

Mohammad Aram, Who Serves as the Central Bank of Iran's Deputy Governor for Forex Affairs, While Leading a High-Ranking Delegation of Banking and Government Officials Traveled to Saudi Arabia for Talks on Expansion of Banking Ties

IRAN NEWS

The Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) Has Announced That Cash Donations From Iranians to the Palestinian People of Gaza Have Reached \$1.74 Million at the End of the Fifth Week of the Donation Campaign

2 DOMESTIC



Iran Non-Oil Exports to Azerbaijan Hit \$303m in 7 Months

> SEE PAGE 2

3 INTERNATIONAL

Indonesian President Urges Biden to Help Stop Gaza Atrocities

> SEE PAGE 3



Iran Condemns U.S., EU Over Double-Standard Approach to Israel's Crimes



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's ambassador to Belgium has condemned the United States and the European Union over their double-standard approach to the Israeli regime's ongoing war of genocide against the besieged Gaza Strip. Gholamhossein Dehqani made the remarks on Monday while addressing a press conference, along with ambassadors of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) member states, in the Belgian capital Brussels, which is also seat of the EU. "In the past 30 days, we have witnessed the application of double standards by the European Union, the United States, and many European countries towards the criminal acts committed by Israel in Gaza," he said. "Despite the global outcry and demands for a ceasefire from people in the streets, from the U.S. to Europe to Australia, Western decision-makers unfortunately do not heed the people's wishes," the Iranian envoy added. Western governments, led by the United States, have, however, stopped short of drawing any red lines for the regime, which has vowed to wage a "long" war against Gaza. Tel Aviv's allies have also refused to throw their weight behind the United Nations Security Council resolutions that called for a ceasefire.



Iran Gaining Access to Ground-Breaking Military Technologies

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's Defense Ministry is moving toward manufacturing ground-breaking military equipment as it has envisaged wars based on such technologies in the future, a senior Iranian military official says. Iranian Deputy Defense Minister Brigadier General Mehdi Farahi made the remarks on Monday while addressing the first international confab to commemorate the 12th martyrdom anniversary of Hassan Tehrani Moqaddam, a general known for his relentless efforts to develop Iran's missile program. He said the Iranian experts at the Defense Ministry do not seek to merely manufacture military parts but are now taking steps toward the production of state-of-the-art military equipment. He expressed hope that such outstanding military achievements would further increase Iran's deterrent power. As announced by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, Iran had sought to import barbed wire from abroad as the country was not able to produce it due to the extensive scale of the sanctions while the Soviet Union has also prevented the cargo to be delivered by way of their land, Farahi said. "However, Iran exported military equipment worth some one billion dollars last year," the official emphasized. Elsewhere in his remarks, Farahi hailed Tehrani Moqaddam's great and unique efforts to develop Iran's missile program, saying the martyred scientist conducted several projects at the state-owned Defense Industries Organization despite a lack of the required know-how over a period of 17 years. Finally, Iran succeeded in developing its missile industry and manufacturing precision missiles, he said. Tehrani Moqaddam, a commander of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), was a key figure in the country's ballistic missile program. He helped develop the medium and long-range ballistic missiles. An engineer by profession, he designed the Shahab, Ghadr and Sejil missiles with a range of over 1,000 kilometers. Tehrani Moqaddam began establishing Iran's missile program at a time when the country was under attack during the eight-year Iraqi imposed war on Iran. He continued his efforts to boost the program in subsequent years amid the difficulties and shortages. Tehrani Moqaddam died in an explosion in November 2011 west of Tehran. The blast came during a missile test at a base in Bid Ganeh. At least 16 others were killed in the blast.

Iran Warns Against Nuclear Threats Directed by Israeli Regime



TEHRAN (MNA) - Iran's ambassador and permanent representative to the United Nations warned about the danger of the Israeli regime's nuclear weapons. Iran's ambassador and permanent representative to the United Nations, Amir Saied Iravani on Monday at the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, stated, "At the regional level, the arsenal of weapons held by the Israeli regime has generated immense and actual concerns of proliferation." He further explained, "The existence of such weapons, at the regional or global level, poses an existential threat to humanity, often serving as a tool for blackmail." Stating that the secrecy of Israel's nuclear capabilities is a significant threat to regional stability, Iravani added, "In light of recent atrocities in the Middle East, we express our urgent concern regarding Israel's policy of nuclear ambiguity and the potential use of weapons of mass destruction in the Gaza conflict or elsewhere, if not prevented now." Iran's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations, pointing out that now, more than ever, creating a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction is essential as a fundamental step towards a safer future, emphasized, "In these critical times, the imperative to establish such a zone in the Middle East has never been more urgent." Iravani stated that the actions of the Israeli regime, including examples of terrorism and sabotage against civilian nuclear programs and scientists in the region, called for immediate intervention from international bodies such as the UN Security Council and the IAEA, adding, "It's imperative that the international community acknowledges these threats by the Israeli regime as a stark wake-up call."

Iran Faces Record Low Population Growth Rate



TEHRAN - Iran's fast-declining population growth rate has not improved despite massive budget allocations to a regeneration scheme, a prominent commentator has pointed out. "The current administration and parliament have spent a minimum of 250 trillion rials (\$500m) a year to increase the birth rate, but 25,000 fewer babies have been born each year. [Consequently], every fewer birth has cost 10b rials (\$2,000)," Abbas Abdi wrote in a commentary in the reformist Etemad newspaper Tuesday. Officials' most recent statements indicate that the population growth rate has dropped to 0.6 percent from 1.23 two years ago which was also much lower than the 4.21 percent in 1984, five years after the Islamic Revolution of 1979. This is why the annual decline in births that Abdi has highlighted becomes more meaningful, since 25,000 fewer babies follows a decades-long trend. The country's population has doubled from around 40 million in the early 1980s to 84 million now, but Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei always insists that increasing Iran's population is one of the most urgent duties of the government. Since 2014, Ayatollah Khamenei has repeatedly said that Iran's population should rise to at least 150 million by 2050 to avoid having an elderly population. Responding to Ayatollah Khamenei's calls, the parliament, passed a law in March 2021 promoting population growth. The law compels government and state entities to encourage marriage and childbearing, enforces penalties for non-compliance, and prohibits any activity promoting birth control. The law, branded as Supporting Family and Regenerating Population Act includes incentives like increased child-benefit payments, interest-free loans, and free land allocations for families with more than three children. In April 2014 Ayatollah Jafar Sobhani, a prominent Shiite sources of emulation in the city of Qom, warned that the Saudis were plotting to obliterate the "absolute majority of Shiites in all Iranian cities."

