

Iran Has Awarded a First Contract to Private Investors for Development of Its Railway Infrastructure Amid Plans to Expand the Country's Rail Freight Transport Market

# IRAN NEWS

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi and His Omani Counterpart Have Held Talks on the Latest Regional Developments, Particularly the Issue of Putting an End to the Genocidal War in the Gaza Strip

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2

DOMESTIC



## Iran Eyes World Trade Organization Membership

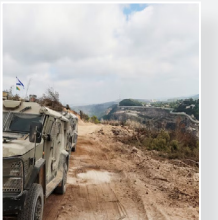
> SEE PAGE 2

3

INTERNATIONAL

## UN Says Israeli Tanks Burst Into Peacekeeper Base

> SEE PAGE 3



## Iran Supports Any Proposal to Restore Peace to Region



TEHRAN (PressTV) - President Masoud Pezeshkian says Iran will support any proposal aimed at restoring "peace and security" to the region, urging European countries to compel the Israeli regime to end its genocidal wars in Gaza and Lebanon.

Pezeshkian made the remarks during a phone call Sunday with his French counterpart, Emmanuel Macron, where they discussed the latest developments in the region, particularly the Israeli invasion of southern Lebanon.

The president emphasized that Iran seeks a secure region free from war and conflict and welcomes any effort towards a ceasefire.

He noted that Iran exercised restraint following the assassination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran early in July, allowing Western diplomacy a chance to broker a ceasefire agreement in Gaza.

"However, the Zionists have demonstrated a disregard for any humanitarian framework and international law by intensifying their bombings and crimes in Gaza and extending them to Lebanon," Pezeshkian said.

On October 1 and after nearly two months, Iran launched a missile barrage at Israeli military and intelligence bases in retaliation for the assassination of Haniyeh as well as Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah and a senior IRGC commander, who were both killed in a massive Israeli airstrike on southern Beirut.

In the phone call, Pezeshkian reiterated that Iran is prepared to support any proposal that would lead to "peace and stability" in the region.

Pezeshkian's appeal for peace came as his foreign minister, Abbas Araqchi, was on a regional tour consulting with allies about how to halt Israeli aggression. Earlier in the day, Araqchi left the Iraqi capital for Oman after a busy week of diplomacy that also included visits to Lebanon, Syria, and Saudi Arabia.

Pezeshkian urged President Macron to work with other European leaders in efforts to compel the Israeli regime to cease its genocidal actions in Gaza and Lebanon.

Pezeshkian also welcomed the French government's decision to halt the supply of arms to the Israeli regime.

On Friday, Macron said "stopping the export of weapons" used by Israeli forces in Gaza and Lebanon was the only way to end fighting, and also condemned the "deliberate" targeting of UN peacekeepers in Lebanon.

"We all know it. It's the unique lever that would end it," Macron said at a summit of European and Mediterranean leaders in Cyprus.

## Inter-Parliamentary Union Must Condemn Israeli Genocide in Gaza, Lebanon



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Majlis Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf says the member states of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) should take a clear stance on Israel's genocide in Gaza and Lebanon and condemn the regime's atrocities against civilians.

Qalibaf made the remarks in a Sunday meeting with the IPU President Tulia Ackson on the sidelines of the 149th Assembly of the IPU in Geneva, Switzerland.

He said the people of the world expect the IPU states to exert political pressure on Israel to end its crimes in Palestine and Lebanon.

He added that the region is currently in a difficult situation due to the ongoing developments, including the war between Russia and Ukraine and Israel's aggression against Palestine and Lebanon.

The top Iranian parliamentary emphasized that when the Israeli regime, with direct US support, violates all international and humanitarian laws, no one can expect the establishment of peace and security.

Qalibaf stressed the importance of addressing the Palestinian issue and said the participants at the IPU summit should take steps towards the adoption of a resolution given the positive coordination among Arab, Muslim and Asian countries.

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

## Hezbollah Drone Strike on Israel's Binyamina Military Base Kills at Least 4 Zionists



TEHRAN - The Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah has carried out a drone strike on an Israeli military site, leaving four of the regime's soldiers dead and dozens more injured.

Hezbollah said on Sunday it fired "a squadron of attack drones" on an Israeli training camp in northern occupied territories.

Israel's national emergency medical service said at least four Israeli soldiers were killed and at least 61 others were injured in the drone strike on the military base for the Golani Brigade in Binyamina south of Haifa.

But independent media reports said more than 100 people were injured in the attack. Seven of the injured Israeli soldiers are in critical condition, according to reports.

Trained for combat, the Golani Brigade is one of the five infantry brigades of the Israeli army. There have been other rocket and drone attacks on Israeli military sites. They include a rehabilitation and maintenance center south of Haifa that was targeted with a barrage of rockets and a logistics base in the occupied Golan Heights.

Hezbollah also fought off Israeli soldiers by ambushing the outskirts of a town in southern Lebanon.

The resistance fighters used a barrage of rockets and machine guns in the ambush, forcing the regime's troops to withdraw.

Hezbollah said in a statement that "fighters of the Islamic Resistance targeted (for the fifth time) a gathering of Israeli enemy forces in the Manara settlement with a rocket barrage."

"The fighters of the Islamic Resistance targeted a gathering of Israeli enemy forces at the Houmin barracks with a barrage of rockets," Hezbollah said.

It added that "the fighters of the Islamic Resistance targeted movements of the Zionist forces near the Fatima Gate in the town of Kfar Kila with artillery shells at 10:00 PM on Sunday, October 13, 2024."

Hezbollah said its operations were conducted in support of Palestinians in Gaza and in defense of Lebanon.

Hezbollah said the operation was in "response to Zionist attacks" including airstrikes in the

central Beirut neighborhoods of Basta and Nweiri that killed 22 people on Thursday, and in support of the Palestinians in Gaza.

Its "fighters attacked Israeli enemy forces in... Aita al-Shaab and violent clashes took place with machine guns, rockets, and artillery shells," the resistance movement said earlier.

Israeli media reported that two drones were launched from Lebanon, and one made it through the Israeli regime's advanced air defense systems.

The drone fired a missile at the target before crashing and exploding into it, reports said. It was the second time in two days that a drone launched by Hezbollah has struck in the occupied territories. On Saturday, a drone targeted a suburb of Tel Aviv, causing damage but no injuries.

Meanwhile the Hezbollah resistance movement warned of more retaliatory strikes against Israel if the regime pushes ahead with its deadly bombing campaign on Lebanon.

