

Iran's Minister of Information and Communications Technology Issa Zarepour Has Said That the Islamic Republic of Iran Will Launch Astronauts Into Orbit With Indigenous Bio-Capsule by the End of 2028

# IRAN NEWS

Abbasali Kadkhodaei, the Head of the Iranian Constitutional Council's Research Center Sharply Criticized the United States for Its Unwavering Military and Diplomatic Support for the Israeli Regime

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### U.S. Support for Israel Driving Force in Gaza Genocide



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf says the United States' military, media and diplomatic support for Israel is the driving force and the root cause of the regime's genocide in Gaza. "We are still witnessing that the Zionist regime continues to kill the innocent people of Gaza and destroy its vital civilian infrastructures with the full cooperation of the United States as its main partner in crime," Qalibaf said while addressing an open session of the parliament on Monday. On Friday, the US used its veto in the United Nations Security Council to block a draft resolution calling for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza. Thirteen other Security Council members voted in favor of the resolution, put forward by the United Arab Emirates, while the United Kingdom abstained. Slamming "US stubbornness" at the Security Council, Qalibaf said Muslims and freedom seekers of the world expect their governments not to enable such "unjust structures" to allow the Israeli regime to continue its genocidal crimes. He also said the people of Gaza have proved that they were the "real winners" of the events that unfolded on October 7, when the Palestinian resistance movements launched a surprise operation into the occupied territories. Nothing can undo the crushing defeat and restore the lost dignity of the Tel Aviv regime, he asserted. The top Iranian parliamentarian maintained that Israel is now much more hated in the world than in the past, and its fake grandeur has been shattered even in front of its friends. As announced by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, the Palestinian issue will be solved soon and the Palestinian sovereignty will be established across the territory, he added. Israel waged the devastating war on Gaza on October 7 after the territory's Palestinian resistance movements carried out a surprise retaliatory attack, dubbed Operation Al-Aqsa Storm, against the occupying entity over its intensified violence against Palestinians.

### Gaza Crimes Reveal Disintegration of Defeated, Deranged Israeli Regime



TEHRAN (PressTV) - A senior Iranian Army commander says Israeli crimes against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip are a sign of the regime's weakness and decay. "Now, the Zionist regime (Israel) is in a position of weakness and collapse and the presence of media has revealed all the realities on the ground and nothing is hidden from anyone," Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari, deputy chief of the Iranian Army for Coordination, said. He urged the self-styled advocates of human rights to pay heed to Israel's ongoing atrocities against the oppressed and defenseless people of Gaza. The Israeli regime would have collapsed by now if it were not for the United States and European countries' support, he argued. The top Iranian commander further said if the Israeli regime was not weak and sought to fight strongly, it would have used practical military tactics instead of targeting women and children in Gaza hospitals. Sayyari likened the Israeli regime to a mad person who carries out whatever act and emphasized, "This indicates its weakness." No one in the world regards harming innocent civilians, particularly women and children, as a military operation or a tactic, he added. Sayyari slammed Israel's raids on the Gaza Strip's al-Shifa Hospital under the pretext that there were hidden tunnels under it that were used by the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas, saying the regime has failed to even prove its claims and "everyone acknowledged that this was an exaggeration." Israel has turned Gaza's hospitals into a specific target of its ongoing war of genocide against the coastal sliver, alleging that those facilities house Palestinian resistance fighters and their equipment.

## Iran Economy Should Be Based on Science

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN (IP) - President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi said at the economic conference focused on reforming structures and resolving disagreements that the Iranian economy should be based on science which in turn will be the key to its permanence. Speaking at the economic conference focused on reforming structures and resolving disagreements held on Monday morning, Raisi said: "Our economy should be based on science for its permanence." Raisi further stressed that the approved theory at the universities should be implemented but at the same time he noted when it comes to implementation there is no room for trial and error. Referring to the administration of Justice Iran's President said: "Our society must develop. Development is necessary and inevitable, but development must be based on justice; Justice in the distribution of wealth and economic justice." He went on to say that the economy should also be based on the people. The government should not interfere in the economy and should supervise, not take over. President Raisi further suggested that Government guidance, support and supervision can be active. He also called for the activation of the private sector and privatization in Iran and said that the government should fulfill its supervisory duty. "The government should make structural reforms and pursue behavioral reforms in order to lead to economic justice, progress and economic growth," stated Raisi. He added: "The growth of liquidity which is the cause of inflation was controlled. If liquidity goes to production, it will lead to successful results." Statistics also show that the government is determined to start production. Restarting some factories shows that the government is trying to start production," concluded he. Meanwhile Iranian Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs said that Iran must be aware of how to play its economic role in the international arena along with its political and security roles, as its former roles are changing. Speaking at the economic reforms conference held in Tehran, Ehsan Khandouzi said that with the sanctions imposed on Iran, three things happened for the country, including the change in the political, security, and economic roles in the international arena. The decrease in the country's surplus currency income allocated for the development of infrastructure and the limitation of access to the world's currencies were the two other happenings he referred to. Given the issues that happened, Khandouzi said that the neutralization of the sanctions imposed on Iran would pass through the adoption of due and effective strategy. He said that the strategy must simultaneously address three challenges; first the confusion of the political-economic situation in Iran; and the increase in the country's surplus currency income to develop the infrastructure. The third challenge he mentioned was a new settlement structure with strategic partners, that is to increase Iran's power by role-playing through partners and a new economic belt. The conference held in Tehran on Monday addresses Iran's reforming of economic structures, resolving discrepancies, and playing a new role in the international arena.

