

Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Andrey Rudenko Held Talks With the Director-General for International Legal Affairs of the Iranian Foreign Ministry Ali Mousavi Where Both Sides Reviewed the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Between the Two States

IRAN NEWS

An Iranian Diplomat, Addressing UNSC Session on Cybersecurity, Rejected the Baseless Accusations Raised by Albania and the Israeli Regime of Iran's Support for Cyberattacks

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Israel Will Be the Ultimate Loser in War With Hezbollah



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran has warned Israel about the consequences of waging an all-out war on Lebanon's Hezbollah resistance group.

Iran's mission to the UN said in a statement on Friday that Israel would be the "ultimate loser" of any military action against Lebanon.

"Undoubtedly, this war will have one ultimate loser, which is the Zionist regime. The Lebanese resistance movement, Hezbollah, has the capability to defend itself and Lebanon - perhaps the time for the self-annihilation of this illegitimate regime has come," Iran's mission to the United Nations said. The statement said Hezbollah is capable of defending both itself and Lebanon.

It also warned that any action by Israel against Lebanon could plunge the region into a new conflict. "Any imprudent decision by the occupying Israeli regime to save itself could plunge the region into a new war, the consequence of which would be the destruction of Lebanon's infrastructure as well as that of the 1948 occupied territories," the statement noted. In a statement, the movement said it attacked the Ras al-Naqura site, "accurately" hitting buildings used by Israeli officers and soldiers, causing confirmed casualties and destroying part of the site.

The Israeli regime and Hezbollah have been exchanging fire along Lebanon's southern border almost on a daily basis since the Gaza onslaught began on October 7.

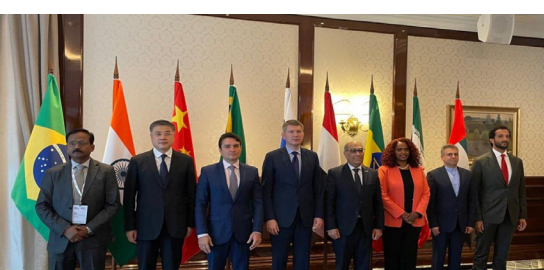
The tensions have flared over the past week especially after Israel killed a senior Hezbollah commander last week.

The exchange of fire has intensified following the Israeli assassination of senior Hezbollah commander Sami Taleb Abdallah.

The movement has retaliated by firing hundreds of rockets into the northern parts of the occupied territories.

Hezbollah says its operations are meant to support the Gaza resistance and to put pressure on the regime to stop the genocide in Gaza, which has so far left over 37,400 Gazans dead, most of them women and children.

Tourism Roadmap for BRICS Countries Signed



TEHRAN - Ministers and officials from the BRICS group of emerging economies signed a tourism roadmap for member countries for the years 2024 to 2026, concluding their two-day meeting on Friday in Moscow.

This meeting, considered the first BRICS Tourism Forum, featured in-person and video conference participation from officials representing the Islamic Republic of Iran, Russia, China, India, Brazil, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, and the United Arab Emirates. The Director-General of the Foreign Tourism Marketing and Development Office of Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism shared his views on developing tourism cooperation among BRICS countries via video conference.

The BRICS tourism roadmap was approved by officials from the member countries, focusing on six main areas: developing direct contacts between tourism organizations of member countries, exchanging tourists, and mutually introducing tourism attractions. The roadmap also emphasizes the need for innovation in tourism services, developing skills related to the tourism industry, and promoting sustainable tourism among BRICS countries.

Moslem Shojai, head of the Foreign Tourism Marketing and Development Office at the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, in the event, called for mutual visa waivers among BRICS member states.

Speaking online at the First BRICS Tourism Forum in Moscow, Shojai said the Islamic Republic of Iran has already canceled tourist visa requirements for 6 out of 10 BRICS member countries.

"We should help and encourage our airlines to increase the number of direct flights between the countries," he added.

Emphasizing the importance of the private sector for the development of tourism among the BRICS member states, he said that the more the tour operators are familiar with each other, the more tourists will be exchanged between the BRICS members.



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

Leader Advises Presidential Hopefuls Against Enemy-Pleasing Comments

TEHRAN - Supreme Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has advised the presidential candidates to refrain from making comments that would please the enemies.

Ayatollah Khamenei offered the advice during a meeting with the Judiciary chief and top judicial officials on Saturday to mark the National Day of the Judiciary.

He referred to the election campaign underway ahead of the June 28 presidential vote, including a series of TV debates and programs that involve the six hopefuls taking questions in different political, economic, social and cultural aspects to elaborate on their plans to administer the country.

Ayatollah Khamenei noted that the platforms given to the candidates are good and help people know more about the hopefuls.

"My advice is that these discussions that the candidates have together on TV or the statements they make either in public or individually in order to overcome the rival should not contain anything that makes our enemies happy," the Leader said.

"The words that are uttered should not please the enemy of the country, the nation and the system. This is not permissible," he added.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the Leader also advised Judiciary officials to uphold justice courageously and without any considerations.

Ayatollah Khamenei stated that the Judiciary must work in a way that the public would see it as the house of justice and the place where rights are preserved.

"The judicial system's main purpose must be to work bravely to ensure that justice is served, without having discrimination or privileges for any figure and that is a difficult role," he said.

Ayatollah Khamenei expressed concern over the slow pace of processing cases involving detainees, resulting in prolonged temporary detentions, and said: The status of such individuals should be resolved sooner to prevent anyone from enduring the hardships of prison due to delayed case processing.

The Leader also referred to the unresolved issue of some debt-ridden prisoners and added: Some individuals, even if they remain in prison for their entire lives, do not have the ability to repay their debts, and this problem must be addressed.

He emphasized that judges should rely on domestic laws and not Western human rights sources, continue field inspections by the head of the judiciary, and follow up on the encouraging decisions made during these visits.

In summarizing this part of his speech, he said: Act in such a way that public opinion regards the judiciary as a house of justice and a center for the impartial enforcement of rights.

