

Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi in Turkey Warned That Iran Has "Identified All Its Targets" in the Occupied Territories for a Retaliatory Attack Against Israel

IRAN NEWS

A Bill With a Double Urgency Motion Has Been Submitted to the Islamic City Council of Tehran to Name a Street in the Northwest of the Iranian Capital After the Three Southern Islands

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DOMESTIC



Developing Domestic Tourism Key to Attracting Foreign Visitors

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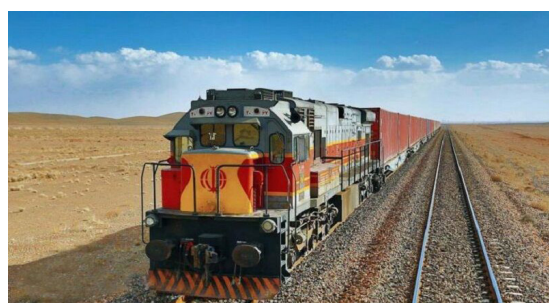
INTERNATIONAL

Israel Continues Crime by Pounding Beirut and Gaza



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Iranian Railways Welcomes Cooperation with TRACECA Member Countries



TEHRAN - The CEO of the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways, during a joint meeting with the Secretary-General of TRACECA, emphasized Iran's Seventh Development Plan, which focuses on increasing freight transit, both rail and road. He stated that Iran is open to transportation cooperation with TRACECA member countries.

Jabbarali Zakeri, in a meeting with Asanbayev, Secretary-General of the Intergovernmental Commission on the Europe-Caucasus-Asia Transport Corridor (TRACECA), highlighted Iran's freight transit potential via rail and road. He noted that Iran already has strong transport ties with several TRACECA member countries and expressed hope that this cooperation would further expand with the 13 other member nations.

Zakeri pointed out that compared to last year, rail routes in the North-South and East-West corridors have become more active. However, parts of these networks are incomplete, and efforts are underway to address these gaps.

Zakeri emphasized that four of Iran's eight TRACECA-registered ports are currently connected to the rail network, with rail lines under construction at two other ports. The Chabahar port rail line is expected to be operational by next year.

He welcomed the potential for increased cooperation with TRACECA members, stating that Iran is ready to resolve any challenges through joint meetings. Zakeri also mentioned the launch of Iranian container trains to China, welcoming TRACECA's support in activating the Southern Corridor, and expressed hopes for greater rail traffic between member countries.

The Deputy Minister of Roads and Urban Development highlighted Iran's interest in running freight trains on the Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran route, extending to Turkey and Europe. He also noted the activation of the Afghanistan-Iran-Turkey train this year and expressed optimism that Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Afghanistan freight routes could utilize Iranian corridors.

Zakeri stated that Iran's railway tariff policy for international freight aims for uniformity, and negotiations are ongoing with neighboring countries to establish standardized tariffs based on ton-kilometers or container-kilometers.

In the meeting, TRACECA Secretary-General Asanbayev expressed interest in utilizing Iran's corridors, noting that these routes enable member countries to increase trade from Central Asia to Turkey via Iran. He emphasized that Iran's well-developed rail infrastructure positions the country as a vital link for other nations, especially those without access to open waters, helping them boost their transit freight.

Iran Rejects Israeli Allegations Over Attack on Netanyahu's Home



NEW YORK (IRNA) - The Iranian permanent mission to the United Nations has strongly dismissed allegations by Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu against Iran following a drone attack on his home.

The mission made the comment on Saturday in response to a question, after Netanyahu attributed the attack carried out earlier in the day to "the agents of Iran".

"We have already responded to the Israeli regime, and the action in question has been carried out by Hezbollah in Lebanon", the Iranian mission said in reference to Iran's missile operation on Israeli military and security targets on October 1, which was carried out in response to the regime's assassination of regional resistance leaders and a senior Iranian military commander.

Netanyahu alleged that "the agents of Iran" tried to assassinate him and his wife by launching the drone attack on his home in Caesarea.

Israeli media outlets said that the drone, fired from Lebanon, flew 70 km and directly hit the residence of Netanyahu. They said that smoke rising from the attack scene was visible from a distance.