## Iran Says JCPOA II Out of Question



TEHRAN - The spokesperson for the Iranian Foreign Ministry categorically dismissed the idea of talks on a new Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Asked about speculations on talks for a new nuclear deal with Iran, known as JCPOA II, Nasser Kanaani said at a weekly press conference on Monday. "Such ideas are presented by the parties that have reneged on their commitments." He said certain signatories to the 2015 nuclear deal that have failed to honor their commitments under the JCPOA seek to propose "diversionary ideas" in order to shirk their responsibilities. "Iran sees no necessity for another JCPOA," he underlined. Kanaani noted that the JCPOA, concluded in 2015, has already detailed the responsibilities of all parties. Iran has repeatedly made it clear that the only solution to the revival of the JCPOA is the commitment of all parties to the full, effective, and verifiable implementation of the deal. The United States returned its sanctions against Iran in 2018 after leaving the JCPOA, an agreement between Iran and world countries that would keep the bans lifted in exchange for some voluntary changes in Tehran's nuclear energy program. Meanwhile Kanaani in his weekly press conference on Monday, stressed that the Palestinian nation won't accept unjust solutions. "The Islamic Republic of Iran does not propose any ideas for Palestine, but expresses a democratic solution that has already been registered. But certain parties, especially the United States, want to achieve what they did not achieve through war with political solutions," Kanaani said. He said that experience has shown that the Palestinian nation will not surrender to what is planned outside of Palestine and will not accept unjust solutions. The spokesman in reaction to Netanyahu's claims about Tehran-Moscow relations, said: We ignore the statements of certain parties in relations with friendly

countries in the region, and these statements will not affect mutual ties. Kanaani, in response to the question, said: Cooperation between Iran and Russia in various economic, commercial, and cultural fields has experienced tangible growth, and the volume of trade relations in 2022 has reached 5 billion dollars. He added: The volume of trade between Iran and Russia has grown by 20 percent in the 9 months of this year, which indicates the good performance of the two countries. Pointing out that there are many projects between the two countries, he added: In the recent visit of the president, the North-South Corridor, which is an important transit and commercial project of the two countries, was examined. He also emphasized that cooperation between Iran and Russia continues in the fields of energy, banking, industries, and agriculture. Kanaani said: 17th Joint Cooperation Commissions which will be held in the coming months, we will witness the improvement of relations as well. Kanaani said that there are sufficient documents about the Swedish spy in Iran. Kanaani explained whether Iran has any information about the correspondence between Sweden and the European Union or not saying: "I have no information about these correspondences, but the Swedish citizen's connections and crimes are clear, the relevant institutions have announced them." Kanaani further stated: "These crimes have been announced and there are sufficient documents in this field, and the details have been announced to the Swedish government, and naturally it will go through its judicial process, and the judiciary will perform its duties as an independent authority."

### Iran Urges EU to Stop Israel's Atrocities in Gaza



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian says the European Union's recent position toward the war in Gaza is commendable, urging the bloc to work for a permanent end to Israeli atrocities in the Palestinian territory. Amir-Abdollahian made the remarks in a letter to the EU foreign policy chief Joseph Borrell on Sunday. As Israel continues its crimes in Gaza, the EU should take "more effective" measures to permanently stop the regime's attacks, completely lift the blockade and end the occupation, the top Iranian diplomat said. The Iranian minister also welcomed the EU's position regarding the necessity for establishing a permanent ceasefire, ending the massacre of civilians in Gaza, observing international humanitarian law and sending the urgently needed aid to the homeless. Amir-Abdollahian praised Borrell's announcement that Israeli settlement expansion is a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law and his condemnation of the regime's acts of violence in the occupied West Bank. In a five-page proposal on Thursday, Borrell said the EU should consider visa bans against extremists attacking civilians and use the EU human-rights sanction against the regime. "Settler violence is escalating from an already high level and Israeli army actions [in the West Bank] are becoming more frequent." In a phone call with the Iranian foreign minister earlier this month, Borrell said tensions in Gaza and the West Bank must end as soon as possible. The European Union's foreign policy chief said the bloc believes diplomacy is the best solution to the issue of Palestine. Israel launched the war on Gaza on October 7 after the territory's Palestinian resistance movements waged the surprise Operation Al-Aqsa Storm against the occupying entity in response to the Israeli regime's decades-long campaign of bloodletting and devastation against Palestinians.

### President Censures U.S. Veto of UN Resolution on Gaza Ceasefire



TEHRAN (PressTV) - President Ebrahim Raisi has criticized the United States for vetoing a UN resolution calling for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza. At a time that the world demands an end to Israel's war crimes in Palestine, the US veto of the UNSC ceasefire resolution proves that it is the root of the regime's war on Gaza and its crimes against people in the besieged territory, Raisi said in a post on his X account on Sunday. While the world demands an end of Zionist war crimes in Palestine, the US's veto of the UNSC ceasefire resolution proves it is the root of this war and crimes, & it's fueling Israel's mass killing machine. It is the main supporter of the massacre of innocent Gazan women and children. "The US is the main supporter of the massacre of innocent Gazan women and children," he stated. On Friday, the US used its veto in the United Nations Security Council to block a draft resolution calling for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza. Thirteen Security Council members voted in favor of the resolution, put forward by the United Arab Emirates, while the United Kingdom abstained. The General Assembly, where the US has no veto power, overwhelmingly supported a humanitarian ceasefire. On October 26, the assembly approved the ceasefire with 120 votes in favor and only 14 against the non-binding resolution.

# IRAN NEWS



## IRGC Stages Major Security Drill in Western Iran

TEHRAN (MNA) – The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) ground forces staged a large security drill in western Iran on Monday morning. The exercise was conducted with the approach of confronting the security threats, anti-revolutionary groups, and terrorist and takfiri networks. In this exercise, a part of the latest tactics was used by taking advantage of the talent and new capabilities of the various units of the IRGC ground forces to deal with security threats and terrorist movements. Special training in the conditions of electronic warfare, testing radar and communication systems, conducting reconnaissance and intelligence operations, and destroying the targets and headquarters of hypothetical enemies using new equipment were among the stages of this exercise.

## Ambassador of Pakistan in Tehran Meets Head of UNAMA



TEHRAN - H.E Muhammad Mudassar Tipu, Ambassador of Pakistan in Tehran-Iran met Head of UNAMA Hideo Ikebe at his office on Sunday. He welcomed Mr. Hideo Ikebe and both of them discussed a range of important issues. He reiterated the commitment of Pakistan towards regional security and to promote peace and development by curbing menace of terrorism.

