

Latest Data from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Published on Monday Showed That Iranian Oil Output Had Reached an Average of 3.271m bpd in July, up from 3.25m bpd Reported in June

IRAN NEWS

The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Navy Is Not Just a Coastal Force But Is Capable of Having a Presence in International Waters, a Commander of the Fifth Martyr Lieutenant General Haj Qassem Soleimani Fleet of the IRGC Navy Says

2

DOMESTIC



Iran Imports \$8b Worth of Essential Goods From Brazil

> SEE PAGE 2

3

INTERNATIONAL

Ukraine Touts Huge Gains in Kursk Region

> SEE PAGE 3



Mutual Respect Key to Enhanced Iran-Europe Ties



TEHRAN (Dispatches) - President Masoud Pezeshkian says Iran seeks to expand relations with all European countries based on friendship, confidence-building and mutual respect.

In a phone conversation with Germany's Chancellor Olaf Scholz on Monday, Pezeshkian underscored the need to remove obstacles in the way of promoting relations between Iran and Europe.

He said regional and international peace, stability and security are a centerpiece to Iran's foreign policy.

Referring to the war in Gaza, the Iranian president said the Israeli regime is violating all international treaties and regulations and pressing ahead with its genocide in the besieged Palestinian territory.

Pezeshkian said the world nations expect European countries, not least Germany, to play an effective role in ending the Israeli regime's genocidal war in Gaza instead of supporting it.

The Israeli regime also conducted terrorist acts in other countries and poses a serious threat to regional security and global peace, he said, apparently referring to the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh, the head of the political bureau of the Hamas resistance movement, in Tehran on July 31.

"Iran will never succumb to pressure, sanctions, bullying and aggression but reserves its right to respond to aggressors in accordance with international principles," Pezeshkian stated.

The German chancellor, for his part, said Berlin is keen to promote relations with Iran in all fields.

Scholz said the establishment of peace and security in the region is among his country's priorities. He placed a premium on ending Israel's campaign of death, destruction and genocide in Gaza.

Meanwhile later the Iranian president, Masoud Pezeshkian, warned that some Western states support the Zionist regime, which emboldens the regime to keep threatening peace and security at the regional and global levels.

Iran Showcases Indigenous Long-Range Mohajer-10 Drone at Russian Exhibition



TEHRAN (Dispatches) - The Iranian Defense Ministry has put on display an unmanned combat aerial vehicle (UCAV) as well as sophisticated radar systems entirely designed and manufactured by the country's military experts at a defense exhibit in Russia.

The Mohajer-10 (Immigrant-10) drone, with an operational range of 2,000 kilometers (1,240 miles) and a 24-hour flight endurance ability, was showcased at the Army 2024 International Military-Technical Forum in Patriot Park outside the Russian capital, Moscow.

Iran's advanced homegrown air defense and radar systems were also unveiled for the first time in the exhibition, which runs from August 12 to 14.

Other Iranian products put on display in the exhibition include electronic warfare (EW) systems, airborne and seaborn missile defense systems, ballistic missiles as well as batteries for industrial and military applications.

Brigadier General Ali Shadmani, deputy coordinator of the Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters, Iranian Ambassador to Moscow Kazem Jalali and a number of other high-ranking Iranian military officials attended the inauguration ceremony of the event.

Iranian military experts and technicians have in recent years made substantial headways in manufacturing a broad range of indigenous equipment, making the armed forces self-sufficient in the arms sphere.

Officials have repeatedly underscored that the country will not hesitate to strengthen its military capabilities, including its missile power, which are entirely meant for defense, and that Iran's defense capabilities will be never subject to negotiations.



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

U.S. Primary Defender, Promoter of Terror in Region, World

TEHRAN - Iran's permanent ambassador to the UN calls the United States the primary defender and promoter of terrorism across the West Asia region and the world.

Amir-Saeed Irvani made the remarks in a letter addressed to the world body's Security Council (UNSC) on Monday.

He wrote the message in reaction to allegations that had been leveled by the American UN envoy Linda Thomas-Greenfield at a UNSC briefing earlier in the month. Using the event, which was being held under the agenda of "threat to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts," the American official had accused the Islamic Republic of "supporting terrorism in the region."

Irvani called the accusation "unwarranted and misleading," saying Thomas-Greenfield had deviated from the briefing's agenda by bringing up such an allegation. "The Islamic Republic categorically rejects and strongly condemns this baseless allegation and irresponsible behavior by the United States' representative," he added. "It is unequivocally clear that the United States, not Iran, is the primary advocate and propagator of terrorism, both in the region and globally," the envoy asserted.

Irvani said it was "both ironic and shameful" that the United States was throwing such accusation against the Islamic Republic at the same time as providing staunch political and military support for the Israeli regime's ongoing war of genocide against the Gaza Strip.

Nearly 40,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children, have been killed in the brutal military onslaught that began on October 7 last year.

Last month, The New York Times revealed that the US had armed the regime with upwards of 25,000 bombs and missiles since the onset of the war.

According to the report, the American arms shipments to the occupied Palestinian territories throughout the war had featured over 20,000 unguided bombs, some 2,600 guided bombs, and 3,000 surgical strike missiles.

A month earlier, The Washington Post had also reported that the US had supplied the regime with over \$6.5 billion in military supplies since the beginning of the warfare.

The sheer increase comes while Washington's annual so-called military aid for Tel Aviv stands at around \$3.3 billion.

Irvani underlined how the American support was being used by Tel Aviv towards "terrorizing and massacring the innocent people of Palestine..., prolonging the bloodshed and horror in the Gaza Strip."

He cited the regime's most recent massacre of more than 120 people in an attack on the prayer hall of the al-Tabaen School in Gaza City during a mass prayer at dawn, calling it "a result of such ironclad support of the U.S."

The ambassador also pointed to the backing that the US has been providing for the terrorist groups wreaking havoc across the region.

Various regional media outlets and officials have similarly found Washington culpable of providing arms support and training for the terror outfits, such as the Daesh and Hayat Tahrir al-Sham Takfiri groups, towards subversive and destabilizing goals.

The support, Irvani said, "is further evidence of how the United States is the principal sponsor of terrorism in the region."

"Given such a dark record, the United States has no standing to accuse or lecture other members of the United Nations," he concluded.