Iran Emphasizes 7 Key Points to Strengthen Joint Cooperation in the SCO

TEHRAN - Energy Minister Ali-Akbar Mehrabian, at the fourth meeting of energy ministers of SCO member countries, emphasized that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is one of the most important and effective regional pacts with international influence. He stated that this organization plays a special role in regional and global economic and security development and is a pioneer in promoting multilateralism globally.

Mehrabian referred to Iran's membership in this organization, mentioning that Iran joined the SCO in 2021 through the efforts of the late President "Seyed Ebrahim Raisi," whose memory, along with that of the respected Foreign Minister "Amir-Abdollahian," he honored.

Mehrabian continued: The late President Raisi believed that the SCO symbolizes the great civilizational family of the ancient continent of Asia, with its greatest capacity being the creation of peace. It stands in a position to lay the foundations for new horizons of regional convergence and security-building cooperation based on values such as justice, spirituality, and respect for human dignity. Emphasizing convergence in the energy sector within the SCO will significantly contribute to greater economic development, reduced security and economic costs, and regional and transregional stability.

The minister then outlined the key points discussed in this SCO meeting: As a member with the world's largest oil and gas reserves, Iran believes that all countries, whether energy consumers or producers, are suffering from the instability of the current energy supply and demand system.

He stated that it is essential for SCO members to develop cooperation in the energy sector through their initiatives. Iran, as a founding and influential



member of OPEC and the Gas Exporting Countries Forum, is ready to create necessary convergence to ensure energy security for SCO member countries.

Mehrabian emphasized the importance of mutual experiences in human capital training, creating new financial mechanisms for energy interactions to facilitate and speed up bilateral and multilateral financial transactions, involving private sectors in member countries to initiate and complete priority energy projects, and expanding the export of technical and engineering services.

He stressed the vital role of energy, especially electricity, as a driving force for development, economic and social growth, quality of life improvement, and environmental protection. He pointed out that SCO member countries could guarantee energy and electricity security through effective cooperation frameworks.

He then called for the following 7 key points for strengthening cooperation among the SCO: Creating a Regional Electricity Market; Enhancing Energy Security; Developing Electric Desalination Capacity; Promoting Energy Storage and Electric Vehicles; Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions; Exchanging Technical Knowledge and Services; and Trading Technical and Engineering Services.

Mehrabian concluded with hopes that these points would strengthen cooperation and solidarity among SCO member countries, leading to sustainable growth and development in the energy sector. He suggested creating mechanisms like an "Energy Technology Development and Exchange Platform" to position the SCO as a global leader in technology and innovation.

Iran Raps Use of Cyber Advances as UCMs



TEHRAN (Tasnim) - Iran's UN envoy took a swipe at the countries that employ information and communications technology (ICT) advances as tools for economic, political, or other coercive measures, stressing that the ICT environment must be used exclusively for peaceful purposes.

Saeed Iravani delivered a speech at a meeting of the UN Security Council on "Addressing the Evolving Threat in Cyberspace", held in New York on June 20.

In his speech, Iravani said: Information communication and technology (ICT) has become an integral part of global communication, business, and governance, offering numerous opportunities while at the same time introducing evolving threats. Addressing evolving threats in the ICT environment requires a multifaceted approach encompassing technological, legal, and cooperative strategies."

He added: "Iran has been the primary target and main victim of numerous cyberattacks on its infrastructure, significantly disrupting public services and governmental functions. Clear examples include the Stuxnet and Duqu attacks on Iran's peaceful nuclear facilities, as well as cyberattacks on critical industrial infrastructures such as steel, petrochemical industries, and gas stations."

He noted: "These malicious activities highlighted the potential for ICT environments to be weaponized to inflict damage on the infrastructures of states."

He reiterated: "The primary responsibility for maintaining secure, safe, and trustworthy ICT rests with individual states. The prominent role and active involvement of states in the ICT environment governance at the global level, especially in policy and decision-making, must be enhanced and ensured. ICT governance should be developed in a manner that does not adversely affect the rights of states to determine their own development, governance, and legislation concerning the ICT environment. States must act responsibly and in accordance with fundamental principles of international law, particularly the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations."

He concluded: "We strongly believe that the ICT environment must be used exclusively for peaceful purposes. To this end, the UN must continue its central role through the OEWG (Open-ended Working Group) to develop legally binding obligations to prevent the use of ICTs for malicious purposes and maintain this domain for exclusive purposes."

U.S. Sanctions Hampering Care for Afghan Refugees in Iran



TEHRAN (Tasnim) - The Iranian ambassador to the United Nations deplored the illegal US sanctions and the lack of international aid as the factors that have impaired Iran's ability to manage the influx of Afghan refugees and drugs single-handedly.

Addressing a UN Security Council meeting on the situation in Afghanistan, held in New York on Friday, Saeed Iravani called on the international community to provide swift, sufficient, and continuous support to Iran in hosting Afghan refugees. "Afghanistan continues to face severe economic and humanitarian crises, worsened by a significant reduction in international aid. This situation is profoundly affecting many people, particularly women and children. The Secretary-General's report (S/2024/469) estimates that 23.7 million Afghans will need humanitarian assistance in 2024," he said. "However, by May 15, only 16.2% of the required \$3.06 billion had been raised to help 17.3 million people. This instability affects neighboring countries, highlighting the need for regional and international cooperation and engagement," Iravani added. "Iran remains committed to supporting Afghanistan, keeping its borders open to Afghan displaced and refugees during critical times and challenges the Afghan people faced, and hosting more than six million Afghans at an annual cost of 10 billion dollars despite sanctions. Iran has provided education to 700,000 Afghan students residing in Iran," the envoy stated.