## Uzbekistan Determined to Broaden Ties With Iran



By: F. Taherpoor

TEHRAN – Outgoing Uzbekistan Ambassador to Tehran hailed all-out progress in the relations of his country with Iran and reiterated his country is determined to broaden its ties with neighboring states especially with Iran. In a reception which was held in the Uzbekistan Embassy on Sunday on the occasion of the 31st Anniversary of the Constitution and National Anthem Days of the Republic of Uzbekistan as well as completion of his diplomatic mission in Tehran, H.E. Bakhodir Abdullaev said that 31 years ago on December 8 the Constitution and on December 10 the national anthem of his country were approved and the country sees those two days as national holidays and thanked participants in this event. He then added that in recent days Uzbekistan has witnessed great and expanded reforms in all fields taken by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev and the reforms continue with fast speed. He added that on April 30, 2023 and in a referendum, Uzbeks voted yes to the reforms for the Constitution and articles of the Constitution increased from 128 to 155. He reiterated that Uzbekistan is trying to have and expand its friendly ties with the world community based on the international laws and boosting and developing ties and cooperation with the neighboring states is the priority. Abdullaev added

that the first visit of President Mirziyoyev after the Constitutional referendum was to Iran which happened on June 18, 2023 and the visit was aimed to define new priorities for bilateral cooperation with Tehran. He then pointed to the visits of Iranian President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi to Uzbekistan in 2022 and 2023 which created new opportunities for broadening ties between the two countries. Abdullaev went on to say that currently there are some actions underway for increasing the bilateral trade volume to one billion dollars and broadening cooperation in trade, advanced technologies, investment, industrial cooperation, transportation, communication, tourism and cultural exchanges. He reiterated he expects the cooperation between the two countries to pick up in the future. Abdullaev then announced the end to his political mission in Tehran and thanked the participants who helped him to do his job for boosting the ties with Iran in style. He later honored Dr. Amir Teymour Rafiee who is one of the famous Iranian historians and experts who has conducted many studies on great Uzbek literary personalities and written many books. He then awarded Mr. Rafiee with the Popular Friendship medal which has been initiated by Uzbek President given to him for serving the ties between Iran and Uzbekistan.

## CBI Governor in Oman for Bolstering Monetary-Banking Ties



TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Mohammad Reza Farzin arrived in the Omani capital of Muscat on Sunday for talks on strengthening mutual ties in the banking and monetary fields. Holding high-profile talks with Omani officials in line with the development and promotion of monetary, financial and banking ties as well as boosting trade and economic relations between Tehran and Muscat have been cited as the main aims of the visit. Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Economic Diplomacy Mehdi Safari accompanies the CBI governor in this visit. Earlier, in a meeting held between Farzin and Oman's minister of commerce, industry, and investment development, the two sides emphasized the importance of strengthening monetary ties by using the national currencies in commercial transactions rather than the dollar.

## Iran, Syria to Boost Techno Engineering Cooperation



TEHRAN (IP) - The head of the joint commission for economic cooperation between Iran and Syria announced the issuance of technical and engineering services and the creation of five committees to follow up the implementation of cooperation documents between the two countries. The 15th meeting of the Joint Supreme Committee for Economic Cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Syrian Arab Republic was held in the presence of "Mohammed Makhber", the first vice president and prime minister of Syria, on the sidelines of which, a memorandum of understanding and 6 cooperation documents were signed by high-ranking officials of the two countries. According to Iran press, Mehrdad Bazpash, the head of the joint commission for economic cooperation between Iran and Syria, in a meeting with Syrian Prime Minister Hussein Amous, expressed his satisfaction with the results of the negotiations between the two parties and added: "In this meeting, in addition to the memorandum of understanding of the 15th meeting, other documents in the fields of "amendment of free trade agreement between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Syrian Arab Republic", "tourism cooperation", "antiquities and museums" and "sports cooperation" were signed by the two sides. The Minister of Roads and Urban Development of Iran emphasized: "During the visit of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Syria, 16 cooperation documents were signed between the two countries, and efforts are being made to implement these cooperation documents and current agreements seriously." In the joint high committee of cooperation between the two countries, many issues and topics were raised and discussed in different sectors of oil, gas, electricity, industry, free trade, tourism, education, fighting dust. Also in the field of reconstruction of damaged factories in Syria. The Prime Minister of Syria has traveled to Tehran to attend the 15th meeting of the Joint Supreme Committee for Economic Cooperation between the two countries at the head of a high-ranking delegation.

## Iran to Begin Overseas Refining in Syria

TEHRAN (MNA) – Iran is in talks with Syria to start overseas refining in Homs refinery, according to an official familiar with the talks. Ali Shahverdi said on Sunday that Iran has requests from countries such as Nicaragua, Cuba, South Africa, and Central Asian countries for refining cooperation, while noting that the main option will be Homs refinery. He said that "We are reaching a contract with Syria like the one with Venezuela's El Palito refinery". Touching upon the El Palito refinery which is Iran's first-ever overseas refining project, he said "We increased the refinery's capacity from 20,000 barrels to 80,000 barrels in the first phase". Shahverdi also said that the development of the Homs refinery will include 120,000 barrels in the first phase. When the projects are complete, Iran will be exporting 120,000 barrels of oil from the El Palito refinery and 140,000 barrels from the Homs refinery, the official said. He added that Iran also plans to start operation in the Banias refinery of Syria after the completion of the Homs refinery.

## Gov't Seeks Stable Revenues by Preventing Tax Evasion

TEHRAN (Dispatches) - Minister of Economy says the government intends to prevent tax evasion to ensure stable revenues for the country. Referring to "the transparency of economic information and the increase of new taxpayers and the prevention of tax evasion", Ehsan Khandouzi said that the government is trying to have stable revenues in the budget, ISNA reported on Monday. President Ebrahim Raisi submitted the national budget bill for the next Iranian calendar year (March 2024-March 2025) to the Majlis (parliament) last week. The share of tax revenues in the proposed budget bill is twice that of oil and gas revenues. Iran's more reliance on tax revenues happens as the intensified US-led sanctions on Tehran have targeted the country's oil industry as a major source of revenues for the Islamic Republic. Head of Iran's Plan and Budget Organization Davoud Manzour has stressed that the government is not going to exert more pressure on the taxpayers and rather plans to prevent tax evasion and ensure tax justice.

## Resistance Front's Unity Foiled U.S.-Israeli Plots Against Gaza

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's security chief says the resistance front's unity in the face of Israel's brutality in Gaza thwarted US-Zionist plots against the Palestinians in the besieged territory. Ali Akbar Ahmadian, the secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), made the remarks in a meeting with visiting Syrian Prime Minister Hussein Arnous and his accompanying delegation in the capital Tehran on Sunday. "The cohesion and unity of the resistance front ruined the US and the Zionist regime's plans to bring down Gaza, displace the [Palestinian] people and destroy the resistance," Ahmadian was quoted as saying by the SNSC-affiliated Nour News. Praising as "unparalleled" the resistance of Gaza residents against the barbaric attacks of the child-killing Israeli regime, the Iranian security chief said, "Today, the Palestinian people and resistance have shown capabilities in the fight against the

aggressors the armies of several countries cannot demonstrate; and this is an honor of the resistance front's." Ahmadian said, "The resistance front from Syria to Yemen will never allow the sinister plans of the arrogance system to be implemented." Meanwhile, the secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council highlighted the depth of Tehran-Damascus relations and said Syria has an important and pivotal role in the West Asia region. Arnous, for his part, expressed his gratitude for the cooperation and companionship of the Iranian government and nation as he underlined the expansion of bilateral ties between the two countries in all fields, especially economy. "Joint efforts will repel [external] pressures and strengthen the steadfastness of the two countries," the Syrian prime minister said. Bilateral cooperation will have positive results on both sides and the entire region, he said.