Gov't Announces %22 Rise in Country's Transit

TEHRAN (IP) - The government spokesman announced the %22 growth of the country's transit in different areas in the seven months of this year compared to last year. Ali Bahadori-Jahromi in his press conference said: "Transit of the country in various areas recorded a growth of %22 in the seven months of this year compared to last year." He also added that in the automobile field, we experienced a %22 growth in the seven months of this year. Bahadori-Jahromi referred to the recent trip of First Vice President Mohammed Mokhber to China and noted that all efforts have been carried out to implement the 25-year agreement between Iran and China during the trip. He stated that bilateral meetings were held with China and the Prime Minister of Cuba, adding various topics were discussed in these meetings; including the genocide of the Zionist regime, as well as the emphasis on new business models in order to guarantee the general interests of human society, Iran's high economic capacity, and Iran's strategic role in the international arena in transit and energy routes. The government spokesman said that Iran insists on using all its capacities to impose global political and economic sanctions on Israel. Bahadori Jahromi in response to Iran Press said: Effective measures have been taken to help the oppressed people of Gaza at various levels. In this regard, President Ebrahim Raisi has held numerous talks with other leaders. He said that Iranian ministers had also various correspondences with their counterparts to condemn Israel's crimes. He stated: Financial support for the people of Gaza,

stopping Israel's war crimes, and the formation of a financial fund has been done, which we hope will soon achieve a good result in the international community. The Spokesman said that the recent visit of Afghanistan's economic delegation to Iran was aimed at a consultation about removing obstacles and expanding trade relations between the two countries in various fields. Bahadori Jahromi in response to a question about the Afghan delegation's visit to Iran, said: "Iran and Afghanistan have a lot in common. The purpose of the visit of the Afghanistan economic delegation to Iran is to consult about removing obstacles and expanding trade relations between the two countries in the fields of minerals, engineering technical services, export and import of goods, using the transit capacities of the two countries and setting a target of ten billion dollars for this." He added: During this trip, good consultations were held in order to complete the regional corridors and revive the Silk Road and connect rail and road to Central Asia and China through Afghanistan. The government spokesman said: "Good agreements were made to facilitate and increase Afghanistan's exports and imports through Chabahar port." Elsewhere, Bahadori Jahromi added that consultations were held to make the customs offices of the two countries open 24 hours a day. Joint committees were established to address the problems of immigrants and prevent drug trafficking. The development of economic relations will definitely contribute to the stability and security of the region."



Iran, Turkmenistan Look to Expand Energy Sector Cooperation



TEHRAN (Dispatches) - Turkmenistan and Iran confirmed readiness to deepen constructive ties in the fuel and energy sector, Trend reports. This readiness was confirmed by the President of Turkmenistan Serdar Berdimuhamedov and the new Iranian Ambassador to Ashgabat Ali Mojtaba Roozbahani during their meeting. During the meeting, the parties stressed the positive dynamics of building up relations in priority areas, expressing interest in building up partnership also in the transport and communication, construction and agricultural sectors. Furthermore, they also discussed the development of cooperation between the two countries within the framework of international organizations, primarily in the UN. The ambassador noted that he would make every effort to further develop the partnership between the two countries and bring them to a qualitatively new level. Meanwhile, Azerbaijan, Iran and Turkmenistan signed a contract on swap gas supplies in the Turkmen capital on November 28, 2021. The document provided for the supply of Turkmen gas to Azerbaijan through Iran in the amount of up to 1.5-2 billion cubic meters per year. Azerbaijan's Minister of Economy Mikayil Jabbarov and Iranian Oil Minister Javad Owji signed a memorandum of understanding in Baku in the middle of last year, according to which it was envisaged to double the supply of Turkmen gas to Azerbaijan through Iran.

IRAN NEWS



New Projects Add 30,000 b/d to Iran's Oil Production

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Implementation of new projects in southern Iran has added some 30,000 barrels a day (b/d) to Iran's oil production, according to an official with the knowledge of the matter. Alireza Mota'ali Jahromi, the director of Khark operational area of the Iranian Offshore Oil Company, said on Monday that with the implementation of a development project in Abouzar Field and the construction and installation of thermal converters in the onshore part of the field, the company is producing some 30,000 b/d more oil. The official also said that the Well F8-5 of Forouzan Field came on stream last month and is producing some 1,000 b/d of oil. The spokesman of the Iranian Oil, Gas and Petrochemical Products Exporters' Union Hamid Hosseini said last month that Iran's oil production has increased to 3.4 million barrels per day (bpd), despite US sanctions aimed at curbing oil exports and the associated revenue to Iran's government.

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

Iran's Export of Dairy Products Up 65%



TEHRAN (Tasnim) - The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) highlighted a significant growth in production of grains, red meat and dairy products in Iran in 2023, saying the country's export of dairy products has registered a 65 percent growth over the past two years. In its latest report on "World Food Production Outlook", the organization put the volume of grains produced in Iran in the 2023 Crop Year at 19.8 million tons, showing about a three percent hike compared to the last year's corresponding period. FAO had put Iran's grain production volume in the 2022 Crop Year at 19.3 million tons. Following the increased production of grains in Iran, import of this product to the country decreased from 16.1 million tons in 2022 to 15.6 million tons in 2023, the report added. Regarding the wheat production in Iran in the 2023 Crop Year, the organization put it at 13.5 million tons, showing a 500,000 tons hike compared to a year earlier. Iran had produced 13 million tons of wheat in 2022. According to this report, Iran imported three million tons of wheat in 2023. FAO put the total grain production volume in the country in 2023 at 12.1 million tons, showing a one million-ton growth compared to a year before.