IRAN NEWS



Some Iranians Among People Drowned Following Shipwreck Off Italy

TEHRAN (IFP) - The Iranian Embassy in Rome has confirmed reports that some Iranian nationals are among those who drowned in Italy in a boat incident. The diplomatic mission offered some explanations regarding the presence of Iranian nationals on a boat carrying refugees that wrecked off Italy. The Iranian Embassy said that after being notified of the possible presence of some Iranians on the boat of refugees, it took necessary actions including coordinating with the Foreign Ministry, the Interior Ministry, and the Coast Guard of Italy to obtain accurate information about the situation of the migrants and it's now getting updated on an hourly basis by the governor's office of Calabria. The Iranian Embassy added that according to the announcement of some families, unfortunately, a number of drowned people are Iranian nationals.

\$2b of Gasoline Predicted to Imported in 2024



TEHRAN - Gholamreza Dehghan Nasrabadi, a member of the Islamic Consultative Assembly, told Tasnim News Agency: "Currently, about 80% of the country's energy consumption basket is dependent on gas. This means that if there are any issues in gas supply, such as declining gas fields or any other problems, the country's energy supply will face serious challenges."

He added: "This issue can disrupt the production of major industries such as petrochemicals, steel, and cement, leading to increased foreign currency expenditure and decreased foreign currency income. Examples of this issue and its results have been evident in recent years."

The representative of Kazeroun and Koochenar in the 12th Parliament emphasized: "The approximately \$1.7 billion loss in the petrochemical and steel industries last year due to gas supply cuts to major industries is one of the consequences of the gas imbalance during the four cold months of the year."

He continued: "The imbalance in the energy sector is not limited to gas alone. We also have imbalances in gasoline, diesel, and electricity. Given the current gasoline consumption trend in the country, it is predicted that this year we will have more than \$2 billion in gasoline imports, which is approximately equivalent to the cost of building a refinery with a capacity of 100,000 barrels per day."

Dehghan Nasrabadi stated: "The energy imbalance issue has two major risks for the country. One is that the country's energy security will be jeopardized, and the second is that industrial production will decrease, leading to reduced foreign currency income and increased expenditure. Therefore, if we fall behind in addressing the energy imbalance, we will face more of these consequences in the near future. Hence, the primary priority in the energy sector should be resolving the energy imbalance issue, which should be specially reviewed and pursued in the Islamic Consultative Assembly."



Connecting Uzbekistan's Power Grid to Turkmenistan, Iran Facilitates Regional Electricity Exchange

TEHRAN - Energy Minister Ali Akbar Mehrabian on the sidelines of the fourth meeting of energy ministers from Shanghai Cooperation Organization member countries, met with Mahmoud Zhurabek, Uzbekistan's Minister of Energy. Mehrabian thanked the President of Uzbekistan for his commitment to bilateral cooperation in the energy sector and expressed readiness to expand cooperation between the two countries.

He announced the readiness of the Islamic Republic of Iran to develop cooperation, particularly in the export of technical and engineering services, as well as the supply of energy sector equipment to Uzbekistan.

The Minister of Energy mentioned that Uzbekistan has a growing economy and highlighted energy as the most important aspect of development in the country.

Mehrabian emphasized Iran's capabilities in manufacturing equipment for electricity generation, transmission, and distribution, stating: "Iranian equipment manufacturing factories are ready to cooperate with Uzbekistan at competitive prices."

He noted: "If Uzbekistan's power grid is connected to Turkmenistan's power grid, the exchange of electricity with Uzbekistan and the management of peak consumption in summer and winter will be possible. In this meeting, Mahmoud Zhurabek, Uzbekistan's Minister of Energy, expressed condolences on the martyrdom of the President of Iran and said: "Following our visit to Iran, we seek close cooperation with Iran. Considering the proposal for cooperation with the Iranian side, we are striving for bilateral cooperation and joining Uzbekistan's power grid to Iran's through Turkmenistan to manage peak consumption in summer and winter.""

Iran-Tajikistan Trade Exchange Increases Fivefold

TEHRAN - Energy Minister stated that the volume of relations between Iran and regional countries, including Tajikistan, had decreased in the past. However, with the approach of the thirteenth government, these relations have developed, and now the volume of exchanges between Iran and Tajikistan has increased fivefold.

In the margins of the fourth meeting of energy ministers of the member countries of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, during a meeting with Daler Juma, the Minister of Energy and Water Resources of Tajikistan, Iranian Energy Minister Ali Akbar Mehrabian noted that the volume of relations between Iran and regional countries, including Tajikistan, had previously decreased. He added that the late president was eager to develop Iran's relations with regional countries and had a significant belief in expanding these relations.

He mentioned that relations between Iran and Tajikistan have increased fivefold and emphasized that the late president's first trip after being elected was to Tajikistan.

Mehrabian invited the Tajik Minister of Energy to attend the upcoming Water Board of Governors meeting in Tehran and said that the important water meeting recently held in Dushanbe was very successful, and it is necessary to follow up on its results.

The Minister of Energy continued, stating that the Iranian Water Research Institute is ready to transfer its experiences, especially regarding the management of melting glaciers in Tajikistan.

Mehrabian highlighted the active role of Iranian companies in advancing the construction of the Rogun Dam, adding that Iranian technical and engineering companies, with their experience and knowledgeable and skilled workforce, can actively participate in various water and electricity projects in Tajikistan if supported.

He referred to the history of the Farab Company in Tajikistan, noting that Farab is one of the successful companies in exporting



technical and engineering services. Recently, following this company's activities in Sri Lanka, the large Uma Oya project was inaugurated.

Mehrabian stated that continuing this cooperation, Farab Company, alongside other Iranian companies, can have an effective presence in advancing the Rogun Dam project.

He also emphasized addressing the issues and problems faced by cooperating companies in Tajikistan's water and electricity projects.

The Tajik Minister of Energy and Water Resources, during this meeting, acknowledged the presence of millions at the funeral of the late Iranian president, Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi, and stated that Ayatollah Raisi was a great figure whose loss is a significant misfortune.