### Trump Cancels Plan to Testify in NY Fraud Trial

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - Donald Trump changed his mind about testifying in his own defense in his New York fraud case on Monday, he said, announcing that he will not take the stand as expected because he has "nothing more to say." The 77-year-old posted the surprise statement on Truth Social on Sunday, adding that he has "already testified to everything" in the ongoing trial against him, his eldest sons Don Jr and Eric, and other Trump Organization executives. Trump was questioned last month by the prosecution, which has accused him and the other defendants of exaggerating the value of their real estate assets by billions of dollars to obtain more favorable bank loans and insurance terms. For four hours on November 6, Trump sparred with prosecutors -- with his acrimonious answers at times earning rebukes from Judge Arthur Engoron, who warned the current Republican front-runner that "this is not a political rally." On Sunday, Trump said that he had already testified "very successfully & conclusively" in the case.



### Zelenskiy Says Had Frank Talk With Hungary's Orban



BUENOS AIRES (Dispatches) - Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy said he had a "frank" conversation with Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban on the sidelines of the inauguration of Argentine President Javier Milei. "It was as frank as possible - and obviously, it was about our European affairs," Zelenskiy said in his nightly video address posted on the Telegram channel early on Monday. The meeting took place against a backdrop of Orban's threatening to block more European Union financial support to Kyiv, his opposition of Ukraine's entry to the bloc and the White House intensifying its push for Kyiv aid after Republicans blocked an emergency spending bill to fund the war. Orban's press chief Bertalan Havasi confirmed the meeting in an email that did not address whether the Hungarian leader would continue to oppose Ukraine's entry to the European Union. "With regards to Ukraine's EU accession, Viktor Orban signaled that the member states of the European Union were continuously discussing the issue," Havasi said in the email. A video on the Argentine Senate's YouTube channel showed Zelenskiy and Orban conversing for about 20 seconds as they mingled with other guests in the Argentine parliament, ahead of an EU summit on Dec. 14-15, set to decide whether to start membership talks with Ukraine. Orban has repeatedly said he opposes starting talks now. Any decision to proceed has to be unanimous. Orban has also threatened to block moves to give Kyiv 50 billion euros (\$53.8 billion) in budget support through 2027, though a senior official said on Friday the EU would find ways to support Ukraine financially even if Hungary vetoed the move. Zelenskiy said earlier he had spoken by telephone with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen to coordinate their positions. "We are counting on a positive decision regarding the allocation of 50 billion euros and the start of negotiations on Ukraine's accession to the EU," he said in a post on Telegram. "Europe must decisively defend its values and unity. I know that we can rely on the support of Madam President in this matter," he added. Zelenskiy was due to arrive in Washington on Monday for talks with U.S. President Joe Biden and U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Mike Johnson about the ongoing Russian war in Ukraine and the "vital importance" of continued U.S. aid to Kyiv.



## Argentine President Milei Warns Economic Shock Unavoidable

BUENOS AIRES (Dispatches) - Argentina libertarian economist Javier Milei took office on Sunday warning in his maiden speech that he had no alternative to a sharp, painful fiscal shock to fix the country's worst economic crisis in decades, with inflation heading towards 200%. "There is no alternative to a shock adjustment," he said on the steps on Congress after taking the presidential baton and sash, with crowds of supporters cheering despite Milei saying the economy would worsen in the short term. "There is no money," Milei, 53, a former TV pundit who shot to fame with expletive-ridden tirades against rivals, China, and the pope, is taking over from Peronist leader Alberto Fernandez, whose government was dogged by failures to rein in soaring prices. "The outgoing government has left us on track towards hyperinflation," Milei said. "We are going to do everything we can to avoid such a catastrophe." While the speech was light on details, he said key steps would include a fiscal adjustment equivalent to 5% of the country's GDP through cuts that he said would fall on "the state and not the private sector." The wild-haired outsider marks a major gamble for Argentina: his shock therapy economic plan of sharp spending cuts has gone down well with investors and could stabilize the embattled economy, but it risks pushing more people into hardship with over two-fifths already in poverty. However, voters - who drove Milei to victory in a November run-off against a ruling Peronist coalition candidate - have said they were willing to roll the dice on his sometimes radical ideas that include shutting the central bank and dollarizing. "He is the last hope we have left," said 72-year-old doctor Marcelo Altamira, who slammed

"useless and inept" governments for years of boom-bust economic crises. The outgoing Peronist government, he said, "had destroyed the country". The challenges are huge. Argentina's net foreign currency reserves are estimated at \$10 billion in the red, annual inflation is 143% and rising, a recession is around the corner and capital controls skew the exchange rate. Argentina has gone through boom-bust cycles for decades with money printing to fund regular deficits stoking inflation and weakening the peso. That has worsened in recent years as reserves have dwindled with a major drought earlier this year hitting main cash crops soy and corn. If not tamed, inflation could reach 15,000% annually, Milei warned in his speech, pledging to "fight tooth and nail" to eradicate it. He also warned about a \$100 billion debt "bomb". The major grains exporter needs to revamp a creaking \$44 billion loan program with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), while Milei needs to navigate ties with important trade partners China and Brazil, whom he criticized during the campaign. Milei takes over from unpopular outgoing center-left President Fernandez, but will need to negotiate with rivals as his libertarian coalition only has a small bloc in Congress. He has allied with the main conservative grouping. That has already had an impact. He has moderated his tone in the last few weeks, packed his first Cabinet with mainstream conservatives rather than ideological libertarian allies, and on Sunday he did not mention dollarization in his speeches. Later in the day he took action to make good on one campaign promise, announcing in a post on X that he had signed a decree to slash the number of ministries by half, from 18 to nine.