Hezbollah issued the warning on Sunday after it fired a swarm of attack drones on an Israeli infantry training camp in Binyamina, south of Haifa, killing four occupation soldiers and injuring 58 others.

It said the operation came in response to Israeli attacks, especially on the Nuweiri and Basta neighborhoods in the capital, Beirut, and other Lebanese areas, as well as massacres committed by "the Zionist enemy".

Hezbollah "promises the enemy that what it witnessed today in southern Haifa is nothing compared to what awaits it if it decides to continue its aggression against our noble and dear people," it added.

The resistance group further expressed its readiness to defend Lebanon and its people, noting that it "will not hesitate to fulfill its duty in deterring the enemy."

Meanwhile, Israeli media reported that three drones entered the occupied lands' airspace and one of them struck the military camp.

Israeli military spokesperson Daniel Hagari said the occupation's army will "investigate" how the Hezbollah drone reached its target without triggering an alert.

## Iran Fully Ready for War Situation, Strives for Peace in Gaza, Lebanon

TEHRAN - Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi says Tehran is fully ready for a "war situation" while working for establishing peace in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon.

Araqchi made the remarks during a joint presser with his Iraqi counterpart, Fuad Hussein in Baghdad on Sunday. He arrived in the Iraqi capital as part of a regional tour that has also taken him to Lebanon, Syria and Saudi Arabia so far.

"We are fully prepared for a war situation. We are not afraid of war but we do not want war and we will make efforts for a just peace in Gaza and Lebanon," Araqchi said.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran does not seek an escalation of tension, conflict and war, although it is ready for any situation. We are ready for war as we are ready for peace and this is the firm position of the Islamic Republic of Iran," he added.

Iran and Iraq have consensus on the necessity to put an immediate end to the Israeli regime's crimes and aggression and achieve a ceasefire in Gaza and Lebanon, he said.

The top Iranian diplomat noted that he has held close consultations with officials of the regional countries, particularly with Iraqi authorities, given "very dangerous challenges" and an "alarming situation" in the region.

The Iranian foreign minister emphasized that his current visit to Iraq is aimed at discussing the "dangerous and sensitive issues in our region and in the Persian Gulf", saying "very good consultations" were held in this regard.

Pointing to the very high possibility of broader conflict in the region, Araqchi reiterated that



Iran's crimes are the root cause of the ongoing situation "which started in Gaza and has now spread to Lebanon and is likely to be spread to other regional countries."

The top Iranian diplomat warned that the region is facing a very dangerous situation and there is a possibility of a widespread war.

He once again underlined the importance of countering the Israeli regime's aggression and halting its war and attacks on people in Gaza and Lebanon.

The minister expressed regret that the international community did not pay enough attention to the very important issue of displaced people, saying Israel has blocked all

ways to assist them with its attacks.

He reaffirmed Iran's determination to help the Lebanese people and the Palestinian refugees in Syria through every possible means.

The Iraqi foreign minister, for his part, said his country opposes a regional war spreading to Iran amid the Israeli regime's rhetoric about a possible response to the Islamic republic's recent missile attack.

"The continuation of the war and its expansion towards the Islamic Republic of Iran and (Israel's) exploitation of Iraqi airspace as a corridor is completely unacceptable and rejected," Hussein added.

He noted that the Iraqi government and Foreign Ministry has warned that Israel's aggression against Lebanon would drag the region into a war and conflict.

The Iraqi minister emphasized that any war in the region would have consequences for regional security and peace.

## Iran to Activate All Capacities to Punish Israel for IRGC General Assassination



TEHRAN - Iran's Foreign Ministry says the Islamic Republic will make use of all its capacities to hold Israel to account for the assassination of senior Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) commander Brigadier General Abbas Nilforoushan in Beirut's southern suburbs late last month.

In a statement released on Monday morning, the ministry once again extended its condolences to Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, the Iranian nation, freedom-loving peoples worldwide, and the top Iranian military adviser's family.

The Zionist entity's notorious record of crimes ever since it was created in 1948 shows that appeasement towards the regime's acts of aggression and brutalities emboldens it to get more violent and perpetrate more crimes, the statement added.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry described the assassination of the top IRGC general as an unlawful act and unforgivable crime, emphasizing that the Islamic Republic will undoubtedly utilize all its capacities to penalize the Zionist regime and hold it to account for the crime.

General Nilforoushan, a senior commander of the IRGC Quds Force and commander of the IRGC in Lebanon, was pronounced martyred in the Israeli attack that targeted a number of residential buildings in Beirut's densely populated southern suburb of Dahiyeh on September 27.

He was assassinated along with Hezbollah Secretary General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah.

The IRGC public relations department announced on Sunday that funeral services for Nilforoushan will be held in the Iraqi holy cities of Najaf and Karbala as well as in Iran's northeastern holy city of Mashhad on October 14.

Mourners can attend a ceremony in his commemoration at the Imam Hussein (AS) Square in Tehran on October 15.

## Iran to Give Harsh Response to Any Mistake by Enemy



TEHRAN (PressTV) - A high-ranking commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) has warned that any mistake by the enemy will draw "a harsh and regret-inducing response" from the elite force and the rest of the Iranian armed forces.

Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh, the commander of the IRGC's Aerospace Division, made the remarks on Sunday, in response to messages of appreciation from Iranian officials and people following the recent retaliatory operation against the Israeli regime, dubbed Operation True Promise II.

Hajizadeh said that members of the IRGC Aerospace Force, along with other Iranian armed forces, "are ready and alert and with open eyes, so that in the event of a mistake by the enemies of this border and region, they will give a harsh and regretful response to the rotting and decaying body of the enemy."

He further noted that "undoubtedly, the successful Operation True Promise II, which was carried out to punish the evil and criminal Zionist regime, was launched with the unified decision of the government officials, the approval of the Supreme National Security Council, the unwavering support of the presidency, and the approval and guidance of the Commander-in-Chief of Iranian armed forces."

On October 1, Iran launched two hundred ballistic missiles towards the Zionist entity, in a retaliatory attack dubbed Operation True Promise II.

Iran has reiterated that the missile attack against Israel was a response to the regime's brutal wars in Palestine and Lebanon and its sabotage activities in Iran in recent months. Authorities have warned that any counterattack by Israel would face more destructive responses from Iran.

Meanwhile Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi said the Israeli war machine has to be "immediately" stopped as means of preventing further escalation and deterioration of security situation across the West Asia region.