Dalir Juma, presenting a report on the important water conference in Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan, mentioned that the melting of natural glaciers in Tajikistan was one of the issues and concerns raised at this conference.

He emphasized that Iran's security and growth are directly linked to global security and growth and stressed the development of relations between Iran and Tajikistan.

Dalir Juma continued, stating that Iranian experts have valuable experience in the management of natural glaciers and, therefore, Tajikistan welcomes the continuation and development of cooperation with Iranian companies.

He added that they are aiming to accelerate the progress of the Rogun Dam, noting that more than 70% of the progress in some sections of the Rogun Dam has been achieved by Iranian companies. Considering the competitiveness of Iranian companies in advancing projects, Tajikistan welcomes their presence.

Dispatch of Trade Delegation to Egypt

TEHRAN - Mohammad Reza Safari, Acting Head of the Africa Office at the Trade Promotion Organization, highlighted an overview of the latest status of Iran-Africa trade.

He said that in 2023, the value of Iran's exports to African countries was \$695 million, and the value of Iran's imports from the continent was \$96 million. From these totals, the value of Iran's exports to North African countries was \$60 million, and the value of imports from this region was \$1 million.

He added that among African countries, Ghana, South Africa, Tanzania, and Kenya have the most trade exchanges with Iran. Among North African countries, Algeria, Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia have more trade exchanges with Iran compared to other countries in the region.

Safari mentioned that urea fertilizer, iron ingots, and bitumen are the main goods exported from Iran to Africa, while seafood, tobacco, precious stones, tea, and animal feed corn constitute the majority of Iran's imports from Africa.

The Acting Head of the Africa Office emphasized that the average value of Iran-Africa trade in recent years has been around \$1 billion. This value has been achieved despite the fact that in 2022, the total trade turnover of all African countries was \$1,400 billion; \$725 billion of this amount was imports to Africa, and \$677 billion was exports from these countries.

He noted that Iranian traders lack precise knowledge about Africa and have an underlying fear regarding this continent, believing that there is no investment security in Africa. Thus, they choose Africa as an export destination only when no other options are available. Conversely, the African side also does not have an accurate understanding of Iran.

Safari recalled that at the Iran-Africa summit this year, Iran hosted guests from more than 30 African countries. These guests included

government officials and African traders. Some of them, visiting Iran for the first time, had the perception that Iran's technological advancements and infrastructure were weaker than what they observed.

He spoke about the significant activity of Iranian trade counselors in South Africa and Algeria and the establishment of 12 Iranian trade centers in Africa.

Safari added that direct transit of goods from Iran to East African countries is possible, and efforts are being made to enable this for North African countries as well. Additionally, efforts are underway to establish direct flights with countries having significant trade with Iran.

He reported significant activities by China, the UAE, and Turkey in Africa, and added that Africa has rich mineral resources that can supply Iran with raw mineral materials. This continent also has abundant water and fertile lands but suffers from weak agricultural mechanization and infrastructure, thus having the potential for overseas farming.

He emphasized that Africa is a good market for Iran's oil and petrochemical products and has a high demand for pharmaceuticals produced in Iran. Additionally, Iran can be an attractive destination for tourists from Africa seeking medical services.

In response to a question about the requirements to strengthen Iran-Egypt trade, Safari stated that the development of economic relations necessitates the enhancement of political relations, which is crucial for strengthening trade between Iran and Egypt. For this reason, Iran plans to dispatch a trade delegation to Egypt in January of this year. In line with this, the trade ministers of both countries met on the sidelines of the World Trade Organization meeting in the UAE.



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

Tehran, Minsk Ready to Cooperate in Gas Turbine Production



TEHRAN - Energy Minister Ali Akbar Mehrabian on the sidelines of the fourth meeting of the energy ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization member countries, met with the Belarusian Minister of Energy. He highlighted the special emphasis of the martyred President on developing relations with regional countries, especially Belarus, and said, "The relationship between Iran and Belarus is an excellent one on a political level. These relations have always been expanding under various Iranian governments."

He continued, "Belarus is an advanced country in terms of industry and technological level, with significant capabilities in electronics, mining machinery, and various equipment."

Mehrabian pointed out that Iran is also an advanced country that has seen remarkable growth in the industrial sector since the revolution, and stated, "Economic relations between Iran and Belarus need strengthening."

He added, "We are ready to cooperate with Belarus in the field of gas turbines, including sales and after-sales services."

Viktor Karankevich, the Belarusian Energy Minister, expressed condolences on the martyrdom of the Iranian President and said, "Belarus is developing its energy network, with development processes overseen by the President and the government of Belarus."

Referring to the Belarusian nuclear power plant, he added, "With the launch of this plant, energy security in Belarus has been ensured, maintaining the country's energy independence by producing the necessary energy domestically."

He continued, "This power plant has provided an incentive to diversify energy supply and benefit from the electricity generated by it."

Iran, Pakistan to Continue Cooperation



TEHRAN (IP) - Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz and Mohammed Nawaz Sharif the President of Pakistan Muslim League (N), expressed grief over the martyrdom of Iranian President Syed Ibrahim Raisi. On this occasion, Mian Nawaz Sharif said, "He feels the sorrow of the people of Iran over the martyrdom of Iranian President Syed Ibrahim Raisi, the Foreign Minister Hussain Ameer Abdullahian, and his companions".

Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz also expressed her views and said, "The meeting with the martyred Iranian President Syed Ibrahim Raisi was memorable, his personality was impressive and she had a useful discussion with the late President Syed Ibrahim Raisi".

On this occasion, the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran Raza Amiri Moghadam said that we are grateful to the people of Pakistan, as they paid their full right to friendship and stood by their Iranian brothers in time of grief.

Iran's Ambassador added: "Pakistan is very important for Iran and the agreements and MoUs signed during Martyred President Ibrahim Raisi's visit will continue."

In the meeting, matters of mutual interest such as trade, cultural, economic, and social relations were discussed, while the proposal to make the Pakistan-Iran border of security into the border of the economy was agreed in principle.

