

Iran Hailed a Deal Between Yemen's Ansarullah Resistance Movement and the Saudi-Backed Presidential Leadership Council (PLC) to Ease Financial Tension and Stop Reciprocal Measures

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Iran Condemns Germany's Ban on Islamic Center as Freedom of Religion Violation



TEHRAN - Iran's interim Foreign Minister Ali Bagheri Kani has strongly condemned the German police's move to ban the Islamic Center Hamburg (IZH) and its subsidiary organizations, stating that the step violates fundamental principles of freedom of religion.

"The decision by German judicial and law enforcement authorities on inspection of premises affiliated to IZH, which is among the oldest Islamic centers [in the country] with a history of 70 years and a precious heritage of late top Shia authority Grand Ayatollah [Hossein] Boroujerdi, is an unjustified move and flouts all principles of freedom of religion and thought," Bagheri Kani wrote in a post published on the social media platform X.

He added that the measure is a gift to extremists, violence mongers and advocates of terrorism.

"The terrorist regime of Israel, which uses every excuse to divert public opinion from the ongoing genocide against Palestinians, also welcomed the German police's move," Bagheri Kani stated.

The top Iranian diplomat held the German government responsible for the repercussions of the unjustified and vicious act.

Bagheri Kani underlined that the Iranian government, alongside the Iranian nation and expatriates, supports the promotion of Islamic and Iranian thoughts and civilization as well as the rights of Muslims and Iranians in any part of the world, including Germany.

Germany's Interior Ministry said on Wednesday it had "banned the Hamburg Islamic Center and its affiliated organizations throughout Germany to date, as it is an Islamist extremist organization pursuing anti-constitutional objectives."

The center is accused of supporting Lebanon's Hezbollah resistance movement, which Berlin designates as a "terrorist" organization, as well as promoting "aggressive anti-Semitism" and spreading "authoritarian, theocratic rule."

As part of the ban, the ministry said it will also close four Shia mosques, including Hamburg's Blue Mosque, one of Germany's oldest mosques.

Iran Raps UN Reporteur's Report



TEHRAN (Dispatches) - The spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry has roundly dismissed the last report by the outgoing UN special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the country as part of attempts by enemies to tarnish the image of the Islamic Republic.

In a statement on Wednesday, Nasser Kanaani said Javadd Rehman, the outgoing UN rapporteur, who has been misappropriating his position to serve the terrorist Mujahedin-e-Khalq Organization (MKO), has pursued the policies of the terror group in the final days of his tenure.

Kanaani underlined that the allegations raised by Rehman lack credibility and are totally rejected.

The Iranian diplomat went on to lament the fact that Rehman has easily abused the UN position to publish false stories.

"UN officials, specifically the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), are legally responsible to prevent the exploitation and chances for the pursuit of biased personal or collective objectives against countries," Kanaani said.

He stated that the Islamic Republic of Iran reserves the legal right to object to such wrong approach in certain human rights institutions.

"Enemies of the Iranian nation, who have failed to bring the people to their knees through terrorism, promotion of cruel economic sanctions, and other coercive measures cannot burnish their dismal record of anti-human and terrorist activities by means of abusing international organizations and distorting realities," Kanaani stated.

Experience has proved over the past few decades that enemies of the Iranian nation have been disgraced, and that the Iranians' honorable strive for national progress and authority continues apace, the Iranian diplomat emphasized. In his last report on Iran dated July 17, Rehman called for an international mechanism to investigate what he called "atrocious crimes" in Iran, including "summary, arbitrary and extra-judicial executions."

The UN rapporteur, whose mandate ends on July 31, called for an international mechanism to investigate and prosecute those responsible.



Support of American Academics for Palestine "Unprecedented"

TEHRAN - The statements of Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei during his meeting with the organizers of the Tehran Province Martyrs Congress, held on May 15 were released on Thursday at the location of this congress in the holy shrine of Imam Khomeini (may God rest his soul).

In this meeting, Ayatollah Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution, considered one of the blessings of the struggles during the Sacred Defense era to be the transmission of the message of steadfastness and resistance both domestically and abroad. He said: "Many experts explicitly state that the movements currently being carried out worldwide in favor of Palestine stem from the spirit of the Islamic Revolution."

The Supreme Leader added: "The slogans and positions we witness today in support of Palestine all over the world are the same positions of Imam Khomeini and the slogans that emerged from the hearts of the Iranian people and became widespread."

Referring to the movement of American academics in support of the Palestinian people, Ayatollah Khamenei called it an example of the blessings of the Iranian nation's movement and the warm spirit of the revered Imam, describing it as an unprecedented phenomenon in contemporary history. He noted: "The spread of the American academic support movement for Palestine has reached a point where the U.S. government contradicts all its claims and slogans."

The police in this country trample and handcuff students and professors in front of the public and cameras."

He emphasized: "What they wanted to do in Iran is now happening to them."

The Supreme Leader also attributed the spirit and motivation of the country's youth in recent years to confront ISIS or the Zionist regime to the same spirit of the Sacred Defense era, stating: "In the incidents and seditions of recent years, including the 2009 sedition in Tehran, young people who had neither seen Imam Khomeini nor the Sacred Defense era entered the field with the motivation and spirit of that era and thwarted the enemy's designs aimed at creating problems for the country and the people."

Ayatollah Khamenei, praising the role of Tehran province's units and youth during the Sacred Defense, especially the Seyyed al-Shohada (PBUH) Division, added: "The role of Tehran's youth with the same spirit continues, and in the events of 2022, young people from Tehran and its surroundings made their mark."

He called the artistic documentation and elucidation of significant works and documents related to the Sacred Defense an important and necessary task, emphasizing: "Experience has shown that a truth, no matter how prominent and clear, if not elucidated and reiterated, the ill-wishers will promote anti or distorted versions of it."