The top diplomat made the remarks in an Instagram post on Monday, detailing the contents of his earlier meetings with senior Iraqi officials in the Arab country's capital Baghdad.



# IRAN NEWS



## Iranian VP's Talks in Pakistan to Revolve Around Economy, Politics

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Iran's Vice-President Mohammad Reza Aref is expected to hold talks mainly on economy and politics on his upcoming visit to Pakistan, an official says.

Ali-Najafi Khoshruhi, the deputy for international and regional cooperation of Iran's vice president, elaborated on the agenda of the forthcoming visit of Aref to Pakistan.

Aref is to attend the 23rd Meeting of the Council of Heads of Government of Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Islamabad. He is expected to hold talks mainly on economy and politics in his visit to the neighboring country, he underlined.

Since Iran enjoys a full membership in the SCO, the summit can bring about desired results, Najafi noted.

## Tabriz Int'l Exhibition Ready to Roll



TEHRAN - The 11th National Handicrafts and 3rd International Tourism Exhibition will open in Tabriz, East Azarbaijan, on Wednesday October 16.

According to the Public Relations Office of the East Azerbaijan Department of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, Tabriz International Fairground will host the event on October 16-19 as the exhibition will be open to the public from 15 to 21 p.m. everyday.

The director of the Association of Tourism Organizations of East Azerbaijan announced the participation of eight foreign countries in the 3rd International Tourism Exhibition of Tabriz.

Rashid Rajabpour, speaking at a press conference, stated that the exhibition will be held from October 16 to 19, concurrent with the 11th Tabriz Handicrafts Exhibition. He added that significant efforts had been made for a long time to attract more foreign countries and tourism institutions, resulting in better participation compared to previous years.

Rajabpour confirmed the presence of tourism representatives from Turkey, Cuba, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, the Republic of Armenia, Iraq, and the Kurdistan Region, and mentioned ongoing negotiations for the participation of Azerbaijan, which is highly likely to attend.

He announced that the 3rd International Tourism Exhibition of Tabriz will be held at the Shahriar Hall of the Tabriz International Exhibition Center, and noted that the participation of 17 provinces from Iran has also been finalized.

He mentioned that there will be 70 booths at the exhibition, and due to overwhelming interest from companies and tourism professionals, 29 applications had to be declined due to limited physical space and available booths.

Rajabpour further stated that 11 booths have been allocated for foreign countries, given the strong interest in the event.

He assessed the conditions of this year's tourism exhibition as highly favorable compared to the previous two, stating that the event is poised for positive outcomes in the field. Despite considering the addition of another hall, this could not be achieved due to time and financial constraints.

This tourism official highlighted the significant potential and facilities of the lucrative tourism industry in East Azerbaijan, emphasizing the need to promote these advantages both domestically and internationally. He added that media cooperation could have a highly positive and impactful effect on the economy of the region and the country, as tourism is one of the most profitable global industries.

Rajabpour described neglecting the tourism sectors of Iran and East Azerbaijan as irreparable and stressed that organizing various exhibitions and attending those in other countries could resolve many of the country's tourism challenges and pave the way for developing the industry.

He mentioned that weaknesses identified in the previous two exhibitions had been reviewed, and steps were taken to address them this year. The 2024 event aims to improve on past shortcomings with a range of additional activities and positive changes.

The director of the Association of Tourism Organizations of East Azerbaijan thanked the province's Department of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism for preparing, coordinating, and creating the necessary conditions for holding the 3rd International Tourism Exhibition and the 11th Handicrafts Exhibition of Tabriz. He emphasized that without the cooperation and synergy between the public and private sectors, holding such exhibitions would not be possible.

## Iran's Private Sector Satellites Kowsar, Hodhod Set for Russian Launch



TEHRAN (Tasnim) - Two Iranian satellites, developed by a private sector company, have been sent to Russia for launch into orbit.

The satellites "Kowsar" and "Hodhod," built by an Iranian private knowledge-based company, were dispatched to Russia on Friday, October 11, for launch into Earth's orbit.

The launch of these satellites is considered a major milestone in the history of Iran's space industry as it signifies the first substantial effort by the country's private space sector.

The "Kowsar" satellite is designed for precision agriculture and mapping, while "Hodhod" is an Internet of Things (IoT) communications satellite.

The development of Kowsar, a high-resolution remote sensing satellite, began in 2019.

Hodhod, which applies advanced technologies from Kowsar, was designed and built within a year.

A team of young Iranian engineers, with an average age of 25, led the project at a private Iranian tech firm.

Kowsar is a high-resolution imaging satellite aimed at applications such as agriculture, natural resource management, environmental monitoring, and disaster management.

Hodhod, a small communications satellite, is designed for satellite-based communication networks and IoT, providing services in remote areas with limited access to terrestrial networks.

The launch of these satellites is expected to significantly advance Iran's self-sufficiency in space technology, create jobs, and raise the country's global standing in the space industry.

IRANNEWS/ECONOMICDESK



## Iran Eyes World Trade Organization Membership

TEHRAN - In a significant development for Iran's trade ambitions, the head of the country's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), Mohammad Ali Dehghan Dehnavi, emphasized the necessity of Iran joining the World Trade Organization (WTO). Speaking at a press conference on the 28th National Export Day, Dehghan Dehnavi outlined both the challenges and opportunities Iran faces in its international trade efforts.

Dehghan Dehnavi highlighted that this year's National Export Day, an event celebrating the country's outstanding exporters, would focus on recognizing excellence in 40 product categories, five technological sectors, and five service industries. Out of the 449 companies that applied to be considered for the prestigious title of exemplary exporter, winners will be chosen based on their contributions to export growth, the number of international markets they serve, and their performance in meeting foreign exchange commitments.

However, Dehghan Dehnavi also presented a sobering picture of Iran's trade landscape. He reported that in the past year, Iran's exports were valued at \$49.3 billion, a 9.8% increase in volume but an 8.9% decrease in value, reflecting the impact of declining global prices for key exports, particularly petrochemical products. Iran's imports, meanwhile, reached \$66.2 billion, with a 4.4% rise in volume and a 9.8% increase in value. The resulting non-oil trade balance for the year was a negative \$16.8 billion.

For the first half of the current year, 70 million tons of goods were exported, worth \$25.8 billion, marking a modest 3.4% growth in volume and a 6.5% increase in value. Despite this, the trade balance remained negative, a situation exacerbated by the ongoing sanctions and other global economic pressures.

