, representatives of Member States, and intergovernmental organizations, on a theme chosen by the Council each year. One of the key goals of the Forum is to promote social cohesion based on the principles of social justice, equity and solidarity as well as addressing the social dimension and challenges of the ongoing globalization process.



U.S., Allies Sacrificing Int'l Peace, Human Rights for Sake of Israel's Interests



TEHRAN (PressTV) - The spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry has strongly condemned the deadly Israeli airstrike against Bureij refugee camp in the Gaza Strip, stating that the United States and its allies have sacrificed international peace and human rights for the sake of Israel's interests. "It is glaringly evident that the United States, alongside a limited number of countries, has effectively taken hostage the United Nations and the Security Council, prioritizing the interests of the racist and criminal Israeli regime at the expense of international peace, security, and Human Rights," Nasser Kanaani wrote in a post published on X, formerly known as Twitter, on Thursday evening. Gaza authorities say at least 15 people have been killed in a Thursday Israeli air strike on the Bureij camp, located in the center of the Gaza Strip. A spokesperson for Gaza Civil Defense said the strike hit a residential building, and residents reported scores of people trapped beneath the rubble. Kanaani stressed that supporters of Israel are complicit in its "war crimes" in Gaza. "The culpability of the authorities within these governments is as substantial as that of the Zionist regime in the perpetration of these egregious war crimes in Gaza, necessitating their accountability." The top Iranian diplomat highlighted that the Israeli strike on Bureij refugee camp, marking the third bombing of a camp in as many days, "vividly showcases the depth of the atrocities and loss of life." "The overwhelming majority of countries, governments, and global nations are calling for an immediate cessation of hostilities and an end to the wanton and destructive assaults perpetrated by the Zionist regime against the defenseless Gazans.

Official Advocates for Common Ground Between Tehran, Beijing



TEHRAN (IFP) - Major General Yahya Rahim Safavi, the assistant and a senior advisor to Iran's Supreme Leader, said during his visit to China that Tehran and Beijing should establish a shared understanding concerning common threats and interests. Rahim Safavi proposed the prioritization of implementing common security and sustainable peace within the member nations of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and advocated for the formulation of a non-aggression pact. He suggested that the prevention of aggression among Shanghai Cooperation Organization members could serve as a paradigm for such initiatives. Furthermore, he hailed China's recognition of Iran's role in regional affairs and its congratulations to the Islamic Republic of Iran for its membership in both the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and BRICS. Addressing the United States "unlawful and inhumane unilateral coercive measures", Rahim Safavi underscored the crucial role of the Chinese government in countering the American government's pursuit of hegemonic power and unilateral policies. In other comments Rahim Safavi, emphasized the oppression against Palestinian people and their legal rights. He considered the Al-Aqsa Flood operation by the Palestinian resistance group Hamas against Israel, legitimate act of defense against the Zionist regime's over 75 years of occupation.

IRAN NEWS



FM Calls on Muslim Gov'ts to Take Immediate, Effective Action Against Israel

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian has called on Muslim nations to take "immediate and effective" action to put an end to Israel's war crimes in the Gaza Strip and its blockade on the small territory. Amir-Abdollahian also called for sending humanitarian aid to the war-stricken coastal strip, during a meeting with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, in which he also hailed Erdogan's support for Gaza and recent massive pro-Palestine rallies held across Turkey. The Iranian minister, who was on a visit to the Turkish capital Ankara, also called for an emergency meeting of heads of Muslim and Arab countries on the situation in Gaza.

Israel's Displacement of Gazans Clear Example of Crime Against Humanity



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's deputy permanent representative to the United Nations Office in Geneva has strongly denounced the Israeli regime's efforts at displacement and forcible evacuation of the Gaza Strip's Palestinian population. Mahdi Aliabadi made the remarks at a meeting of the Permanent Committee of the International Organization for Migration (IOM). "These (the Israeli regime's) ruthless attacks [on Gaza] will lead to a new displacement crisis. The occupiers have resolved to [forcibly] evacuate Gaza's population, [something] which serves as another example of crime against humanity by the Zionist regime," he said. The remarks came amid a brutal war that the Israeli regime has been waging against the coastal territory since October 7 that has so far claimed the lives of nearly 9,061 people, including 3,700 children and more than 2,300 women. "It is necessary that the organization adopts a strong and decisive position concerning whatever measure that leads to forcible evacuation of [Gaza's] population," he added. The envoy, accordingly, called on the international community to seriously consider revoking the Israeli regime's membership of the IOM.