### War-Torn Sudan Faces Catastrophe as UN Funds Run Short



PORT SUDAN (Dispatches) - The United Nations has only been able to reach a fraction of the nearly 25 million people needing aid in war-devastated Sudan, the head of the UN's humanitarian response in the country says. But assistance to even those four million could soon stop if the chronic lack of funding continues. Clemetine Nkweta-Salami told AFP in an interview on Sunday. The UN's humanitarian coordinator for Sudan said the situation is "catastrophic", eight months into a conflict between rival generals that has torn the country apart. Aid workers have called it the "forgotten war". On April 15, army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and his former deputy Mohamed Hamdan Daglo, who commands the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, turned their weapons on each other. Two years after the former allies jointly engineered a 2021 coup that derailed a fragile democratic transition, their power struggle has killed more than 12,190 people, according to the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED). That figure is only a conservative estimate, with entire parts of the country completely cut off from the world. There are also "seven million people displaced in Sudan, which is the highest displacement situation globally," said Nkweta-Salami, of Cameroon. Yet despite the scale of the crisis, the humanitarian response remains woefully underfunded. "We've received only 38.6 percent" of the total \$2.6 billion needed for 2023, Nkweta-Salami said. "There will come a time when even if we have (physical) access, we will not have the resources to enable us to channel the relevant assistance that we need to do," she warned. Sudan, whose tragedy has been overshadowed by the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza, saw nearly all aid groups disappear soon after fighting broke out. Their warehouses were looted and workers harassed or attacked. One of a handful of organizations still providing vital aid across Sudan is the Norwegian Refugee Council. "I have never, in all my years, seen such a horrific mega-catastrophe with so little attention or resources to reach people in their hour of greatest need," said Jan Egeland, the NRC's secretary general. "Millions are trapped in the crossfire, in ethnic violence, in bombardments, and we are simply not there," he told AFP. The gaps, Egeland and Nkweta-Salami agree, are huge. According to the UN representative, "we are facing a population that is about 24.7 million people in need of humanitarian assistance," or more than one in two Sudanese. "To date, we've been able to reach about four million and our goal is to hopefully reach around 18 million" who face immense challenges with "health, water and sanitation, food and malnutrition," she continued. Only recently was the UN able to regain limited access through Chad into areas of Darfur, Sudan's vast western region where the UN has warned of a repeat of violence that occurred there in the early 2000s.

## Zionist Forces Bomb South Gaza After Hamas Hostage Threat



GAZA STRIP (Dispatches) - Israel bombed southern Gaza's main city on Monday after Hamas warned no Israeli hostages would leave the territory alive unless its demands for prisoner releases were met. Israeli strikes on Monday hit the city of Khan Yunis, an AFP correspondent reported, while Palestinian militants Islamic Jihad said they had blown up a house where Israeli soldiers were searching for a tunnel shaft. The army reported rocket fire from Gaza into Israel on Monday, and said fierce fighting had taken place on Sunday around Gaza City and Khan Yunis. Hamas on Sunday warned that Israel would not receive "their prisoners alive without an exchange and negotiation and meeting the demands of the resistance". Israel says there are still 137 hostages in Gaza, while activists say around 7,000 Palestinians are in Israeli jails. Months of intense bombardment and clashes have left Gaza's health system on the brink of collapse, with most hospitals no longer functioning and nearly two million people displaced. AFP visited the bombed-out ruins of the Al-Shifa hospital in Gaza City and found at least 30,000 people taking refuge amid the rubble after Israeli forces raided the medical facility last month. "Our life has become a living hell, there's no electricity, no water, no flour, no bread, no medicine for the children who are all sick," said Mohammed Daloul, 38, who fled there with his wife and three children. The UN estimates 1.9 million of Gaza's 2.4 million people have been displaced from their homes - roughly half of them children. Israel had urged people to seek refuge in the south, but after expanding the war to include southern targets, there are few safe places for civilians to go. Humanitarian organizations continued to press Israel for greater protection of civilians in the conflict. Mapping software deployed by Israel's army to try to reduce non-combatant deaths was condemned as inadequate Sunday by Lynn Hastings, UN humanitarian coordinator for the Palestinian territories. "A unilateral declaration by an occupying power that patches of land where there is no infrastructure, food, water, health care, or hygiene are 'safe zones' does not mean they are safe," she said. Only 14 of Gaza's 36 hospitals are functioning at any capacity, according to the United

Nations' humanitarian agency OCHA. "Gaza's health system is on its knees and collapsing," said World Health Organization chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, as the agency called for immediate, unimpeded aid deliveries. Israel's army chief Herzi Halevi said Sunday his troops were using "significant force" in Gaza, hailing "significant achievements" in the war. The military said Sunday it had struck more than 250 targets in 24 hours, including "a Hamas military communications site", "underground tunnel shafts" in southern Gaza, and a Hamas military command centre in Shejaiya in Gaza City. It says 98 soldiers have died and around 600 wounded in the Gaza war. Some 7,000 "terrorists" have been killed, according to National Security Adviser Tzachi Hanegbi. "Hamas should not exist, because they are not human beings, after what I saw they did," Menahem, a 22-year-old soldier wounded on October 7, told AFP during a military-organised tour that did not allow him to give his surname. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said Sunday the Security Council's "authority and credibility were severely undermined" after the United States blocked a ceasefire resolution on Friday. "I can promise, I will not give up," Guterres told a leaders' gathering in Qatar. Qatar, where Hamas's top leadership is based, said it was still working on a new truce like the week-long ceasefire it helped mediate last month that saw 80 Israeli hostages exchanged for 240 Palestinian prisoners and humanitarian aid. But Israel's relentless bombardment was "narrowing the window" for success, said Qatari Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Sunday again rejected a ceasefire. "With Hamas still alive, still intact and... with the stated intent of repeating October 7 again and again, that would simply perpetuate the problem," he told CNN. But Blinken also said the United States was "deeply, deeply aware of the terrible human toll that this conflict is taking on innocent men, women and children". There are fears of regional escalation with frequent cross-border exchanges between Israel and Lebanese militants, and attacks by groups against US and allied forces in Iraq and Syria.