Reacting to the Israeli prime minister's allegations, Iran's Foreign Ministry Spokesman Esmail Baghaei said that the Zionist regime has been founded on the basis of spreading lies and distorting facts.

Today's Battle Is One of Ideas, Production, and Trade



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - President Masoud Pezeshkian on Sunday attended the 28th National Export Day ceremony, where he honored exemplary exporters and listened to their concerns and viewpoints.

During the ceremony, Pezeshkian condemned the crimes committed by the Zionist regime in the region and criticized the support of countries that claim to uphold human rights, freedom, and democracy. Referring to the enemy's conspiracies, which began before the recent presidential election and have continued, he stated, "Since the presidential election, the enemy has been trying to spread despair among the people and create division to keep them from voting."

The President emphasized that to resist the enemy's excessive demands, unity through faith and belief is essential. He added, "Since my inauguration, the enemy has aimed to break this unity by force and intimidation, attempting to make us bow down."

Pezeshkian highlighted the resilience of the Iranian people, saying that the dignity and pride of Iran cannot be compared to those who seek to wage war and cripple the country. He remarked, "It's not acceptable for those who bomb hospitals, schools, and public places, killing innocent civilians, to act arrogantly towards our nation."

Criticizing the countries that support the Zionist regime, the President stated, "All the countries that claim to defend democracy and human rights have turned a blind eye to the crimes of the Zionists. They've displaced people from their homes and are now using the excuse of terrorism to brutally massacre innocent civilians. Their crimes have escalated beyond measurable limits."

In another part of his speech, Pezeshkian referenced a statement from Imam Ali (PBUH), noting that in Nahj al-Balagha, Imam Ali categorizes society and outlines the responsibilities of each group, stressing that no group can thrive without proper treatment of traders and industrialists. The President emphasized, "We must believe that the stability and growth of our nation depend on proper interaction with traders and exporters, and we are committed to removing obstacles from their path."

The President explained that one of the country's challenges lies in the goals set by governmental institutions, especially those impacting production. He mentioned that the imbalances in the banking system are partly due to decisions made by Parliament, including some of his own when he was a member. "Parliament imposes obligations on governments that are not aligned with reality. For example, mandates are given to provide loans or insurance, which creates debt and imbalances for the government and banks. Then, when problems arise, people expect the government to resolve them."

Pezeshkian admitted that "our current situation isn't good because of these imbalances. We are at war, and things are getting worse by the day." However, he encouraged producers, industrialists, and traders to assist, saying, "We will clear the way. Today's battle is one of ideas, production, trade, and industry, and fighting in this war requires the right infrastructure, which we are committed to providing."

The President also called for the creation of necessary bodies such as the High Council of Exports, expressing readiness to hold meetings to address the demands of exporters and ensure the development of production. He emphasized that decisions made without considering potential consequences lead to problems.

"We are in a war, and we believe that our producers and exporters are on the front lines," Pezeshkian said. "We must stand by them. Parliament members are cooperating, and together, we can solve these issues. The decisions made in the past have led us to this point, but now we must work together to bring about sustainable growth and ensure the pride of our nation."

He concluded by saying, "We need to ensure that those who are new on the scene have no standing compared to Iran, with its long history. Iranians will do whatever they can for the country's growth and development. Rest assured, we in the government will stand by you to the end and fight these challenges together."

Araqchi Calls Region "Powder Keg," Iran Ready for Any Scenario

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi has warned of the possibility of an ever-expanding war in the West Asia region, describing as a "powder keg" the situation in the strategic area following Israel's heightened escalation in the besieged Gaza Strip and southern Lebanon.

Araqchi made the remarks after discussing various regional and bilateral issues with his Turkish counterpart Hakan Fidan on the sidelines of the meeting of the 3+3 South Caucasus Regional Cooperation Platform in Istanbul on Saturday.

