

Defense Minister Brigadier General Aziz Nasirzadeh Says Perpetrators of a Terrorist Attack in the Southeastern Province of Sistan and Baluchestan Will Be Dealt With "Severely"

# IRAN NEWS

Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Ali Akbar Ahmadian and the State Secretary of Belarusian Security Council Alexander Volfovich Discussed Ways to Promote Strategic Relations and Cooperation on the International Scene

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## Tehran Calls on UNSC to Condemn Terrorist Attack in Iran



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's Permanent Representative to the UN Amir Saeed Iravani on Friday wrote to the Security Council to call for appropriate measures against the perpetrators of the attack in southeastern Iran.

Iravani also said Tehran is committed to punish and bring the perpetrators to justice.

Three Iranian border guards were killed when gunmen opened fire at a gas station in the town of Mirjaveh.

The Jaish al-Adl terrorist group claimed responsibility. The group has been behind several terrorist attacks in Sistan and Baluchestan province. "I am writing to inform you of yet another appalling and cowardly terrorist attack on my country, the Islamic Republic of Iran, carried out by the known terrorist group, Jaish al-Adl," Iravani said in the letter.

"In the late hours of 12 September 2024, this foreign-backed group, linked to and supported by Daesh Khorasan (ISIL-K), notorious for its violent activities since 2012, launched a brutal attack in the border city of Mirjaveh in Sistan and Baluchistan province," Iravani wrote.

"At a gas station in Mirjaveh, an armed group affiliated with Jaish al-Adl opened fire on an Iranian law enforcement vehicle as border guards and officers were refueling," he said.

He added that the terrorist act led to the martyrdom of Second Lieutenant Mohammad Amin Narouei, Private Parsa Soozani, and Private Amir Ebrahimzadeh.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran strongly condemns such heinous criminal terrorism and underscores its unwavering commitment to ensure that those responsible are brought to justice and held accountable," he wrote.

Jaish al-Adl, a notorious terrorist group headquartered in Pakistan, has been involved in numerous terror attacks against Iran.

Iran has repeatedly called on Pakistan to prevent terrorist groups from gaining a foothold in their border region.



## Iran Successfully Launches Chamran 1 Research Satellite Into Orbit

TEHRAN - Iran has successfully sent into orbit a domestically-made research satellite dubbed Chamran 1.

The satellite was placed at an orbit of 550 km on Saturday morning using the Qaem-100 satellite carrier, a solid-fueled space launch vehicle developed by the aerospace experts of the Islamic Revolution Gauds Corps (IRGC).

Several hours into the launch, Chamran 1 satellite sent its first signals. The spacecraft, which has been developed by several Iranian companies and industrial groups, weighs about 60 kg.

Its main mission is to test hardware and software systems in order to prove orbital maneuvering technology in height and phase.

Chamran 1 was put into orbit to also evaluate cold gas propulsion subsystems in space systems and to assess the performance of navigation and situation control subsystems.

Iran has developed its space program in the past several years despite restrictions caused by Western-imposed sanctions on the country.

In last February, Iran launched three satellites simultaneously amid regional conflicts that involve what Western governments say are Iranian-backed militia groups.

The satellites were launched atop one of the nation's Simorgh rockets and reached low Earth orbit, with each satellite's altitude ranging between 280 miles (450 kilometers) and 680 miles (1,110 km), according to the statement.

The trio of satellites consisted of two communications and navigation cubesats known as Keihan 2 and Hatef 1, and a third satellite known as Mehda. That latter spacecraft is described as a "research satellite" that will allow Iran's space agency to evaluate the performance of the Simorgh to inject satellites into different orbits.

By the way in March 2024, Iran also successfully put into orbit the domestically-built Pars 1 research-sensing satellite.

The 134-kilogram satellite was launched by a Soyuz rocket from the Vostochny Cosmodrome in Russia's far eastern Amur region on Thursday.

Equipped with three cameras, Pars 1 will scan Iran's topography from an orbit of 500 kilometers above the Earth's surface.

The satellite is designed and manufactured by experts and young scientists at the Iran Space Research Institute with the cooperation of knowledge-based companies.

It receives data from ground sources in three spectral ranges of visible, short-wave infrared and thermal infrared.

According to reports, Iran is constructing West Asia's largest launch base in the country's south.

In April 2024, Iran's Space Agency said it is charting a course for expansion in the new Persian year, focusing on satellite launches, technological advancements, and bolstering international collaborations to elevate satellite capabilities.

Iran is reportedly the ninth country in the world after the Soviet Union, the United States, France, Japan, China, the United Kingdom, India and the Zionist regime that has successfully launched a satellite independently.

Since 2005, Iran has joined the club of space countries by sending the Sina 1 satellite, which was sent into orbit with the help of Russia. Since then, the Iranian Space Agency has put planning for the use of space and the expansion of space technologies in the country using local knowledge and international cooperation on the agenda.

## Iran Slams EU Allegations on Missile Supplies to Russia



TEHRAN (Dispatches) - Iran has strongly condemned the European Union's allegations about its involvement in the Ukraine war.

In a statement issued on Friday evening, Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Naser Kanaani strongly condemned the statement of the High Representative of the European Union regarding Iran accusing the Islamic Republic of interference in the Ukraine conflict.

Kanaani said any claim regarding sales of Iranian missiles to Russia is unfounded. "I am again clearly reminding the position of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Any claim that Iran sells ballistic missiles to Russia is false," he said.

He warned against such destructive comments and false accusations. "We recommend that the European Union avoid accusations based on false information," the spokesman said.

He also addressed the threat by the EU to impose new restrictive measures against Iran over the issue.

Kanaani said Western countries are addicted to sanctions. He said such measures create problems rather than solving them, as they will trigger an Iranian response.

"Unfortunately, some Western parties are addicted to the imposition of sanctions, a path that not only does not help to solve the problems but is itself a part of the problem and will face Iran's response," he said.