### Sunak Battles to Unite Divided Party in Pivotal Week

LONDON (Dispatches) - Prime Minister Rishi Sunak faces the most dangerous moment of his premiership this week, when he is due to appear before a COVID-19 inquiry and must win a crunch vote in parliament on his plan to revive a policy to send asylum seekers to Rwanda. Just over a year since he became prime minister, Sunak is struggling to maintain his authority, as politicians on both the left and the right of his Conservative Party are threatening to vote against his flagship asylum policy. Parliament will hold a first vote on Tuesday on the legislation that would override some human rights law with the intention that this would allow the first deportation flights to leave for Rwanda before a national election expected next year. The proposed law is opposed by some moderate Conservative politicians who are worried about Britain breaching its human rights obligations and also by right-wing lawmakers who want the government to go further. Both sides are taking legal advice before deciding how to vote. For Sunak, struggling to revive a weak UK economy and heavily trailing the main opposition party in opinion polls, the Rwanda policy has become the defining issue for his government, despite lawyers saying at every stage that it will not work. "The Rwanda policy has become a totemic struggle and it has liberated the factions in the Conservative Party to continue their all-out war," said Tony Travers, a politics professor at the London School of Economics. The plan was ruled unlawful by the UK's Supreme Court last month, which said genuine refugees would be at risk of being returned to their home countries where they might face potential violence or ill treatment, which would breach British and international law. The government has spent about a quarter of a billion pounds on the scheme in the hope it will deter the tens of thousands of people - including from Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq - who arrive on the south coast of England after crossing in small boats from France. In a sign of how uncertain Sunak is about the size of any parliamentary rebellion, he decided against making it a confidence vote. If Sunak had done so and lost, he would have faced calls to hold a general election. But the prime minister stands to be badly weakened if he loses any vote on the legislation. Only 29 Conservative members of parliament would need to rebel to defeat the government. Asked on Sunday if Sunak would call a snap election if the legislation failed to pass, Michael Gove, a senior government minister in charge of regional development and housing, played down the possibility.

## West African Leaders Set Conditions for Lifting Niger Sanctions

ABUJA (Dispatches) - West African leaders on Sunday kept sanctions imposed on Niger after a July military coup and said they would need to see progress towards a transition to civilian rule before easing the measures. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) leaders met for a summit with the region in crisis after coups in Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea and Niger since 2020 and two attempted coups elsewhere in recent weeks. ECOWAS commission President Omar Touray said a commission from Benin, Togo and Sierra Leone would engage with the Niger regime's CNSP leadership to decide on progress towards a short transition and other conditions for lifting sanctions. "Based on the outcomes of the engagement by the committee of heads of state with the CNSP, the authority will progressively ease the sanctions imposed on Niger," Touray said at the closing of the summit. "Failure by the CNSP to comply with the outcomes of engagement with the committee, ECOWAS shall maintain all sanctions." International attention has focussed on the region's most recent coup in Niger in July, when troops ousted President Mohamed Bazoum, prompting ECOWAS to impose tough sanctions and suspend trade. Under military rule, Niger - a key Western partner in the fight against Sahel militants - has demanded that French troops based there leave, while the US still has military personnel in the country. But recent talks with the regime in Niamey stalled. ECOWAS called for Bazoum's immediate return to power, but Niger's rulers have kept the ousted president in detention and want up to three years for a transition back to civilian rule. Touray said ECOWAS recognised the "dire humanitarian" situation in Niger, but accused the rulers in Niamey of interfering with the flow of aid that was allowed into the country. He did not say what would be considered an acceptable short transition for Niger back to civilian rule. Nigeria's President Bola Ahmed Tinubu is current chair of ECOWAS and US Assistant Secretary

of State for African Affairs Molly Phee was also at the meeting to discuss how to support Niger's return to democratic rule and Sahel security. The summit also discussed on delayed or uncertain transitions back to civilian rule and elections for Mali, Burkina Faso and Guinea. ECOWAS said it would lift travel restrictions on presidents, prime ministers and foreign ministers from those countries in transition to aid in advancing negotiations. At the summit, Tinubu called for the "re-engaging with the countries under military rule on the basis of realistic and short transition plans". Earlier this month, Nigeria said it was asking the Niger regime to free Bazoum and allow him to fly to a third country, as a step to opening talks on lifting sanctions. But Niger's military leaders rejected that option and have asked Togo's President Faure Gnassingbe to act as a mediator. Before Sunday's ECOWAS meeting, Niger's military leader General Abdourahmane Tiani and some of his ministers visited Togo on Friday to strengthen bilateral ties. "Tiani is willing to talk over the length of the transition and over the situation with Bazoum," said a Togolese diplomatic source. ECOWAS has also left on the table the last option of a military intervention in Niger though analysts say that appears increasingly unlikely. Since French troops began leaving the region, military regimes in Niger, Mali and Burkina - struggling with jihadist violence - have hardened their positions and joined forces in an "Alliance of Sahel States": "This phantom, push back-alliance appears intended to divert attention from our mutual quest for democracy and good government," Tinubu told the summit. Last month, armed attackers stormed military posts, prisons and police stations in another ECOWAS member Sierra Leone, in what the government called a coup attempt that killed 21 people. A week later Guinea-Bissau also denounced an attempted coup, with fighting between the national guard and special forces of the presidential guard.



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## Man City End Winless Run as Chelsea Crash at Everton

LONDON (Dispatches) - Manchester City survived a scare at Luton to end their four-match winless run in the Premier League with a 2-1 victory, while Chelsea's problems mounted with a 2-0 defeat at Everton. Tottenham won for the first time in six matches as Richarlison's double inspired a 4-1 rout of dismal Newcastle. With star striker Erling Haaland absent due to injury, City trailed to Elijah Adebayo's goal late in the first half at Kenilworth Road. But, after squandering a host of chances, Pep Guardiola's side finally clicked into gear with two goals in three minutes after the break. Bernardo Silva equalised and Jack Grealish bagged the winner to give City a much-needed first victory in five league matches. After their lethargic 1-0 defeat at Aston Villa on Wednesday, which followed draws with Chelsea, Liverpool and Tottenham, City were in danger of falling out of the title race. Liverpool's win at Crystal Palace on Saturday had moved the leaders seven points clear of City. But fourth-placed City responded with a gritty display to close the gap on Liverpool to four points. City still have work to do to regain control of their bid for an unprecedented fourth successive top-flight title and Haaland's fitness scare could not have come at a worse time. Haaland, who had started all of City's league matches this season, was sidelined with a foot injury that could impact his availability for the treble winners' hectic Christmas schedule. Everton continued to shrug off the impact of a 10-point deduction as victory over Chelsea took the Toffees four points clear of the relegation zone. Abdoulaye Doucoure opened the scoring at Goodison Park before Lewis Dobbin's first Everton goal imposed another damaging defeat on Chelsea boss Mauricio Pochettino. Without the penalty for breaching financial rules, which