Houthi Hails Iran as True Supporter of Palestinians, Warns of Escalation Against Israel



SANAA (Dispatches) - The leader of Yemen's Ansarullah resistance movement has hailed Iran as "true supporter" of Palestinian cause and oppressed nations as he warned of "dramatic escalation" of anti-Israel operations in concert with the Iraqi Islamic Resistance.

Adul-Malik al-Houthi lauded Iran's overwhelming and unconditional support for Palestinians and their legitimate cause, stressing that the Islamic Republic pursues the approach unfazed by the US and Israeli hegemony.

Houthi made the remarks in a televised speech broadcast live from the Yemeni capital Sana'a on Thursday afternoon. He noted that the Israeli regime's prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu is seeking to mobilize Arab regimes against Palestinians and Iran. "Iran is a stalwart supporter of the Palestinian cause and oppressed nations," the Ansarullah chief said. He also said, "The course of the Yemeni Armed Forces' joint operations with the Islamic Resistance in Iraq against the Israeli regime will see a serious escalation in the next phase." "The Islamic Resistance in Iraq has carried out multiple operations against Israeli targets in Haifa and Eilat with new and sophisticated Arqab cruise missiles. Yemeni forces also started the fifth stage of their [anti-Israel] strikes last week with Operation Yafa [against Tel Aviv]."

Houthi added that the operation took the Zionist regime by surprise, and it was a real shock that vital targets in Tel Aviv were struck.

"Operation Yafa covered an aerial distance of more than 2,200 kilometers and penetrated through all barriers that the Israeli enemy has sought from its advocates and sponsors," he stated.

"Israeli media outlets maintain that the operation put an end to the regime's air supremacy. Such reports show that anti-Israel strikes have been fairly effective," he

said. Houthi also pointed to the Israeli military's atrocities in the Gaza Strip, stating that Israeli forces target refugee camps and areas declared as "safe zones".

"Among the Israeli enemy's crimes this week was repeated attacks on the eastern flank of Khan Younis city [in southern Gaza Strip] after partial repatriation of its local residents. Israeli forces target children through bombings, snipers and all means of mass murder," the Ansarullah leader said. He denounced the intensity of unfolding crimes in Gaza as "extremely terrible," saying, "What the Zionist enemy is committing there amounts to great cruelty, barbarism, brutality, and embodies all attributes concerning the crime of genocide."

Houthi highlighted that the Israeli military carries out raids across the occupied West Bank, the most intense of which was the predawn incursion in the Tulkarem refugee camp on Tuesday. He further pointed to Hezbollah's operations against Israeli positions at the northern side of the 1948 occupied territories, noting that new illegal settlements came under the Lebanese resistance group's rocket fire this week. Furthermore, Houthi referred to Netanyahu's address to the US Congress, saying it was full of outright lies and complete fabrications.

Commenting on Israeli air strikes on Yemen's port city of Hudaydah, the Ansarullah chief said the attacks won't deter Yemeni forces from launching anti-Israel operations in support of Palestinians.

Houthi reiterated that Yemeni military operations against Israeli-linked vessels and vital targets inside the occupied territories will continue and that the US and British strikes on Yemen would not stop Yemenis' anti-Israel operations.

The Ansarullah chief finally called on all walks of the Yemeni society to take to the streets on Friday and reiterate their strong solidarity with Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

Iran Rejects Allegations of Plot to Target Israeli Athletes at Paris Olympics



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran has strongly rejected allegations of a plot to target Israeli athletes and tourists during the Paris Olympic Games.

"Terrorist acts have no place in the principles of resistance groups. Lies and deceit cannot switch the roles of the plaintiff and the accused," Iran's permanent mission to the United Nations said in a brief statement in response to a report published by Reuters news agency.

Reuters reported on Thursday that Israeli foreign minister Israel Katz had warned his French counterpart Stephane Sejourne of attempts to carry out attacks against members of the Israeli delegation and Israeli tourists during the Olympics.

The Israeli allegation comes as a global campaign has been launched to ban the regime's representatives from participating in the Games, citing the ongoing genocide in the Gaza Strip which has killed at least 39,175 Palestinians, mostly women and children.

Pro-Palestine activists have initiated the hashtag #BanIsraelFromParisOlympics on social media to pressure organizers to prevent Israeli athletes from participating in the Games, which are scheduled to begin on July 26.

The campaigners argue that "celebrating the human values of the Olympics contradicts Israel's oppressive and genocidal practices against the Palestinians." They questioned, "How do we celebrate human values while human rights are being brutally violated?" adding, "Olympics without Israel is the demand of everyone who believes in justice and humanity."

Moreover, demonstrations have taken place in European countries, including France and Switzerland, in front of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) headquarters, demanding the exclusion of Israeli sports teams from the Paris Olympics.

U.S.-Occupied Airbase Comes Under Fresh Attack in Iraq



BAGHDAD (Dispatches) - An airbase housing the US's occupation forces in western Iraq has come under fresh attack amid continued regional uproar against Washington's unstinting support for the Israeli regime's genocidal war on the Gaza Strip.

Several rockets were launched against the Ain al-Assad Airbase, which is located in the Arab country's Anbar Province, on Thursday, Iraqi security officials said. "Four rockets fell in the vicinity" of the outpost, one security source said. Another said an attack had occurred with "a drone and three rockets" that fell close to the base's perimeter. Over the past years, the outpost, together with the al-Harir Airbase, which houses the American troops in the northern Iraqi Kurdistan Region, has come under numerous attacks in protest at the American forces' presence on the country's soil. Iraq's Islamic Resistance, an umbrella group of anti-terror fighters, has claimed responsibility for the attacks.

The coalition, however, has ramped up its strikes against the bases since October 7, 2023, when the Israeli regime, the US's most cherished regional ally, began waging the war on Gaza.