Neglecting Countries' Responsibility for the Caspian Sea's Pollution Threatens Regional Life

TEHRAN (IRNA) - The Iranian Ambassador to Turkmenistan stated that while industrial activities, the laying of pipelines, the establishment of secure transport corridors in the Caspian Sea, and the extraction of hydrocarbon resources from this sea contribute to the economic development and social welfare of countries, neglecting the responsibility of countries regarding the pollution of this shared body of water threatens the life cycle in the region.

Coinciding with the anniversary of the "Caspian Sea Day" on August 12, the international conference titled "Caspian Sea: Interaction for Sustainable Development" was held in the Avaza National Tourism Zone in Turkmenistan.

This conference aimed to examine environmental issues in the Caspian Sea and related factors in areas such as politics, economy, trade, ecology, and humanitarian relations, covering a wide range of topics focused on convergence and cooperation among coastal countries and the development of structures for sustainable development.

This annual conference is organized on Caspian Sea Day by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan, with participation from the Caspian Sea coastal countries, relevant international bodies including the UN Resident Coordinator's Office, the UN Development Programme, and the OSCE, held in the Avaza National Tourism Zone along the Caspian Sea coast in the Turkmenbashi Port, Turkmenistan.

Rashid Meredov, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Charygeldi Babaniyozov, Minister of Environmental Protection of Turkmenistan, attended this conference.

In his speech, Ali Mojtaba Rouzbekani, Iran's Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador to Turkmenistan, remarked on Caspian Sea Day, stating: "On August 11, 2003, the five coastal countries of the Caspian Sea signed the Caspian Sea Environment Protection Convention, known as the Tehran Convention, and committed on August 12, 2006, to observe this convention, marking this day as an important environmental event."

Rouzbekani added: "The Caspian Sea is a shared heritage, a hub of friendship among the countries surrounding it, and a source of blessing for over 270 million people in the coastal countries of this sea. Just as our ancestors protected this valuable divine gem and passed it down to us, we must strive to protect this precious gift for future generations. The Caspian Sea region is a strategic area and a connecting link between the North-South and East-West corridors. The Caspian neighbors have the duty to pass down the Caspian Sea to future generations as it was inherited: clear, transparent, clean, and safe."



He emphasized: "The drafting, approval, and implementation of the Caspian Sea Marine Environment Protection Framework Convention, known as the Tehran Convention, as the first step towards achieving cooperation in the Caspian Sea, indicates the importance of environmental preservation as a fundamental principle for all activities in the Caspian Sea."

Rouzbekani stressed: "While industrial activities, the laying of pipelines, the establishment of secure transport corridors in the Caspian Sea, and the extraction of hydrocarbon resources from this sea contribute to the economic development and social welfare of countries, neglecting the responsibility of countries regarding the pollution of this shared body of water threatens the life cycle in the region."

He added: "The inviolable principle of adhering to agreed environmental standards and considering the transboundary environmental impacts in the implementation of national and transnational projects must receive more attention."

Rouzbekani also mentioned: "Fluctuations in the Caspian Sea's water levels are another important issue that requires collective cooperation and thought. The decline in the Caspian Sea's water levels, in addition to its negative impacts on navigation, also affects the livelihoods of coastal residents."

The Iranian ambassador to Turkmenistan also noted: "The negative environmental effects of this trend on the marine life and the unique plant cover of the Caspian Sea are undeniable. Controlling the decline in the Caspian Sea's water levels requires serious attention from all coastal countries."

Referring to the existing protocols on Caspian Sea environmental protection, Rouzbekani said: "In this regard, four protocols have been signed so far on combating oil pollution, combating pollution from land-based sources, protecting biodiversity, and assessing transboundary environmental impacts. These protocols provide the necessary legal framework for targeted environmental activities in the Caspian Sea. Another important environmental document currently under negotiation is the Protocol on Monitoring, Assessment, and Information Exchange in the Caspian Sea. It is essential that all parties strive to finalize this important environmental protocol."

In another part of his speech, Iran's ambassador to Ashgabat noted: "Despite agreements on the establishment of the convention's secretariat in the Caspian region, unfortunately, nearly a decade after the agreement was made, this important issue has not been implemented."

Iran Needs No Permission to Defend Its National Security



TEHRAN (IRNA) - The Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman says the Islamic Republic is determined to defend its national security and sovereignty, stressing the country does not get permission from anyone to use its recognized rights.

Iran is also firmly determined to help establish permanent stability in the region and be deterrent dealing with the main cause of terrorism and insecurity in the region, Nasser Kanaani said on Tuesday in reaction to the statement issued by the European troika about the regional developments.

The three European countries (Britain, Germany, and France) issued the statement while Israel, with the indifference of pro-regime states and Western countries, continues genocidal acts and war crimes against defenseless Palestinians, Kanaani noted. He went on to say that Israel's insolence to commit the cruelest crimes has increased as its officials have not been punished. Referring to the critical humanitarian condition in the Gaza Strip, the spokesman said Israel adds new dimension to its crimes against the Palestinians and its extra-regional assassinations as the United Nations and the Security Council have remained inactive in preventing the criminal regime from committing crimes which lasted over 10 months. The three European countries asked Iran not to carry out punitive attack against Israel after the regime assassinated the Hamas political leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran two weeks ago, Kanaani underlined.

Such rude requests lack political logic while they are also against the international laws and principles, he stressed. Censuring the three countries for their request, Kanaani said, adding that it will encourage the criminals to continue massacre, genocide and crime against humanity.

If those mentioned countries are really after peace and stability in the region, they should practically stand against the adventurism of the apartheid regime at least one time and try to cease the war in Gaza and the killing of children and women, the spokesman said.

The countries in their joint statement said that fight must stop now and all hostages must be released, according to Reuters. The statement also said the people in Gaza need "urgent and unfettered delivery and distribution of aid," the report says.

The occupying regime has been crippled by fear and anxiety in the aftermath of the assassination of Haniyeh as the Islamic Republic vowed to retaliate decisively.

The intelligence and security agencies in Tel Aviv have been evacuated few days ago over fears of retaliatory attacks from Iran and the Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah after the assassination of Haniyeh in Tehran and a senior Hezbollah military commander Fuad Shukur in Beirut.

Iran to Take Revenge on Israel Over Haniyeh Assassination at Substantial Level



TEHRAN (PressTV) - The representative of Hamas in Tehran says Iran's response to Israel's assassination of the head of political bureau of the Palestinian resistance group will be "definite and decisive" and will be carried out at "a substantial level."