TEHRAN - Iran exported commodities valued at \$303.315 million to Azerbaijan during the first seven months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-October 22), according to the spokesman of the International Relations and Trade Development Committee of Iran's House of Industry, Mining and Trade. Ruhollah Latifi said that the value of Iran's export to its neighbor, Azerbaijan, fell 28 percent in the seven-month period of this year, from that of the previous year. As previously announced by the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), the value of trade between Iran and Azerbaijan increased by 13 percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20). Iran-Azerbaijan trade was \$688 million in 1400, and \$608 million in 1401. Components and parts, tubes, aluminum, packaged butter, potatoes, heaters, non-electric appliances, non-powder polyethylene compound, special polyethylene compound wire and cable cover, polyethylene film grade with specific

weight, and iron and steel ingots were Iran's main exported items to Azerbaijan. Milling machines, car gearboxes, gas generators for the simultaneous production of electricity and heat, lathes, air-generating units, presses for the production of chipboards, bending machines (presses), pipes, car engine control units, and sets of generators with compression piston engines were Iran's major imported products from its neighbor in the past year. In early October, Iran's Minister of Transport and Urban Development Mehrdad Bazrpash and Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan Shahin Mustafayev held talks as the chairmen of the Iran-Azerbaijan Joint Economic Committee in Baku on Friday to discuss bilateral ties and issues of mutual interest. During the meeting, the two sides negotiated over promoting cooperation, border facilities, joint rail and road projects, and the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) as part of developing mutual relations.

Iranian, Turkish Tech Companies Sign MoU

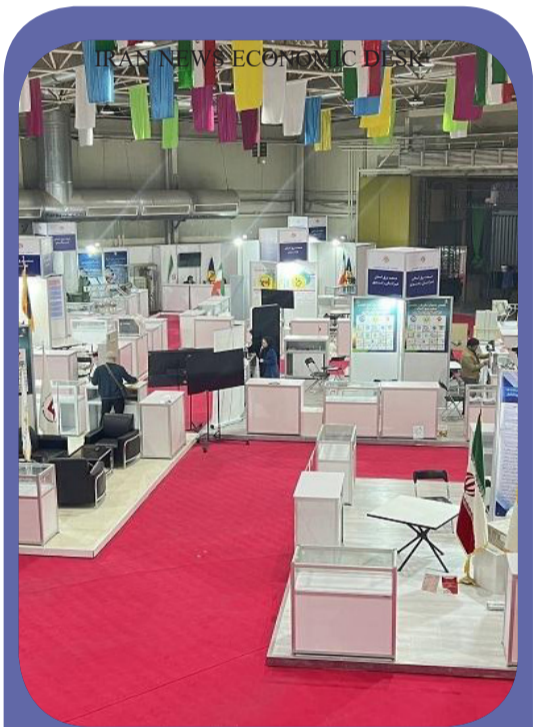


TEHRAN (MNA) - Two Iranian and Turkish companies signed a memorandum of understanding for cooperation in knowledge-based areas. Iran's Moghan Industry Company and Turkey's Ezmir Armaghan Company signed a memorandum of understanding for cooperation in knowledge-based areas including the production and propagation of hybrid seeds, and greenhouse and farm products. In the signing ceremony held in Ardabil, northwestern Iran, the two sides agreed to cooperate in the mentioned areas as well as the branding of Moghaneh Agrotipe, Turkey's sharing of its agricultural knowledge and technology, and the expansion of exports. Iran's Moghan Industry Company is a complex active in farming, agriculture, animal husbandry, and the relevant industry in northwestern Iran, with 2,700 staff.

NIOC Signs Contracts With Domestic Companies to Drill 35 South Pars Gas Wells



TEHRAN (Shana) - The National Iranian Oil Company signed four contracts with domestic companies to drill 35 infill wells in the South Pars gas field, said the NIOC managing director. The \$1.17 billion contracts awarded to four Iranian drilling, exploration, and production companies are aimed at enhancing productivity and maintaining gas production in this field, Moshen Khojastehmehr added. Supervised by the Pars Oil and Gas Company (POGC), the projects will be carried out within three years, the NIOC CEO continued. The megaprojects will not only help develop the country's gas industry and economy, but also create job opportunities and promote domestic capabilities, the deputy oil minister underlined. According to Khojastehmehr, similar contracts will be awarded to qualified Iranian companies in the near future. Earlier, the POGC managing director said Iran's gas production capacity in the South Pars field will exceed 730 million cubic meters per day (mcm/d) in the upcoming winter. In an exclusive interview with SHANA, POGC CEO Mohammad Hossein Motejalli added a 30 mcm/d increase in winter output of the world's largest joint gas field has been planned through putting several wells of Phase 11 and platform 13A as well as a new pipeline of Phase 16 into operation. Shared by Iran and Qatar in the Persian Gulf, the South Pars gas field holds 50 percent of Iran's gas reserves and accounts for 70 percent of the country's gas supply.



Int'l Electricity Exhibition Kicks Off in Tehran

TEHRAN - The 23rd Iran International Electricity Exhibition (IEE 2023) kicked off at Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds on Tuesday. The opening ceremony of the exhibition was attended by senior energy officials including Iranian Energy Minister Ali-Akbar Mehrabian along with the energy ministers of Pakistan and Afghanistan. The four-day exhibition covers various areas including production, transmission, and distribution, as well as high, medium, and low-voltage electrical equipment. Some 474 domestic firms along with 110 foreign exhibitors from different countries, including Italy, Czech Republic, Germany, China, South Korea, Croatia, Turkey, Spain, India, Slovenia, Poland, and Japan, are showcasing their latest products and services in this exhibition. All kinds of electrical panels, lighting equipment, smart equipment, diesel generators and electric motors, batteries, and UPS; earthing and protection systems, transformers, wires and cables, industrial automation and precision instruments, and measuring equipment are being presented at IEE 2023. According to a statement by the Ministry of Energy, the energy ministers of five countries, including Pakistan, Iraq, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Afghanistan, are also scheduled to visit this event.