The Israeli military onslaught has so far claimed the lives of more than 39,175 Palestinians, mostly women and children, and wounded 90,257 others. Also on Thursday, The New York Times reported that the United States had armed the regime with upwards of 25,000 bombs and missiles since the onset of the war. Earlier this month, the regime's military radio reported that the Israeli Air Force had dropped a total eight US-manufactured JDAM (Joint Direct Attack Munition) bombs against the al-Mawasi refugee camp in the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis, killing and injuring a total of 390 Palestinians.

IRAN NEWS



Providing Over \$22b for Imports Exceeds

TEHRAN (ILNA) - According to a report from the Central Bank, from the beginning of this year until August 2, a total of \$22.271 billion in foreign currency has been allocated for the import of essential goods, medicines, commercial and trade goods, imports in exchange for exports, and services.

Based on this report, \$5.120 billion has been allocated for essential goods and medicines, \$11.929 billion for commercial and trade goods, \$407 million for services, and \$4.815 billion for imports in exchange for exports.

According to the Central Bank report, for the import of essential agricultural goods including wheat, oilseeds, and livestock feed, \$4.051 billion was allocated. For medicine, pharmaceutical raw materials, and medical equipment, \$1.069 billion was allocated, totaling \$5.120 billion for essential goods and medicines at a rate of 28,500 tomans to support consumers and ensure cheaper access to essential goods for the public.

Iran's Trade With 15 Neighboring Countries Hits \$20b



TEHRAN - During the spring months of this year, Iran's trade with 15 neighboring countries reached \$20 billion.

Trade with neighboring countries in the first four months of this year increased by 6% to \$20 billion.

According to Moj News Agency, the value of trade with neighboring countries in the first four months of this year increased by 6% to \$20 billion. The weight of Iran's trade with 15 neighboring countries was 34,196,000 tons, which shows a 5% increase compared to the same period last year.

Out of the total trade between Iran and neighboring countries in the first four months of this year, 26,981,000 tons worth \$10.642 billion were allocated to exports, and 7,215,000 tons worth \$9.179 billion were allocated to imports.

The value and weight of exports to neighboring countries during the mentioned period increased by 16% and 6%, respectively, while imports from neighboring countries during this period increased by 1% in weight but decreased by 4% in value.

Iran's trade balance with 15 neighboring countries, excluding oil, was positive by \$1.5 billion.



Iran to Soon Reach Among Top 20 Countries in Fixed Internet Speed

KERMANSHAH (IRNA) - The Minister of Communications and Information Technology stated that with the widespread adoption of fiber optic internet among the public, Iran will soon be among the top 20 countries in the world in terms of fixed internet speed.

Isa Zarepour, the Minister of Communications and Information Technology, during his one-day visit to Kermanshah on Wednesday, July 24, 2024, at a meeting for the inauguration of communication projects in the province held via video conference at the Science and Technology Park, stated: "Significant developments have occurred in the communications sector during the current administration, with fiber optic projects being a lasting legacy of this government. This extensive project is the largest communications project in the country's history." He explained: "In each province, at least one secondary operator exists for implementing the fiber optic project in cities; in Kermanshah, Asiotech is active, and we hope that competition between this operator and telecommunications will lead to better services for our fellow citizens."

The Minister of Communications and Information Technology, noting that currently 40% of urban households in the country have access to this technology, added: "By the end of this year, this figure will reach 70%; today, conditions have been established so that, upon request, fiber optic internet service will be activated for applicants

within a month." He announced that over 7,500 billion rials have been spent on implementing the fiber optic project in Kermanshah city, with as much specialized work done as in a country like Oman, and said: "This path must continue until the last building in the country is connected to the internet via fiber optics." Referring to agreements signed with municipalities for implementing the fiber optic project, Zarepour said: "In over 250 to 300 cities, the project's implementation rate is above 70 to 80%, and overall, 40% of urban households have access to this technology." He continued: "This groundwork was laid during the current administration; whether we want to use foreign or domestic services, this infrastructure must exist; this high-speed communications highway is currently being inaugurated city by city." The Minister of Communications also highlighted the successes of the government in the space industry, saying: "Another major achievement during the Raisi administration was reviving the national space industry; from 2009 to before the 13th government, there were only twelve satellite launches, whereas in the three-year period of the Raisi administration, twelve launches have been conducted." He added: "These launches are essential for testing space payloads and satellites; currently, space has become a laboratory for us, and we can place satellites weighing up to 200 kilograms into space with a 100% Iranian satellite carrier."

32% Growth in Agricultural Exports



TEHRAN (IRNA) - The Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration announced: From the beginning of this year to the end of July, 2,226,000 tons of agricultural products worth \$1.18 billion have been exported abroad.

According to IRNA from Iranian Customs, the volume of agricultural exports during this period shows an increase of 22% in weight and 32% in value.

Based on this report, pistachio exports, with \$273 million and a 193% growth compared to last year, hold the top rank in the country's agricultural exports.

This report indicates that after pistachios, various types of tomatoes with \$147 million, apples with \$108 million, and watermelons with \$96 million had the highest export volumes during this period.

According to IRNA, the country's foreign trade in the first four months of this year, excluding oil, reached \$36 billion. Of the total foreign trade of the country this year, \$17.5 billion was non-oil exports and \$18.5 billion was imports.