Khaled Qaddoumi made the remarks in an exclusive interview with the Arabic service of Tasnim news agency on Monday, stressing that Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian has assured Khalil al-Hayya, the deputy head of the Hamas political bureau in Gaza, that nothing other than a decisive action could be considered a retaliation for the heartrending target killing of Ismail Haniyeh.

He added that Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf has also underlined during meetings with Hamas officials over the past few days that Iran's response will be definite, decisive and different in kind and manner.

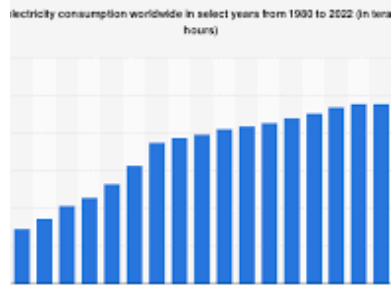
"Experience has proven that the Zionist regime will press ahead with its crimes in case it does not receive an answer... The most important reason why a criminal like [Israeli prime minister Benjamin] Netanyahu is forging ahead with its genocide is the absence of diplomatic pressures from the United States. He does not feel such strains," Qaddoumi said.

The senior Hamas official emphasized that Iran will definitely respond to the Israeli assassination of Haniyeh at a substantial level, and expressed regret that the occupying Tel Aviv regime is not under pressure from any other party, either in West Asia or anywhere else.

It is very difficult to comment on the scope of the response, Qaddoumi stated, but noted that Iran's rightful response to Haniyeh's assassination is unquestionable.

Iran's retaliation is an issue that even Iranians themselves have underscored its necessity, he said, adding that Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, President Masoud Pezeshkian and all Iranian authorities have laid particular emphasis on it.

IRAN NEWS



Electricity Consumption Growth Three Times the Global Average

TEHRAN (ILNA) - Deputy Director of Transmission and Foreign Trade at Tavanir Mohammad Allahdad says that the over 8% increase in the country's electricity consumption is more than three times the global average, putting significant pressure on the power grid.

He added that in just three provinces—Khuzestan, Hormozgan, and Bushehr—electricity consumption has increased by 1,000 megawatts, which is equivalent to the total electricity consumption of the Markazi Province. He also mentioned the persistent high temperatures, noting that it is unrealistic to expect a sudden drop in temperature, and emphasized that as a result, electricity consumption will not decrease rapidly. He stressed the continued need for public cooperation in managing electricity consumption. He emphasized the importance of turning off air conditioning systems in offices after working hours and during rest periods for businesses. He noted that buildings with central cooling systems (chillers) should reduce their per capita consumption.

680% Increase in Exports to Latin America



TEHRAN - According to customs officials, in the first four months of this year, 436 million tons of goods worth \$136 million were exported to Latin American countries, marking a 680% increase compared to the same period last year.

As reported by IRIB News Agency, the Iranian Customs Administration has released the latest export figures to Latin American countries.

In the first four months of the year, around 436 million tons of goods valued at \$136 million were exported to Latin American countries.

This export volume shows an increase of more than 18 million tons in weight and a 680% increase in dollar value compared to the same period last year.

Exports to Latin America were made to 15 countries, including Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, Paraguay, El Salvador, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

Among these, Brazil topped the list of export destinations, receiving more than 435 tons of goods, followed by Venezuela, Cuba, Colombia, and Mexico.

The value of Iran's exports to these five countries exceeded \$13 million, representing a 737% increase compared to the same period last year.

The most exported products to Latin American countries include urea (even in aqueous solution), parts and components for aircraft engines, agricultural tractors, chain wheels, and wire for winding.



Iran Imports \$8b Worth of Essential Goods From Brazil

TEHRAN - Fakhruddin Ameriyan, the Chairman of the Iran-Brazil Joint Chamber of Commerce, said that among Latin American countries, Brazil is the largest supplier of essential goods to Iran, with imports valued at \$8 billion.

He added that Brazil is one of the largest grain producers in the world, and Iran imports more than 40% of its needs in this sector from Brazil. Currently, Brazil supplies Iran with several essential consumables, including corn, soybeans, sunflower oil, soybean meal, meat, and sugar.

Ameriyan noted that in recent years, Iran imported more than 150,000 tons of frozen beef from Brazil. He said, "We have been importing red meat from Brazil for over 20 years. However, since the current livestock in Iran meets the country's needs, imports have decreased, and now this number has fallen to 20,000 tons or less."

He also mentioned that due to sanctions, some of Iran's imports are done through intermediary countries and are registered under their names. For example, the statistics of corn imports from European countries or Dubai are actually exports from Brazil, but the documents are registered under the names of those countries.

The Chairman of the Iran-Brazil Chamber of Commerce stated that Iran's exports to Brazil amounted to \$150 million last year, but this figure is increasing this year.

He added, "If we want to witness long-term and fundamental impacts in the production sector, we need to focus on identifying the sectors of the economy with advantages after reforming and strengthening laws, regulations, and foreign trade systems, and organizing high-tech production in those sectors. Effective synergy and cooperation between the public and private sectors are

crucial for achieving this goal."

Ameriyan also pointed out that the items imported from Brazil to Iran are foodstuffs that are not subject to sanctions. However, Iranians mainly send petrochemical products, which are subject to sanctions.

He further said: "We had \$1.3 billion in unofficial urea exports to Brazil. This was due to the efforts of our ambassador who worked hard and planned meetings with officials to solve the problems. Since its establishment, the Iran-Brazil Chamber of Commerce has tried to resolve the issues faced by our exporters in Brazil."

He added: "One of the major problems we have is that the import duties on goods in Brazil are very high, above 100%, whereas the import duties on Brazilian goods that we import are 1-2%. We have always requested that Brazil, considering the highly positive trade balance between the two countries, take measures to reduce the import duties on some Iranian goods, similar to what it has done with its neighboring countries. But so far, this has not happened. However, if we only expect Brazil to solve our problems, it is not realistic. Brazil should definitely facilitate the import of its goods into Iran, and it is indeed trying to increase the \$8 billion trade to \$10 billion."