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's foreign minister has strongly condemned the ongoing massacre of Palestinians in the besieged Gaza Strip by Israel as a blatant violation of international law. Hossein Amir-Abdollahian made the remark in a phone call with his Hungarian counterpart, Péter Szijjártó. During the conversation, the two top diplomats discussed various aspects of bilateral relations as well as the latest developments in the West Asia region, especially the situation in Palestine and Israel's genocide in Gaza. Referring to deteriorating humanitarian conditions in Gaza as a result of Israel's savage crimes, Iran's foreign minister said, "Through [indiscriminate] bombardment and massacre of people in the Gaza Strip, this [Israeli] regime has blatantly violated all [norms of] human rights and international law." Amir-Abdollahian also underlined the necessity of mounting pressure on Israel by the international community to put an immediate halt on the regime's aggression against Gaza, establish a ceasefire across the territory, and pave the way for the dispatch of humanitarian aid. On Sunday, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

sounded a stern alarm about the humanitarian situation in the besieged Gaza Strip, saying, "The situation [in Gaza] is rapidly approaching a humanitarian disaster." "An unbearable human tragedy is unfolding in front of our eyes. People call us day and night saying they are afraid to open their doors for fear of getting killed and pleading to help them reach safety," said William Schomburg, head of the ICRC's sub-delegation in Gaza. The ICRC also expressed alarm at the regime's targeting of heavily populated urban areas, saying, "Israeli attacks taking place in heavily populated urban areas in the [Gaza] Strip, including around hospitals, endanger the lives of the most vulnerable people like medical staff, patients, the wounded, premature babies, people with disabilities, and the elderly." Elsewhere in his remarks, Amir-Abdollahian expressed satisfaction over the growing ties between Iran and Hungary, declaring Tehran's readiness to hold a meeting of the two countries' joint commission. The Hungarian top diplomat, for his part, expressed hope that relations between the two countries would further develop in all areas of mutual interest.

Iraq's Gas Imports From Iran to Continue



TEHRAN (MNA) - Iraq's minister of electricity said that the import of gas from Iran will remain in place as the country needs Iranian gas to generate electricity. Ziad Ali Fazel on Monday emphasized the need for importing gas from Iran. The minister went on to say that Iraqi power plants operate with gas fuel to generate about 7,000 to 8,000 megawatts of electricity. Since the previous projects related to Iraq's oil ministry have been delayed with the aim of investing in gas projects, Iraq's need to import gas from Iran has remained in place. Fazel pointed to a memorandum of understanding (MoU) inked between Iraq and Turkmenistan for the daily import of 25 million cubic meters of gas from the Central Asian country and added that the gas will be transmitted through the Iranian gas pipeline. He put the total amount of electricity needed in Iraq at 40,000 megawatts, adding, "Of the total 40,000-MW electricity required in Iraq, we have managed to generate 26,000-megawatts." Iraq relies on Iran for natural gas which generates as much as 45 percent of its 14,000 megawatts of electricity consumed daily. Iran transmits another 1,000 megawatts directly, making itself an indispensable energy source for its Arab neighbor.

Gaza death toll climbs to 11,100, including 8,000 kids, women

Tehran, IRNA – The Israeli regime keeps on committing atrocities against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip, as the number of martyrs goes up to 11,100, some 8,000 out of which are children, women, and senior citizens. The Palestinian Ministry of Health in Gaza announced on Sunday that the casualties of the Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip have reached 11,100. According to the report, some 8,000 martyrs are children, women, and senior citizens, and the number of the wounded has also reached 27,000 as the conflict between the Zionist regime and Hamas in Gaza enters its 37th day.



Lebanon Front With Israel Heats Up, Stoking Fears of Wider War



BEIRUT (Dispatches) - Weeks of hostilities across the Lebanese-Israeli border have escalated, with growing casualties on both sides and a war of words fuelling concerns of a widening conflict between Israel and the Lebanese group Hezbollah. Israeli strikes killed two people in south Lebanon on Monday, according to a first-responder organization affiliated to the Hezbollah-allied Amal Movement. On the Israeli side, a Hezbollah missile attack on Sunday wounded several workers from the Israel Electric Company and one died of his wounds on Monday, the firm said. Hezbollah has been trading fire with Israeli forces since its Palestinian ally Hamas went to war with Israel on Oct. 7. The exchanges mark the deadliest violence at the border since Israel and Hezbollah fought a month-long war in 2006. So far, more than 70 Hezbollah fighters and 10 civilians have been killed in Lebanon, and 10 people including seven troops have been killed in Israel. Thousands more on both sides have fled shelling. Until now, violence has largely been confined within a band of territory on either side of the border. Israel has said it does not want war on its northern front as it seeks to crush Hamas in the Gaza Strip, while sources familiar with Hezbollah's thinking said its attacks have been designed to keep Israel forces busy while avoiding all-out war. The United States has said it doesn't want conflict to spread around the region, sending two aircraft carriers to the area to deter Iran from getting involved. But that has not stopped the escalating rhetoric from Hezbollah and Israel. Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah said on Saturday the Lebanon front would "remain active", and said there was "a quantitative improvement" in the pace of the group's operations. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned Hezbollah on Monday not to broaden its attacks. "This is playing with fire. Fire will be answered with much stronger fire. They should not try us, because we have only shown a little of our strength," he said in a statement. Asked at a news conference on Saturday about what Israel's red line was, Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant said: "If you hear that we have attacked Beirut, you will understand that Nasrallah has crossed that line." Lebanon's caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati, in an interview with Al Jazeera on Sunday, said he was reassured by the "rationalism" of Hezbollah so far. "We are preserving self-restraint, and it's up to Israel to stop its ongoing provocations in south Lebanon," he said. Lebanon took years to rebuild from the 2006 war and can ill afford another one, four years into a financial crisis that has impoverished many Lebanese and paralysed the state. Israel has long seen Hezbollah as the biggest threat along its borders. The 2006 war killed 1,200 people in Lebanon, mostly civilians, and 157 Israelis, mostly soldiers. U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin characterised the violence as "tit-for-tat exchanges between Lebanese Hezbollah and Israeli forces in the north", predicting Israel would remain focused on the threat from Hezbollah "for the foreseeable future". "And certainly no one wants to see another conflict break out in the north on Israel's border in earnest," he told reporters in Seoul, although he said it was hard to predict what might happen. Mohamad Hage Ali of the Carnegie Middle East Center said: "I can definitely see a wider escalation but I am not sure about a full conflict that nobody wants." "Nobody wants one on one hand, and I think the U.S. is playing a strong role keeping things under control," he said.