The top export destinations for Iran remained concentrated in its regional neighbors, with China, Iraq, the UAE, Turkey, and Afghanistan accounting for 75% of the country's exports. On the import side, the UAE, China, Turkey, Germany, and India supplied the bulk of Iran's needs, representing 79% of total imports. Dehghan Dehnavi revealed that the trade deficit for the first half of the year amounted to \$7 billion.

Several factors contributed to the ongoing negative trade balance, Dehghan Dehnavi explained. Chief among these was the global decline in prices for petrochemical products, a vital part of Iran's export portfolio. Additionally, a \$5.3 billion drop in gas exports, coupled with the imposition of export duties on raw and semi-raw materials, further impacted trade. While the Trade Promotion Organization supports the idea that exporting raw materials is not ideal, Dehghan Dehnavi argued that punitive duties must be balanced to encourage the production of value-added goods.

He emphasized that Iran should focus on transitioning its exports away from raw materials and towards products with higher value. He warned that sudden laws, restrictions, and conflicting regulations were hampering exporters,

leading many to consider exiting the market.

One of the most notable points from the press conference was Iran's renewed push to join the World Trade Organization (WTO). Dehghan Dehnavi stressed that no expert would deny the importance of WTO membership for Iran, calling it "an absolute necessity." He acknowledged that Iran had missed early opportunities to join the WTO due to indecision in the past but noted that the country now possesses the skilled personnel needed to move forward with the process.

However, Dehghan Dehnavi cautioned that the final decision rests with higher authorities in the government. Once approval is granted, the Trade Promotion Organization is prepared to take the necessary steps to initiate Iran's accession to the global trade body.

Another significant issue raised during the press conference was the disparity between the NIMA exchange rate—an official exchange rate used for trade—and the free market rate. Dehghan Dehnavi admitted that this gap was causing various problems, including corruption and dissatisfaction among legitimate exporters and importers. He urged the government to work towards narrowing the gap between the two rates, which would help facilitate trade and reduce instances of rent-seeking.

The dual exchange rate system has led to discrepancies in trade reporting, with traders sometimes under- or over-reporting their figures depending on the exchange rate they use. This has complicated the accuracy of Iran's trade balance statistics, though Dehghan Dehnavi was clear that the negative trade balance is still a reality.

Iran's trade ambitions continue to be hampered by the sanctions imposed on the country, which severely limit its ability to conduct official financial transactions. Dehghan Dehnavi noted that many Iranian traders are forced to rely on unofficial channels to bypass these restrictions. Despite these challenges, he emphasized that Iran will not cease trading altogether, and regional agreements and partnerships remain critical in this context.

While joining trade agreements and regional organizations can provide some relief, Dehghan Dehnavi argued that they are not sufficient on their own. Iran must continue to seek creative ways to circumvent sanctions and improve trade relations with its partners. Free trade remains a priority for the country, and Iranian exporters and importers are finding ways to succeed despite the obstacles.

Dehghan Dehnavi urged the government to reduce the pressure on the private sector, which has played a pivotal role in keeping Iran's trade alive under sanctions. He argued that the government should support these efforts by easing regulatory burdens and allowing exporters and importers to continue their work without excessive interference.

## Russian Metal Industry Activists Informed of Free Trade Opportunities With Iran



TEHRAN - A representative from the trade policy section of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), in a meeting, informed Russian metal industry and market activists about the opportunities that will arise following the implementation of the free trade agreement between the EAEU and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

According to a report from the press service of the Eurasian Economic Union, Kira Danilchova, at the second international conference "Metal Market: Sales, Production, and Strategy," presented a report on the process of eliminating customs tariffs in trade with Iran as a result of the recent agreement with Tehran.

She emphasized that the free trade agreement between the Eurasian Economic Union and Iran creates a favorable environment for a significant increase in trade exchanges between the countries involved in the agreement.

This EAEU official stated that to take advantage of the emerging opportunity, commercial representatives of both sides need to enhance their communications.

Danilchova further invited interested business activists to participate in the third specialized Eurasian exhibition in Iran. The Eurasia exhibition will be held from December 3 to 6 in Tehran at the Tehran International Permanent Fairground.

The Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) is an intergovernmental

economic union consisting of Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, and Armenia. Its observer members include Uzbekistan, Moldova, and Cuba. The foundation of this union was laid about 10 years ago, in 2014.

Earlier, in December 2023, the EAEU signed a free trade agreement with the Islamic Republic of Iran, the implementation of which requires ratification by the parliaments of the member states and the Islamic Consultative Assembly (Iranian Parliament). The parties will fully eliminate tariffs on 87% of goods traded between them.

The parliaments of Belarus, Russia, and Kyrgyzstan have already ratified this agreement. Armenia, Kazakhstan, and the Islamic Republic of Iran, as contracting parties, also need to complete their legal procedures for the free trade agreement to come into effect.

The Eurasian Economic Forum was held on September 30 and October 1, 2024, in Yerevan, the capital of Armenia, with the participation of heads of delegations from member states, including Mohammad Reza Aref, First Vice President of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The forum discussed the possibility of elevating Iran's cooperation with the union to observer membership. In addition to high-ranking officials from member states, several entrepreneurs and business managers from the union and the Islamic Republic of Iran also attended this event.

## Over 230 Producers Set to Participate in 31st Tehran Int'l Handwoven Carpet Exhibition



TEHRAN - The 31st edition of the Tehran International Handwoven Carpet Exhibition is set to take place with the participation of more than 230 domestic producers, offering a platform for showcasing Iran's renowned craftsmanship in handwoven carpets. The event, which aims to bolster the industry and expand export markets, will run from November 13 to 16 at Tehran's International Exhibition Center.

Ghodratollah Doost Mohammadi, the exhibition's director and a prominent figure in the carpet industry, highlighted the significance of this year's event in a meeting held on Sunday. He emphasized the importance of the exhibition in supporting the handwoven carpet sector, which holds a special place in Iran's cultural and economic landscape. "The main objective of this exhibition is to sustain the growth of the handwoven carpet industry in Iran and create new export markets for our high-quality carpets," Doost Mohammadi said.

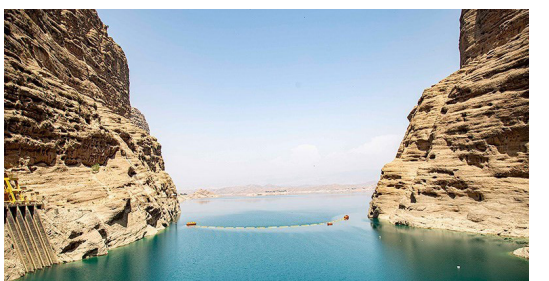
He described Iranian carpets as an embodiment of artistic and cultural heritage, noting that the country is globally recognized for producing some of the most beautiful and high-quality handwoven carpets. "Iran is the birthplace of handwoven carpets, and the intricate designs, natural dyes, and craftsmanship make these carpets more than just decorative items; they are true works of art," he added.