Furthermore, in the meeting, the possibilities of cooperation between Iran and Punjab in agriculture, livestock, and other sectors were reviewed, and it was agreed to increase Iran's import of meat from Punjab from 40% to 70%.

There was a detailed discussion on the commercial role of Punjab in the agreement to increase mutual trade between Pakistan and Iran to 10 billion dollars. Various proposals were also considered for the promotion of the Persian language in Punjab.

Both sides agreed to further increase the cultural links between the twin cities of Isfahan, Mashhad and Lahore.

On this occasion, Iranian Ambassador Raza Amiri Moghadam invited both dignities to visit Iran.

Barcelona Aims to Become Airbnb-Free Zone by 2029

BARCELONA (Dispatches) - Barcelona, one of Europe's most visited cities, said Friday it aims to ban apartment rentals to tourists by 2029 to ease the housing shortage in Spain's second largest city. The licences for the 10,101 apartments currently approved as short-term rentals which are available on platforms such as Airbnb and Homeaway will not be renewed when they expire in November 2028, Barcelona's leftist mayor, Jaume Collboni, told a news conference.

"The city cannot allow such a large number of flats to be used for tourist activity at a time of difficulty of access to housing and when the negative effects of tourist overcrowding are obvious", he added. This means that "from 2029", if there are no setbacks, "tourist flats as we conceive of them today will disappear from the city of Barcelona".

Cities like Berlin, Paris and Barcelona say home-sharing websites for tourists deprive locals of apartments for long-term rent and push up prices for homes remaining on the market.



Far-Right Rise Risks Return of "the Wild State"



STRASBOURG (Dispatches) - The rise of far-right parties in several countries is pulling Europe towards a "wild state", but the outgoing head of the Council of Europe said Friday she did not believe Britain and France would leave the body after looming elections. Marjia Pejcinovic Buric, who will stand down as secretary general of the rights body in September, said that despite criticism of the 46-nation institution by British and French right wingers, Europe had no alternative to taking a "multilateral" path to solve its problems. "We see very well in Europe and around the world that there are nationalist extremists, populists and anti-rights movements who are pulling the world, or Europe, into a wild state," the former Croatian foreign minister told reporters. Buric highlighted how the creation of the Council in 1949 had followed two devastating wars and said there was "no alternative" to multilateral action. "It is not without reason that after the two big wars in Europe, it was decided that the multilateral path, multilateral cooperation, was the path to take," she said. Russia was excluded from the council after its 2022 invasion of Ukraine. And calls have been made in Britain and France, which will each hold national elections in coming weeks, to withdraw from the European Court of Human Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights. But Buric said it was hard to believe that the two key countries would leave the council.

"It is easier to attack international bodies or human rights defence organs, but I hope that when the elections have passed we will hear more reasonable voices that exist in these two countries," Buric said. Buric said that increased anti-Semitism reported across Europe was one of the "different faces of the democratic retreat" in the continent. "One would never believe... that with all that has happened to the Jewish people that this could happen again on European soil," she said.

Israel Continues Genocide in Gaza, Killing Dozens



CAIRO (Dispatches) - Israeli forces pounded Rafah in southern Gaza, as well as other areas across the enclave, killing at least 45 Palestinians as troops engaged in close-quarter combat with Hamas militants, residents and Israel's military said.

Residents said the Israelis appeared to be trying to complete their capture of Rafah, which borders Egypt and has been the focus of an Israeli assault since early May.

Tanks were forcing their way into the western and northern parts of the city, having already captured the east, south and centre.

Firing from planes, tanks and ships off the coast caused more people to flee the city, which a few months ago was sheltering more than a million displaced people, most of whom have now relocated again.

The Gaza health ministry said at least 25 Palestinians had been killed in Mawasi in western Rafah and 50 wounded. Palestinians said a tank shell hit a tent housing displaced families.

"Two tanks climbed a hilltop overseeing Mawasi and they sent balls of fire that hit the tents of the poor people displaced in the area," one resident told Reuters over a chat app.

The Israeli military said that the incident was under review. "An initial inquiry conducted suggests that there is no indication that a strike was carried out by the IDF (Israel Defence Forces) in the Humanitarian Area in Al-Mawasi," it said.

Earlier, the military said its forces were conducting "precise, intelligence-based" actions in the Rafah area, where troops were involved in close-quarter combat and had located tunnels used by militants.

Over the past week, the military said, troops targeted a university that served as a Hamas headquarters from which militants fired on soldiers and found weapons and barrel bombs. It did not name the university.

In the central Gaza area of Nusseirat, the military said soldiers killed dozens of militants over the past week and found a weapons depot containing mortar bombs and military equipment belonging to Hamas.

Some residents said the Israeli onslaught on Rafah had intensified in the previous two days and that the sounds of explosions and gunfire had hardly stopped.

More than eight months into the war in Gaza, Israel's advance is now focused on the two last areas its forces had yet to seize: Rafah on Gaza's southern edge and the area surrounding Deir al-Balah in the centre.

Palestinian and UN figures show that fewer than 100,000 people may have remained in the far western side of the city, which had been sheltering more than half of Gaza's 2.3 million people before the Israeli assault began in early May.

In nearby Khan Younis, an Israeli air strike yesterday killed three people, including a father and son, medics said.

In parallel, Israeli forces continued a new push back into some Gaza City suburbs in the north of the enclave, where they fought with Hamas-led militants.

On Friday, an Israeli air strike on a Gaza City municipal facility killed five people, including four municipal workers, the territory's Civil Emergency Service said. Rescue teams were searching the rubble for more missing victims.

In the nearby Beach camp, an Israeli air strike on a house killed at least seven people, medics said.

Palestinian health officials said at least 45 Palestinians were killed in Israeli strikes across Gaza on Friday.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said its Gaza office was damaged when heavy-calibre projectiles landed nearby, in an area where hundreds of displaced Palestinians are living in tents.