Sunak Brings Back Cameron, Sacks Braverman



LONDON (Dispatches) - British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak brought back former leader David Cameron as foreign minister in a reshuffle triggered by his firing of interior minister Suella Braverman after her criticism of police threatened his authority. It was the latest reset for a prime minister whose Conservative Party is badly lagging the Labour Party before an election expected next year. Cameron's return suggested Sunak wanted to bring in a more centrist, experienced hand rather than appease the populist right of his party which backed Braverman. It also reawakens divisive debate over Brexit: Cameron held the referendum on European Union membership in 2016 and was hated by many on the right of the party after he campaigned to remain. He quit soon after Britain voted 52%-48% to leave. The ministerial reshuffle followed growing criticism of Braverman from opposition lawmakers and members of the governing Conservatives, enabling Sunak to bring in allies and remove ministers he felt were not performing. His hand was forced when the ever-controversial Braverman defied him last week in an unauthorised article accusing police of "double standards" at protests, suggesting they were tough on right-wing demonstrators, but easy on pro-Palestinian marchers. The main opposition Labour Party said her comments had inflamed tensions between a pro-Palestinian demonstration and a far-right counter protest on Saturday, when nearly 150 people were arrested. While her removal was no surprise, it was the appointment of Cameron which caused shock in the party. It was welcomed by more centrist lawmakers but loathed by some on the right who described it as the ultimate "Brexit surrender". Cameron said he was glad to take on his new role at a time of global change. "I know it's not usual for a prime minister to come back in this way but I believe in public service. I hope that six years as prime minister, 11 years leading the Conservative Party gives me some useful experience and contacts and relationships and knowledge," he told reporters, saying he would tow the government line despite having disagreed with Sunak at times in the past. Cameron has been out of politics since 2016 and will be able to return to government via an appointment to the House of Lords upper house of parliament. Sunak's press secretary said the prime minister launched the reshuffle to create a "strong, united team that will be focused on delivery", after the government had come under fire for failing to meet some of its pledges. But Cameron's return compounded the anger felt by some on the right after Braverman's sacking. They backed her stance on protests and immigration and predicted she would remain a vocal force. One lawmaker, Andrea Jenkyns, wrote a letter to the head of the 1922 Committee that governs Conservative lawmakers calling for a no confidence vote in Sunak over what she called his Machiavellian role in ousting former prime minister Boris Johnson and the "purge of the centre-right from his cabinet". To trigger a leadership challenge, 53 of the 350 Conservative lawmakers in parliament must write letters of no confidence to the chairman of the 1922 Committee. Some Brexit supporters said Cameron's role in the Brexit vote meant the "remain" wing of the party had taken over, while others questioned how Sunak could bring back a man who in 2021 was criticised for lobbying government during COVID on behalf of supply chain finance firm Greensill as it collapsed.

Indonesian President Urges Biden to Help Stop Gaza Atrocities

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - Leaders from the United States and Indonesia held discussions on Monday that will set the stage for U.S. President Joe Biden's first in-person meeting in a year with Chinese leader Xi Jinping later this week. Biden greeted Indonesian President Joko Widodo at the White House as the two leaders prepare for a Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in San Francisco, where Washington hopes to reduce friction with Beijing. Biden is due to meet Xi on Wednesday. The United States and Indonesia agreed to new cooperation in defense areas including cybersecurity, space, combined exercises and nuclear threats, the White House said. On climate, they agreed on efforts to support the electrical grid and improve air quality. Reuters reported on Sunday that the two countries are working to advance a potential minerals partnership focused on the electric vehicle (EV) battery metal nickel, citing three people with direct knowledge of the conversations. But the Biden administration is still concerned about environmental, social and governance (ESG) standards in Indonesia and is examining how such a deal might work. The two sides will unveil a plan that will prepare the countries for negotiations on the issue, one of the US officials said. The White House said on Monday that Biden would announce a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the two sides on sustainable energy and mineral development. Jokowi, as the president is known, pressed Biden on steps to end Israel's war with Hamas. "Indonesia appeals to the US to do more

to stop the atrocities in Gaza. Ceasefire is a must for the sake of humanity," Widodo said in the Oval Office at the start of talks with the U.S. president. Indonesia, an archipelago of 270 million people, is the largest Muslim-majority nation. Many Muslims have been outraged by Biden's support for Israel after Hamas militants killed about 1,200 people and took more than 200 hostages on Oct. 7, according to Israeli officials. Palestinian officials have said Israeli strikes have killed more than 11,000 Gaza residents. "The president will look to ask Indonesia to play a larger role and to assist us," in the Middle East, a US official said, without elaborating on what such an expanded role might entail. Like several of its neighbors in Southeast Asia, Indonesia is economically intertwined with China as it navigates territorial disputes with its larger neighbor and wants to avoid getting caught in the middle by hostile Washington-Beijing relations. Jakarta and Washington formally upgraded relations to the highest diplomatic tier as part of the leaders' meeting. The two leaders were expected to discuss Indonesia's diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict in Myanmar, where the military took control in a 2021 coup and has been engaged in clashes with rebel alliances, one of the officials said. "It's going to be time soon for us to think about what our next steps are together to deal with a situation that is untenable," the person said. Jokowi, first elected in 2014, is constitutionally required to leave office next year after serving the maximum two terms.