By: F. Taherpoor

TEHRAN - Italian Embassy in Tehran on November 2 marked the Week of Italian Language by holding a ceremony at Ambassador's Residence with participations of writers, translators, publishers, intellectuals and many graduate of Italian Language as well as media persons. Italian Ambassador Giuseppe Perrone hosted the event while Italian Cultural Counsellor Yara Romanova and First Secretary of the embassy Giulia Flore helped him for holding the event in style. Addressing the participants Ambassador Perrone welcomed the participants and said that on the occasion of the 100th birth anniversary of famous Italian writer and intellectual Italo Calvino, this year's event in Tehran was dedicated to him as many of his works have been translated in Iran several times. He then pointed to the style of Calvino's writing and reiterated that he was challenging with the Fascist forces during the World War II and he believed literature had important role in politics and his special look and vision to the realities and the world were of his characteristics. Perrone noted that Calvino was interested in foreign cultures and he paid a visit to Iran and he was in Iran for two months to make a documentary and during his presence in Iran he visited Tehran, Shiraz, Isfahan and Yazd and he praised Iran. He reiterated that some 30 works of Calvino have been translated in Iran by famous Iranian translators. Then Romanova took the floor and invited the participants to watch a short and documentary film where Calvino's friend during his visit to Iran Alber Negrin recounted some of that unforgettable travel. She said some of Negrin's photos during his and Calvino's visit to Tehran have been put on display in this event. Then a



documentary made by Mohammad Moghadam with the title of "The Shape of Time" was screened for the participants in which some translators and directors expressed their views on Calvino's impact on Italian literature and translation of his works in Iran. They all hailed Calvino for being creative and reiterated some 95% of his works have been translated in Iran. Then in the second part of the event, a roundtable chaired by First Secretary Flore was held with presence of some translators and publishers of Calvino's works and they explained why they chose the works of Calvino for translation. Calvino is best known works include Italian Folktales, a lyrical retelling of 200 traditional fables, the allegorical Our Ancestors trilogy, the whimsical Cosmocomics short story collection, and the novels Invisible City and If On a Winter's Night a Traveler. The Week of the Italian Language in the World is an event that has been held by Italian missions abroad since 2001 and that over time has become one of the most important initiatives dedicated to the celebration of the Italian language internationally. The event is held and marked in the third week of October (16-21) every year and each year it is dedicated to one of the greatest of Italian literature and language. This year Italian Embassy in Tehran chose Calvino because he is famous in Iran and his works have been translated into Persian. It also postponed the event to late October and early November and some photos and books of Calvino were put on display during the event.

Iran Expects Human Rights Mechanisms to Help Stop Gaza Massacre

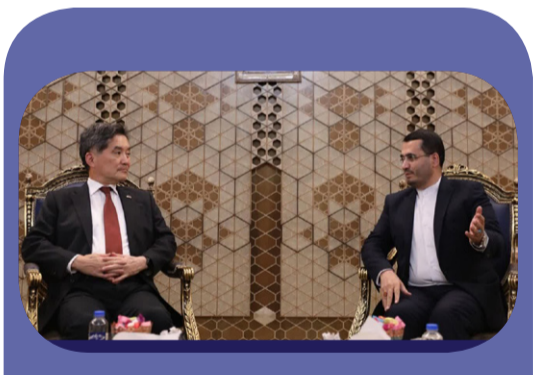


TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Ali Bagheri Kani has underscored that the legitimacy of international human rights mechanisms hinges on their practical measures to stop the massacre of innocent and defenseless Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. Bagheri Kani, who visits Geneva for negotiations, discussed with High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk on Wednesday afternoon issues such as the unfortunate human rights situation in Gaza, the systematic violation of human rights in the besieged area, and international efforts needed to put an end to war crimes and the carnage of Palestinian people. The Iranian official also argued that the Israeli regime's claim of legitimate defense is not acceptable under international law, and that internationally recognized regulations do not grant any legitimacy to an occupying regime in terms of defending itself in the face of the people under occupation. Volker Türk, for his part, emphasized that he mentioned some recommendations of human rights mechanisms to halt blatant violations of human rights in the occupied territories and called for an end to the occupation during his recent speech at the Human Rights Council. The High Commissioner for Human Rights went on to say that he is in contact with all parties to stop the conflicts and establish a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, and that he also plans to visit the region.

Iran, Russia Urge Secession of Zionist Crimes in Gaza



TEHRAN (IP) - The special representative of the President of Russia and the senior adviser of the Iranian Foreign Minister on special political affairs expressed their concern over the brutal killing of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip by the Zionists and emphasized the cessation of these crimes. "Alexander Lavrentyev", the special representative of the Russian President on Syrian affairs, who has traveled to Tehran as the head of a delegation, met and talked with "Ali Asghar Khaji", the senior adviser of Iran's foreign minister on special political affairs, on Wednesday. Russia's special envoy for Syria Alexander Lavrentyev who is visiting Tehran at the head of a delegation, on Wednesday, November 1, met with Ali Asghar Khaji, a senior advisor for special political issues to Iran's foreign minister. The two officials discussed the latest developments in Syria and the region, especially the Zionist regime's crimes against the oppressed people of Gaza. They expressed deep concern over the Zionist regime's massacre of Gazans in cold blood. Khaji and Lavrentyev further called for an immediate end to the attacks, the establishment of a ceasefire and the delivery of international relief aid to the people of Gaza. Khaji said the brutal attacks by the Zionist regime on the oppressed people of Gaza and the killing of thousands of women and children are happening due to the full support of the US, adding that these crimes cannot be described as anything but collective punishment and genocide. In the meeting, the two sides also exchanged views over the latest political developments in Syria and the situation on the battlefield as well as the initiatives of both sides to help improve the economic and humanitarian situation and efforts aimed at pressing ahead with the political process in the Arab country.