The US, UK, France and Germany have already slapped their own sanctions on Iran over the allegations, despite denial by Iran.

On Tuesday, the foreign ministers of the United Kingdom, France and Germany - known as the E3 - issued a statement against what they alleged was "Iran's export and Russia's procurement of Iranian ballistic missiles."

They also decided to "cancel bilateral air services agreements with Iran" and announced that they would work towards imposing sanctions against Iran Air, the country's national airliner.

On Tuesday, the US Treasury and the State Department imposed sanctions on 10 individuals and nine entities based in Iran and Russia.

## Iran Armed Forces Biggest Anti-Terror Entity



TEHRAN (Dispatches) - Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari, the head of the Joint Staff of the Iranian Army, says the country's armed forces are considered the biggest and strongest anti-terror organization.

Rear Admiral Sayyari who is in China to attend the Global Peace and Security Conference in the capital Beijing made the remarks on Friday, noting that Iran's armed forces will firmly respond those that do not comply with international principles and regulations in the region.

The world is presently interwoven with tensions, wars, and conflicts that have put humans' lives in danger, he said.

He called on the participating countries to take concrete steps to confront the ongoing challenges in the globe.

Unilateralism has brought about grave consequences in the world, he pointed out.

He hailed the Chinese initiative of One Belt, One Road, noting that Iran welcomes plans of friendly countries that benefit all sides.

He called on international bodies such as BRICS and Shanghai Cooperation Organization to root out oppression and wrongdoing in the world.

Before his departure, the senior Iranian army official said that the Beijing conference explores ways to counter the global arrogance's dominance, sending the message that a multipolar system will be the basis of future cooperation among world countries.

He said that Iran's official stance at the conference will be the promotion of global peace and security and will stress the importance of navigation security in the northern Indian Ocean as well as the Strait of Hormuz and Bab al-Mandab with a focus on cooperation among neighboring countries.

Iran's official stance will also highlight the point that establishing regional security does not require the presence of extra-regional powers, Sayyari added.

The Gaza war will be another issue that Iran will highlight at the conference, he noted.

He cited the instances of the Israeli regime's ongoing genocidal war on the Gaza Strip and deadly aggression against other places across the West Asia region as well as its violations against the Islamic Republic's interests and sovereignty amid untrammelled intelligence and military support on the part of the United States.

"All of these indicate [the existence of] chronic anarchy across the international establishment," said the commander.

## Hezbollah Strikes Israeli Military Targets With Drone Swarms, Rockets



BEIRUT (Dispatches) - Hezbollah says it struck the Galilee Division Reserve Base and its logistics depots at Ami'ad kibbutz in the northern sector of the Israeli-occupied territories with dozens of Katyusha rockets.

Hebrew-language sources also reported a large-scale Hezbollah drone attack from southern Lebanon on the Galilee region, during which the Nahal Gershom base was targeted.

The movement said Saturday the operation was in retaliation for Israeli attacks on civilians and residential buildings in Lebanon and in solidarity with Palestinians.

Hezbollah also stated it conducted a missile attack against an Israeli Merkava battle tank as it was moving along the Ruwaisat al-Alam-Zebdine road. The strike destroyed the tank and set it aflame.

On Friday, Hezbollah targeted the Israeli al-Marj and Bayyad Bliida outposts in the northern part of the occupied territories and the Zebdine barracks in the occupied Shebaa Farms.

Hezbollah and Israel have been exchanging deadly fire since early October last year, shortly after the regime launched a genocidal war against the Gaza Strip following a surprise operation by Hamas.

On Friday, Israeli media acknowledged that Hezbollah's drones pose the "greatest challenge" to the regime's missile systems.

According to a report by Israeli Channel 13 television channel, Hezbollah's kamikaze drones strike their designated targets accurately, as "the top-tier Israeli Iron Dome system and fighter aircraft fail to bring them down."

## President Calls for Muslim Unity, Says Discord Only Benefits Enemies

TEHRAN (Dispatches) - President Masoud Pezeshkian has called for unity among Muslim nations, noting that the benefits of enemies lie in discord among Muslims.

"If we stand together, our capacity for economic, scientific, and cultural progress will increase significantly and this is why our unity is undesirable to our enemies, and their benefit lies in our discord and division," he said on Friday while addressing a host of cultural, religious, and academic elites in Basra, Iraq.

"Therefore, any message or voice that causes division among Muslims is a satanic message," he added.

"We must all join hands to restore the past glory and dignity of Muslims," said Pezeshkian who started his official three-day visit to the neighboring country on Wednesday.

"If we truly act as brothers, can Israel massacre Muslims every day?" he asked, referring to the ongoing Israeli genocide in Gaza where the regime's attacks have killed at least 41,118 Palestinians and injured more than 95,000 others since October last year.

Europeans fought each other fiercely for over 100 years, but today they have managed to reduce border restrictions, connect their roads, and establish a common currency while maintaining national sovereignty, bringing them closer together, he said. "Why can't we Muslims, in the same way, facilitate interactions and exchanges among the people of our Muslim countries, who are truly brothers, while preserving national sovereignty?"

The remarks come as Muslims observe "Islamic Unity Week" this year, amid the ongoing plight of Palestinians in Gaza.

Shia Muslims believe the 17th day of Rabi al-Awwal, which falls on September 21 this year, marks the birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Meanwhile, Sunni Muslims celebrate his birthday on the 12th day of the month, which is September 12 this year. The period between these dates is annually celebrated as Unity Week.



The late Founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Imam Khomeini, established this occasion as Islamic Unity Week in the 1980s.

Meanwhile after wrapping up his visit to Iraq and return to Tehran, Pezeshkian told reporters after returning from his trip to Iraq emphasized the pursuit of the objectives of his trip on the basis of unity and cohesion of the two countries.