Presidential Candidates in Madagascar Call for Election Boycott

MADAGASCAR (Dispatches) - Six prominent presidential candidates in Madagascar told AFP on Monday they plan to boycott this week's elections, worsening a political crisis engulfing the country. The six, who are part of a larger grouping of opposition candidates holding almost daily protests for weeks, said they will not take part in Thursday's vote and will urge their supporters not to cast their ballot. "We will call (on people) not to go and vote," said presidential hopeful Marc Ravalomanana, 73, one of two former presidents to join calls for a boycott. The Indian Ocean island nation has been shaken by a fierce battle between President Andry Rajoelina, who is running for re-election, and most opposition leaders. Almost all the 12 opposition candidates in the running have led near daily, unauthorised marches in Antananarivo, for more than a month, protesting at what they have called an "institutional coup" that favours the incumbent. The demonstrations have been regularly dispersed by police that on Saturday fired teargas and detained 11 protesters at yet another rally. "I will not stand for election, that is very clear," said Hery Rajaonarimampianina, 65, another former president who was in the running to replace Rajoelina. Last week, the head of the lower house of parliament, who leads a mediation group to find a way out of the crisis, called for the suspension of the presidential elections, to ensure "peace" and "harmony". The situation in the country did not allow for a free and credible vote, she said. But a spokeswoman for Rajoelina called the request a "far-fetched idea". The outgoing president held his last campaign rally in Antananarivo on Sunday in front of a fervent crowd of several thousand people donning t-shirts bearing his image. "I'm going to win, that's for sure, and in the first round," he told AFP in an interview at the weekend. Rajoelina, 49, became Africa's youngest head of state in 2009 when he took power on the back of a coup. After not running in the 2013 election due to international pressure, he was voted back into power in 2018 and has since held the reins in a country that remains among the poorest in the world despite vast natural resources. The show of support for the president at the weekend "means nothing" said Roland Ratsiraka, 57, another opposition candidate, hinting at the common practice of paying people to attend political rallies in the country. Rajoelina "is lying to himself and he knows it," he said. The European Union, the United States and other members of the international community have expressed "deep concern" at the political tensions and denounced the excessive use of force against the opposition. The crisis erupted in September after Rajoelina resigned in line with the constitution in order to run for re-election. The president of the Senate was supposed to take over but declined for "personal reasons", leaving the task to a "collegial government" headed by the prime minister, an ally of Rajoelina. The move was accepted by the Constitutional Court, which also dismissed appeals to have Rajoelina's candidacy declared void over his dual French nationality, sparking opposition anger. Voters in Madagascar were initially due to head to the polls on November 9, but the top court in October ordered that the elections be postponed after a presidential candidate was injured during a demonstration. The date for a potential second round vote on December 20 was kept unchanged. Thursday's election "will not take place", said Hajo Andrianainarivo, 56, another opposition candidate.



Venezuela Slams Renewed EU Sanctions

CARACAS (Dispatches) - Caracas slammed a six-month renewal of European Union sanctions against it, and said the move precluded the bloc from participating in Venezuelan "political processes" ahead of elections next year. The EU has had sanctions against Venezuela, including an arms embargo and a travel ban and assets freeze for dozens of officials, since November 2017 - reviewed annually. On Monday, the European Council said in a statement it had decided "exceptionally to extend its restrictive measures for six months only instead of one year, until 14 May 2024." The foreign ministry in Caracas hit back in a statement, calling the measure "arrogant and illegal" and accusing the bloc of interference in its internal affairs. Caracas is under investigation by the International Criminal Court in The Hague for alleged crimes against humanity over its response to protests in 2017 against President Nicolas Maduro - whose subsequent re-election in 2018 was not recognized by several countries, including EU members. Last month, Maduro's government and opposition agreed to hold elections next year and allow observers, including from the EU - an announcement that prompted the United States to ease some oil and gas sanctions.

North Korea Criticizes G7 as Remnant of the Cold War

SEOUL (Dispatches) - North Korea criticised the Group of Seven countries as a "remnant of the Cold War" that causes conflicts for their own interests and violates other countries' sovereignty, its state media KCNA said on Tuesday. Jo Chol Su, director general of the Department of International Organisations at Pyongyang's foreign ministry, condemned G7 foreign ministers for "slandering" the country's exercise of "self-defensive and legitimate sovereignty" in a joint statement following a meeting last week in Tokyo. The joint statement by the G7 called for humanitarian pauses in the Israel-Hamas war, reaffirmed support for Ukraine in its war with Russia, and condemned North Korea's missile tests and arms transfers to Russia. "G7, which has caused and fomented the recent international crisis, says this or that to find fault with independent sovereign states," Jo said, according to KCNA. "G7 is just the main dangerous source of destroying global peace and

security and the main stumbling block to the establishment of a just international order." The group cannot represent the international community but protects a few countries' interests, Jo said, singling out the United States as a supplier of deadly weapons to Ukraine to "deliberately destroy peace and stability" in Europe. Jo also accused Washington of "conniving at and fomenting" military strikes at Gaza while "shielding Israel's hideous massacre of civilians." "It has lost the justification for its existence," Jo said. "G7, the remnant of the Cold War, should be dismantled immediately, and this will be the first step toward defusing the present international crisis and restoring global peace." The North Korean statement coincides with South Korea hosting representatives of 17 member states of the U.N. Command (UNC) enforcing the Korean War armistice. The talks on Tuesday were expected to renew a pledge to respond to any aggression by North Korea.