The exhibition will occupy over 27,000 square meters of space, and will attract both domestic and international visitors, including foreign delegations. Doost Mohammadi also revealed that a collection of museum-quality and antique carpets will be displayed, giving attendees the opportunity to view historically significant pieces that reflect the depth and richness of Iran's carpet-weaving tradition.

Beyond showcasing exquisite carpets, the event also serves as a platform to address the challenges facing the industry. "We have been actively engaging with the National Carpet Center of Iran to discuss the concerns of carpet producers and present their demands to relevant authorities," Doost Mohammadi said. The center has formally raised these issues with the Ministry of Industry, Mining, and Trade in an effort to find solutions for the problems facing the sector.

In addition to its cultural significance, the handwoven carpet industry plays a vital role in Iran's economy, providing jobs for thousands of artisans and weavers across the country. "The handwoven carpet is a symbol of Iranian identity, passed down through generations. Many families still preserve carpets as valuable heirlooms," Doost Mohammadi explained, adding that the exhibition will feature a wide variety of designs and colors that cater to different tastes, from traditional motifs to modern styles.

## More than Half of Dam Capacity Is Empty



TEHRAN - According to a report by Tasnim News Agency, in the first 21 days of the current water year (starting from October 2024), a total of 800 million cubic meters of water has entered Iran's dams. This marks a 3% decrease compared to the inflow of 830 million cubic meters during the same period in the previous water year.

Although the water inflow to the country's dams decreased by 3% in the first 21 days of October compared to the same period last year, there was a 28% decrease in water inflow by mid-October (October 6) compared to the same time last year. However, in the past week, the increased water inflow has compensated for much of this reduction.

Additionally, during this period, 1.9 billion cubic meters of water have been released from the country's dams to supply drinking water, agriculture, industry, and environmental needs, which represents a 4% decrease compared to the release of 1.97 billion cubic meters of water during the same period last year.



## U.S. to Send Anti-Missile System and Troops to Israel

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - The United States said on Sunday it will send U.S. troops to Israel along with an advanced U.S. anti-missile system, in a highly unusual deployment meant to bolster the country's air defenses following missile attacks by Iran.

U.S. President Joe Biden said the move meant "to defend Israel," which is weighing an expected retaliation against Iran after Tehran fired more than 180 missiles at Israel on Oct 1.

The United States has been privately urging Israel to calibrate its response to avoid triggering a broader war in the Middle East, officials say, with Biden publicly voicing his opposition to an Israeli attack on Iran's nuclear sites and his concerns about a strike on Iran's energy infrastructure.

Pentagon spokesman Major General Patrick Ryder described the deployment as part of "the broader adjustments the U.S. military has made in recent months" to support Israel and defend U.S. personnel from attacks by Iran and Iranian-backed groups.



## Lithuania's Center-Left Opposition Says It Will Try to Form Gov't



VILNIUS (Dispatches) - Lithuania's center-left opposition Social Democrats (SD) will attempt to form a majority coalition government together with two other parties following the country's parliamentary election, its leader said on Sunday.

Early results showed SD winning the popular vote of the election, which was dominated by concerns over living costs and potential threats from neighboring Russia.

"I think it will be a coalition with two left parties," Vilija Blinkeviciute told reporters, adding the parties in question were the Farmers and Greens and For Lithuania.

With 91% of votes counted, SD had 20% of the popular vote, making it the largest party ahead of the ruling Homeland Union of Prime Minister Ingrida Simonyte with 17% and the anti-establishment Nemunas Dawn with 15%.

If Blinkeviciute succeeds in forming a government, she is expected to maintain Lithuania's hawkish stance against Russia and its massive defense spending.

NATO estimates the Baltic nation of 2.9 million people will spend some 3% of GDP on the military, making it the alliance's sixth biggest spender this year.

Lithuania has a hybrid voting system in which half of the parliament is elected by popular vote. The other half is chosen on a district basis, a process which favours larger parties. In most districts, the top two candidates will face each other in a run-off on Oct. 27.

Some 52.1% of the Baltic nation's eligible voters cast a ballot on Sunday, up from 47.2% four years ago, official data showed.

Blinkeviciute said foreign policy would not change and helping Ukraine remained a priority.

"I think that our voters, our people said that they want some changes," she said, pointing to earnings, housing, healthcare and education as key areas of concern.

Simonyte's center-right government saw its popularity eroded by inflation that topped 20% two years ago, as well as by deteriorating public services and a widening gap between rich and poor.

## UN Says Israeli Tanks Burst Into Peacekeeper Base



NEW YORK (Dispatches) - The United Nations said on Sunday Israeli tanks had burst through the gates of a base of its peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon, the latest accusation of Israeli violations and attacks denounced by its own allies.

The UNIFIL peacekeeping force said two Israeli Merkava tanks destroyed the main gate of a base and forcibly entered before dawn on Sunday morning. After the tanks left, shells exploded 100 metres (yards) away, releasing smoke which blew across the base and sickened U.N. personnel, it said in a statement.

In its version of events, the Israeli military said militants of the Iran-backed group Hezbollah had fired anti-tank missiles at Israeli troops, wounding 25 of them. The attack was very close to a UNIFIL post and a tank helping evacuate the casualties under fire then backed into the UNIFIL post, it said.

"It is not storming a base. It is not trying to enter a base. It was a tank under heavy fire, mass casualty event, backing up to get out of harm's way," the military's international spokesperson Nadav Shoshani told reporters.

In a statement, the military said it used a smoke screen to provide cover for the evacuation of the wounded soldiers but its actions posed no danger to the U.N. peacekeeping force.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in a statement addressed to U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres: "The time has come for you to withdraw UNIFIL from Hezbollah strongholds and from the combat zones."

"The IDF has requested this repeatedly and has met with repeated refusal, which has the effect of providing Hezbollah terrorists with human shields."

Guterres paid tribute to UNIFIL's peacekeepers, who "remain in all positions," U.N. spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said in a statement issued later on Sunday, adding that "the U.N. flag continues to fly."