Speaking to reporters at Mehrabad Airport after returning from a 3-day trip to Iraq and visiting 6 cities in the

country, President Pezeshkian said that in addition to the capital, during this trip, he will also visit the Kurdistan region and the holy cities of southern Iraq.

"The goals we pursued during the 3-day trip to Iraq were unity and cohesion; To reach a common language and look with each other," he said.

Pezeshkian stated that in terms of political, economic, cultural and security relations, "we held talks with the president, prime minister, parliament speakers, judiciary, political parties and currents of this country and expressed our desired content."

The president continued that during this trip, 14 memorandums of understanding on cooperation between Iran and Iraq were signed, but what was more important is that in order to reach a common language, it was decided that a team from both sides would develop long-term strategic plans that would be used in future trips. "Future strategic plans should be signed."

"We had a meeting with Iranians who have invested in Iraq and we heard their desired points. The Minister of Economy was supposed to follow up and solve the issues. Facilitation of transportation was also discussed and it was decided to work on it with other neighboring countries based on the general policies announced by the Supreme Leader," he further said.



# IRAN NEWS



## Iranology Center to Be Set Up at Pakistani University

ISLAMABAD (IRNA) - Rawalpindi Women's University in Pakistan is set to establish an Iranology center to expand its scientific relations with Tehran. Mehdi Taheri, Iran's cultural attaché, toured Rawalpindi Women's University in Pakistan, IRNA reported on Friday.

The Iranian official emphasized the potential for cooperation in various fields, including instructor and student exchange programs, joint research, and educational projects.

He highlighted the need for scientific, artistic, and cultural meetings, as well as the introduction of Persian language classes at the university.

Referring to the scientific standing of Iranian universities in the international arena, Taheri underscored the importance of scientific and academic cooperation with Pakistani universities.

## Business Environment Needs to Become More Competitive /



TEHRAN - Seyed Shamseddin Hosseini, head of the Parliament's Economic Commission, discussed the impact of national laws on attracting foreign investment. He explained: "The Parliament has passed a law on financing and infrastructure, and considering the current circumstances in the country, this law includes provisions for facilitating the inflow of foreign currency, investment, and the issuance of visas, residency permits, and similar measures."

He added: "When we talk about both domestic and foreign investment, we need to create security in the business environment. To achieve this, the licensing process must be simplified. Based on this, other aspects such as financing methods and currency transfer have been considered in various laws."

Hosseini continued: "Of course, we cannot claim that there are no legal flaws regarding attracting domestic and foreign investments. The fact that there are no apparent problems differs from how competitive we've made the environment. Nowadays, business environments are competing with each other. While it might seem like there's no issue on the surface, our business environment may lack the competitiveness of rival countries. This is where incentives and facilitation become relevant. Sometimes, certain issues are not even defined yet, and laws must evolve along with the progress of trade."

He emphasized: "However, it is generally true that the problem in our country lies more in implementation than in the laws themselves. This issue must be discussed in joint meetings between the government and the parliament, as well as in sessions with the private sector, to improve the business environment and facilitate the full implementation of the law."

The head of the Economic Commission of Parliament noted: "The more we aim for economic growth, the greater the need for financing. The capacity of Iran's economy to attract foreign financial resources is even higher than the figures mentioned today. In addition, attracting investments from domestic resources is also crucial, especially when some of our fellow citizens are taking their investments out of the country and investing abroad."



## UN's Commitment to Assist Iran in Further Developing Renewable Energy

TEHRAN - UN Resident Coordinator for Iran Stefan Priesner, speaking at the "Workshop on Enhancing the Role of Renewable Energy in National Energy Supply in the Islamic Republic of Iran," hosted by SATBA and the United Nations, stated that the two-day workshop examined Iran's considerable potential to lead in the global renewable energy sector. He noted that Iran's unique position, with over 300 sunny days and significant wind currents, allows the country to develop renewable energy sources such as wind and solar energy. Additionally, Iran not only has natural resources but also a skilled workforce, producing over 230,000 engineers annually.

Priesner emphasized that during the workshop, experts pointed out that in the global race to produce cheaper energy, solar power has emerged as the winner.

He added that Iran has significant advantages in the sustainable energy competition due to its geographic location and resources. SATBA has planned to increase Iran's renewable energy production capacity to 30,000 megawatts by 2030, which will not only reduce environmental damage but also create jobs.

Priesner highlighted the importance of renewable energy in addressing energy challenges, contributing to economic development, securing the future for humanity, and generating employment. He noted that for every million dollars invested in renewable energy, three times more jobs are created compared to investments in fossil fuels.

The UN coordinator in Iran also stated, "We view renewable energy from a human perspective, focusing on the benefits of clean air, equitable access to resources, and reducing environmental harm."

He emphasized the importance of international cooperation in accelerating renewable energy projects and praised the collaboration between SATBA and the UN in organizing the workshop. He mentioned that Iran, through international cooperation, can both share its technical expertise and benefit from the knowledge of other countries.



TEHRAN - The head of the Ahvaz Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture announced that a sisterhood agreement will soon be signed between the mayor of the capital of Oman's Northeastern province and the mayor of Ahvaz. This agreement will serve as an opportunity to further enhance trade and cultural exchanges between Khuzestan and Oman.

Mohammad Javad Amani, speaking at the first comprehensive conference on international economic cooperation between Iran and Oman held at the Ahvaz Chamber of Commerce, said that proposals had been presented to the Omani trade delegation to boost trade exchanges between the two regions. These proposals include holding two joint investment conferences annually, organizing meetings with women entrepreneurs from both regions, and conducting annual visits to explore the investment capacities of Khuzestan and Oman.

The head of the Ahvaz Chamber stated that Khuzestan welcomes and supports Omani investors in developing and operating within the downstream industries.

In continuation of the conference, Shahla Amouri, the vice-president of the Ahvaz Chamber of Commerce, said that last year, 207,145 tons of goods valued at \$50 million were exported from Khuzestan to Oman.