Iranian Goods Enjoy Good Reputation in African Markets

AHVAZ (IRNA) - The International Affairs Advisor of the Iran-Africa Joint Chamber of Commerce stated that Iranian goods have a good reputation in African markets. He emphasized that there are strategic opportunities for trade and exports in this continent that Iranian merchants can leverage. Amir Hamed Rezaei, speaking on Wednesday at a conference on strategies for developing Iran-Africa trade with a focus on Khuzestan's capacities held at the Ahvaz Chamber of Commerce, said: Iranian merchants and traders can use the good political and commercial relations between Iran and Africa to develop exports and trade exchanges. He highlighted that Africa offers a very good opportunity for Iranian traders, adding that the World Bank has predicted that African countries will experience good economic growth in the coming years. Rezaei pointed out that traders have not fully utilized the export potential to Africa, noting that the total value of exports and imports to African countries is estimated at 1,500 billion dollars, with Iran's share being only 1.46 billion dollars. The International Affairs Advisor of the Iran-Africa Joint Chamber of Commerce stated that there are numerous strategic opportunities for developing Iran's foreign trade in Africa. To seize these opportunities, expanding communication networks and having sufficient financial readiness to enter the continent's trade market are necessary. Continuing in the conference, the Business Affairs Advisor of the Iran-Africa Joint Chamber of Commerce noted that Khuzestan is the second province after Tehran in terms of gross national production. He stated that due to strong political ties between Iran and Africa, this province can have significant trade activities in African countries. Mohammad Ali Pour Dejou, referring to investment opportunities in Africa, added that 17 out of the 20 valuable metals in the world are found in this continent, and an economic growth rate of over 5% is among the continent's economic and commercial advantages. He mentioned that South Africa is an industrial country where Khuzestan's economic activists can invest and trade in the oil and petrochemical sectors. Pour Dejou described Africa as a safe and strategic target for importing certain raw materials for the country's and province's steel industry. He added that the continent is also a suitable target for wood imports, and Khuzestan, with its large wood conversion industries, can import wood from Africa without any problems or concerns.

Iran, India Call for Cooperation in Fields of Cultural and Tourism



TEHRAN - Rao Inderjit Singh, the Indian State Minister of Culture, met with Ali Darabi, Deputy Minister and Vice President of Cultural Heritage of Iran.

In this meeting, they discussed enhancing bilateral cooperation in the fields of cultural heritage, tourism, and handicrafts. They also talked about formulating a comprehensive joint program in tangible and intangible cultural heritage, facilitating visa issuance for tourism groups, and organizing joint cultural and tourism exhibitions, reaching initial agreements.

During the meeting, the Indian State Minister of Culture welcomed the Iranian delegation present at the UNESCO World Heritage Committee meeting and stated: The history of deep friendship and cultural and civilizational relations between Iran and India over the centuries shows that these relations can develop well and have a significant presence in various fields of cultural heritage and tourism.

Addressing Ali Darabi, Rao Inderjit Singh mentioned: The historical and cultural relations between Iranian and Indian families suggest that our ancestors might have had cultural and familial connections in the past.

He said: The development of both countries, especially in the fields of tourism and cultural heritage, can envision a

brighter future. Singh also welcomed Iran's participation in joint Iran-India exhibitions.

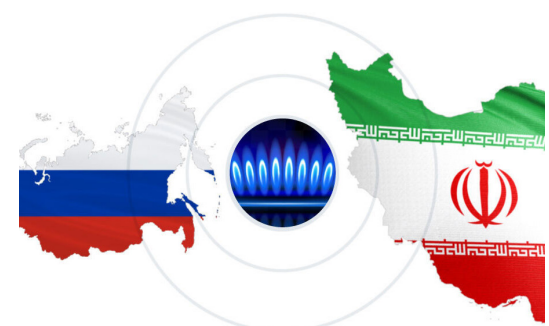
Darabi, in this meeting, emphasized the long-standing shared civilizational background of Iran and India. Citing historical narratives of the shared literature and culture of Iran and India, he stated: The two nations of Iran and India have had deep cultural, social, and economic relations throughout history.

The Deputy Minister and Vice President of Cultural Heritage of Iran said: The development of cultural and economic cooperation, especially in tourism between Iran and India, is based on the long-standing history of such interactions between the two nations, and is a mutual desire of the people and governments of Iran.

He also reminded about the global registration of the Nowruz file and India's involvement in this international intangible world heritage file, saying there are numerous common grounds for expanding cooperation in this field.

Ali Darabi also pointed to Iran's unilateral visa waiver for friendly countries and the potential for facilitating visas between the two countries, emphasizing: If this is realized, the development of tourism between the two countries will see significant growth.

Iran Could Become the Regional Gas Hub



IRNA
Public News Agency

TEHRAN (IRNA) - An energy expert stated that the conditions are ripe for Iran to become the regional gas hub. He mentioned that Iran could import gas from Russia and export it to the demanding countries, thereby increasing its share in the gas trade. Habibollah Zafarian, in an interview with IRNA, emphasized the importance of gas trade. He pointed out that Iran possesses the second-largest conventional gas reserves in the world and ranks third in gas production and fourth in gas consumption. However, Iran's share in the global gas trade is less than 2%.

He added that while Russia, Qatar, and Turkmenistan have secured significant shares in the gas trade due to their substantial gas resources, Iran had aimed for an 8-10% share in gas exports. Unfortunately, due to increasing domestic consumption, this goal was not achieved. Discussing the necessity of gas trade, Zafarian noted that Article 13 of the general policies of the resistance economy emphasizes increasing gas and electricity exports. The general policies of the Seventh Development Plan also highlight the necessity of transforming Iran into the regional energy exchange center. Zafarian further explained that the Seventh Development Plan, recently issued, discusses making Iran an energy hub focused on gas trade. According to the plan, Iran's gas exports are expected to increase from 20 billion cubic meters to 40 billion cubic meters per year. Currently, Iran imports no gas and exports about 18 billion cubic meters. He continued by stating that gas trade, due to its role in electricity production and heating at the national level, involves long-term contracts and creates new strategic dimensions for both parties involved. Additionally, by centering on gas trade, Iran can enhance its political power, a significant tool for increasing regional influence. The third aspect of the importance of gas trade, according to Zafarian, is Iran's gas-related conflicts with the United States in the region. Given the political nature of gas trade, the U.S. can strengthen its political power in the region and obstruct Iran's development, as seen in its interference with Iran's gas exports to India and Pakistan. Hence, increasing Iran's share in the regional gas trade is crucial.