He noted: "Meanwhile, our government officials should work to help increase this \$126 million, given that Brazil has \$280 billion in exports. At least, I am not talking about petrochemicals, but we can certainly export \$1 billion worth of Iranian goods from this \$280 billion. A few years ago, before 2017, we used to export \$30-40 million worth of handmade carpets to Brazil annually. But after 2017, the issue of foreign exchange commitments was raised, which affected this trade."

Conditions Are Such That No One Is Interested in Investing



TEHRAN - The head of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture said: The conditions for production and the survival of businesses are so difficult that the government should award a golden plaque of appreciation to those producers who continue to operate in these circumstances.

Samad Hassanzadeh, in a meeting with the board of representatives of the Ahvaz Chamber and the executive board of the Iran Chamber, continued: Unfortunately, the recession imposed on production due to government mis-coordination and incorrect policies has exhausted economic enterprises. I hope the new government can resolve these issues.

He emphasized that, unfortunately, today no one is interested in investing in the country. He added: Any investor expects a return on their investment within a specific timeframe based on a clear formula. However, in our country, the risk of investment is high, and people prefer to deposit their money in banks with existing interest rates.

The head of the Iran Chamber, noting that Khuzestan, due to its coastal location and land resources, has many advantages for economic development, agriculture, and exports, added: Any necessary action for economic development and investment in this region will be included in the Iran Chamber's agenda.

He asked the board of representatives of the Ahvaz Chamber to provide a 5-year plan, including prioritized investment areas, to the Iran Chamber as a basis for future planning.

Mohammad Javad Amani, head of the Ahvaz Chamber, also stated in this meeting that power outages have crippled production units. He said: Besides this, producers face many problems with

various organizations related to production, including the Ministry of Industry, Mines and Trade, banks, customs, insurance, etc. We ask the Iran Chamber to send a representative to Khuzestan to identify the problems of producers and report them to the government.

He added that Khuzestan is facing problems in its border areas. He said: Another request we have from the Iran Chamber is the formation of a working group regarding the Chazabeh and Shalamcheh borders to focus on investment and the creation of facilities and border markets. The conditions are such that fish exporters in our province are forced to carry out their exports through the Mehran border.

Shahla Amouri, vice-president of the Ahvaz Chamber, also suggested forming specialized committees in the Iran Chamber to categorize provinces and assess their problems and advantages for future planning. She continued: I suggest that for more effective actions, the secretariat for unfinished projects and the secretariat for infrastructure development be established in the Iran Chamber.

She also requested that a seat on the Iran Chamber's executive board be allocated to women, adding: The Iran Chamber should plan to utilize the experience of its senior figures and honor them.

Safdar Pir Moradi, vice-president of the Ahvaz Chamber, also expressed dissatisfaction with the regulated pricing and production mandates in the poultry and egg industry. He said: Production costs have increased 10 to 15 times since May 2022, and no facilities have been provided to producers.

Crane Shutdowns at Ports Due to Maintenance and Lack of Parts



TEHRAN - Secretary of the Shipping Companies Association Masoud Polmeh discussed the deterioration of port equipment and the slowdown in port operations due to the lack of essential equipment at key ports, especially in southern regions. He stated that, in general, we are facing equipment issues across the ports, with most of the equipment being old or highly worn out.

He continued, "Since we cannot quickly provide the necessary parts for the repair and maintenance of this equipment, we are facing these current problems, leading to the shutdown of port equipment, including cranes."

The Secretary of the Shipping Companies Association, speaking about the status of equipment at Imam Khomeini Port, which is a specialized port handling bulk cargoes, including essential goods and necessities for the country, said, "Imam Khomeini Port is the only major bulk cargo port in the country, with 35 berths that are always operational. Sometimes ships are delayed due to document-related issues, such as order registration, banking, etc., but the port itself has no deficiencies in providing services. However, the key equipment at the port is old, leading to wear and tear, which means they require repair and parts replacement sooner than new equipment would."

Polmeh emphasized, "Unfortunately, all gantry cranes and suction devices are foreign-made. Due to their low usage, it is not economically viable for Iranian companies to manufacture them domestically, as their construction requires very advanced technology and special maintenance. Moreover, their use is limited mostly to ports and they do not have multiple applications."

He added, "Additionally, due to sanctions, even if these types of equipment were produced domestically, exporting them would not be feasible. Any port using Iranian-made equipment would face the threat of sanctions, and there is a high likelihood that such equipment would not be welcomed by buyers. Therefore, localizing this equipment is not justifiable."

The Secretary of the Shipping Companies Association continued, "Some parts of this equipment have been manufactured domestically, but they are not among the strategic parts. The key equipment is highly valuable and is sourced from abroad, with high repair and maintenance costs. Ultimately, when any of this equipment is out of service, the speed of loading and unloading operations decreases."

Regarding the speed of loading and unloading in Iran compared to global standards, Polmeh stated, "The standard unloading time at our ports varies from 12 to 18 containers per hour, depending on the conditions, while the global minimum standard is 26 containers per hour. Naturally, if a gantry crane is operational at a port, the unloading speed increases, but under current circumstances, they are forced to operate with two cranes."

EC Ratifies NIOC Plan to Boost Oil Production



TEHRAN (Shana) - The Economic Council approved a plan proposed by the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) to boost oil production in 34 oil fields.

This plan, in principle, is slated to raise Iran's daily oil production swiftly by 250 thousand barrels.

During the session, the 14th administration's first vice-president Mohammadreza Aref referred to the important role and performance of the Economic Council in the framework of the decision-making processes in the country.

He noted the council was in charge of coordinating decisions made by different ministries and other governmental bodies amid planning and directing financial resources toward the country's largest developmental and infrastructural projects.

"Regarding the role and performance of the Economic Council and prompting its status, it is necessary to avoid creating parallel councils and committees, so that the government will be able to realize the president's announced strategies, promises, and programs as soon as possible." The first vice-president said.

In a separate news, the managing director of the National Iranian Oil Products Distribution Company (NIOPODC) Jafar Salarnasab estimated that the average daily gasoline consumption during the current Iranian Month of Mordad, since July 22, will be 126.3 million liters.

He said that daily gasoline consumption was expected to rise this month mainly due to Arbāeen Travels when hundreds of thousands of pilgrims go to the neighboring country Iraq where the third Imam of Shia, Imam Husain, is buried.

According to him, 20 mobile gas stations have been set up in border terminals with Iraq to facilitate fuel delivery to the pilgrims.