She added that in the first five months of this year, 299,433 tons worth \$78 million were exported from Khuzestan to Oman, and it is expected that by the end of this year, exports to Oman will increase threefold compared to last year.

Amouri noted that to enhance and facilitate trade exchanges between Khuzestan and Oman, it is necessary to establish a direct flight from Ahvaz or the province to Oman.

She continued by stating that, according to the Omani trade delegation, the war in Gaza has led Oman to stop purchasing American products, presenting an opportunity for Khuzestani and Iranian investors to enter Oman's market.

The Deputy Coordinator for Economic Affairs in Khuzestan said that the province, having ranked first in attracting foreign investors, is prepared to facilitate activities for Omani investors.

Mohammad Razi Jalali continued at the conference, saying that the governor of Khuzestan will meet with the Omani delegation, and agreements will be signed to strengthen commercial cooperation between Khuzestan and Oman.

He added that specialists and intellectuals are Khuzestan's assets, and a strong connection has been established between the province's universities and industries through the efforts of its academic and industry leaders.

Jalali noted that despite sanctions posing challenges to production and the economy, knowledge-based companies have succeeded in meeting the needs of various industries.

Hamidreza Falah, the Director General of Industry, Mining, and Trade in Khuzestan, said that specialists in the fields of oil, petrochemicals, and steel in Khuzestan are ready to offer their expertise and knowledge to Oman.

He added that there are 450 active technical and engineering companies in Khuzestan, which have significant capacity to produce equipment needed by large and small industries.

Falah also mentioned that 250 investment projects have been identified in the province, with land allocated for investors to operate.

The head of the Chamber of Commerce of Oman's Northeastern province said

that the trade volume between Iran and Oman amounts to \$2 billion annually, and they seek to increase trade and investment exchanges with Iran.

Sheikh Mohammed bin Nasser Al-Maskari stated that the key to investing in Oman is familiarity with investment laws and organizations.

He added that Iran, as a neighboring country, is highly advanced with modern technology and industries. Trade exchanges with such a wealthy country present a significant opportunity.

Al-Maskari also noted that Oman's strategic position serves as a gateway for trade and political relations with eastern countries, and many countries take advantage of this opportunity.

The head of the Chamber of Commerce of Oman's Northeastern province emphasized that the Omani government views all social strata equally and strives to provide equal opportunities for all communities.

Rashid bin Saeed Al-Sadeeri, the chairman of the Food Security Committee of the Chamber of Commerce of Oman's Northeastern province, stated that excellent trade and political relations exist between Iran and Oman.

He added that during their three-day visit to Khuzestan, they became acquainted with the significant investment and economic capacities of the province, with the goal of strengthening trade ties between Oman, Iran, and Khuzestan.

Al-Sadeeri noted that the Omani government offers substantial and valuable incentives to investors, making the country a safe and reliable place for investment.

He further mentioned that achieving food security requires utilizing technology in the agricultural sector. Iran is one of the world's largest producers of agricultural products and exports many goods to Oman.

The chairman of the Food Security Committee said that Khuzestan also has great potential in agricultural production, and with Khuzestan's cooperation, many agricultural factories could be established in Oman.

Al-Sadeeri stated that modern agriculture is needed in Oman's Northeastern province, adding that large plots of land have been allocated for agriculture in the region, with wheat being one of the main products.

He mentioned that there are many similarities between Iran and Oman in terms of water, soil, and climate, and therefore they welcome cooperation with Iran in the agricultural sector.

Jamal bin Nasser Al-Muslehi, the chairman of the Committee for Mining Development and Properties at the Chamber of Commerce of Oman's Northeastern province, said that both Iran and Oman produce similar mineral resources. This commonality presents a significant opportunity for trade development between the two countries in the mining sector. In Oman, metallic mines, mineral stones, nickel, chromium, lime, and marble are extracted and produced.

He added that copper extraction is one of the oldest minerals discovered in the country, and Oman welcomes and supports the establishment of mining factories by Iranian investors.

## Iran, Iraq Emphasize Facilitating and Expanding Customs Affairs



TEHRAN (IRNA) - The heads of the customs authorities of Iran and Iraq, in addition to discussing common customs issues, particularly border matters and the existing capacities for cooperation to facilitate and expand trade, emphasized the signing of a cooperation and mutual assistance agreement in customs affairs.

During the visit of Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, to Iraq, Mohammad Reza Ravanifar, Deputy Minister of Economy and the Head of the Iranian Customs Administration, and Hassan Hamoud Hassani, Advisor to the Minister of Finance and Director General of the Iraqi Customs Organization, met at the headquarters of the Iraqi

Customs Organization. The two sides discussed various customs issues.

In this meeting, in addition to reviewing common customs topics, especially border issues and the available capacities for cooperation to facilitate and expand trade, the emphasis was placed on signing a cooperation and mutual assistance agreement in customs affairs.

The text of the agreement, which had been discussed over two consecutive days with the Iraqi side, was finally agreed upon during this session, and both parties expressed their approval for signing the document.

## China Remains Top Trade Partner of Iran



TEHRAN - According to Eghtesad Online, trade is one of the most crucial pillars of a country's economy, ensuring its economic health. A positive trade balance can guarantee stability in a country's currency, economic, and political conditions, while a disorganized trade situation can reflect economic turmoil.

On the other hand, businesses can analyze annual trade data published by statistical centers in each country to better understand their target markets abroad, as well as assess the level of competition for a particular product in a specific destination. Economic analysts can also forecast currency and economic stability by examining a country's import and export situation throughout the year.

In the first four months of this year, Iran's exports reached \$17.463b, reflecting an 8.15% increase compared to \$16.148b in the same period last year. In terms of weight, exports amounted to 47.978 million tons, showing a 4.05% growth compared to 46.109m tons in the same period last year.

China was the top export destination for Iran in the first four months of this year, with exports amounting to \$4.777b, representing 27.36% of Iran's total exports. Iraq came in second, with a 20.73% share, equivalent to \$3.621b. The UAE ranked third, accounting for 13.54% of total exports, or \$2.365b.