Iran, Japan Parliamentary Groups Cooperate Fruitfully

TABRIZ (IRNA) - Japan's ambassador to Tehran has appreciated the Iranian parliamentarians for their cooperation with their Japanese counterparts, noting that parliamentary friendship groups from both nations pursue fruitful collaborations and that Tokyo welcomes the development of these relations. Kazutoshi Aikawa said in a meeting with the head of the Iranian side of the Iran-Japan Parliamentary Friendship Group who is also a lawmaker representing Tabriz city at parliament Rouhollah Motefaker-Azad on Wednesday night that Japan welcomes and supports parliamentary exchanges with the aim of deepening bilateral relations, the IRNA reported on Thursday. The ambassador also pointed to his country's support for Palestine in terms of providing humanitarian aid to the people residing in the Gaza Strip, adding that Japanese officials are of the opinion that dialogue is an appropriate solution in order to solve problems and disputes at this juncture. Motefaker-Azad, for his part, criticized the silence of the international community when it comes to crimes committed by the child-killing Israeli regime, saying that we are witnessing a genocide happening in the Gaza Strip. He also referred to the proper level of collaboration between the two countries, arguing that third-party intervention, especially the United States, has not succeeded in destroying the relationship between Iran and Japan. According to the MP, the Iran-Japan Parliamentary Friendship Group plays an effective role in strengthening mutual ties, which can be further expanded. The legislator also appreciated the efforts made by the Japanese ambassador in this respect, as well as his trips to Tabriz in East Azarbaijan Province, in a bid to expand his country's investment in Iran, particularly in Lake Urmia, and asked the envoy to inform the Japanese government of the Iranian side's willingness to invest in various fields in Japan.

Agreement Signed on New Transport Corridor from China to EU Via Iran

TEHRAN (Tasnim) - An agreement on creation of a new transport corridor from China to Europe via Iran, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan was signed by the transport ministers and representatives of the member states of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in Tashkent on Thursday. The 12th Meeting of Transport Ministers of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) was held in the capital of Uzbekistan on Thursday with the participation of Iran's Deputy Minister of Roads and Urban Development Shahriar Afandizadeh. In the meeting, the protocol for the creation of a new transport corridor from China to the EU via Iran, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan was inked by the transport ministers of the ECO member states. The unification of tariffs and transportation procedures and border processes will be implemented within the framework of the protocol, according to which, it is predicted that a significant share of the transit volume from China to Europe can be attracted into Iran's east-west transit route. At the meeting, the ECO transport ministers also exchanged views on strengthening transport communications in the ECO region. The need to finance infrastructural projects in the ECO region with the participation of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), completing the missing rail and road links and strengthening

the regional corridors including Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul and Almaty-Tehran-Istanbul and also east-west corridors for connecting China to Europe as well as Caspian Sea routes were among the other issues discussed at the meeting. Iran's deputy roads minister expounded on the "Iran Road" transport initiative and emphasized that all countries in the region will be able to have safe and cheap access to other destinations via Iran using the initiative. The 13th Meeting of Transport Ministers of the ECO will be held in Tehran in 2024.



'Horrible Suffering' in Sudan Only Growing

GENEVA (Dispatches) - As fierce fighting in Darfur once again pushes thousands of Sudanese to flee their homes, more must be done to alleviate the suffering of the millions already displaced, a UN official tells AFP. "Six months and six million people forced to move, that's an average of one million per month, it's horrible suffering," said Mamadou Dian Balde, the top regional official for the UN's refugee agency (UNHCR). The war between troops loyal to Sudanese army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) of General Mohamed Hamdane Daglo has left more than 9,000 dead since April, according to a UN report. Of the nearly six million who have fled, 1.2 million have left the country, "very proud people who find themselves begging" and whose lives have been "totally disrupted," the UN official said.



UN Chief Calls for United, Sustained, Global Strategy for AI



BLETCHLEY PARK (Dispatches) - UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called for a "united, sustained, global" strategy to tackle the risks posed by artificial intelligence's rapid development, as world leaders met in the UK. He called for "new solutions" to close the gap between AI and its governance, proposing that it should be based on the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Guterres was joined by other political leaders including UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, US Vice President Kamala Harris and EU chief Ursula von der Leyen at the two-day conference at Bletchley Park. The UN chief urged lawmakers and regulators to "get ahead of the wave" of emerging AI technology rather than playing "catchup". A failure to do so, he said, "increases the risk that the technology will be used maliciously by criminals or even terrorists". That will undermine security or information integrity, and run the risk that humans could lose control of it, leading it to develop in "unintended directions", he added. "We urgently need frameworks to deal with these risks, so that both developers and the public are safe and can have confidence in AI," he said in a statement. Guterres also called for a "systematic effort" to spread the technologies around the world to avoid exacerbating "the enormous inequalities that already plague our world". "We need a united, sustained, global strategy, based on multilateralism and the participation of all stakeholders," he said. "The United Nations is ready to play its part."