U.S. Arrests Mexican Drug lord 'El Mayo' and El Chapo's Son in Texas

MEXICO CITY (Dispatches) - Mexican drug kingpin Ismael "El Mayo" Zambada and the son of his ex-partner, Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, were arrested on Thursday in El Paso, Texas, in a major coup for U.S. authorities that may also reshape the Mexican criminal landscape. Zambada is one of the most consequential traffickers in Mexico's history and co-founded the Sinaloa Cartel with El Chapo, who was extradited to the United States in 2017 and is serving a life sentence in a maximum security prison. Both Zambada and Joaquin Guzman Lopez, the son of El Chapo, face multiple charges in the U.S. for funneling huge quantities of drugs to U.S. streets, including fentanyl, which has surged to become the leading cause of death for Americans between the ages of 18 and 45.

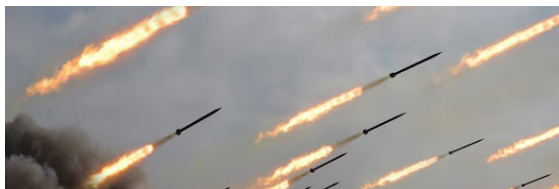
Zambada, who is believed to be in his 70s, and Guzman Lopez, who is in his 30s, were detained after landing in a private plane in the El Paso area, two U.S. officials told Reuters.

Guzman Lopez is one of four sons of El Chapo - known as Los Chapitos, or Little Chapos - who inherited their father's faction of the Sinaloa Cartel. His brother, Ovidio Guzman, was arrested last year and extradited to the United States.



IRAN NEWS

North Korean Hackers Stealing Military Secrets



WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - North Korean hackers have conducted a global cyber espionage campaign in efforts to steal classified military secrets to support Pyongyang's banned nuclear weapons program, the United States, Britain and South Korea said in a joint advisory. The hackers, dubbed Anadriel or APT45 by cybersecurity researchers, are believed to be part of North Korea's intelligence agency known as the Reconnaissance General Bureau, an entity sanctioned by the U.S. in 2015. The cyber unit has targeted or breached computer systems at a broad variety of defence or engineering firms, including manufacturers of tanks, submarines, naval vessels, fighter aircraft, and missile and radar systems, the advisory said. Victims in the U.S. have also included the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), Randolph Air Force Base in Texas and Robins Air Force Base in Georgia, FBI and U.S. Justice Department officials said on Thursday. In the February 2022 targeting of NASA, the hackers used a malware script to gain unauthorized access to its computer system for three months, U.S. prosecutors allege. Over 17 gigabytes of unclassified data were extracted. "The authoring agencies believe the group and the cyber techniques remain an ongoing threat to various industry sectors worldwide, including but not limited to entities in their respective countries, as well as in Japan and India," the advisory said. Internationally isolated North Korea, known formally as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), has a long history of using covert hacking teams to steal sensitive military information. To fund their operations, the hackers used ransomware to target U.S. hospitals and healthcare companies, U.S. officials allege.



NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Humanity is suffering from an "extreme heat epidemic," UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned Thursday, calling for action to limit the impacts of heat waves intensified by climate change.

"Billions of people are facing an extreme heat epidemic -- wilting under increasingly deadly heat waves, with temperatures topping 50 degrees Celsius around the world," he said. "That's 122 degrees Fahrenheit. And halfway to boiling."

According to the European Copernicus network, July 21, 22 and 23 were the three hottest days ever recorded worldwide, with July 22 holding the absolute record of 17.16 degrees Celsius (62.9 degrees Fahrenheit).

Guterres repeated his call for humanity to fight its "addiction" to fossil fuels.

"Today, our focus is on the impact of extreme heat. But let's not forget that there are many other devastating symptoms of the climate crisis: ever-more fierce hurricanes. Floods. Droughts. Wildfires. Rising sea levels. And the list goes on," he said.

"To tackle all these symptoms, we need to fight the disease. And the disease is the madness of incinerating our only home. The disease is the addiction to fossil fuels. The disease is climate inaction," he stressed, calling in particular on G20 countries to take action.

While 2023 was the hottest year on record, and 2024 could set a new record, temperatures well above 40C (104F) are increasingly common.

In the space of a year, the 50C threshold has even been exceeded in at least 10 places, from Death Valley in the United States (53.9C on July 7) to Agadir in Morocco, and also in China and India.

The intense heat, often less visible than other devastating impacts of climate change such as storms or floods, is nonetheless more deadly.

This "silent killer" is responsible for around 489,000 deaths per year between 2000 and 2019, compared with 16,000 deaths per year from cyclones, according to the UN's "Call to Action" document published on Thursday.

Extremely high temperatures also have an economic impact, with the UN estimating economic losses from heat stress at work will reach \$2.4 trillion in 2030.

According to a report by the International Labor Organization published on Thursday, more than 70 percent of workers were exposed to excessive heat in 2020, 8.8 percent more than in 2000.

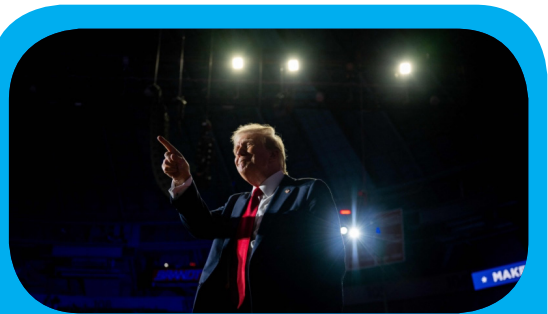
"The good news is that we can save lives and we can limit its impact," Guterres said Thursday.

The UN has called for the world community to first act to protect "the most vulnerable" -- including young children, the elderly and also humanity's poorest.

In this context, early warning systems should include extreme heat, warning populations of the arrival of heat waves and informing them of the precautions to take, the document says.