The Secretary-General reiterated a warning that peacekeepers must not be targeted, he said.

"Attacks against peacekeepers are in breach of international law, including international humanitarian law. They may constitute a war crime," Dujarric said.

UNIFIL has said previous Israeli attacks on a watchtower, cameras, communications equipment and lighting had limited its monitoring abilities. U.N. sources say they fear any violations of international law in the conflict will be impossible to monitor.

U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin in a call on Sunday with his Israeli counterpart, Yoav Gallant, "reinforced the importance of Israel taking all necessary measures to ensure the safety and security of UNIFIL forces and Lebanese Armed Forces,"

according to a readout of the call.

Austin also pressed Gallant on the need for Israel "to pivot from military operations in Lebanon to a diplomatic pathway to provide security for civilians on both sides of the border as soon as feasible," it said.

Hezbollah, which Israel has been battling on the ground in southern Lebanon since it launched an incursion at the start of this month, denies Israel's accusation that it uses the proximity of peacekeepers for protection.

The conflict between Israel and Hezbollah resumed a year ago when the Iranian-backed group began firing rockets at Israeli positions in support of Hamas at the start of the Gaza war and has sharply escalated in recent weeks.

On Sunday, Hezbollah said it attacked a camp of the Israeli military's Golani Brigade camp in Binyamina in northern Israel with a "swarm of drones". Some of the unmanned aircraft, which included drone models Hezbollah has not used before, penetrated Israeli air defense radars without being detected, the group said in a statement.

Israel's military said four of its soldiers were killed and seven severely injured in the incident. The incident was being examined, the military said.

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, typically one of Israel's most vocal supporters among Western European leaders, spoke to Netanyahu by phone on Sunday and denounced the "unacceptable" Israeli attacks, her government said.

Italy has more than a thousand troops in the 10,000-strong UNIFIL force, making it one of the biggest contributors of personnel. France and Spain, which each have nearly 700 soldiers in the force, have also condemned the Israeli attacks.

The presence of UNIFIL puts peacekeepers from 50 separate countries in harm's way, in a force initially set up in southern Lebanon in 1978.

The area has seen decades of conflict, with Israel invading in 1982, occupying southern Lebanon until 2000 and again fighting a major five-week war against Hezbollah in 2006, which ended with a ceasefire monitored by UNIFIL.

Israel's assault against Hezbollah over the past three weeks has uprooted 1.2 million Lebanese and inflicted an unprecedented blow on the group by killing most of its senior leadership.

Lebanon's government says more than 2,100 people have been killed and 10,000 wounded in over a year of fighting, mainly over the past few weeks. The toll does not distinguish between civilians and combatants but includes scores of women and children.

## Man Arrested Near Trump Rally in California Faces Gun Charges



NEW YORK (Dispatches) - A man arrested at a security checkpoint near Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump's California rally on Saturday faces gun charges after he was found in possession of loaded firearms, multiple passports and a fake license plate, the local sheriff said on Sunday.

Riverside County Sheriff Chad Bianco said he believed his department halted an assassination attempt, though he acknowledged that was "speculation." The suspect was released on bail on Saturday, jail records showed. A federal official said on Sunday that a federal investigation was underway.

"What we do know is he showed up with multiple passports with different names, an unregistered vehicle with a fake license plate and loaded firearms," the sheriff said at a news conference on Sunday afternoon. "I truly do believe that we prevented another assassination attempt."

The 49-year-old man, identified as Las Vegas resident Vem Miller, was stopped in a black SUV by sheriff's deputies around 5 p.m. local time on Saturday and taken into custody without incident, according to the sheriff's office. Trump had not yet taken the stage.

## China Holds Military Drills Around Taiwan

TAIPEI (Dispatches) - China deployed planes and ships to encircle Taiwan, in drills Beijing said were aimed at sending a "stern warning" to "separatist" forces on the self-ruled island.

Beijing has not ruled out using force to bring Taiwan under its control and today's drills represent its fourth round of large-scale war games in the past two years.

China's drills come days after US Secretary of State Antony Blinken warned Beijing against taking action in response to a speech by Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te during the island's National Day celebrations.

Lai, who took office in May, has been more outspoken than his predecessor Tsai Ing-wen in defending Taiwan's sovereignty, angering Beijing, which calls him a "separatist".

Taiwan condemned the latest exercises as "irrational and provocative" and said it has dispatched "appropriate forces" in response.

The drills, dubbed Joint Sword-2024B, "test the joint operations capabilities of the theatre command's troops", Beijing said.

They are taking place in "areas to the north, south and east of Taiwan Island," said Captain Li Xi, spokesman for the Chinese military's Eastern Theatre Command.

The drills are "focusing on subjects of sea-air combat-readiness patrol, blockade on key ports and areas", Li said.

They also practiced an "assault on maritime and ground targets" and "joint seizure of comprehensive superiority".

China's coast guard was also dispatched to conduct "inspections" around the island.

A diagram released by the coast guard showed four fleets encircling Taiwan and moving in an anticlockwise direction around the island.



China has ramped up military activity around Taiwan in recent years, sending in warplanes and other military aircraft while its ships maintain a near-constant presence around the island's waters.

Taiwan said yesterday it had detected a Chinese aircraft carrier group to its south in the Bashi Channel, a waterway that separates the island from the Philippines, that appeared to be heading towards the western Pacific.

"In the face of enemy threats, all officers and soldiers of the country are in full readiness," Taiwan's defense ministry said today.

"We are determined and confident to ensure national defense security."

In his speech on Thursday, Lai vowed to "resist annexation" of the island, and insisted Beijing and Taipei were "not subordinate to each other".

China warned after the speech that Lai's "provocations" would result in "disaster" for the people of Taiwan.

Beijing today said the drills were "a legitimate and necessary operation for safeguarding state sovereignty and national unity".

Beijing's state broadcaster CCTV released a video warning: "the greater the provocation, the tighter the reins".

The current dispute between China and Taiwan dates back to a civil war in which the nationalist forces of Chiang Kai-shek were defeated by Mao Zedong's communist fighters and fled to Taiwan in 1949.

Lai's Democratic Progressive Party has long defended the sovereignty and democracy of Taiwan, which has its own government, military and currency.

Beijing has sought to erase Taipei from the international stage, blocking it from global forums and poaching its diplomatic allies.

## Zelensky Says N. Korea Sending Troops to Russian Army

KYIV (Dispatches) - Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky accused North Korea on Sunday of sending troops to Russia's army and once again appealed for more support to prevent "a bigger war".