Conditional Import of Household Appliances

TEHRAN - Deputy Minister of Public Industries at the Ministry of Industry, Mine, and Trade Mohammad Mehdi Baradaran commented on the ban on importing household appliances, stating that all countries support their domestic industries, especially if the industry is emerging and needs support.

He mentioned that currently, over 300 manufacturing units in the field of large household appliances, small household appliances, and related industries such as component manufacturing, cooling and heating systems, and gas-powered industries are active in the country. Most of these units have seen a surge in production in recent years and require support.

Baradaran explained that import permission is granted for certain product categories to ensure competitiveness. He added that if a product category is not produced domestically or domestic production cannot meet internal demand, imports are allowed.

He also stated that they expect producers in certain product categories who have recently activated new production lines to capture a larger share of the domestic market, thereby reducing the presence of imported and smuggled goods in the market. Currently, domestic goods supply more than 80% of the internal market across various product categories, which is promising.

Baradaran emphasized that in the context of household appliance imports, whether through bans, tariff restrictions, or currency allocation, priority should be given to producers who can manufacture the same or similar products domestically with less foreign currency. This policy benefits the national economy.

He noted that the domestic market is competitive and has been able to satisfy consumers in recent years.

The Deputy Minister added that if, for any reason, the quality of domestic products or the internal supply does not meet the required standards, they would consider sourcing goods from abroad. He asserted that the competitive ability exists both domestically and regionally to sustain this competition.

He clarified that the general principle is not to declare a blanket ban or unrestricted import of household appliances. Instead, each product category is reviewed by relevant commissions, and based on these assessments, goods may receive tariff support.

Baradaran continued by saying that this method is common in large countries. South Korea followed a similar path to achieve a significant market share and compete internationally.

Regarding concerns that tariff support might create monopolies in the domestic market, he said that while monopolies might exist in the automotive industry or other sectors, the household appliance industry, with 30 to 40 top producers competing within each product category, does not face such issues.

Greece Asks EU for Help as Wildfires Near Athens Suburbs

ATHENS (Dispatches) - A massive wildfire blazed into Athens' northeastern suburbs on Monday as hundreds of firefighters battled to contain it, forcing thousands of residents to flee their homes and sparking a Greek government appeal for international help. In scenes never before seen in the Greek capital, residents wearing masks against the choking smoke were desperately dousing their homes with water hoses in the leafy suburbs of Nea Penteli and Vrilissia in an effort to render them less vulnerable to fire.

"(It's) the first time ever the fire has come here," said Melina Kritseli, 40, a civil servant living in a two-storey white house in Patima Halandriou, another Athens suburb that was evacuated.

"I took my children to a friend's house to be safe," she told AFP as her husband hosed the ground and grass outside their house.

Television footage showed several cars gutted by fire and the roofs of stately homes burning as water-bombing helicopters roared overhead.

"The situation is dramatic," Penteli Mayor Natassa Kosmopoulou told news portal newsit.gr.

"A school and homes are on fire, and I can see the fire coming towards the town hall," she said.



Maduro Calls for State "Iron Fist" Against Protesters



CARACAS (Dispatches) - Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro called Monday for the state to use an "iron fist" after deadly protests in response to his July reelection, dismissed at home and abroad as a sham.

As the official protest death toll rose to 25, Maduro urged "severe justice" for violence he blames on the opposition, which insists its candidate Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia had won the July 28 vote by a landslide.

"I demand from all the powers of state greater speed, greater efficiency and an iron fist against crime, against violence, against hate crimes," the socialist leader told a defense council meeting.

Widespread protests broke out after Maduro was declared president-elect by the CNE electoral council seen as loyal to his regime.

Observers reported a brutal security force crackdown with more than 2,000 arrests.

Maduro, in turn, blames Gonzalez Urrutia and popular opposition leader Maria Corina Machado -- who was ruled out of running for the presidency by institutions aligned to the state.

"Where are the intellectual authors of this violence, where are the financiers of this violence, where are those who planned it?" Maduro railed on Monday.

"Where is Mr Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia? Why did he flee? why does he not show his face? Where is the greatest fascist, Mrs Machado, who ordered to kill, who ordered to assassinate?" he continued.

Both leaders have gone into hiding, citing fears for their lives and threats of arrest.

Ukraine Touts Huge Gains in Kursk Region



KYIV (Dispatches) - Ukraine said on Monday its biggest cross-border assault of the war had captured 1,000 square kilometres (386 square miles) of Russia's Kursk region and that Russian President Vladimir Putin would have to be forced into making peace.

With Russia still struggling to repel the surprise assault a week after it began, Ukraine's top commander Oleksandr Syrskiy briefed President Volodymyr Zelenskyy by video link and said the advance into Russian territory was ongoing.

"We continue to conduct an offensive operation in the Kursk region. Currently, we control about 1,000 square kilometres of the territory of the Russian Federation," he said in a video published on Zelenskyy's Telegram account.

He provided scant other detail, continuing Kyiv's strategy of silence that contrasts starkly with last year's counteroffensive that was known about for months in advance and which foundered on Russian defensive lines.

Syrskiy spoke a few hours after Alexei Smirnov, Russia's acting regional governor of Kursk, estimated that Kyiv's forces had taken control of 28 settlements in an incursion that was about 12 km deep and 40 km wide.

Though less than half Syrkiy's estimate of the Ukrainian gains, Smirnov's remarks were a striking public admission of a major Russian setback more than 29 months since it launched a full-scale invasion of its smaller neighbour.

Reuters was unable to verify the claims by either side.

Putin has described the cross-border attack as a "major provocation" and said it was aimed at improving

Kyiv's negotiating position.

Zelenskyy told Ukrainians in his nightly address that the operation was a matter of Ukrainian security and the Kursk region had been used by Russia to launch many strikes against Ukraine.

He said Ukraine's northeastern Sumy region, which lies across the border from Kursk region, had been struck by Russia almost 2,100 times since June 1.

"Russia must be forced to make peace if Putin wants to fight so badly," Zelenskyy said.

The Ukrainian attack comes after months of slow but steady advances by Russian forces in the east that has forced Ukraine's troops onto the back foot as they try to withstand Russia's heavy use of gliding bombs and assault troops.

Former Ukrainian defence minister Andriy Zagorodnyuk told Reuters the Kursk operation looked like it aimed to distract Russian forces and its leadership from the eastern fronts.