"This grave security incident is one of several in recent days; previously stray bullets have reached ICRC structures," the organisation said in a post on X on Friday. "We decry these incidents that put the lives of humanitarians and civilians at risk."

The United Nations said it is Israel's responsibility — as the occupying power in the Gaza Strip — to restore public order and safety in the Palestinian territory so humanitarian aid can be delivered, amid warnings of imminent famine.

Russia Must Uphold North Korea Sanctions

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Russia must abide by United Nations sanctions on North Korea, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said after the two countries this week deepened ties and agreed to provide immediate military assistance if either faces armed aggression.

The pact — signed by Russian President Vladimir Putin and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un on Wednesday — follows US accusations that Pyongyang has been transferring weapons to Russia for use against Ukraine, which it invaded in February 2022. Both Moscow and Pyongyang have denied the accusations.

The UN Security Council will meet June 28 on North Korea, diplomats said, at the request of the US, France, Britain, South Korea and Japan, who want to discuss weapons transfers by Pyongyang in violation of council resolutions.

Formally known as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), North Korea has been under UN sanctions since 2006 for its nuclear and ballistic missile programs, and those measures have been strengthened over the years — with Russia's support.

"There are sanctions approved by the Security Council in relation to the DPRK," Guterres told reporters on Friday. "Any relationship that any country has with DPRK, including the Russian Federation, must entirely abide by those sanctions."

Russia's mission to the United Nations declined to comment on Guterres' remarks. For the past several years the 15-member Security Council has been divided over how to deal with Pyongyang. Russia and China say more sanctions will not help and want such measures to be eased. They proposed some sanctions be lifted in December 2019 but have never put their draft resolution to a vote.

In May 2022, the pair vetoed a US-led push to impose more UN sanctions on North Korea over its renewed ballistic missile launches. Russia then vetoed in March the renewal of a panel of experts monitoring enforcement of UN sanctions.

Before the panel disbanded at the end of April, three of the experts travelled to Ukraine and — in a report to the Security Council seen by Reuters — determined that the debris from a missile that landed in the Ukrainian city of Kharkiv on January 2 was from a North Korean Hwasong-11 series ballistic missile.

China and Russia say joint military drills by the United States and South Korea provoke Pyongyang, while Washington accuses Beijing and Moscow of emboldening North Korea by shielding it from more sanctions.



Russia Sets Condition for Talks With U.S.

MOSCOW (Dispatches) - Russia sees a pressing need for security talks with the United States but they must be "comprehensive" and include the subject of Ukraine, the Kremlin said on Friday.

"It is impossible to rip out any individual segments from the general complex of accumulated problems, and we will not do this," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said when asked if Moscow was ready to talk to Washington about nuclear risks.

"So we are open to dialogue, but to a broad comprehensive dialogue that covers all dimensions, including the current dimension related to the conflict around Ukraine, related to the direct involvement of the USA in this conflict," Peskov told reporters.

The United States rejects Russia's contention that by arming Ukraine it has become a direct protagonist in a war aimed at inflicting a crushing "strategic defeat" on Moscow. The U.S. says any negotiations over the war are a matter for Ukraine.

The Russian stance, as outlined by Peskov, is not new. But he told reporters that the list of topics that Russia and the United States needed to discuss was growing.

France's New Left-Wing Alliance Unveils Ambitious Economic Program



PARIS (Dispatches) - The left-wing New Popular Front coalition announced in a joint press conference Friday just how much its ambitious economic program is going to cost — and how it's going to fund it. But for a left fighting against decades of neoliberal economic orthodoxy, convincing voters that alternatives are possible could prove an uphill struggle. The bombardment has begun.

"Unfunded gifts", a "major risk" of "long-term stagnation" in the French economy, a "total delusion", "dangerous" propositions. Whether coming from President Emmanuel Macron, Prime Minister Gabriel Attal, Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire, the Movement of the Enterprises of France (MEDEF) employers' association or non-stop TV talking heads, a hefty part of France's political and

media landscape has been blasting the economic program put forward by the left-wing New Popular Front (NFP) this week.

As programs go, it's ambitious. The NFP — a coalition of left-wing parties including Jean-Luc Mélenchon's France Unbowed, the Socialist Party, the French Communist Party and the Greens — plans to raise the monthly minimum wage to €1,600, impose price ceilings on essential foods, electricity, gas and petrol, repeal Macron's deeply unpopular decision to raise the retirement age to 64 and invest massively in the green transition and public services. Critics accuse the bloc's policies of being costly, uncoded or even, to borrow Attal's words at the launch of his own coalition's program launch Thursday, a "fiscal drubbing".

"It's a strategy designed to scare people," France Unbowed's Éric Coquerel, the former president of the National Assembly's finance committee, said. "When the left has the capacity to govern the country, we lose count of the slanders levelled against us. It's classic. It happened in 1981 [with Socialist François Mitterand's victory] when people said that Russian tanks were going to roll into Paris. It happened in 1997 [with the victory of the 'Plural Left' in legislative elections and

the cohabitation of right-wing President Jacques Chirac and Socialist Prime Minister Lionel Jospin], with very violent attacks from the MEDEF head at the time — and now it's the same. We're witnessing an accumulation of fake news and caricatures of what we're proposing." The NFP has moved quickly to show the public that its numbers add up. During the bloc's first three years in government, officials from the left-wing parties said in a joint press conference Friday, public revenues would rise first by €30 billion in 2024 — through a tax on companies' super-profits and a restored wealth tax — to an increase of €100 billion in 2025 and €150 billion in 2026. This increase in revenue through taxation, they said, would cover the cost of the substantial increase in government spending the coalition was proposing — some €150 billion by 2026-2027. They stressed the program would not increase France's deficit — though it wouldn't reduce it, either.

By proposing a complete break with Macron's program, the NFP is launching a direct assault on the established economic order. And not just in France — for four decades, neoliberal economic orthodoxy has reigned across much of the Western world.