Zverev Overpowers Alcaraz, Medvedev at ATP Finals



TURIN (Dispatches) - Alexander Zverev battled back from a set down to beat Carlos Alcaraz 6-7 (3/7), 6-3, 6-4 at the ATP Finals as Daniil Medvedev won a Russian derby against Andrey Rublev in straight sets 6-4, 6-2. Germany's Zverev, a two-time winner at the year-ending tournament, put on a powerful display to see off world number two Alcaraz who is not on top form after returning from injury at the end of last month. Zverev is tough opposition on hard courts like the one at the Pala Alpitour in Turin and made full use of his height and power in the Red Group clash to see off Alcaraz who looks far from being the ageless Novak Djokovic's main rival for the title. The 26-year-old Zverev rattled off 16 aces and was only broken once over the course of an impressive win in which he hit more winners and made significantly fewer unforced errors than out-of-sorts Alcaraz. "In the beginning of this year, I was nowhere near at his level," Zverev told reporters. "I'm just happy to be back at the level where I'm competitive with those guys, where I feel like I can win, I feel like I can compete for tournaments again." Wimbledon champion Alcaraz has struggled with lower back and left foot problems which had kept him out of action since the Shanghai Masters in early October until the Paris Masters. He was dumped out early in the French capital by Russian qualifier Roman Safiullin and flagged towards the end of a bruising contest with giant Zverev, the number seven seed in Turin. However Alcaraz insisted that he was not struggling back to form after his lay-off. "I'm one of the players who has

played most matches on tour... I feel good physically," insisted Alcaraz. "I don't think I need more matches (to be in top condition)." Before Zverev's win Novak Djokovic was presented with the trophy for finishing the season as world number one. The 24-time Grand Slam winner secured that position after winning his thrilling Green Group opener with Holger Rune on Sunday, a match which lasted more than three hours. Djokovic is red-hot favorite to claim his seventh Finals title which would put him out of his own as the record winner, one ahead of retired great and old rival Roger Federer. "Winning Grand Slams and being number one in the world are probably the pinnacles of the sport," said Djokovic on court. Medvedev moved above Zverev - his next opponent - to top the Red Group with a straightforward win over his childhood friend Rublev who once again had the worst of a match between the two Russians. Third seed Medvedev, who has five titles to his name this season, has now won seven of his nine matches with Rublev and needed just one hour and 31 minutes to prevail. The match turned on the game which would end up handing Medvedev the first set, a 17-point thriller which took more than 10 minutes to resolve and featured four break and set points. Rublev has had a fine season and won this season's Monte Carlo Masters, but struggles to step up when it counts. And he lost his head after losing the first set, giving up his serve in the first game of the second and from there allowing Medvedev to cruise to victory to take charge in the group.

Neymar Responding Well to Treatment



RIO DE JANEIRO (Dispatches) - Brazil forward Neymar is recovering well from the knee surgery he had after suffering an injury last month but there is still no forecast of when he will be able to return to action, national team doctor Rodrigo Lasmar said. Neymar ruptured the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) and meniscus in his left knee on international duty. He underwent surgery earlier this month in a Belo Horizonte hospital. The 31-year-old is responding "very well" but the recovery will be long and he must focus on the process, Lasmar told a press conference at Brazil's training center in Teresopolis. "He's shown, from the first moment that he's following what we're proposing. He knows that it's a process that he's going to need all of us, physiotherapist, fitness trainer, so that we can have Neymar (back) as soon as possible," said the doctor. Lasmar, who carried out the surgery, said it was not yet possible to set a date for the Al-Hilal player's return. "Injuries are individual. In general, there are associated injuries that can be just as important, such as a meniscus injury. All this makes the procedure more complex, with a slower recovery period. That's why we don't talk about a timescale," he said. Neymar joined the Saudi Pro League in August for a reported 90 million euros (\$96.28 million), but the former Barcelona and Paris St Germain forward only played five games because he was struggling with muscle injuries. Brazil, who sit third in the South American World Cup qualifying standings with seven points, face fifth-placed Colombia, with six points, on Thursday. They host leaders Argentina, who have 12 points, the following Tuesday. Lasmar also said goalkeeper Ederson had withdrawn from the squad due to an injury he sustained playing for Manchester City in their 4-4 draw at Chelsea in the Premier League on Sunday. "He suffered trauma to his foot in the final minutes and was able to continue the match but the pain became intense. The foot became swollen, making it difficult to walk," Lasmar said. Atletico Paranaense keeper Bento has been called up to replace him in the Brazil squad.

Italy, Netherlands, Wales Aim to Secure Euro 2024 Qualification

PARIS (Dispatches) - Reigning champions Italy are preparing for a decisive qualifier with Ukraine for a place at Euro 2024, while former winners the Netherlands and 2016 semi-finalists Wales are also aiming to book their tickets to the finals in Germany. The last two rounds of qualifying matches take place over the next week, and a total of 12 countries will secure their spots in next month's draw in Hamburg for the tournament to go with nine who are already guaranteed to be there. Continental heavyweights Spain, France, England, Belgium and Portugal have already qualified along with hosts Germany, Turkey, Scotland and Austria for the 24-nation finals which will run June 14 to July 14 next year. Italy, who beat England on penalties at Wembley in the final of the last European Championship in 2021 to claim the title for the second time, still have work to do to avoid missing another major tournament. Having failed to qualify for either of the last two World Cups, there is a danger the Azzurri will not be in Germany to defend their title after a qualifying campaign during which coach Roberto Mancini quit either side of defeats home and away to England. Yet the equation is simple for the team now coached by Luciano Spalletti - whatever happens when they face North Macedonia in Rome on Friday, win against Ukraine in Germany next Monday and they will qualify. A draw against Ukraine will suffice if they beat North Macedonia first. Lose their last game, on the other hand, and Ukraine will progress to the finals instead, while Italy will drop into the play-offs next March which will determine the final three qualifiers. That is a scenario they will desperately want to avoid, having failed to qualify for the 2018 and 2022 World Cups after losing play-off ties to Sweden and North Macedonia respectively. "We have to handle the fear. It will be there by our side as we go," indicated Spalletti this week when asked about the high stakes facing his