Zelensky's comments came days after visiting several European capitals to press his case for more military and financial help in the war against invading Russian forces.

"We see an increasing alliance between Russia and regimes like in North Korea," Zelensky said in his evening address.

"It is no longer just about transferring weapons. It is actually about the transfer of people from North Korea to the occupier's military forces."

"Obviously, in such circumstances, our relations with our partners need to be developed. The frontline needs more support," he said.

"When we talk about more long-range capability for Ukraine and more decisive supplies for our forces, it is not just a list of military equipment," Zelensky said in Sunday's address.

"It is about increasing the pressure on the aggressor, which will be stronger for Russia than they can withstand. And it is about preventing a bigger war."

Zelensky completed a whirlwind tour of European capitals last week including Berlin, London, Paris and Rome to ask for sustained military aid as Russia's invasion of Ukraine grinds on through its



third year.

Those trips were organised at the last minute after US President Joe Biden postponed a trip to Germany originally due last week, to oversee preparations to deal with Hurricane Milton as it approached Florida.

Biden's visit was to have included attending a meeting of more than 50 of Ukraine's allies to discuss further support for Kyiv, at which Zelensky had been expected.

A German government source said Sunday that Biden was now set to visit this coming Friday for one day, with Ukraine and the Middle East expected to be high on the agenda.

Earlier Sunday, Russia said it had captured another east Ukrainian village as it closes on the important city of Pokrovsk, where its forces have been advancing for weeks.

Russian troops have moved westward in the Donetsk region for months, with Kyiv saying this weekend that the situation was "very difficult".

Moscow's defence ministry said its forces had now taken Mykhailivka, at the gates of the town of Selydove, and south of Pokrovsk.

Selydove has been badly damaged by months of shelling and seen most of its population flee.

Russia has been trying to capture Pokrovsk, a mining town that was home to around 60,000 people before Moscow launched its offensive. It has been claiming east Ukrainian villages for months.





## Ravens Rip Commanders as Lions Lose NFL Sacks Leader in Win

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - Lamar Jackson threw for 323 yards and a touchdown to spark the Baltimore Ravens over Washington 30-23 on Sunday in a showdown of the NFL's top-scoring squads. NFL rushing leader Derrick Henry ran 24 times for 132 yards and two touchdowns while Zay Flowers had 132 yards on nine catches, all in the first half for a Ravens record. "Just giving my guys the opportunities, making guys miss and getting yards after the catch," said Jackson. "It was just an all-around team effort."

Two-time NFL Most Valuable Player Jackson completed 20 of 26 passes and ran 11 times for 40 yards, guiding the Ravens on two scoring drives from beyond 90 yards for a fourth consecutive victory after an 0-2 start. "Just taking accountability," Jackson said "We made a lot of mistakes the first two games. That's the NFL -- everything's not perfect. "But we've just been trying to minimize our mistakes and put points on the board and that's what we've been doing."

Washington rookie Jayden Daniels completed 24 of 35 passes for 269 yards and two touchdowns and rushed six times for 22 yards for the Commanders (4-2) against the NFL's top run defenders. "Great player," Jackson said of Daniels. "Just his sixth game in the league, rookie year. The sky is the limit for him."

In the only other game between clubs with winning records, the Detroit Lions crushed host Dallas 47-9, scoring their second-most road points behind a 52-point outburst in 1952. Detroit reached 40 points in consecutive games for the first time since 1962, improving to 4-1, but suffered a major injury setback. Lions defensive end Aidan Hutchinson, the NFL sacks leader, went down early in the third quarter with

a gruesome leg injury after sacking Dallas quarterback Dak Prescott and was carted off the field with what was later diagnosed as a broken left tibia. "Obviously, he's going to be down for a little while," said Lions coach Dan Campbell, who said Hutchinson will stay in Texas for evaluation. Detroit's Jared Goff threw for 315 yards and three touchdowns while David Montgomery ran for 80 yards and two touchdowns. Tampa Bay's Baker Mayfield threw for 325 yards and four touchdowns to spark the Buccaneers over host New Orleans 51-27. Sean Tucker ran for 136 yards and a touchdown while Chris Godwin caught 11 passes for 125 yards and two touchdowns for the Bucs (4-2). At London, top NFL Draft pick Caleb Williams completed 23 of 29 passes for 226 yards and four touchdowns to lead the Chicago Bears over Jacksonville 35-16. Cole Kmet and Keenan Allen each caught two touchdown throws and D'Andre Swift ran for 91 yards and another touchdown for the Bears (4-2). At New England, C.J. Stroud threw for 192 yards and three touchdowns and Joe Mixon ran for 102 yards and scored twice in Houston's 41-21 rout of the host Patriots. "Awesome job. We played really well. We brought energy," Texans coach DeMeco Ryans said. "Proud of everybody."

New England rookie Drake Maye threw for 243 yards and three touchdowns but the Texans (5-1) forced four turnovers. Green Bay's Jordan Love threw for 258 yards and four touchdowns to give the Packers (4-2) a 34-13 home victory over Arizona.



## Goggia Aims to Return in December After Injury

MILAN (Dispatches) - Italian Olympic ski champion Sofia Goggia will miss the opening races of the World Cup season but hopes to be back in action before Christmas after an injury, she said. Goggia broke the tibia in her right leg when she crashed in training giant slalom in February, ending her season at a time when she was leading the World Cup downhill standings. "If all goes well, I'd like to be back in competitions in mid-December at Beaver Creek," Goggia, 31, said at the Italian Winter Sports Federation (FISI) media day in Milan. Goggia is a four-time winner of the overall downhill World Cup title and raced to gold in the downhill at the 2018 Pyeongchang Olympics and silver at the 2022 Beijing Games. However, her career has been marred by a series of injuries. "Emotionally, this time was very difficult but I made every effort to recover. I would be intellectually dishonest if I talked about goals now without even actually having touched snow," she said. Goggia added that she had no expectations for the season but just wanted "progress, without any hurry". "I want to ski, I want to give it a go, the drive to push myself hard is still there despite seven injuries," she said.