Everton are appealing, Sean Dyche's men would be four points above Chelsea in mid-table. Pochettino shuffled his pack after a dreadful display in losing 2-1 at Manchester United in midweek. But the Argentine is struggling to solve his side's lack of a clinical edge up front, despite the club having spent £1 billion (\$1.3 billion) on new players in the past three transfer windows. Since topping the Premier League after beating Crystal Palace on October 27, Tottenham had lost four of their next five games to squander the momentum from their blistering start to the season. Ange Postecoglou's attacking tactics were branded as naive during that losing run, but the Australia stuck to his guns and was rewarded with a goal-spreed at Newcastle's expense. Destiny Udogie put Tottenham ahead in the first half in north London and Brazil striker Richarlison doubled the lead before the break. Richarlison netted again in the second half and Son Heung-min converted a late penalty as fifth-placed Tottenham moved within three points of fourth-placed Manchester City. Joellinton's goal in the final seconds was no consolation for outclassed Newcastle. "Our attacking play was as good as it has been for a while. You can see Newcastle are running on fumes. We've gone through that and hopefully we are coming out the other side," Postecoglou said. Fulham ran riot for the second time in a week as they thrashed West Ham 5-0 at Craven Cottage. Just four days after Fulham beat Nottingham Forest by the same scoreline, Marco Silva's side turned on the style again. Raul Jimenez opened the scoring to take his personal tally to four in five games. Willian and Tosin Adarabioyo netted before the interval, with Harry Wilson and Carlos Vinicius completing the London derby demolition.

## Lakers Ready to Get Back to Business After Historic NBA Cup Win



LOS ANGELES (Dispatches) - The champagne was flowing after LeBron James and Anthony Davis inspired the Los Angeles Lakers to the first-ever NBA Cup crown, but the celebrations were shortlived with the season's main goal still ahead. "We made history," James said after he and Davis led the Lakers in a dominant 123-109 victory over tournament darlings Indiana in the NBA's first in-season tournament on Saturday. "Any time you're on the right side of history, you take it." Davis spearheaded the Lakers' charge in the title game, scoring 41 points with 20 rebounds. James added 24 points and 11 rebounds and got the nod as Most Valuable Player of the tournament conceived to lend some excitement to the early stages of the long NBA regular season. James, the league's all-time leading scorer, said the Lakers' 7-0 run through the competition that began with all 30 NBA teams drawn into six groups for round-robin play showed Los Angeles have the ingredients to make a strong push in the NBA championship playoffs. However, he cautioned, it was far too soon to be talking about May and June and the chances of the Lakers adding to their 17 NBA championships - tied with the Boston Celtics for the most ever. "I think that's thinking too far down the road," James, himself owner of four championship rings, said. "We want to put it in perspective that it's still December. We like where we are right now but we want to continue to work our habits, continue to get healthy as well." But I think right now where we are in December, I would take it. I would take it, but I'm definitely not looking to May and June. "There's too many steps that need to be taken still in order for our team to be who we want to be once the post-season starts." With many of their early-season injury troubles behind them, the Lakers next turn their attention to a Tuesday regular-season clash with the Mavericks in Dallas. It's the start of a three-game Texas swing that will also feature two games in San Antonio against the Spurs and their sensational rookie Victor Wembanyama. James said their performance in the tournament, especially in quarter-finals against the Phoenix Suns and the rout of the New Orleans Pelicans in the semi-finals, showed the Lakers were getting where they need to be on the defensive end.

## Superb Girona Stun Champions Barcelona to Lead La Liga

BARCELONA (Dispatches) - Shock Spanish title contenders Girona earned a historic 4-2 win over rivals Barcelona on Sunday to move top of La Liga, with coach Michel saying he believes his team can beat any opponent. Girona defeated their Catalan rivals for the first time ever in the top flight in a pulsating battle to rise two points above Real Madrid, second, after their 1-1 draw at Real Betis on Saturday. Champions Barcelona are fourth after Atletico Madrid, third, beat Almeria earlier on, and Xavi's side trail Girona by seven points. Artem Dovbyk sent Girona ahead and after Robert Lewandowski pulled Barcelona level, Miguel Gutierrez slammed home again for the visitors. Valery Fernandez extended Girona's lead with 10 minutes remaining, before Ilkay Gundogan netted to set up a frantic finale. Veteran striker Crishtian Stuani struck from close range in stoppage time to wrap up a stunning victory which reaffirms the mimms' title dream. "We're enjoying the moment, we're in a hugely positive dynamic," Michel told reporters. "I don't know if we have the ability to win La Liga, but we are able to beat any opponent." Defeat leaves Barcelona's title defense badly dented. "They deserved it, they've got a lot of merit, they're seven points ahead of us," Xavi told DAZN. "We want to cut down the gap, this is our reality - this is a Barca under construction, although they have criticized me for (saying) it. "You take one step back to be able to take two steps forwards." Girona, part-owned by the City Football Group, were without injured key midfielder Yangel Herrera, whom they signed from Manchester City, but did not let it set them back. In La Liga for only the fourth season in their history, they played without any fear of their more illustrious neighbours and took the lead early on as the game see-sawed deliciously from end to end. The visitors split the 27-time champions open with a lethal counter-attack, with Ukrainian winger Viktor Tsygankov feeding his compatriot Dovbyk to slam home in the 12th minute. Unperturbed, Barcelona levelled quickly through Lewandowski, with the 35-year-old heading home Raphinha's corner to end a run of three matches without a goal. Former Real Madrid left-back Gutierrez, no stranger to an adventure upfield, drove into the box and cracked an early strike into the near top corner five minutes before the break. Barcelona tried to force their way back in, with Paulo Gazzaniga saving Frenkie de Jong's low effort and Raphinha sending a free-kick over the bar. Valery seemed to end Barca hopes with 10 minutes to go when Stuani headed the ball into his path, and he beat Jules Kounde with ease before firing home. However Gundogan turned well in the box and lashed past Gazzaniga to give the hosts a chance to snatch a draw. Lewandowski might have levelled but headed wide when well-placed Stuani bundled home at the death to complete a sensational night for Girona, with several of their players leaping the advertising hoardings and running towards their fans in celebration. Michel said beforehand that a win would send his team into a new dimension and there can be little doubt now they are genuine title contenders this season. Barcelona's title defense, however, is on the ropes. "We're seven points behind, which is a lot, but there's more than half a season to go," De Jong told DAZN. "There's time, but we have a lot to come back from."