Turkey ranked fourth, with exports totaling \$1.679b, comprising 9.61% of total exports. Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India followed, with respective shares of 4.01%, 3.91%, and 3.37%. Iran's exports to these countries amounted to \$700m, \$684m, and \$589m, respectively.

Oman, Russia, and Azerbaijan ranked eighth to tenth, with shares of 2.93%, 1.93%, and 1.35%, respectively. Iran's exports to these countries were \$511m, \$338m, and \$235m, respectively.

According to the latest customs report on export data for the first four months of this year, the top ten export categories were as follows: Liquefied natural gas: \$1.576b, Liquefied propane: \$1.126b, Methanol: \$803.87m, Petroleum bitumen: \$770.68m, Liquefied butane: \$714.81m, Other liquefied petroleum gases and hydrocarbons: \$667.38m, Urea (even in solution): \$584.28m, Non-alloy iron and steel ingots: \$540.83m, Hot-rolled iron or steel rods: \$371.83m and Polyethylene film grade: \$349.56m.

## Iran-Iraq Trade Reaches \$12 Billion



TEHRAN (Borna News) - Davood Godarzi, the head of Iraq's Desk at Iran's Trade Promotion Organization, stated that Iran-Iraq trade relations have consistently increased since 2003. He mentioned that the trade volume between the two countries started at \$600 million in the early years of their trade interaction and has now surpassed \$12 billion in 2023. The growth of these relations, especially in recent years, has accelerated significantly, with Iran's exports to Iraq reaching \$4.5 billion in the first five months of this year, accounting for 21% of Iran's total exports.

Godarzi added that Iran's exports to Iraq grew notably in 2021 and 2022 as well, with a wide variety of goods being exported to Iraq. Among the most important items is natural gas, valued at approximately \$2 billion annually, which is considered one of Iran's key export items to Iraq. Other regularly exported goods include iron and steel bars, tiles and ceramics, various steel ingots, domestic air coolers, potatoes, watermelons, tomatoes, and other household goods. Additionally, some industrial items, such as plastic kitchen appliances and equipment related to steam turbines, are part of Iran's technical and engineering exports to Iraq. Of the 4,500 items on Iran's export list to Iraq, more than 2,500 are regularly sent to the country.

Godarzi also examined the status of Iran's imports from Iraq, noting that Iraq, due to its heavy reliance on crude oil exports, primarily imports consumer goods. Iran's imports from Iraq are much smaller in scale compared to its exports. The majority of Iran's imports from Iraq consist of industrial waste such as aluminum and copper scrap, which are used in various domestic industries, particularly in cardboard manufacturing and metals. Some consumer goods, like corn and mobile phones, are also imported into Iran via Iraq. Another regularly imported item from Iraq is split air conditioners, which have constituted a significant portion of imports from the country in recent years.



### Comoros President Wounded in a Knife Attack

PARIS (AFP) - Comoros President Azali Assoumani was slightly wounded in a knife attack Friday, the presidency said, adding that the attacker had been arrested. "The President of the Republic Azali Assoumani was slightly wounded by a knife while attending the funeral" of a well-known religious leader, it said in a statement. "His injuries are not serious, and he has returned home. The attacker is in the hands of the security services," it added. Government spokeswoman Fatima Ahamaduel told AFP that the attack happened in Salimani-Ilsandra, an area on the outskirts of the capital Moroni. "Thank God, his life is not in danger," she said, declining to give further details. Witnesses told AFP that the attacker was a 22-year-old with no criminal history, who had joined the army in 2022. He was dressed in a boubou, and was in the room with the religious leader's body, as mourners were paying respects, they said. The knife injured the president's hand, but the attacker was stopped by another mourner, the witnesses said.



### Moscow Expels Six UK Diplomats as Tensions Rise Over Ukraine Missiles



MOSCOW (Dispatches) - Russia's FSB security service said on Friday it had revoked the accreditation of six British diplomats in Moscow after accusing them of spying and sabotage work, signalling the Kremlin's anger at what it sees as London's vital role in helping Ukraine.

Britain described the accusations as "completely baseless", saying it was a tit-for-tat action after the UK expelled the Russian defence attaché and removed diplomatic status from several Russian properties in May.

Russia announced the expulsions hours before British Prime Minister Keir Starmer met U.S. President Joe Biden at the White House, a crucial step towards winning the go-ahead for Kyiv to use long-range missiles against targets in Russia.

The United States is "committed to standing with you to help Ukraine as it defends against Russia's onslaught of aggression," Biden told Starmer.

Neither Biden nor Starmer addressed long-range missiles in brief comments in front of reporters. The White House earlier said no announcement of any new policy on Ukraine was planned.

"I think the next few weeks and months would be crucial, very, very important that we support Ukraine in this vital war of freedom," Starmer said.

President Vladimir Putin said on Thursday that the West would be directly fighting with Russia if it allowed Ukraine to strike Russian territory with Western-made long-range missiles, a move he said would alter the nature and scope of the conflict.

### Tunisians Protest Against President Ahead of Election

TUNIS (Dispatches) - Thousands of Tunisians marched in the streets on Friday to protest against President Kais Saied, whom they accuse of trying to rig the Oct. 6 presidential election by detaining and intimidating his rivals.

The march was one of the country's biggest protests in two years since Saied began ruling by decree in 2021 in a move the opposition describes as a coup.

The protesters chanted slogans including "Out with dictator Saied" and "No fear, no terror, streets belong to the people".

The electoral commission in August eliminated three prominent candidates, from the race, citing alleged irregularities in their candidacy filings. The court in charge of election disputes ordered the commission to reinstate them on Sept. 2 but the commission rejected the ruling.