## Chepngetich Smashes Women's Marathon World Record

CHICAGO (Dispatches)- Kenya's Ruth Chepngetich put on a performance for the ages as she obliterated the women's marathon world record in Chicago on Sunday, taking nearly two minutes off the previous best to win in an unofficial time of two hours, nine minutes and 56 seconds. Chepngetich ditched the competition by the halfway mark and ran through a chorus of cheers through the final straight as she claimed her third title in Chicago and crushed Ethiopian Tigst Assefa's previous record of 2:11:53, set last year in Berlin. Ethiopia's Sutume Kebede crossed the line seven minutes and 36 seconds later while Kenyan Irine Cheptai (2:17:51) was third. "This is my dream that has come true," said Chepngetich, whose time was originally recorded as 2:09:57 but was later adjusted. Her compatriot John Korir won on the men's side in 2:02:44.

Chepngetich set a blistering pace from the start, running the first five kilometres in 15 minutes flat and by the halfway mark she had built a 14-second cushion between herself and Kebede. Television commentators were astonished as she grinded through the course, comparing her attempt at a sub-2:10 marathon to the moon landing, and she only seemed to gain momentum as she sprinted through the final two miles. Chepngetich, the 2019 world champion, hunched over in utter exhaustion after breaking the tape and dedicated her performance to compatriot Kelvin Kiptum, who broke the men's world record a year ago in Chicago and died in a car crash four months later. "World record was in my mind," she said in televised remarks. "Chicago, as I said in the press, is like home." The day began with a moment of silence at the starting line for Kiptum, who ran last year in 2:00:35, as runners took off under pristine conditions in the Windy City. Korir stuck with a crowded men's lead pack through the first 30 kilometres before making his move and was nearly 30 seconds clear of the rest of the field by the 35-kilometre mark. He glided through the final kilometres, holding his arms out wide as he finished his textbook performance in a personal best time for his first major title. Ethiopia's Mohamed Esa was second in 2:04:39 while Kenyan Amos Kipruto (2:04:50) finished third. "Today I was thinking about Kiptum," said Korir. "I had to believe in myself and try to do my best."

## Sinner Blocks Out Off-Court Turmoil to Win Shanghai Masters

SHANGHAI (Dispatches) - World number one Jannik Sinner said he did his best to roll with the punches and prevent his ongoing doping controversy from affecting his performances after he beat Novak Djokovic 7-6(4) 6-3 to claim the Shanghai Masters crown on Sunday. In August, the International Tennis Integrity Agency said Sinner had failed two drug tests in March but had been cleared of wrongdoing by an independent tribunal. The tribunal accepted the Italian's explanation that the anabolic agent clostebol entered his system from a member of his support team through massages and sports therapy. However, in September, the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) said it would appeal against the independent tribunal's decision and was seeking a period of ineligibility of up to two years for Sinner. WADA's announcement came days before Sinner was beaten by rival Carlos Alcaraz in the China Open final, with the U.S. and Australian Open champion admitting he was in an uncomfortable situation ahead of his Shanghai Masters campaign.



"This year has been very, very tough for me because of other circumstances and at points I lost a bit of my smile because I had some issues off the court, and they're still in my mind sometimes," Sinner told reporters after his win in the final. "People think that by winning or having success you don't have any problems, but it's not true, because I'm in the situation where I'm in. Obviously, it's not comfortable, and I wish I would not be in this position where I am right now off the court. "But you have to accept it. I feel like I'm strong when I go on the court, trying to not think about it and trying to stay focused on everything I do and give a 100% in every single match or practice."

Sinner's win over 24-times Grand Slam champion Djokovic has taken his trophy count for the year up to seven, including two Grand Slams, three ATP Masters 1000 titles and wins in Rotterdam and Halle. This season has been the 23-year-old's most successful on tour, and when asked what had changed in the past year, Sinner said: "I feel that physically I'm ready to play for a longer amount of time at the highest level possible."

## Rice Seals It as England Outclass Finland

LONDON (Dispatches) - England eased to a 3-1 victory away to Finland in the Nations League yesterday, while Austria put five past Erling Haaland's Norway. Jack Grealish put England ahead in the first half, then Trent Alexander-Arnold curled in a superb free-kick and Declan Rice sealed the win inside the final 20 minutes, before Arttu Hoskonen netted a late consolation for the hosts. It was a more recognisable England side than the one that lost to Greece at Wembley on Thursday as interim manager Lee Carsley rang the changes after his striker-less formation last time out failed. "The team responded really well -- in the best way," Carsley told ITV. "They scored three good goals. We were a lot better tonight. We played with a lot more control. We had massive possession, lots and lots of passes and created chances. But we can do better." Manchester City's Grealish broke the deadlock in the 18th minute, providing the finishing touch to a well-crafted 17-pass move. Angel Gomes, starting in central midfield, slipped a clever ball through the Finnish defense, which Grealish ran onto and rolled beyond the goalkeeper. Finland created several good opportunities to equalize but failed to suitably trouble Dean Henderson in the England goal. Alexander-Arnold, deployed at left-back rather than his usual right-back position at Liverpool, doubled the lead on 74 minutes when he whipped a 25-yard free-kick into the top corner. Rice tucked away substitute Ollie Watkins cross with six minutes remaining to ensure England's third Nations League win in four Group B2 games. Finland remain rooted to the bottom of the table having lost all their games, but they did at least double their goal tally for the campaign when Hoskonen headed home from a corner in the 87th



minute. Greece maintained their three-point lead at the top of the group over England by beating the Republic of Ireland 2-0 in Athens. Tasos Bakasetas powered a drive from the edge of the box before Caoimhin Kelleher early in the second period and Petros Mantalos netted in stoppage time to preserve the Greeks' 100 per cent record with a fourth-consecutive win. The match was Greece's first at home since George Baldock, their English-born Greek international, was found drowned in his swimming pool in Athens on Wednesday. Norway's Erling Haaland in action with Austria's Nicolas Seiwald and Konrad Laimer during their UEFA Nations League, League B Group B3 match in Linz October 13, 2024. — Reuters pic Norway's Erling Haaland in action with Austria's Nicolas Seiwald and Konrad Laimer during their UEFA Nations League, League B Group B3 match in Linz October 13, 2024. — Reuters pic Austria keep Haaland quiet Marko Arnautovic netted a brace as Austria thrashed Norway 5-1 in Linz. The Inter Milan attacker scored early in both halves, either side of a first-half Alexander Sorloth equaliser, before Philipp Lienhart, Stefan Posch and Michael Gregoritsch completed a dominant win for Austria. Arnautovic put the hosts in front on eight minutes with a hammered strike from 20 yards that flew in off the crossbar. Sorloth nipped in to head a leveller for Norway six minutes prior to the interval. But the Austrian skipper put his side back in front in the 49th minute when he dispatched a penalty-kick after Christoph Baumgartner was fouled in the box.