Putin Signs Law Revoking Russia's Ratification of Nuclear Test Ban Treaty



MOSCOW (Dispatches) - Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday signed a law revoking Russia's ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, a move strongly criticized by the United States. The 1996 treaty outlaws all nuclear explosions, including live tests of nuclear weapons, though it never came into force because some key countries - including the United States and China - never ratified it. The West has accused Russia of using reckless nuclear rhetoric since it launched its offensive on Ukraine last February. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken criticized Putin's announcement on Thursday, and called on Moscow to commit to not carry out testing. "Unfortunately, it represents a significant step in the wrong direction, taking us further from, not closer to, entry into force" of the treaty, Blinken said in a statement. "This continues Moscow's disturbing and misguided effort to heighten nuclear risks and raise tensions as it pursues its illegal war against Ukraine," he said. Putin last week oversaw ballistic missile drills in what Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu said was practice for a "massive" retaliatory nuclear strike against an unnamed enemy. Putin also said last month he was "not ready to say" whether Russia would carry out live nuclear tests. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) has urged Russia to continue its commitment to the treaty, including the use of monitoring stations capable of detecting the slightest explosion in real time. "Today's decision by the Russian Federation to revoke its ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is very disappointing and deeply regrettable," CTBTO head Robert Floyd said on X, formerly known as Twitter. France, one of

the treaty's original signatories, said it "deplored" Russia's decision to revoke the ratification. "Russia's decision compromises the work of making the treaty universal. We reaffirm the importance of the CTBT and its full implementation," it said. The bill to revoke the treaty passed through Russia's parliament last month in a fast-track process. During parliamentary hearings, State Duma speaker Vyacheslav Volodin said the move to revoke the treaty was a response to the United States' "cynicism" and "boorish attitudes" on nuclear weapons. Although it never entered into force, the agreement was ratified by 178 countries, including nuclear powers Russia, France and Britain, and has symbolic value. The United States as well as China have never ratified the treaty, a key obstacle for it coming into force. President George H.W. Bush in 1992 signed into law a unilateral ban on US nuclear testing that has since been extended. But the Senate rejected ratifying the test ban treaty in 1999. Current President Joe Biden and his Democratic predecessors have supported ratification but treaties under the US Constitution require two-thirds support, a prohibitive threshold with many Republicans wary of any international limits on US power. The treaty's backers say it established an international norm against live tests of nuclear weapons, but critics say the potential of the deal remains unrealized without the ratifications of major nuclear powers. Russia's parliament ratified the agreement in June 2000, six months after Putin first became president.

Weak Yen Forces Japan to Shrink Historic Military Spending Plan



TOKYO (Dispatches) - A collapse in the yen is forcing Japan to scale back a historic five-year, 43.5-trillion-yen defense build-up aimed at helping to deter a Chinese invasion of Taiwan, according to eight people familiar with the matter. Since the plan was unveiled in December, the yen has lost 10% of its value against the dollar, forcing Tokyo to reduce its ambitious defense procurement plan, which was then-calculated to cost \$320 billion, the sources said. Reuters interviewed three government officials with direct knowledge of defense procurement and five industry sources, who said Japan will begin cutting back on aircraft purchases in 2024, the second year of the build-up, due to the weak yen. Details of how Japan is paring back military procurement due to currency fluctuations have not been previously reported. The eight people, who attended numerous meetings on the purchases, spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to media. Tokyo assumed an exchange rate of 108 yen to the dollar - a rate last traded in summer 2021 - when it began formulating purchase plans in December, the eight people said. By early November, the currency dipped to 151 to the dollar. The Bank of Japan on Tuesday took a small step toward ending the decade-long monetary stimulus, which has driven yen depreciation, by tweaking bond yield controls. Unlike large companies that do business overseas, Japan's defense ministry does not hedge against currency rate fluctuations, one of the government officials said, meaning it has few means to mitigate the rising cost in yen of Tomahawk cruise missiles and F-35 stealth fighters. Any sign that Prime Minister Fumio Kishida will get less bang than anticipated from his military spending binge could stir unease in Washington about its key ally's ability to help contain Beijing, said Christopher Johnstone, Japan chair at the Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank. "For now, the impact is modest. But there is no question that a long-term depreciation of the yen would sap the impact of Japan's build-up, and force cuts and delays to key acquisitions," said Johnstone, a former National Security Council director for East Asia in the Biden administration. Japan's Ministry of Defense said it does not discuss details of procurement planning when contacted for comment. The U.S. Embassy in Tokyo said it was unable to comment. The Pentagon did not immediately return a request for comment. Kishida described Japan's biggest defense build-up since World War Two as a "turning point in history." The spending is meant to guard the nation for possible conflict around its far-flung islands stretching along the edge of the East China Sea toward Taiwan, according to defense white papers. Tokyo also shares responsibility for protecting U.S. bases on its soil that Washington could use to launch counter strikes against Chinese forces attacking the self-governing democratic island. In December, Kishida pledged to double annual defense outlays to 2% of gross domestic product. A move to transform the war-renouncing nation into potentially the world's third-biggest military spender was seen by analysts and lawmakers as improbable until two years ago. That changed when Russian forces rolled into Ukraine in February 2022, in an invasion that Tokyo worries will embolden Beijing to strike Taiwan. China stoked Japanese fears again that August by firing missiles into waters close to its territory in response to then-U.S. house speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan. That came after months of intensifying Chinese activity in East Asia, including joint sorties with Russian forces.