team in the Group C finale. Meanwhile, there appears little prospect of the Netherlands failing in their bid to join France in qualifying from Group B. A win at home to the Republic of Ireland in Amsterdam on Saturday will do the job for Ronald Koeman's side. And if they slip up, they will have another chance when they face Gibraltar on Tuesday. Assuming they do wrap up qualification, that will leave Euro 2004 winners Greece to settle for a place in the play-offs, as determined by their performances in the last UEFA Nations League. Wales have recovered from a wobble as they adapt to life without Gareth Bale and are now hopeful of securing a spot at a third consecutive Euro finals. Rob Page's side appeared up against it in Group D following defeats by Armenia and Turkey in June, but a 2-1 win over Croatia in Cardiff last month, when Harry Wilson scored twice, has left them with qualification in their own hands. A win in Armenia on Saturday, and another at home to already-qualified Turkey three days later, will take them through. "The mindset we've got is we can get a result against anyone. We've shown that," said Wales captain Ben Davies. Croatia are ready to take advantage of any slip-up by the Welsh, but otherwise the 2018 World Cup runners-up, and 2022 semi-finalists, will have to try again in the play-offs. Other nations poised to qualify include Denmark, Hungary, Serbia, Slovenia and Slovakia, while Albania are set to go to a second Euro in three editions. They need just a draw away to minnows Moldova on Friday in order to qualify from Group E, in which Robert Lewandowski's Poland look likely to miss out. They, like Erling Haaland's Norway, could at least still get into the play-offs, as they aim to avoid the fate of Sweden, the biggest nation to already be eliminated.

Australia Aims to Follow USA in Building FIFA's Club World Cup



MIAMI (Dispatches) - Australia's football chief James Johnson believes his country can help FIFA turn their new Club World Cup into a global success as he seeks to get in the driving seat for the bidding process. Australia last month opted not to bid for the 2034 World Cup after facing competition from Saudi Arabia, who are the only bidders for the tournament. But Johnson, CEO of Football Australia, believes the new 32-team Club World Cup, which will debut in the United States in 2025, would more than compensate for missing out on the game's biggest event. "I'm very excited by this," Johnson told AFP in an interview on Monday ahead of this week's Soccerex conference in Miami. "There's an opportunity there. 32 teams, 64 matches, played over one month. We've got the biggest teams in the world coming together and fighting it out to be world champion of the Club Football. It's extremely interesting," he said. The current Club World Cup features just seven clubs from six confederations and has struggled to grab attention. Johnson believes though that once the new tournament, with 12 elite European clubs and eight top teams from South America, has made an impact in the USA, its prestige will be transformed. "The competition needs to be built. We can't wait to see what happens here in the United States in 2025. We believe that we can help build that competition, take it to a new level, like what we saw with the Women's World Cup in Australia," he added. European clubs, fans and broadcasters have shown little interest in the old Club World Cup but Johnson believes that will change with the chance to compete in a full tournament outside their traditional markets. "Australia is a great market for European clubs. Every summer, European summer, we have big clubs coming to Australia," he said. "We know that we can fill stadiums. We never have problems with selling tickets in any sport. We're also in a great region for broadcast. It's an area of the world that is going to work for the clubs in terms of their brand. I think having an edition both in America and then in Asia, you'll be able to cross-promote and I think it would be a nice package to kick off the first two editions of the Club World Cup," he added. Johnson said FIFA's bidding process for the 2034 World Cup "came around a little bit quicker than what we were anticipating, so that was a little bit of a surprise. But it wasn't the reason we opted not to do it." Instead, he says, the chance to follow-up on the success of the Women's World Cup, with the Women's Asian Cup in 2026, which Australia is also bidding for and the Club World Cup three years later was the perfect way to keep momentum ahead of the Brisbane Olympic Games in 2032. "I felt that putting our time and our resources and our investment into the Women's 26th Asian Cup, Club World Cup in 29 was better than flipping the coin and seeing what we could do for 34. I think if we had gone for 34 it might have impacted on our ability to focus on 26," he said. The former Australia youth international, who previously worked for FIFA and the Manchester City owned City Football Group, said another factor was that the expanded 48-team World Cup meant they would likely have had to find other countries to co-host. Johnson said hosting this year's Women's World Cup had led to a surge in participation in the game among girls and massive interest in the Australian team, nicknamed the Matildas, who reached the semi-final.

Raptors Wipe out 4th-Quarter Deficit, Defeat Wizards

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Pascal Siakam made a jump shot with eight seconds to play and the Toronto Raptors came back to defeat the visiting Washington Wizards 111-107. Siakam had a season-best 39 points - 29 in the second half - and added 11 rebounds and seven assists as the Raptors overcame a 16-point deficit in the fourth quarter. Scottie Barnes added 19 points and nine rebounds for Toronto, Jakob Poeltl scored 13 points and Precious Achiuwa had 10. Kyle Kuzma scored a season-best 34 points for the Wizards, who have lost three straight. Daniel Gafford and Jordan Poole each had 14 points for Washington, and Tyus Jones, Corey Kispert and Bilal Coulibaly scored 10 apiece. The Wizards, who led by as many as 23 points early in the third quarter, took a 10-point advantage into the fourth quarter. Kuzma's layup had Washington ahead by 16 early in the fourth. Toronto trimmed the margin to eight on a layup by Barnes with 5:07 remaining, and Barnes made two free throws to cut the lead to six with 4:34 left. Chris Boucher's layup tied the game at 107 with 52 seconds left. Toronto ended the first quarter with a 10-4 burst but the Wizards took a 32-25 into the second quarter. The Wizards opened a 17-point lead on Kuzma's reverse layup with 6:10 to play in the second quarter. The lead reached 18 as the Wizards continued to play good defense. Toronto cut the lead to 13 on Siakam's layup and free throw with 2:25 left. Kuzma completed the first-half with a 3-pointer and a free throw to give Washington a 64-45 lead. He had 19 points in the half. Siakam and Poeltl each scored 10 in the half to lead Toronto. Kuzma's layup bumped the lead to 23 with 9:32 to play in the third quarter. Toronto got to within 73-56, but Kuzma's dunk had the lead back to 22 with 5:58 to play. Toronto used a 10-0 run to cut the lead to 10. Washington led 91-81 after three quarters.