## Kyrgios Pulls out of Australian Open Due to Injury



SYDNEY (Dispatches) - Nick Kyrgios has withdrawn from next month's Australian Open for a second successive year due to ongoing injuries that kept him out of action for much of the 2023 season, the Australian announced. Kyrgios pulled out of the Melbourne major this year and had surgery on his left knee. He was defeated in his comeback match following a five-month layoff, falling to China's Wu Yibing in the Stuttgart Open first round in June. The 28-year-old then missed the French Open due to a foot injury suffered during the theft of his car, and he pulled out of Wimbledon with a wrist ligament problem that also forced him out of the U.S. Open. "This is a very disappointing time for me, but I won't be able to compete at the 2024 Australian Open," Kyrgios said on the online platform OnlyFans, which he joined on Friday. "Obviously, heartbreaking. I've had so many amazing memories there, and I just want to really get back to playing at the top of my game and doing it right, and I need a little more time." "I was so close to winning a Grand Slam. I want to make sure that my body is going to have the time it needs to come back, so please bear with me." Kyrgios' injury woes began after a stellar 2022 campaign in which he reached the Wimbledon final, won the Washington title and made the quarter-finals at Flushing Meadows. He was a notable absentee from the Jan. 14-28 Australian Open's main draw released on Thursday in a blow to organisers, but is expected to be at the Grand Slam for TV commentary. Meanwhile Britain's Emma Raducanu has accepted a wildcard to play at the Auckland Classic in the New Year after missing out on one in the initial batch offered by the Australian Open. The former U.S. Open winner has had a lengthy absence from the tour following operations on both wrists and an ankle this year but hopes to be fit for the start of the 2024 season. The 21-year-old is set to return to Auckland with a protected ranking of 103 and a year on from exiting the tournament in tears after rolling her ankle during a second round match moved indoors due to wet weather. Raducanu condemned the court for being "very slippery" after retiring against Slovakian Viktoria Kuzmova, though organisers were adamant the surface was fit to play. "Despite the fact she had to retire this year, she was really happy to come back," tournament director Nicolas Lamperin told New Zealand media on Thursday. Raducanu joins a field featuring reigning champion and U.S. Open holder Coco Gauff and former world number one Caroline Wozniacki, who was given a wildcard as she continues her tour comeback after a three-year hiatus to start a family. American Amanda Anisimova was also given a wildcard and is set to return to action after pulling out of the tour in May, citing burnout and mental health concerns. Unlike former Australian Open champion Wozniacki, who won her sole Grand Slam title at Melbourne Park in 2018, Raducanu missed out on a wildcard in the initial batch announced on Wednesday for the year's first Grand Slam. Organizers will award another four for the women's singles main draw before the tournament starts Jan. 14.

## Bills Down Chiefs in Thriller, Ravens Hold Off Rams

LOS ANGELES (Dispatches) - Josh Allen and Buffalo Bills kept their NFL post-season hopes alive with a nail-biting 20-17 victory over the Kansas City Chiefs on Sunday as Baltimore held off the Los Angeles Rams to move into pole position in the AFC playoff race. A 39-yard field goal from Tyler Bass with 1min 54sec remaining sealed victory for Allen and the Bills at the Chiefs' Arrowhead Stadium in another absorbing encounter between the two rivals. The Bills survived a scare on the Chiefs' final drive, when a superbly worked touchdown which saw tight end Travis Kelce toss a lateral pass to send Kadarius Toney racing into the end zone was ruled out for offside. Instead the score was called back and Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes was unable to move the chains to leave Buffalo celebrating a win that leaves them on 7-6 and second in the AFC East. Bills quarterback Allen could not hide his relief at the disallowed touchdown that enabled Buffalo to claim a hard-fought victory. Allen threw one touchdown and rushed for another to finish with 233 passing yards from 23 completions. Opposite number Mahomes had a relatively quiet day, with one touchdown and an interception for 271 yards as the reigning Super Bowl champions fell to a second straight loss. Elsewhere Sunday, a Tylan Wallace punt return touchdown in overtime sealed a thrilling 37-31 victory for the Baltimore Ravens over the Los Angeles Rams. Wallace's 76-yard dash for glory helped the Ravens improve to an AFC-best record 10-3, boosting their chances of claiming top seeding in the NFL postseason. "I'm just happy I was able to make a difference in the game," Wallace said. "You never know when your moment's gonna come, so when it does you just take advantage of it." The walkoff touchdown was the final act of a wild game that saw the lead change hands eight times in regulation. The Rams forced overtime with a Lucas Havrisik field goal with seven seconds

remaining that tied the score at 31-31 after the Ravens had snatched the lead late in the fourth quarter thanks to a Zay Flowers touchdown and a two-point conversion to make it 31-28. Ravens quarterback Lamar Jackson finished the game 24-of-43 completions with 316 passing yards and three touchdowns with one interception. The San Francisco 49ers enhanced their reputation as Super Bowl contenders with a dominant 28-16 win over the Seattle Seahawks in Santa Clara. Quarterback Brock Purdy threw two touchdowns with 368 yards while running back Christian McCaffrey rushed for 145 yards as the Niners improved to 10-3. In Las Vegas, meanwhile, the Raiders and the Minnesota Vikings came within a whisker of the first 0-0 scoreline of the NFL's Super Bowl era before Greg Joseph's 36-yard field goal with 1:57 on the clock gave the Vikings a 3-0 victory. The result was the lowest scoring game since Pittsburgh defeated Miami by the same scoreline in 2007. The last time a game finished 0-0 after four quarters came in a 1943 arm wrestle between the New York Giants and the Detroit Lions. In other games, the Detroit Lions crashed to an upset 28-13 defeat to the Chicago Bears in their divisional battle at Soldier Field. Chicago quarterback Justin Fields threw for 223 yards with one touchdown and rushed for an 11-yard solo score late in the fourth quarter to set up the win. In Cleveland, Trevor Lawrence shrugged off a high ankle sprain to start at quarterback for Jacksonville but had a mixed outing as the Jaguars (8-5) slumped to a 31-27 loss to the Browns, who improved to 8-5. At East Rutherford, New York Jets quarterback Zach Wilson brushed off his critics with two touchdowns and 301 yards in a 30-6 rout of the Houston Texans. Texans rookie sensation quarterback C.J. Stroud had a day to forget, finishing with just 91 yards and no touchdowns. He was sacked four times and ended up in concussion protocol.