Critics say Saied is using the electoral commission, whose members he appointed, to secure victory by stifling competition and intimidating candidates. Saied denies the accusations, saying he is fighting traitors, mercenaries and the corrupt, and he will not be a dictator.

The commission's decision to defy the court meant only three candidates are left in the race - Saied, Zouhair Maghazouli and Ayachi Zammel.

Zammel was jailed 10 days ago, accused of falsifying voter signatures on his paperwork, charges he said were manufactured by Saied. He faces 25 court cases on the issue, and lawyers say he may be forced out of the race.

The protesters demanded the release of Zammel and all political prisoners, activists and journalists detained for criticising Saied.

"We are in the street to defend freedoms and rights which are at real risk", Bassam Trifi, the head of Human Rights League, told Reuters.

"The electoral commission should respect the court ruling and end restrictions against candidates. Otherwise, it means an undemocratic election", he added.



### UNRWA Worker Killed Amid Israeli West Bank Operation

GAZA (Dispatches) - An employee of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, was killed by a sniper in the West Bank amid ongoing Israeli military operations, the agency said Friday. The death of the employee, Sufyan Jaber Abed Jawwad, comes after six other UNRWA staffers were killed in the Gaza Strip on Wednesday during an Israeli strike on a school-turned-shelter.

The UN agency for Palestinian refugees said Friday one of its employees was killed during an Israeli operation in the occupied West Bank, where raids have escalated since last month.

Israel's military called the UN worker a "terrorist" who posed a threat to troops.

The United Nations agency, UNRWA, said the employee was its first to be killed in the Palestinian territory in more than a decade.

But he is among dozens of Palestinians killed during the large-scale Israeli operation which began days ago and is ongoing, with several more Palestinians dead since Wednesday.

UNRWA identified the employee as Sufyan Jaber Abed Jawwad, who worked as a sanitation labourer. It said he was "shot and killed on the roof of his home by a sniper" in Faraa refugee camp.

A military spokesman, Lieutenant Colonel Nadav Shoshani, said on social media platform X that during an operation in Faraa "a terrorist was identified hurling explosive devices that posed a threat" to forces, leading troops to open fire to remove the threat.

It was later "discovered he is also an UNRWA employee," Shoshani said.

Jawwad's death is in addition to those of six other UNRWA staffers the UN said were killed in the Gaza Strip on Wednesday during a strike on a school-turned-shelter. It was the highest single incident toll for the agency, UNRWA said.

Mourners on Friday carried Jawwad's body through the streets of Faraa, with his blue UN vest resting atop the Palestinian flag that covered him.

In nearby Tubas, funerals also took place for other Palestinians, who were killed by an air strike.

A military statement on Friday said Israeli forces had "conducted a 48-hour counter-terrorism operation" in the areas of Tubas, Tamun and Faraa -- northeast of Nablus -- in which an air strike killed "five armed terrorists".

UNRWA has more than 30,000 employees in the Palestinian territories and elsewhere. Israel has previously accused it of employing "more than 400 terrorists" in Gaza.

Violence in the West Bank had already soared alongside the nearly 12-month-old war in the Gaza Strip but in late August Israel began its large-scale raids.

Major Israeli operations in the West Bank are sometimes occurring "at a scale not witnessed in the last two decades," the United Nations human rights chief said this week.

The official Palestinian news agency Wafa said the military withdrew from Tubas on Thursday evening, allowing the funerals there to go ahead, after the air strike which the Palestinian Red Crescent said killed the men on Wednesday.

"I woke up in the morning to the sound of an explosion," Ahmed Sawafta, father of one of the dead men, told AFP.

Osaïd Kharaz, who identified himself as a Hamas activist, told AFP at the funeral in Tubas that Israel "is attempting to impose a new reality and undermine the popular support for the resistance (to Israeli occupation) in the West Bank."

Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant announced on September 4 that the military would use its "full strength" to strike Palestinian militants in the West Bank.

He said he had ordered the military to carry out air strikes "wherever necessary" in order to "avoid endangering soldiers". Days later, the European Union's top diplomat Josep Borrell said Israel aimed "to turn the West Bank into a new Gaza."

Israeli forces this week also carried out operations around the northern West Bank city of Tulkarem.

A military statement on Friday reported four deaths "in the areas of Tulkarem and Nur Shams".

## Russia Reportedly Produces Kamikaze Drone With Chinese Engine

MOSCOW (Dispatches) - President Vladimir Putin said that the West would be directly fighting with Russia if it allowed Ukraine to strike Russian territory with Western-made long-range missiles, a move he said would alter the nature and scope of the conflict.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has been pleading with Kyiv's allies for months to let Ukraine fire Western missiles including long-range U.S. ATACMS and British Storm Shadows deep into Russian territory to limit Moscow's ability to launch attacks.

In some of his most hawkish comments on the subject yet, Putin said such a move would drag the countries supplying Kyiv with long-range missiles directly into the war since satellite targeting data and the actual programming of the missiles' flight paths would have to be done by NATO military personnel because Kyiv did not have the capabilities itself.

"So this is not a question of allowing the Ukrainian regime to strike Russia with these weapons or not. It is a question of deciding whether or not NATO countries are directly involved in a military conflict," Putin told Russian state TV.

"If this decision is taken, it will mean nothing less than the direct involvement of NATO countries, the United States and European countries in the war in Ukraine. This will be their direct participation, and this, of course, will significantly change the very essence, the very nature of the conflict."

Russia would be forced to take what Putin called "appropriate decisions" based on the new threats.

He did not spell out what those measures could be, but he has spoken in the past of the

option of arming the West's enemies with Russian weapons to strike Western targets abroad and in June spoke of deploying conventional missiles within striking distance of the United States and its European allies.

Russia, the world's largest nuclear power, is also in the process of revising its nuclear doctrine - the circumstances in which Moscow would use nuclear weapons - and Putin is being pressed by an influential foreign policy hawk to change it to state Russia's willingness to use nuclear arms against countries that "support NATO aggression in Ukraine."