"The apparent goal is to create a problem area for Russia, which will distract its forces and its leadership's attention and resources from where they're trying to succeed right now," he said by phone.

Visiting Kyiv on Monday, U.S. Republican Senator Lindsey Graham urged the U.S. presidential administration to provide Ukraine with the weapons it needs.

"What do I think about Kursk? Bold, brilliant, beautiful. Keep it up," he told reporters.

Putin has said Ukraine had received help from its "Western masters" and vowed that "the enemy will certainly receive a worthy response".

Israel Keeps Up Strikes in Gaza as Fars of Wider War Grow

CAIRO (Dispatches) - Israeli forces pressed on with operations near the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis on Monday amid an international push for a deal to halt fighting in Gaza and prevent a slide into a wider regional conflict with Iran and its proxies.

Palestinian medics said Israeli military strikes on Khan Younis on Monday killed at least 18 people and wounded several. Meanwhile more families and displaced persons streamed out of areas threatened by new evacuation orders telling people to clear the area.

Later an Israeli airstrike killed five people in the Zeitoun suburb of Gaza City, and two others were killed in Rafah, near the border with Egypt, medics said.

As fighting continued, Hamas reacted sceptically to the latest round of Egyptian and Qatari-brokered talks due on Thursday, saying it had seen no sign of movement from the Israeli side.

The group said on Sunday that mediators must force Israel to accept a ceasefire proposal based on ideas from U.S. President Joe Biden, which Hamas had accepted, "instead of pursuing further rounds of negotiations or new proposals that would provide cover for the occupation's aggression".

Two sources close to Hamas told Reuters the group was convinced the new call for talks was coordinated beforehand with Israel to deter responses from Iran and Hezbollah to the assassination of the group's chief, Ismail Haniyeh, in Tehran and a top Hezbollah leader in Lebanon.

"It is a mild rejection you can say. Should Hamas receive a workable plan, an Israeli positive response to the proposal it had accepted, things may change, but so far Hamas believes Netanyahu isn't serious about reaching a deal," said one Palestinian official close to the mediation effort.



Hamas' reaction to the talks came as preparations for a larger scale confrontation grew, with Washington ordering a guided missile submarine to the Middle East and the Abraham Lincoln strike group accelerating its deployment to the region.

Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant told U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin that Iran was making preparations for a large-scale military attack on Israel, Barack Ravid, a normally well-sourced reporter for Axios News, reported on Twitter.

Israel has been braced for a major attack since last month when a missile killed 12 youngsters in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights and Israel responded by killing a senior Hezbollah commander in Beirut.

A day after that operation, Haniyeh, the political leader of Hamas, was assassinated in Tehran, drawing Iranian vows of retaliation against Israel.

The potential escalation underlined how far the Middle East has been thrown into turmoil by the Gaza war, now in its 11th month.

On Saturday, scores of people were killed in Israeli strikes on a school building in Gaza City that the military said targeted fighters from the armed wings of Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

The Israeli military on Monday released an updated document with names and other details of 31 fighters it said were killed in Saturday's strike.

Hamas and the Islamic Jihad denied any of their fighters were present at the school. Gaza health officials say most of the conflict's fatalities have been civilians but Israel says at least a third were fighters. Israel says it has lost 330 soldiers in Gaza.

U.S. Denies Having a Role in Ousting of Bangladesh's Hasina

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - The United States had no role in ousting Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who recently quit her position and fled the South Asian nation, the White House said on Monday, calling allegations of U.S. interference "simply false."

"We have had no involvement at all. Any reports or rumors that the United States government was involved in these events is simply false," White House spokesperson Karine Jean-Pierre said at a press briefing when asked about reported claims of U.S. involvement.

A report in the Economic Times newspaper in India on Sunday had cited Hasina as accusing the U.S. of playing a role in ousting her because it wanted control over Bangladesh's Saint Martin island in the Bay of Bengal. The newspaper said Hasina had conveyed that message to it through her close associates.

Hasina's son, Sajeeb Wazed, in a post on X on Sunday, said she never made any such statement.

"We believe that the Bangladeshi people should determine the future of the Bangladeshi government and that's where we stand," the White House added.

An interim government in Bangladesh, led by Nobel Peace laureate Muhammad Yunus, was sworn in on Thursday with the aim of holding elections in the Asian nation.

Bangladesh was engulfed by demonstrations and violence after student protests last month against quotas that reserved a high portion of government jobs for certain groups escalated into a campaign to oust Hasina.

She had won a fourth straight term in January in an election that the opposition boycotted and which the U.S. State Department said was not free and fair.

Hasina went to New Delhi after leaving Bangladesh, ending her uninterrupted rule of 15 years.

U.S. Lifts Restrictions on Saudi Weapons

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - The United States confirmed Monday it would resume sales of offensive weapons to Saudi Arabia, as concerns over human rights in the kingdom's Yemen war gave way to US hopes for it to play a role in resolving the conflict in Gaza.

More than three years after imposing limits on human rights grounds over Saudi strikes in Yemen, the State Department said it would return to weapons sales "in regular order, with appropriate congressional notification and consultation."

"Saudi Arabia has remained a close strategic partner of the United States, and we look forward to enhancing that partnership," State Department spokesman Vedant Patel told reporters.

US President Joe Biden took office in 2021 pledging a new approach to Saudi Arabia that emphasized human rights, and immediately announced that the administration would only send "defensive" weaponry to the longtime US arms customer.

The step came after thousands of civilians -- including children -- were estimated to be killed in Saudi-led airstrikes against Huthi rebels, who have taken over much of Yemen.

Geopolitical considerations have, however, changed markedly since then. The United Nations, with US support, brokered a truce in Yemen in early 2022 that has largely held.

Since the truce, "there has not been a single Saudi airstrike into Yemen and cross-border fire from Yemen into Saudi Arabia has largely stopped," Patel said.

"The Saudis since that time have met their end of the deal, and we are prepared to meet ours," Patel said.

It is now the United States, Britain and recently Israel that have been striking Huthi targets in Yemen, with Saudi Arabia content to watch from the sidelines.

The Huthis have been firing missiles at commercial ships in the vital Red Sea in professed solidarity with Palestinians, who have been in the crosshairs of Israel since the October 7 attack by Hamas.

In a bid to find a long-term solution, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has repeatedly traveled to Saudi Arabia to discuss a package of US incentives if the kingdom recognizes Israel.