The call to action also recommends an "increase (to) equitable access to and scale up (of) low-carbon cooling."

This would involve investing in passive cooling systems -- which include climate-sensitive urban design measures, reflective surfaces and natural cooling systems -- and the phase-out of climate-warming gases that are used in many cooling systems.



Trump Fires at Kamala, Calls Her a Radical Left Lunatic

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - Donald Trump launched a volley of attacks against US Vice President Kamala Harris yesterday, calling her a "radical left lunatic" in his first rally since she became the de facto Democratic Party nominee for November's election. In a speech where he also claimed that Harris was in favour of the "execution" of babies due to her position on abortions, the former president and Republican nominee said: "She is a radical left lunatic who will destroy our country." "We're not going to let that happen," he told a crowd in North Carolina, repeatedly mispronouncing Harris's first name. Trump's address comes as Harris, 59, hits the campaign trail armed with President Joe Biden's endorsement -- after his historic decision over the weekend not to seek re-election. The 78-year-old Republican had been attacking Biden over his age, but is now being forced to pivot as he has become the oldest nominee in US history. Trump turned his aim at Harris on Wednesday, saying she was "the ultra liberal driving force behind every single Biden catastrophe". From dubbing her "Lynin' Kamala" to alleging that her record on the border has allowed communities to be "ravaged by migrant crime," he charged that "she's unfit to lead". He also raised the politically explosive issue of abortion, after Harris pledged to put abortion rights at the center of her campaign and to fight for the right to control one's own body. "She wants abortions in the eighth and ninth month of pregnancy. That's fine with her, right up until birth and even after birth, the execution of a baby," Trump claimed. Harris has notably accused Trump of seeking to ban the procedure, previously saying that "we trust women to make decisions about their own bodies." Trump alleged Wednesday that Democratic Party leaders ousted Biden in an "undemocratic" way, saying: "Now we have a new victim to defeat."

Israel Seeks Changes to Gaza Truce Plan, Complicating Talks

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - Israel is seeking changes to a plan for a Gaza truce and the release of hostages by Hamas, complicating a final deal to halt nine months of combat that have devastated the enclave, according to a Western official and a Palestinian and two Egyptian sources.

Israel says that displaced Palestinians should be screened as they return to the enclave's north when the ceasefire begins, retreating from an agreement to allow civilians who fled south to freely return home, the four sources told Reuters.

Israeli negotiators "want a vetting mechanism for civilian populations returning to the north of Gaza, where they fear these populations could support" Hamas fighters who remain entrenched there, said the Western official.

The Palestinian militant group rejected the new Israeli demand, according to the Palestinian and Egyptian sources.

Another sticking point, the Egyptian sources said, was over Israel's demand to retain control of Gaza's border with Egypt, which Cairo dismissed as outside a framework for a final deal accepted by the foes. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office, the White House and Egypt's foreign ministry did not immediately respond to requests for comment on Israel's demands. "Netanyahu is still stalling. There is no change in his stance so far," said Hamas senior official Sami Abu Zuhri, who did not comment directly on Israel's demands. Word of the new sticking points came as U.S. President Joe Biden pressed for a ceasefire in talks in Washington on Thursday with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on reaching a final deal.

"We are closer now than we've been before," said White House national security spokesperson John Kirby, adding that gaps remained.

In a speech to the U.S. Congress on Wednesday, Netanyahu said that Israel was engaged "in intense efforts" to secure the release of hostages held in Gaza.

The sources who spoke to Reuters requested anonymity to discuss Israeli demands because of the



delicacy of the on-off talks to finalize a truce and the release of hostages seized in the Hamas-led Oct. 7 assault on Israel that triggered the Gaza war.

The attackers killed 1,200 people and took more than 250 captives, according to Israeli tallies. Some 120 hostages are still being held, though Israel believes a third of them are dead.

Gaza health authorities say more than 39,000 Palestinians have been killed and most of Gaza's 2.3 million people displaced by fighting that has destroyed much of the enclave and created a humanitarian disaster. The United States, Qatar and Egypt have been mediating indirect talks between Israel and Hamas centered on a framework based on an Israeli offer and promoted by U.S. President Joe Biden, who has pressed the sides to resolve their remaining differences. The framework calls for three phases, with the first seeing a six-week ceasefire and the release of women, elderly and wounded hostages in exchange for hundreds of Palestinian prisoners held by Israel. Talks on the second phase - which Biden calls "a permanent end to hostilities" - would continue in the first phase. Major reconstruction would begin in the third phase.

U.S. officials have said for weeks that a deal was close but that hurdles remained. Israeli officials raised their demand for a mechanism to vet civilians returning to Gaza's north at the last negotiating session in Cairo earlier this month, said the Western and Egyptian sources. This "wasn't expected," the Western official said.

Israel is concerned not only about Hamas fighters slipping back north, but "operatives" among civilians who provide covert support to the group that governs Gaza, the official said.

The Israelis, the official and the three other sources said, also balked at withdrawing their forces from a nine-mile (14 km) strip of land along the border with Egypt referred to by Israel as the Philadelphi corridor.

Harris Pushes Netanyahu to Ease Suffering in Gaza

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris pressured Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu today to help reach a Gaza ceasefire deal that would ease the suffering of Palestinian civilians, striking a tougher tone than President Joe Biden.

"It is time for this war to end," Harris said in a televised statement after she held face-to-face talks with Netanyahu. Harris, the likely Democratic presidential nominee after Biden dropped out of the election race on Sunday, did not mince words about the humanitarian crisis gripping Gaza after nine months of war between Israel and Hamas militants.