Russia is also currently holding major naval exercises with China and considering curbs on major commodity exports.

The West casts its discussion around whether it should allow Kyiv to use its long-range weapons to strike Russia as part of an answer to what it says is an escalation of the war by Moscow, which is says has received ballistic missiles from Iran. Tehran said the claims were "ugly propaganda".

Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022 with tens of thousands of troops, triggering the biggest confrontation between Russia and the West since the depths of the Cold War.

Putin casts the conflict as part of an existential battle with a declining and decadent West which he says humiliated Russia after the Berlin Wall fell in 1989 by encroaching on what he considers Moscow's sphere of influence, including Ukraine.

The West and Ukraine describe the invasion as an imperial-style land grab and have vowed to defeat Russia on the battlefield. Russia controls over 18% of Ukrainian territory.



## North Korea's Kim Meets Russia's Shoigu



SEOUL (Dispatches) - North Korean leader Kim Jong Un met with top Russian security official Sergei Shoigu and discussed deepening strategic dialogue between the two countries, state media KCNA said on Saturday.

They had a "wide exchange of views on regional and international situations", and reached a satisfactory consensus on issues including more "cooperation to defend mutual safety interests," KCNA said.

Kim said North Korea will continue to expand cooperation with Russia in accordance with the strategic partnership between the two countries, KCNA said.

The United States and Ukraine among other countries, as well as independent analysts, say that Kim is helping Russia in its invasion of Ukraine by supplying rockets and missiles in return for economic and other military assistance from Moscow.

Moscow and Pyongyang have denied the accusations, but pledged to boost military cooperation and signed a comprehensive strategic partnership at a summit in June.

Shoigu, previously Russia's defence minister until May, now secretary of the Security Council, signalled the beginning of closer ties between North Korea and Russia with his visit to Pyongyang in July last year.

At the time, he stood shoulder to shoulder with Kim while viewing North Korea's military parade showcasing nuclear-capable missiles and attack drones, as the first top Russian defence official to visit North Korea since the 1991 break-up of the Soviet Union.





PARIS (Dispatches) - France crashed out of the Davis Cup Friday when world No.3 Carlos Alcaraz beat Ugo Humbert 6-3, 6-3 in the second rubber in Valencia with a convincing display. Earlier, the defeat of Arthur Fils to Roberto Bautista 2-6, 7-5, 6-3 put France 1-0 down and Humbert was unable to revive the French against a solid Alcaraz in front of a home crowd. Since the reform of the Davis Cup in 2019, France has never managed to get beyond the group stage. Spain and Australia with two successes each have booked their ticket for the Final 8 in Malaga at the end of November and will compete for the head of this group B on Sunday. "It was the goal since the beginning of the week, to qualify for Malaga," Alcaraz said. "I was really, really focused, I was on a really high level of tennis and it's one of the best matches that I've played this year. "Seeing my last month I needed this kind of match and I'm really happy with my performance today."

The United States booked their ticket to final eight series with a 3-0 win over Slovakia in Zuhai earlier Friday, with Germany also advancing. Mackenzie McDonald beat Lukas Klein 6-4, 6-3 in the opening singles rubber before Brandon Nakashima eased past Jozef Kovalik 6-3, 6-3 to give the Americans an unassailable 2-0 lead.

Austin Krajicek and Rajeev Ram then teamed up in the doubles to battle past Klein and Norbert Gombos 6-7 (4/7), 7-6 (7/4), 10-1. Bob Bryan's US team, playing without top players including US Open runner-up Taylor Fritz and semi-finalist Frances Tiafoe, also beat Chile 3-0 earlier this week. The US victory meant Group C rivals Germany also qualified for the Final 8 which will be held in Malaga in November 19-24. Germany and the US will go head-to-head for top spot in their final group game on Saturday which will determine their seeding for Malaga. Sixteen countries are competing in the group stage finals in four cities with the top two from each group advancing to the eight-team final. "It means a lot," said 40th-ranked Nakashima. "To be able to be in this position right now, to be clinching that spot, it's very important for us." The US, 32-times tournament winners, most recently in 2007, failed to progress out of the group stage finals last year after defeats to the Netherlands and Finland. McDonald, ranked 149, has been returning from an injury-plagued season. "I'm really proud of myself for performing well today and putting the team on the board," he said.

## Livingstone Levels T20 Series for England Against Australia



CARDIFF (Dispatches) - Liam Livingstone said he is thriving on extra responsibility up the order after his 87 levelled England's T20 international series with Australia at 1-1 on Friday with one match to play. Australia had posted a big total of 193/6 thanks to Jake Fraser-McGurk's first international 50 and contributions from captain Travis Head (31) and Josh Inglis (42). But Livingstone had a starring role with both bat and ball to set up a winner takes all clash for the series in Manchester on Sunday. In his 50th T20 international, the spinner was the pick of the England bowlers with 2-16 despite only bowling three overs. He then came to the crease with the hosts 34-2 inside four overs. Stand-in captain Phil Salt's 39 off 23 deliveries helped his side rebuild but it was a blistering 90-run partnership off 47 balls between Livingstone and Jacob Bethell that swung the game England's way. "It is not easy coming in a five, six or seven. So moving up the order it gives me a bit more responsibility, time to bat, and I feel I am in decent nick at the moment with bat and ball," said Livingstone, who has been hampered by injuries in recent years. "Towards the end of the Hundred I felt I was getting my body back to normal, which is a thing that has bothered me the last couple of years. "It has taught me a few life lessons but I am enjoying my cricket and playing with a smile on my face."