Saudi Arabia has sought US security guarantees, a continued flow of weapons and potentially a civilian nuclear deal if it normalizes with Israel.





Western Media Hail Olympics While Russia Scorns Shameful Games

PARIS (Dispatches) - The Paris Olympics won mostly rave reviews from western media after they closed on Sunday, while media in Russia, whose team were excluded because of its war in Ukraine, sniffed at France's success.

Los Angeles Times sports columnist Bill Plaschke wondered whether Tinseltown was up to the task of rivalling Paris when it hosts the next Summer Olympics in 2028.

"We have to somehow take greatness and make it even greater," he wrote, calling the Games in France "a blockbuster Parisian party that was two weeks of pure Hollywood".

"How on earth can the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics surpass what the world just witnessed in a two-week burst of picturesque rejoicing from the Champ de Mars to the Palace of Versailles?"

The New York Times was generous in its praise of the sporting extravaganza, saying it lifted France from its gloom brought on by political crisis.

"Many are reluctant to let go of its magic: of the adrenaline-fuelled excitement, of the party free of political debate, of the sense of time deliciously suspended, like the glowing Olympic cauldron that has hovered wistfully over the city every night."

The Guardian of Britain hailed the Games' message which it said was "the importance of protecting the spirit of the games in an uncertain world riven by conflict".

But Jim White, writing in The Telegraph, said that Paris "could not match the spirit and warmth of London 2012".

The Italian media was unanimous in its praise, with Corriere della Sera saying Paris had "overcome its fears" despite a prologue marked by "rain, pollution of the Seine and sabotage".

La Repubblica highlighted the "Diversity Olympics".

Spain's El Mundo added: "The Paris of the Olympics was the most dedicated Paris we'd seen in a very long time."

Germany's Die Welt praised the security ensured by the French, saying Paris showed how the Games can be organised "safely in a metropolis in a free and democratic country".

Poland's Rzeczpospolita called the Paris Games "a love letter" while Gazeta Wyborcza noted that nearly all the competitions "took place in front of full stands".

In Portugal, the editor of daily Correio da Manhã, Carlos Rodrigues, called the Games "a

magnificent success".

"In sporting terms too, Paris was a success, even if it didn't dazzle or create a world star capable of rivalling the likes of Usain Bolt or Michael Phelps."

But others including Frank Renout, writing for Dutch daily newspaper Het Parool, warned that the magic would not last.

"Soon everything will return to normal, which in the case of the French means dark and confrontational," he wrote.

"If 'happiness' were an Olympic sport, France would never have won a medal."

In Russia, however, some newspapers found fault.

"The Paris Games weren't flawless," said Moskovsky Komsomolets, a pro-Kremlin mass circulation newspaper, stressing it remained unclear who sabotaged France's high-speed rail network before the opening ceremony.

The newspaper argued that spectators will remember "an endless series of scandals" and not the athletes' sporting feats or records.

Komsomolskaya Pravda, a pro-Kremlin tabloid, said the competitions in Paris were "the most shameful Olympic Games in history".

"The Paris 2024 organisers managed to offend hundreds of millions of people with an opening ceremony and a parody of the Last Supper. And then the Olympics became increasingly embroiled in problems, scandals and even crime."

One of its subheads read: "Vomiting athletes, champions with male chromosomes in women's boxing and worms in food."

In Algeria, an editorial in government daily El Moudjahid praised Algerian boxing champion Imane Khelif, who was at the centre of a gender eligibility row at the Paris Games.

"Imane's victory is also a victory for the oppressed and the excluded, but above all it is a victory for the law, which for too long has been trampled by the logic of the powerful, who are greedy for domination and adept at double-standard policies."

Flick's Barca Stumble Against Monaco in Final Friendly



BARCELONA (Dispatches) - Hansi Flick's Barcelona fell to a bruising 3-0 defeat against Ligue 1 side Monaco in a final tune-up friendly before La Liga starts later this week.

The German coach took charge of his first home match since he was appointed in May, but after solid results on their US tour, including a win over Real Madrid, the Catalans crumbled at the Olympic Stadium.

Monaco took the lead early in the second half of Barcelona's traditional Joan Gamper Trophy curtain-raiser through Lamine Camara, before Breel Embolo swiftly doubled the advantage.

Ilkay Gundogan departed after suffering a blow to the head, while Flick brought on Spain's Euro 2024 star Lamine Yamal to try and spark a flat Barca into life.

The 17-year-old excited briefly but supporters ended up whistling their side after Christian Mawissa smashed home Monaco's third late on.

Barcelona, aiming to snatch the Spanish title back from rivals Real Madrid, start their La Liga campaign on Saturday with a difficult trip to face Valencia.

Carlo Ancelotti's Blancos, who followed up last season's league and Champions League double by signing French superstar Kylian Mbappe, begin their domestic campaign on Sunday against Real Mallorca.

Real's Vinicius Open to One Billion Euro Saudi Offer

MADRID (Dispatches) - Real Madrid and Brazil forward Vinicius Jr is open to an offer of more than one billion euros from Saudi Arabia, sources close to the player told Reuters on Monday.

Vinicius, 24, was approached by Saudi Public Investment Fund (PIF) officials to inquire about his interest of moving to the Saudi Pro League (SPL) on a five-year contract worth around 200 million euros per season fixed, plus bonuses.

The package would also include a separate 10-year contract to become an ambassador for the 2034 World Cup, which is set to be held in the country, but those terms and financial numbers are yet to be discussed.

Although an official, formal offer has yet to be presented, Vinicius has not dismissed the move and gave permission to PIF to approach Real Madrid.

Despite being "happy and motivated" in the Spanish capital, Vinicius and his representatives believe that a lucrative offer like this needs to be studied carefully.

Another source close to the player said that Real have shown no interest in negotiating a transfer, highlighting the player's one billion euro buy-out clause.

Real Madrid and PIF did not respond to requests for

comment.

Obsessed to be taken seriously as a soccer force, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia announced a Sports Clubs Investment and Privatisation Project, with PIF taking ownership of 75% of the capital of the country's four main clubs: Al Ahli, Al Ittihad, Al Hilal and Al Nassr.

The biggest Saudi transfer came from the country's most successful club, Al Hilal, who spent 90 million euros to buy forward Neymar from Paris St Germain.