"We cannot allow ourselves to be numb to the suffering and I will not be silent," she said. Harris' remarks were sharp and serious in tone and raised the question of whether she would be more aggressive in dealing with Netanyahu if elected president on November 5. But analysts do not expect there would be a major shift in US policy toward Israel, Washington's closest ally in the Middle East. The conflict began on October 7 when Hamas militants attacked southern Israel from Gaza, killing 1,200 people and taking more than 250 captives, according to Israeli tallies. Israel's retaliatory attack in Gaza has killed more than 39,000 people and caused a humanitarian calamity with most of the coastal

enclave leveled, people displaced from their homes, famine and a shortage of emergency relief. Biden met with Netanyahu but did not make substantive remarks. Aides said he pressed for a ceasefire in his first face-to-face talks with the Israeli leader since Biden traveled to Tel Aviv in the days after October 7. Netanyahu will meet Harris' Republican rival, Donald Trump, tomorrow at Trump's Mar-a-Lago club in Florida. A ceasefire has been the subject of negotiations for months. US officials believe the parties are closer than ever before to an agreement for a six-week ceasefire in exchange for the release by Hamas of women, sick, elderly and wounded hostages. "There has been hopeful movement in the talks to secure an agreement on this deal, and as I just told Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, it is time to get this deal done," Harris said. Although as vice president she has mostly echoed Biden in firmly backing Israel's right to defend itself, she made clear on Thursday that she was losing patience with Israel's military approach. "Israel has a right to defend itself. And how it does so matters," Harris said. In March, she bluntly stated that Israel was not doing enough to ease a "humanitarian catastrophe" during its ground offensive in the Palestinian enclave. Later, she did not rule out "consequences" for Israel if it launched a full-scale invasion of refugee-packed Rafah in southern Gaza.





Gaston Upsets Top Seed Sebastien Baez in Kitzbuhel

LONDON (Dispatches) - France's Hugo Gaston saved two match points and 12 of 16 break points in upsetting top seed Sebastien Baez of Argentina 7-5, 5-7, 7-6 (6) in the quarterfinals at the Generali Open in Kitzbuhel, Austria.

Baez fired more winners (49-34) but also had more double faults (7-2) in the match lasting three hours and eight minutes.

Gaston will face Argentina's Facundo Diaz Acosta, who knocked off fourth seed Pedro Martinez of Spain 6-7 (2), 6-3, 6-4 in a three-hour, 32-minute match.

Italy's Matteo Berrettini won his eighth consecutive match in beating American wild card Nicolas Moreno De Alboran 7-6 (5), 6-3 in the quarterfinals. Berrettini saved all three break points and recorded seven aces on Thursday. He improved to 9-0 in tiebreaks over the past two weeks.

He advances to the semifinals against Germany's Yannick Hanfmann, who ousted Brazil's Thiago Seyboth Wild 7-6 (2), 6-4.

Top seed Andrey Rublev of Russia moved closer to his third title of the year with a 5-7, 6-3, 6-2 quarterfinal victory over Hungary's Fabian Marozsan in Umag, Croatia.

Rublev won earlier in 2024 in Hong Kong and Madrid and has 16 tour-level crowns. He converted six of 15 break points and fired 10 aces to zero double faults.

He moves to the semifinals against fourth-seeded Francisco Cerundolo of Argentina, a 6-4, 2-6, 7-6 (2) winner over Italy's Lorenzo Sonego.

Czech Jakub Mensik eliminated Taiwan lucky loser Chun-Hsin Tseng 6-0, 6-4 and will face second-seeded Lorenzo Musetti of Italy, a 5-7, 6-3, 6-0 winner over Dusan Lajovic of Serbia.

Juncheng Shang, a 19-year-old qualifier from China, upset top-seeded Ben Shelton 7-6 (6), 6-4 in the second round at Atlanta.

The result was a repeat of their matchup last year at the same event, when Shang also got the best of Shelton, an Atlanta native. Shang advanced to the third quarterfinal appearance of his career, all of them coming this year.

Shang faced just one break point in the match despite managing just two aces to Shelton's 13.

Third-seeded Frances Tiafoe won 84 percent of his first serve points (46 of 55) while emerging with a 6-4, 3-6, 6-3 victory over Russia's Aslan Karatsev.

Fourth-seeded Jordan Thompson of Australia won in straight sets over French lucky loser Harold Mayot 6-2, 7-5. Japan's Yoshihito Nishioka downed American Mackenzie McDonald 6-3, 6-4 and next will face Tiafoe in the quarterfinals.

Fifth-seeded Alejandro Davidovich Fokina of Spain and eighth-seeded Max Purcell of Australia also advanced.

Only Captains Allowed to Speak to Referees at Olympics



PARIS (Dispatches) - Only captains will be allowed to speak and discuss decisions with the referee during the Olympics, FIFA said following the rule's first implementation at last month's European Championship.

FIFA is encouraging the adoption of the measure by competition organisers globally after UEFA extended the new approach to all of their competitions in a bid to facilitate clearer communication.

"Without referees there is no football. Protecting match officials and ensuring they are treated with respect is fundamental for the future of the game," FIFA president Gianni Infantino said.

"Implementing measures such as 'captain only' is crucial in maintaining the spirit of football and safeguarding those who uphold its laws."

The world soccer governing body added they will continue to monitor the impact of the "captain only" rule.

"This is an important step based on the overarching idea of further enhancing fairness and respect in football while enabling an open line of dialogue between the referee and the teams," chairman of the FIFA referees committee Pierluigi Collina said.

"As we have seen in the past, measures that are in defence of football end up being accepted."

The Olympic soccer tournament kicks off on Wednesday as Spain take on Uzbekistan at Paris' Parc des Princes while Argentina face Morocco in Saint-Etienne.

Nadal, Djokovic Fighting Time and New Generation at Olympics

PARIS (Dispatches) - Rafael Nadal will bid farewell to the Olympics on the clay courts of Roland Garros - scene of his greatest moments - as Novak Djokovic attempts to prevent the sun setting on tennis's golden generation.

Nadal has won 14 of his 22 Grand Slam titles in Paris but at 38 time is ticking for the Spaniard, who last month suffered his earliest exit from the French Open.