Hezbollah, Israel Exchange Fire

BEIRUT (Dispatches) - Lebanon's Hezbollah said on Thursday it mounted multiple strikes on Israeli army positions including its first using explosive drones, and Israel launched air strikes on southern Lebanon in a sharp escalation of violence. The Israeli army said it responded to launches from Lebanon toward Israel with air strikes on Hezbollah targets, along with tank and artillery fire. The Hezbollah has been exchanging fire with Israeli forces across the Israeli-Lebanese border since the Palestinian militant group Hamas and Israel went to war on Oct. 7, in the deadliest escalation at the frontier since a 2006 war. Lebanon's National News Agency on Thursday said four people were killed near the southern village of Hula during Israeli shelling. Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah was due on Friday to deliver his first speech since the war began. The heavily armed Shi'ite Islamist group said in a statement its fighters launched 19 simultaneous strikes on Israeli army positions in Israel using guided missiles, artillery and other weapons. Hezbollah said two drones packed with explosives struck an Israeli army command position in the disputed Shebaa Farms area at the border. Israeli shelling struck the outskirts of Khiyam town some 6 km (3.75 miles) from the border, slightly injuring one civilian, the town's mayor, Ali Rashed, told Reuters. "His house caught fire and people are putting it out," he said by phone. "The intensity of the shelling was higher than previous days. The shelling and the counter shelling were more than any previous level and included the whole area," he said. Lebanon's National News Agency reported Israeli shells hit various areas of the south along the border. Hezbollah's attack using explosive drones came a few days after the group said for the first time it had used a surface-to-air missile against an Israeli drone. Israel has held the Shebaa Farms, a 15-square-mile (39-square-km) area of land, since the 1967 Middle East war. Both Syria and Lebanon claim the Shebaa Farms are Lebanese.



Guatemalan Electoral Authority Suspends Party of President-Elect Arevalo

GUATEMALA CITY (Dispatches) - The electoral body in charge of regulating Guatemala's political groups, known as the Citizen Registry, announced the suspension Thursday of President-elect Bernardo Arevalo's Seed Movement party. A judge had granted the party's suspension at the request of the Attorney General's Office back in July, shortly before Arevalo was declared the second-place finisher in the initial round of voting. But a higher court ruled that the party could not be suspended during the election cycle, which only ended Oct. 31. Arevalo went on to win a runoff in August and is scheduled to take office in January. However, since the original judge's order for the party's suspension remained pending, the Citizen Registry said Thursday it executed the order. The Attorney General's Office has alleged wrongdoing in the way the party collected the necessary signatures to register years earlier. Observers say Attorney General Consuelo Porras is trying to meddle in the election to thwart Arevalo and subvert the will of the people. Luis Gerardo Ramirez, the registry's spokesperson, said the party cannot hold assemblies or carry out administrative procedures. Ramirez also said the party could appeal the registry's decision to the Supreme Electoral Tribunal, but since the order came from a judge the appeal would need to go through a court. "The suspension is unprecedented, no criminal judge could suspend a party because it's illegal," said Samuel Perez, leader of the Seed Movement's lawmakers in the congress. "The problem is that the judge's suspension isn't legal, it's political." The U.S. State Department's Deputy Assistant Secretary for Western Hemisphere Affairs Eric Jacobstein told journalists during a visit to Guatemala Thursday that the party's suspension was worrisome as an apparent way to interfere with Arevalo's transition to office. It remained to be seen how the order would affect other institutions such as Congress, where Seed Movement lawmakers were supposed to eventually take their seats. Opponents of the Seed Movement in Congress already had declared those incoming lawmakers independent, meaning they could not chair committees or hold other leadership positions. A court at the time had ruled that the Congress couldn't deny Seed Movement lawmakers leadership positions on grounds that the party couldn't be suspended during the election cycle.