With Karim Benzema at Al Ittihad and Cristiano Ronaldo at Al Nassr, PIF tried to persuade France captain Kylian Mbappe to be the big name Al Ahli is still missing last year.

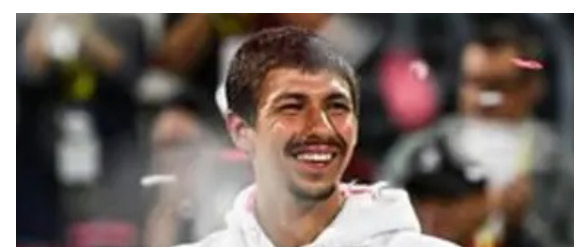
The forward, however, turned down Saudi's lucrative offer and joined Real Madrid in June.

The proposal for Vinicius is understood to be similar to the Mbappe offer. The Brazilian would join Al Ahli, linking up with former Premier League players Riyad Mahrez and Roberto Firmino.

Vinicius, who is under contract until 2027 after signing an extension in 2022, is a contender to win the Ballon d'Or award for the best player in the world after helping Real to a Champions League and LaLiga double last season.



Popyrin Caps Upset Surge to Montreal Championship



MONTREAL (Dispatches) - Alexei Popyrin completed a shock run to the biggest result of his career, winning the championship match of the National Bank Open 6-2, 6-4 over fifth-seeded Andrey Rublev on Monday in Montreal.

Popyrin, a 25-year-old Australian who began the event ranked 62nd in the world, collected the third singles title of his career, his first in a Masters 1000 event - the tournaments classified just below the Grand Slam events.

His surge through to the Montreal title included three victories over top-10 players.

"It means the world, for all the hard work I've put in over the years, all the sacrifices I have made," Popyrin said. "Not just me, but my family, my girlfriend, my team, everybody around me. They have sacrificed their whole lives for me and for me to win this for them is just amazing."

The result will vault Popyrin's ranking to No. 30. That's just behind the career-best No. 23 that Popyrin held after he upset Rublev, a 26-year-old Russian, in the third round at Monte Carlo in April.

Only three players were ranked lower than No. 62 when they won Masters 1000 tournaments -- Croatia's Borna Coric (then-No. 152 at Cincinnati in 2022), Spain's Roberto Carretero (then-No. 143 at Hamburg in 1996) and Sweden's Mikael Pernfors (then-No. 95 at Montreal in 1993).

The result ends a lengthy drought for Australian players in Masters 1000 tournaments, as Lleyton Hewitt last prevailed at Indian Wells, Calif., in 2003.

Popyrin rode his serve to the victory over Rublev. The Aussie had a 10-4 edge in aces, won 84 percent of his first-serve points (compared to 63 percent for the Russian) and saved five of the six break points he faced.

"I tried to focus on what I had to do on my serve," Popyrin said, according to AFP. "My first two match points, I didn't make a first serve, but on the third, I did what I felt I needed to do. I hit a pretty solid forehand to win it."

Meanwhile tenth-seeded Tommy Paul of the United States was knocked out in the first round at Mason, Ohio, squandering three match points and falling 6-2, 4-6, 7-5 to Italy's Flavio Cobolli.

Paul led 5-4 in the third set and three times had the opportunity to end the match on Cobolli's serve. However, Cobolli rallied to win that game, then took a 6-5 edge by converting his fourth break point of the next game before serving out the match.

Martinez Signs New Inter Deal Until 2029

MILAN (Dispatches) - Lautaro Martinez committed his future to Inter Milan on Monday after signing a new contract which keeps him with the Serie A champions until 2029.

"FC Internazionale Milano can confirm that an agreement has been reached to extend Lautaro Martinez's contract. The 1997-born forward has put pen to paper on a deal lasting until 30 June 2029," said Inter in a statement.

Argentina striker Lautaro will reportedly earn a net salary of nine million euros (\$9.8m) per season after renewing a deal which was set to expire in two years' time.

Inter president Giuseppe Marotta said last month that Lautaro had already agreed to sign his new contract but that the club would wait until he returned from post-Copa America holidays to announce it.

Lautaro was key to Argentina retaining the Copa America, netting five times including the only goal in the final triumph over Colombia.

International glory for the 26-year-old came after he helped power Inter to their second Serie A title in four seasons, finishing their triumphant campaign a whopping 19 points ahead of local rivals AC Milan.

The Inter skipper topped the scoring charts with 24 goals in 33 league appearances, eight strikes ahead of his nearest rival Dusan Vlahovic.

Lautaro confirming his intention to stay at Inter is a huge boost for a club which headed into the close season in uncertain mood after a sudden change in ownership.

Investment fund Oaktree took control of Inter just days

after they won their 20th league crown, when previous owners Suning defaulted on repayment of a loan which matured at 395 million euros.

However Oaktree have opted for continuity rather than revolution since ousting ex-president Steven Zhang and Chinese conglomerate Suning, under whom Inter won seven trophies, including two Serie A titles, and reached two European finals.

Coach Simone Inzaghi extended his contract with Inter to 2026 this month, while star midfielder Nicolò Barella signed a new deal until 2029 ahead of Euro 2024.

Meanwhile Atletico Madrid signed striker Julian Alvarez from Manchester City on Monday in a deal reported to be worth up to 85 million euros (\$93 million).



"The club has reached an agreement with Manchester City for the transfer of the Argentine forward, who has signed a contract for the next six seasons," said Atletico in a statement.

Spanish reports say Atletico will pay 75 million euros for the forward, with potentially 10 million more in bonuses.

The 24-year-old arrived at City for just £14 million (16 million euros) in January 2022 from River Plate, winning two Premier League trophies and the Champions League among other silverware.

Alvarez also helped Argentina lift the World Cup trophy in December 2022 and the Copa America in 2021 and 2024.

"Today I say goodbye to this amazing club, with a lot of emotion," Alvarez told City's club website.

"These have been two very special years. During this time, I have grown and learnt a lot -- both as a player and as a person."

Alvarez scored 36 goals for City in 103 appearances across all competitions.

"He's incredibly loved by the team for his behaviour but like I said many times for many players, he wants to leave and have a new challenge," said Manchester City coach Pep Guardiola last week.

Diego Simeone's Atletico have also signed Robin Le Normand and Alexander Sorloth as they reinforce heavily to compete with Real Madrid and Barcelona, following a disappointing fourth-place La Liga finish last season.