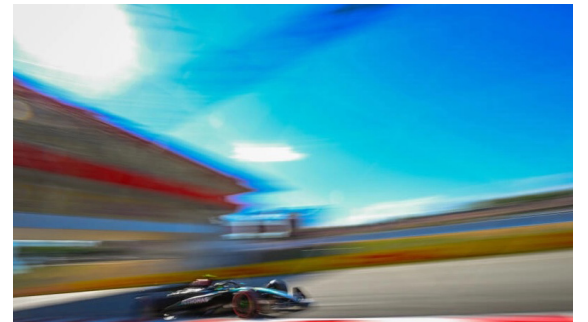
France, Netherlands Produce Euro 2024's First Goalless Draw

BERLIN (Dispatches) - France and the Netherlands edged towards the last 16 of Euro 2024 after a 0-0 draw in Leipzig that failed to catch fire in the absence of Kylian Mbappe. The French captain sat out the whole match from the bench after breaking his nose in France's opening 1-0 win over Austria just four days ago. Xavi Simons had a goal controversially ruled out for the Dutch, while Antoine Griezmann wasted two glorious chances for France. A share of the spoils leaves the sides level on four points at the top of Group D, one ahead of Austria who beat Poland 3-1 earlier on Friday. France take on the Poles, while the Netherlands face Austria in the final games of the section on Tuesday. Les Bleus had won both meetings when these sides met in qualifying but Mbappe scored four of France's six goals in those games. Roared on by an orange wall around two-thirds of the Leipzig Stadium, the Dutch nearly pounced on any French uncertainty within a minute. The explosive pace of Jeremie Frimpong took him clear on goal but the Bayer Leverkusen man could not produce a clean finish and Mike Maignan turned his shot behind.

Aurelien Tchouameni replaced Mbappe in France's only change as coach Didier Deschamps sought the security of an extra midfielder. Without their captain and talisman, the 2022 World Cup finalists turned to Griezmann for inspiration. The stand-in skipper stung the palms of Bart Verbruggen from distance. But the Atletico Madrid forward had a moment to forget with the biggest chance to open the scoring before half-time. An intricate move played in Adrien Rabiot but when he decided to pass rather than shoot, Griezmann failed to connect on his weaker right foot. At the other end, Maignan had to produce another fine save low to his left to turn Cody Gakpo's drive behind. France had the better chances in the second period. Marcus Thuram fizzed a shot just wide from the edge of the area before Tchouameni could not keep a header down. The normally reliable Griezmann was guilty of another big miss when his weak effort was turned behind by Verbruggen with the goal gaping.



Hamilton Tops Barcelona Practice



BARCELONA (Dispatches) - Lewis Hamilton topped practice for the Spanish Grand Prix after his Mercedes boss railed against "lunatic" claims the team were sabotaging the Ferrari-bound seven-time champion's car. Hamilton, who won his 103rd and last Grand Prix in December, 2021, led a finely-balanced second session with the reigning three-time champion Max Verstappen only fifth for Red Bull. Sunday's race is the first of a triple header as Formula One returns to Europe where Verstappen was generally expected to reassert his superiority after missing out on two of the past four races. But on the evidence of Friday's opening two practice sessions Verstappen, who leads the 2024 championship by 56 points, has a real fight on his hands in a refreshing turn of events for impartial F1 fans. Hamilton's lap of 1min 13.264seconds lifted him atop the timesheets on a sun-blessed day in Catalonia ahead of home hero Carlos Sainz, appearing at his last Spanish Grand Prix weekend as a Ferrari driver. The British driver's performance came just hours after Mercedes boss Toto Wolff confirmed police were investigating an email from "a lunatic" claiming his team were sabotaging the car of Hamilton who will drive for Ferrari next season. A visibly angry Wolff spoke out in the strongest terms possible over the "upsetting" email which he denied had come from a member of Mercedes' 1500 workforce and which has been sent to Formula One's major players including the FIA.

Paul Beats Draper to Reach Queen's Semis

LONDON (Dispatches) - Tommy Paul ended Jack Draper's seven-match winning run on grass to reach the semi-finals at Queen's but fourth seed Taylor Fritz crashed out in straight sets. British number one Draper secured the biggest win of his career when he ended the Queen's Club reign of Wimbledon champion Carlos Alcaraz. But the 22-year-old was outgunned by American fifth seed Paul in the last-eight tie in London, going down 6-3, 5-7, 6-4 in a match lasting a shade over two hours. Draper battled back from a set down but he was broken to love midway through the decider as the match swung Paul's way. Defeat ended Draper's winning streak after he lifted his first ATP title in Stuttgart last week. "I played good tennis and I like the grass," said Paul, 27. "I knew today was going to be a battle. "It is never easy against Jack. He has been playing such good



tennis so I am really happy to get through that one." Paul will face compatriot Sebastian Korda in Saturday's semi-final after the world number 23 recovered from the loss of the first set to beat Australian wild card Rinky Hijikata 6-7 (4/7), 6-3, 6-4. Italy's Lorenzo Musetti continued his impressive grass-court season by ending the run of British wild card Billy Harris 6-3, 7-5 to reach his second consecutive semi-final on the surface. Musetti, who advanced to the last four in Stuttgart last week, fired 20 winners and committed just six unforced errors. He is chasing his third tour-level title and will next play Jordan Thompson after the Australian defeated fourth-seed American Taylor Fritz 6-4, 6-3. Thompson, who did not face a break point against Fritz, arrived in London on a five-match losing streak. Meanwhile former Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina pulled out of Berlin WTA tournament while trailing Victoria Azarenka in the quarter-finals.