## Guardiola Looking Forward to Decision on Club's Alleged Rule Breaches

MANCHESTER (Dispatches) - With Manchester City's hearing into their 115 alleged breaches of Premier League financial rules set to begin on Monday, manager Pep Guardiola has said he is looking forward to the decision by an independent commission. The hearing, which could last about two months with a verdict expected by season's end, starts amid a stretch of six games in two weeks in three competitions for the four-times reigning league champions, who host Brentford on Saturday. "It starts soon and then (hopefully) finishes soon. An independent panel will decide and I am looking forward to the decision," Guardiola told reporters on Friday. He said there was no talk among his players about the hearing's potential impact. "I am not a lawyer. (Striker) Erling (Haaland) is not a lawyer," Guardiola said, adding that City will accept the verdict. "Everyone is innocent until proven guilty." City's alleged breaches of rules relating to the provision of accurate financial records go back to the 2009-10 campaign. The club are also charged with failing to comply with rules requiring clubs to follow UEFA's Financial Fair Play regulations from the 2013-14 to 2017-18 seasons and failing to follow rules on Profitability and Sustainability from 2015-16 to 2017-18. City could face penalties such as a points deduction or relegation if found guilty. Everton and Nottingham Forest had points deducted last season for rule breaches. Guardiola will be without injured Dutch defender Nathan Ake for the next few weeks, while Haaland may miss



Saturday's match at Etihad Stadium for compassionate reasons when City put their 100% league record on the line against the Bees. Ake was carried off on a stretcher with an apparent hamstring injury in the Netherlands' 2-2 draw at home to Germany on Tuesday. "We are unlucky with Nathan -- every time he goes there (to play for Netherlands) he comes back injured," said Guardiola, adding that the 29-year-old will be out until the next international break in mid-October. Haaland, who leads the league in scoring with seven goals, is mourning the death of a close family friend. "It is a tough moment for him and his family," Guardiola said. "It is sad and we will see (Saturday) if he is able mentally or physically to play." Midfielders Phil Foden and Rodri returned to training this week and "look really good," said Guardiola, after an illness kept Foden from playing for England in the international break and Rodri picked up a small knock with Spain. Asked about the crowded upcoming match schedule, Guardiola said it was nothing his players were not used to. "It is going to happen many times when teams play in all competitions," he said. "We will do our job anyway because we love to do it. I'm not a specialist about the calendar. We follow it. Everyone knows the schedule will be tight this season so you just have to accept it."

## Pochettino Confident He Has Time to Transform U.S. Before World Cup



NEW YORK (Dispatches) - New United States coach Mauricio Pochettino said he has enough time to prepare for the 2026 World Cup on home soil, and implementing his philosophy to turn the team into genuine contenders is a challenge he is ready to embrace. The Argentine manager, who left American-owned Premier League side Chelsea in May after one season, has been tasked with leading the team onto the global stage, with less than two years remaining until the finals, co-hosted by the U.S., Mexico, and Canada. The 52-year-old, who formerly managed Paris St Germain and Tottenham Hotspur, said he has arrived at the helm at the right time, and American soccer fans need to believe that his side can emerge as champions despite the challenges they will face in adhering to his methods. "Everyone thinks that there is no time to prepare and to arrive in our best condition to the World Cup. What I wanted to tell you is that I am on the opposite side. I believe that there is time enough," Pochettino told reporters on Friday. "I don't want to create an excuse for the player to say, 'We don't have time to buy the new idea, the new philosophy'. No, football is like this, it's to touch the right button and start to perform. "The players are so intelligent and so talented and they can, I think, play in a different way. And for sure, we have time... We need to believe that we can win, that we can win not only a game, we can win the World Cup." The U.S. have been without a permanent coach since a humiliating early exit from the Copa America on home soil in July led to the sacking of Gregg Berhalter after his second stint as head coach. "I don't like to talk about weakness. We are always positive, we have many talented players. Of course the confidence was a little bit low, after the Copa America," he said. Pochettino said he will be implementing an attacking style of soccer. He echoed AC Milan midfielder Christian Pulisic statements and said he will work with the players to create the mindset needed to compete at the highest level and bring in unity to the squad.

## Leclerc Bounces Back From Crash to Go Fastest in Baku

BAKU (Dispatches) - Ferrari's Charles Leclerc crashed and then went fastest in practice for the Azerbaijan Grand Prix while champions Red Bull found some speed after a disappointing run of results. Leclerc, winner of the previous round in Italy and on pole for the past three years in Baku, bounced back with a late lap of one minute 43.484 seconds to lead second practice after missing half of the first session when he hit the wall. Red Bull's Sergio Perez, twice winner in Baku and the driver with the best record around the city circuit, was a mere 0.006 slower. "The pace was there today, but between the incident in FP1 (first practice) and a problem we had in FP2 with the steering, we didn't complete too many laps," said Leclerc. "It will be important for us to have a smooth FP3 (final practice) and get ready to extract the most out of qualifying tomorrow." Perez's team mate and Formula One leader Max Verstappen had been fastest in the three-times halted first practice session with a lap of 1:45.546, but dropped to sixth in the later one when he had understeer and visor problems. "We learnt quite a bit and now it's just about tidying up



the things that we tried, but I think so far we have been more competitive this weekend so that's positive," said Verstappen, who has a 62 point lead over McLaren's

Lando Norris. Norris was fourth fastest in practice one and 17th in the second after looking quick but was then blocked by Alpine's Pierre Gasly. "We're quite a long way off," the Briton told F1 TV. "I'm having to push way too much to try and get a lap time out of it. I think we have quite a lot to find, honestly. "Compared to Mercedes, Ferrari and Red Bull, they're all very similar and then there's a good three, four tenths (of a second) gap back to us. So a lot of work for us to do." Seven-times world champion Lewis Hamilton ended the day third fastest for Mercedes, 0.066 off the pace, after setting the second best time in opening practice. His team mate George Russell was delayed in the second session by a precautionary power unit change but was ninth quickest. Red flags were waved in practice one — first for a marshal to collect debris and then after separate crashes involving Leclerc and Williams' Argentine rookie Franco Colapinto. Leclerc hit the wall at turn 15 with 33 minutes remaining, the Monegasque taking too much speed into the corner and locking up.