North Korea Media Urges Stronger Nuclear Force

SEOUL (Dispatches) - North Korea will increase its military deterrent to ensure its security against a U.S. nuclear arsenal aimed at it, its state media reported on Friday, as it criticized the United States for a recent intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) test. The U.S. Air Force launched a nuclear-capable Minuteman III missile from a base in California on Wednesday but the missile was blown up after an anomaly was detected. The test was attended by South Korean defence officials in their first such visit since 2016. A North Korean military commentator said despite the failure of the test, the presence of South Korean "puppet military gangsters" showed that U.S. nuclear weapons were targeted at North Korea. "The DPRK will as ever continue its military action to bolster up the deterrence and ensure the strategic security in the Korean peninsula and the region," the unidentified commentator said in a report carried by the KCNA state news agency, referring to the country by the initials of its official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The commentary also criticized the U.S. and South Korea for various recent military steps including the deployment of U.S. nuclear strategic bombers to South

Korea. "The nuclear threat by the U.S. and its vassal forces to the DPRK nears a new red line," the North Korean commentator said, calling for the strengthening of "self-defensive nuclear armed forces". South Korea's Unification Ministry, which handles inter-Korean affairs, said the commentary raised the question of whether North Korea was preparing to justify another military "provocation". "It is clear that the current heightened tensions on the Korean peninsula resulted from North Korea's futile nuclear development and reckless military provocations," deputy ministry spokesperson Kim In-ae told a briefing. South Korea held a joint exercise with the U.S. and Japan near the Korean peninsula last month, involving a U.S. B-52 strategic bomber as well as fighter jets of the three nations. The U.S. and South Korea also held air exercises involving 130 warplanes from both countries to simulate 24-hour wartime operations last month. South Korea and the United States say their exercises are aimed at maintaining combat readiness to respond to North Korea. North Korea denounces the exercises as preparations by the United States and its South Korean ally to invade it.



India Rout Sri Lanka by 302 Runs



MUMBAI (Dispatches) - Mohammed Shami took five wickets as India's pacemen produced a devastating display to skittle out Sri Lanka for just 55 as the unbeaten tournament hosts secured a World Cup semi-final place with a colossal 302-run win on Thursday. Sri Lanka's woeful innings in Mumbai featured five noughts, with both their openers falling for golden ducks. Shami took 5-18 in five overs after Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj struck with the new ball in an innings with a top score of just 14. Bumrah, with 1-8 in five overs, and Siraj (3-16 in seven) did the early damage as Sri Lanka slumped to 3-4, chasing 358. The only bigger winning margin in a World Cup match was the 309-run defeat Australia inflicted upon the Netherlands, a non-Test side, in Delhi just over a week ago. But this was India's biggest World Cup win, surpassing their 257-run hammering of Bermuda, another non-Test team, during the 2007 edition in the Caribbean. "We're very happy knowing we have officially qualified (for the semi-finals) now," said India captain Rohit Sharma after his team made it seven wins out of seven. "It's been a good effort from the entire squad... It has been clinical," he added. Sri Lanka's total did top the 50 all out they made in a 10-wicket Asia Cup final defeat by India in Colombo in September. They also avoided setting a new record for the lowest total in any one-day international, which stands at 35, and going under the corresponding World Cup mark of 36, posted by Canada against Sri Lanka in Paarl, South Africa, in 2003. These were meagre consolations to a Sri Lanka side suffering their fifth defeat of the tournament, with skipper Kusal

Mendis saying: "I'm very disappointed. They bowled really well and got a bit of seam and swing... Mohammed Shami, Siraj and Bumrah, they're great bowlers." Earlier, Virat Kohli missed out on equalling Sachin Tendulkar's all-time record of 49 one-day international hundreds. But he still made 88 in an India total of 357-8 and shared a stand of 189 with opener Shubman Gill (92), after the second-ball exit of Rohit. The duo were out in quick succession but Shreyas Iyer kept the runs coming with a blistering 82 featuring six sixes. "Shreyas is a very strong man, strong in his mind," said Rohit. "He did exactly what he is known for, take on the bowlers, take on the opposition and hit sixes." Facing a daunting chase, the visitors would have wanted a solid start at the Wankhede Stadium -- where India beat Sri Lanka in the 2011 World Cup final. Instead Pathum Nissanka was lbw for nought to Bumrah's very first ball and at the start of the second over Siraj had Dimuth Karunaratne, the other opening batsman, lbw for nought as well. Sadeera Samarawickrama survived four balls before he too was out for a duck, edging Siraj to third slip. Mendis was bowled for one by Siraj to the delight of a raucous crowd. Shami ensured there was no respite by dismissing Charith Asalanka with just his third delivery. Then 14-5 was transformed into 14-6 next ball when Dushan Hemantha edged the remorselessly accurate Shami to wicketkeeper KL Rahul. Dushantha Chameera survived the hat-trick but was quickly caught behind for nought off Shami, who then clean bowled veteran Angelo Mathews for 12.

De Ligt Sidelined With Knee Injury



BERLIN (Dispatches) - Bayern Munich's understaffed defence has been dealt another setback, with the club confirming on Thursday centre-back Matthijs de Ligt will be missing "for the time being" with a knee injury. The club did not specify how long de Ligt would spend on the sidelines, saying he was "out for the time being" and "will be missing from FC Bayern in the next games." The Netherlands central defender injured his right knee as Bayern were eliminated 2-1 to third-division Saarbruecken in the German Cup on Wednesday night. De Ligt, who has just returned from an injury to the same knee, grabbed his leg and signalled immediately to the bench 19 minutes into the match, before being subbed out. Midfielder Joshua Kimmich moved to centre-back, with Bayern having only one fit central defender in the squad. Bayern's French centre-back Dayot Upamecano has missed the club's last four matches with a hamstring injury. Manager Thomas Tuchel confirmed after the match de Ligt's injury was to the "same knee" and "was extremely painful". Bayern took the lead through Thomas Mueller after just 16 minutes, but their third division opponents equalized in first-half injury time. With the scores locked at 1-1 and the game looking set to go to extra time, Saarbruecken's Marcel Gaus scored in the sixth minute of injury time to win. The loss means 20-time German Cup winners Bayern have been eliminated in the second round in three of the past four years. Bayern sit second on the Bundesliga, two points ahead of Dortmund, and have not lost a clash between the two sides since 2018.