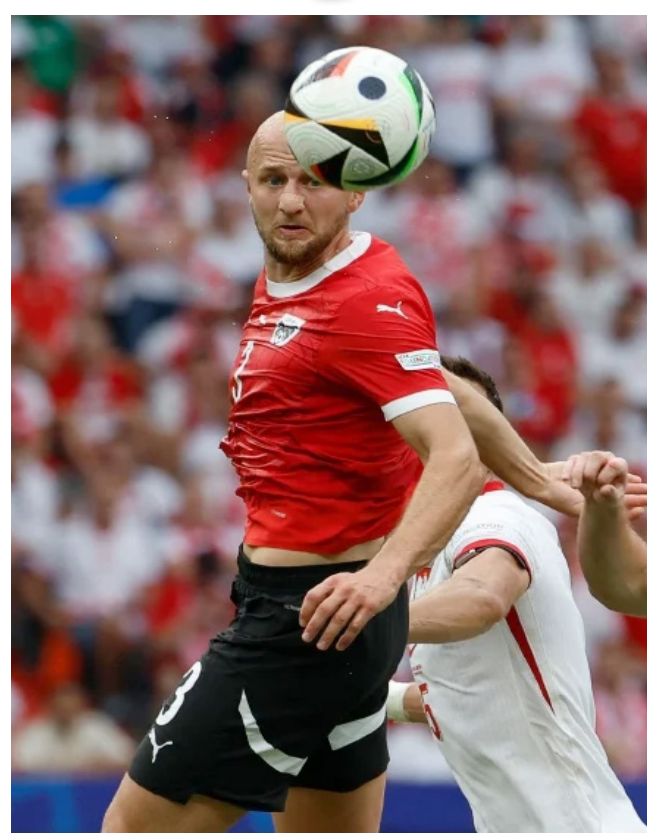
South Africa Squeeze Past England



GROS-ISLET (Dispatches) - South Africa star Quinton de Kock said knowledge of Caribbean conditions helped him propel the Proteas to a competitive total as they edged defending champions England by seven runs in a dramatic Super Eights clash to remain unbeaten at the T20 World Cup. The opener's typically dashing 65 was the cornerstone of South Africa's seemingly modest 163-6 after they lost the toss in a daytime game in St. Lucia on Friday. Fine bowling and fielding then reduced England to 61-4 before a stand of 78 between Harry Brook (53) and Liam Livingstone (33) took the title-holders close. But Anrich Nortje denied England the 14 runs they needed off the last over as they finished on 156-6 and the Proteas edged closer to the semi-finals after a second win in two Super Eights games. Afterwards, England captain Jos Buttler said the powerplay had been decisive, with South Africa 63-0 off the first six overs compared to their opponents' 41-1. "Obviously, it makes a massive impact," said De Kock, 31. "I've played a lot of day T20s in the West Indies (in the Caribbean Premier League) and generally that is the most important time to score runs," explained the left-hander, whose 38-ball innings featured four fours and four sixes. "The wicket looks beautiful at night, plays much differently, but 160-170 are winning scores here in the day." Buttler, reflecting on the match, said: "I'd say it was lost in the powerplay...The way Quinny played at the top really put us under a lot of pressure, he played some great shots and we were unable to do that." Brook almost turned the game England's way before he fell off the first ball of the last over when South Africa captain Aiden Markram held a superb running catch over his shoulder. "It was a great catch and that's what South Africa have prided themselves on over a long period of time," said Buttler. "They've always had great fielders, you think of Jonty Rhodes, Herschelle Gibbs, AB de Villiers. They've always been a great fielding team."

Poland Eliminated After Slumping to 3-1 Defeat by Austria

BERLIN (Dispatches) - A superb second-half performance boosted Austria's hopes of making the Euro 2024 knockout stage with a 3-1 win over Poland, who became the first side to be eliminated from the tournament after today's late game between Netherlands and France ended in a goalless draw. After losing both of their group games so far, Poland's chances of progressing from Group D already looked bleak before the draw between France and the Netherlands confirmed their early exit. Goals from Gernot Trauner, Christian Baumgartner and Marko Arnautovic kept alive Austria's chances of reaching the next round. The Austrians, who lost to France in their opener, survived a spirited first-half comeback in which Poland equalized and came close to taking the lead before the wheels came off in the second half. Undeterred by news that record scorer Robert Lewandowski was still not fit to start, Polish fans lit a handful of flares as they belted out the national anthem, with a cloud of smoke wafting towards the goal Austria defended in the first half. That was about as close as the Poles got in the opening exchanges, with Austria dominating possession through repeated attacks up the left flank and going ahead in the ninth minute. Philipp Mwene's long throws were a threat from the start and Austria's goal came when one of them was headed back into his path, allowing the left back to cross for Trauner to score with a bullet header into the top corner after nine minutes. However, Poland levelled on the half-hour mark as Austria failed to clear a corner satisfactorily and when Trauner blocked a shot from Jan Bednarek, the ball fell



kindly for Krsysztof Piatek to control and then steer into the net. Austria goalkeeper Patrick Pentz had to pull off a superb one-handed save in first-half stoppage time and when Lewandowski finally entered the fray on the hour Polish hopes rose, only to be quickly dashed. Austria's second goal in the 66th was beautiful in its simplicity as they switched play from right to left before Alexander Prass picked out Baumgartner with a pinpoint pass and the midfielder's cool finish gave Wojciech Szczesny no chance. When Marcel Sabitzer then tore through the middle, Szczesny had no choice to bring him down and Marko Arnautovic drilled the resulting spot kick low to the keeper's left to make it 3-1 after 78 minutes and leave the Poles with a mountain to climb. Lewandowski's contribution in just over half an hour amounted to a yellow card for an elbow on Philipp Lienhart four minutes after coming on, and his absence has proved costly as the Poles crashed out. Poland face France in their final group game on Tuesday in Dortmund, with Austria taking on the Dutch in Berlin at the same time. "We gave away the match a little bit which was completely unnecessary, and then in the second half, we knew that now we have to deliver," man of the match Baumgartner told reporters. "That's a one of our qualities, one of our characteristics, that we know how to deal with these kinds of situations, and know how to react to those situations, and that's why eventually it was a positive result for us," he added.