Battered by exhausting, career-long battles with injuries, former world number one Nadal has seen his ranking slump to 161.

As a result he is unseeded at the Games and could come up against top seed Djokovic as early as the second round, in what would be the pair's 60th meeting.

"Roland Garros is the most special place in the world of tennis for me," said Nadal, who won Olympic singles gold at Beijing 2008 and doubles gold with Marc Lopez in Rio eight years later.

Djokovic leads Nadal 30-29 in their head-to-head series.

But Nadal has won eight of their 10 meetings at Roland Garros, triumphing in their most recent clash in the 2022 quarter-finals.

That win helped propel Nadal to a 22nd major title. It was also the most recent of his 92 career singles trophies.

Nadal start his Paris Olympics against Hungary's 83rd-ranked Marton Fucsovics.

Djokovic has traditionally struggled at the Olympics with just a bronze medal



from Beijing 2008 to show for his efforts.

He arrives in Paris smarting from a straight-sets loss to Carlos Alcaraz in the Wimbledon final as he was foiled in his bid to win a record-setting 25th Grand Slam title.

Without a title since last year's ATP Finals, Djokovic is enduring a torrid 2024 by his standards.

Jannik Sinner, missing from the Olympics with tonsillitis, succeeded him as Australian Open champion and eventually world number one.

Alcaraz, still only 21, took his French Open title.

Djokovic, who starts his Olympics against unranked Matthew Ebden of Australia, can at least be confident in his French Open pedigree with three titles in 2016, 2021 and 2023.

With Roger Federer retired, Nadal deep in the twilight of his career and Andy Murray quitting once the Olympics are over, Djokovic finds himself facing down the new generation spearheaded by Alcaraz and Sinner.

Adding to the pressure for the Serb is knowing that should he fail to successfully defend his US Open title in September, it will be the first time in 22 years that none of the "Big Four" have secured a Grand Slam crown.

Alcaraz, who already has four Grand Slam titles, starts his first Olympics against 275th-ranked Hady Habib of Lebanon.

Sinner out of Olympics With Tonsillitis



MILAN (dispatches) - Men's tennis number one Jannik Sinner withdrew from the Paris Olympics yesterday, just two days before it begins, after falling ill with tonsillitis.

The Italian said he was "sad and disappointed" to drop out, adding that he had started feeling unwell on Monday after a practice week in Monaco.

"After seeing my doctors on Tuesday and waiting an extra day to give myself some more time to see if my condition would improve, things unfortunately got worse," Sinner, 22, said in a statement.

"I was looking forward to competing with my teammates and the rest of the Italian team, but for now that will have to wait."

"As advised by my medical team, I will now take some time to rest and recover to full health. I'd like to wish the whole team Italia the best for this important event and hope to be back stronger in the future."

Sinner said the Olympics had been "one of my main goals for this season" and was due to play in the men's singles and the doubles with Lorenzo Musetti.

Wimbledon semi-finalist Musetti will now have to play in the men's doubles tournament with either Luciano Darderi or Matteo Arnaldi.

Italian media reported that Andrea Pavoncelli, ranked 207 in the world, will replace Sinner in the men's singles.

Sinner dropping out deprives Italy of a great shot at a medal.

He has long been the great hope of Italian tennis and after finishing runner-up to Novak Djokovic at the ATP Finals in November last year, he has moved up a level.

Sinner won his first Grand Slam at the Australian Open at the start of this year and then became the first Italian to top the world rankings after his recent run to the semi-finals at the French Open.

He has also won three other tournaments this year, including his second Masters 1000 crown in Miami.

Sinner withdrew from the Madrid Open before the quarter-finals with a hip injury and missed the tournament in Rome in the run-up to Roland Garros, where the Olympic tennis will be played between July 27 and August 4.

Murray Withdraws From Paris Olympics Singles



PARIS (Dispatches) - Andy Murray withdrew from the tennis singles at the Paris Olympics but the two-time gold medalist will play doubles in what will be the final event of his glittering career.

The British former world number one, who will retire at the end of his fifth Games, has still not fully recovered from back surgery last month.

He believes the men's doubles, where he is playing with Dan Evans, offers his best chance of another medal.

"I've taken the decision to withdraw from the singles to concentrate on the doubles with Dan," said the 37-year-old.

"Our practice has been great and we're playing well together. Really looking forward to getting started and representing GB one more time."

Murray won gold in singles at London 2012 and in Rio four years later, as well as silver in mixed doubles with Laura Robson in 2012.

His withdrawal means his final singles match was his brief second-round appearance at Queen's Club against Jordan Thompson last month before he was forced to pull out because of a spinal cyst.

The Scot confirmed on Tuesday that he would retire after the Paris Olympics.

"Competing for Great Britain has been by far the most memorable weeks of my career and I'm extremely proud to get to do it one final time," the three-time Grand Slam champion

posted on social media.

Murray has been ravaged by injuries in recent years, slumping to 121st in the world.

He has played with a metal hip since 2019 and suffered ankle damage earlier this year.

Murray was not fit enough to play singles at Wimbledon this month due to his back surgery but played doubles with brother Jamie and was defeated in the first round before an emotional tribute arranged by tournament chiefs.

"It's hard because I would love to keep playing, but I can't," admitted Murray at the All England Club.

"Physically it is too tough now, all of the injuries, they have added up and they haven't been insignificant."

Murray ended Britain's 77-year wait for a men's champion at Wimbledon when he triumphed in 2013, defeating rival Novak Djokovic in the final.

He added a second title in 2016, taking his career majors total to three after breaking his duck at the 2012 US Open.

Murray won gold at the 2012 Olympics on an emotional day at the All England Club when he defeated Roger Federer just weeks after he had lost the Wimbledon final to the Swiss on the same Centre Court.

Four years later, he defeated Juan Martin del Potro to become the first tennis player, male or female, to win two Olympic singles golds.