Sinner Quits Paris Masters Exhausted by Late Nights

PARIS (Dispatches) - Fourth seed Jannik Sinner withdrew before his third-round match at the Paris Masters blaming "fatigue" after finishing his previous match after half-past two in the morning. The night before, the Italian started his match against American Mackenzie McDonald after midnight and battled to a three-set victory in two hours 16 minutes. Sinner was due on centre court on Thursday as the fourth match on the schedule to face Australian 13th seed Alex de Minaur. Darren Cahill, who coaches Sinner, said on Instagram that he was happy with the victory but criticised "zero care for players' welfare with Paris scheduling". Casper Ruud, the eighth seed, who lost to Francisco Cerundolo on Wednesday, echoed the criticism on Thursday. "Bravo apptour way to help one of the best players in the world recover and be as ready as possible when he finished his previous match at 2:37 am this morning 14.5 hours to recover.. what a joke," the Norwegian posted on X, formerly Twitter. Sinner arrived in Paris from Vienna where he won the title on Sunday in a final against Daniil Medvedev that lasted more than three hours. Stefanos Tsitsipas advanced to the quarter-finals and also locked up his place in the season-ending eight-man ATP Finals as he beat Alexander Zverev 7-6 (7/2), 6-4. Tsitsipas, a 25-year-old Greek, became the sixth player officially qualified for the November 12-19 event in Turin after his first win this season in eight matches against top-10 players. "It's awesome. What a great relief to finally get that spot," said Tsitsipas. "I've been working extremely hard the whole year to be in Turin, and it's a moment of relief that I've made it to one of my favourite events of the year." Tsitsipas broke Zverev's first service game in each set. The German fought back to force a tiebreak in the first set but could not find a way through in the second. The German still holds the seventh spot in Turin but

the two men immediately below him, Holger Rune and Hubert Hurkacz are still going in Paris and could collect enough points from the tournament to overtake Zverev. In the quarter-finals, Tsitsipas will face Russian Karen Khachanov, the winner in Paris in 2018. Khachanov, the 16th seed, beat compatriot Roman Safiullin, who had eliminated Carlos Alcaraz, 4-6, 6-4, 6-2. Hurkacz advanced with a 6-4, 6-3 win over unseeded Argentine Cerundolo. The Pole will face Bulgarian Grigor Dimitrov in the last eight. Dimitrov opened the day's action by racing to a straightforward 6-2, 6-2 victory over Alexander Bublik of Kazakhstan. Dimitrov, the world number 17, showed little sign of any effects from his three-hour win against third seed Medvedev the previous afternoon as he dispatched Bublik in just over an hour. Andrey Rublev also moved into the last eight, beating Botic van de Zandschulp of the Netherlands 6-3, 6-3. "Today it went my way," Rublev said. "Early breaks gave me some confidence. From one set up you play with more freedom and then with a break in the second more free. Then you can go for even more."



Man United Dumped out of League Cup



MANCHESTER (Dispatches) - Manchester United's defence of the League Cup came to a limp end in a 3-0 home defeat by Newcastle on Wednesday as Arsenal were well-beaten 3-1 at West Ham. Liverpool overcame Bournemouth 2-1 to progress to the quarter-finals, while Chelsea saw off Championship side Blackburn 2-0. In a repeat of last year's final, which Erik ten Hag's men won 2-0, both managers named much-changed sides at Old Trafford. But it was Newcastle's strength in depth that showed as United slumped to an eighth defeat in 15 games in all competitions this season -- their worst start to any campaign since 1962/63. Tino Livramento and Lewis Hall have had to wait for their chance to shine since signing for the Magpies but the young full-backs played a huge role as Eddie Howe's side got revenge for defeat at Wembley in February. Livramento's surging run set up Miguel Almiron to open the scoring on 28 minutes. Chelsea loanee Hall then volleyed home a brilliant effort from the edge of the box just eight minutes later. Joe Willock's solo run and stunning finish then drew the sting from any chance of a United fightback on the hour mark. Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta was left to rue leaving Declan Rice out on his return to the London Stadium, with the England international alongside Bukayo Saka, Martin Odegaard and William Saliba on a star-studded Gunners' bench. Aaron Ramsdale was handed a rare start since he was dropped in favour of David Raya, but it was a night to forget for the Arsenal goalkeeper. Ben White beat Ramsdale to Bowen's dangerous in-swinging corner but could only head into his own net after 16 minutes. Mohammed Kudus made it 2-0 on 50 minutes with a brilliant touch and low finish from Nayef Aguerd's long ball forward. Rice was then introduced to a mixed response from the West Ham faithful. But any hope of an Arsenal fightback was quashed by Bowen's strike from the edge of the box that Ramsdale should have done better to keep out. Odegaard grabbed a consolation deep into stoppage time, but it was too little, too late as Arsenal's 30-year wait to win the League Cup goes on. Liverpool had to see off a spirited effort from Bournemouth and appalling weather conditions as Storm Ciaran swept in at the Vitality Stadium. Justin Kluivert had cancelled out Cody Gakpo's opener with his first Bournemouth goal. But Darwin Nunez came off the bench to win the tie with a spectacular dipping strike from outside the box.

Pakistan Stay Alive in Semi-Final Race, Bangladesh Eliminated



KOLKATA (Dispatches) - Former champions Pakistan kept alive their slender chances of making the semi-finals of the 50-over World Cup with a comprehensive seven-wicket victory against Bangladesh, who were eliminated from the tournament on Tuesday. Electing to bat, Bangladesh never recovered from a top order collapse and posted a modest 204 before being all out in the 46th over at Eden Gardens. Pakistan's three-pronged pace attack impressed with the new ball and were equally effective in the death overs with only Mahmudullah (56) managing a half-century for Bangladesh. Openers Fakhar Zaman (81) and Abdullah Shafique (68) combined in a 128-run stand to set up the victory that came with 17.3 overs to spare in a major net run-rate boost for them. Babar Azam's men moved into fifth place after their third win in seven matches, while Bangladesh became the first team to drop out of contention. "We are trying to force things but it isn't working," Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan said after their sixth defeat in seven matches. Pakistan head coach Grant Bradburn had rued how lack of swing in India had defanged his team's pace attack, usually their strong suit, in the tournament. Bradburn must have been pleased as the pace trio of Shaheen Afridi, Mohammad Wasim and Haris Rauf collectively claimed eight of the 10 Bangladesh wickets in the match. Left-arm quick Afridi (3-23) struck with his fifth delivery, trapping Tanzid Hasan lbw for his 100th ODI wicket. Najmul Hossain Shanto fell in Afridi's next over and Bangladesh slumped to 23-3 after Rauf (2-36) had Mushfiqur Rahim caught behind in the sixth over.

Bayern Eliminated From German Cup by Third-Division Saarbruecken

DORTMUND (Dispatches) - Bayern Munich crashed out of the German Cup in the second round for the third time in four years after a remarkable 2-1 loss at third-division Saarbruecken, thanks to a last-minute winner from Marcel Gaus. With the scores locked at 1-1 and the match looking destined for extra time, defender Gaus netted in the sixth minute of injury time to grab his team a famous victory. "When a first-division team like Bayern comes to Saarbruecken and loses, then we did something wrong," veteran Thomas Mueller told ARD after the match. Bayern were beaten by Holstein Kiel on penalties at the same stage three years ago, then thrashed 5-0 by Borussia Moenchengladbach in round two in 2021. The record 20-time winners also lost in the quarter-finals at home to Freiburg last season. "There could be 100 explanations or maybe none at all. We had injuries but some will say we should win anyway," Bayern coach Thomas Tuchel said. An "incredibly proud" home coach Ruediger Ziehl said he had told his players that Thursday's training session was now "voluntary". "If we don't celebrate today, then we can never celebrate." Bayern, who travel to Bundesliga rivals Borussia Dortmund on Saturday, lost central defender Matthijs de Ligt to a potentially serious knee injury early in the match, leaving the side with only one fit centre-back. Six-time Cup winner Mueller looked to have Bayern on the right track for a routine victory at their less-fancied opponents, before De Ligt injured his knee in a tussle soon after and signalled immediately to the bench. The injury forced midfielder Joshua Kimmich into defence and appeared to put Bayern on the back foot against a resurgent Saarbruecken. The hosts struck next, Patrick Sontheimer tapping in a pass from Lukas Boeder after Saarbruecken pressed midfielder Frans Kraetzig into a mistake. Tuchel brought on the calvary, including Kingsley Coman, Jamal Musiala and Serge Gnabry, but star striker Harry Kane stayed on the bench ahead of Saturday's crunch match. With the England captain warming up ahead of what looked like certain extra time, veteran defender Gaus popped up with a moment that will go down in Saarbruecken history.

Earlier, a strike from Marco Reus gave Borussia Dortmund a 1-0 home win over Hoffenheim. Teenagers Jamie Bynoe-Gittens and Youssoufa Moukoko were given rare starts as coach Edin Terzic shuffled his deck before Bayern's visit, but it was veteran forward Reus who gave Dortmund the lead late in the opening half. Bynoe-Gittens dribbled down the left flank and shaped to shoot before finding Reus who looped in a one-touch finish to score his 165th goal for the club and give Dortmund a deserved half-time lead. The hosts spurned chances but Hoffenheim posed little danger and were reduced to 10 men in injury time when former Liverpool defender Ozan Kabak saw red.