"We talked about regional issues, especially the continuation of the crimes of the Zionist regime and the approach of this regime to expand the war in the region, which is not accepted by any side in this region. Both of our countries believe that the genocide in Gaza and the crimes in Lebanon must stop immediately, and all Islamic countries must use all their capacities to stop Israel," the top Iranian diplomat said.

"The region has turned into a powder keg, which can put the world in grave danger, and the possibility of war is still high and no one wants this except the Zionist regime, but we are ready for any scenario," he added.

Araqchi censured Israel as the "most important source of insecurity" across the globe and said the regime did not scruple to breach international law.

"The Zionist regime is the most important source of insecurity in the world, and the international mechanisms have not been able to hinder these crimes, and the US support has made the leaders of the Zionist regime and Netanyahu bolder," he said.

"This regime has no limits in violating international regulations, and we underpin the necessity of stopping the war and delivery of humanitarian aid."



Araqchi underlined that Iran and Turkey have "common goals, interests and threats," and both countries are determined to bolster bilateral relations and regional cooperation.

The Iranian foreign minister pointed to his back-to-back trips to the regional countries over the past week and said the exchanges bespeak of a "complete solidarity" between the countries of the region and the people and cause of Palestine.

"There is outright rebuke of the crimes of the Zionist regime among them, and they believe that this regime should be condemned and forced to stop its crimes in Gaza and Lebanon," he said.

Stressing that the regional countries are worried about rising tensions and the expansion of war, Araqchi said Iran seeks no escalation and is after a ceasefire but is ready for any situation.

"This is a regional decision and all the countries that are geographically located between us and the Zionist regime said that they will not allow their soil to be used against Iran," he noted.

Fidan, for his part, touched on the Israeli regime's brutal onslaught on Gaza and Lebanon, saying Tel Aviv is trying to drag Tehran into the war and threatens to target Iran's nuclear facilities.

"The Zionist regime must end its threatening discourse because we are in a tense region today," the Turkish foreign minister said.

"We do not want war and we must exercise restraint. A truce should be declared in Gaza and Israel must abandon any threats and aggression."

(P)GCC Charging at Iran Instead of Stopping Israeli War Machine



TEHRAN - Majlis Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf has rebuked the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) for its anti-Iran allegations, saying the council should have directed its capacities at stopping the Israeli regime's war machine rather than level baseless allegations against the Islamic Republic.

Qalibaf made the remarks at an open session of Parliament on Sunday in response to the unfounded claims in the final statement of a recent joint meeting between the European Union and the (P) GCC in Brussels about the three Iranian islands in the Persian Gulf.

The Parliament speaker said the council "should have focused its power on halting the Israeli regime's war machine" in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon instead of making "unsubstantiated claims against Iran's territorial integrity."

Advising the EU to avoid testing Iran's resolve, Qalibaf said the bloc and a number of its influential countries have been transformed from independent states into actors that obey the Israeli regime's orders and justify its genocidal crimes in Gaza and Lebanon.

"The European Union and others making absurd claims should know that the three islands of Abu Musa, the Greater Tunb and the Lesser Tunb are inseparable parts of Iran and that nobody will dare to take any measures against this inalienable principle," he said.

Qalibaf warned the countries that question Iran's sovereignty over the three islands that they "had better not test the will of the Iranian nation to establish that principle for the sake of their existence."

In a statement on Thursday, Iran's permanent mission to the United Nations denounced the allegations by the EU and the (P) GCC, stating that Europe is embarking on a misguided and perilous path vis-à-vis the Islamic Republic.

The Persian Gulf islands of Abu Musa, the Greater and Lesser Tunbs have historically been part of Iran, proof of which can be found and corroborated by countless historical, legal, and geographical documents in Iran and other parts of the world. However, the United Arab Emirates has repeatedly laid claim to the islands.

The islands fell under British control in 1921 but on November 30, 1971, a day after British forces left the region and just two days before the UAE was to become an official federation, Iran's sovereignty over the islands was restored.

"Arab Silence" Emboldened Israeli Regime to Commit Massacres



GAZA (Dispatches) - Hamas has said the silence of Arab nations and the international community emboldened Israel to continue committing war crimes and massacres against Palestinians, as Israel's aggression to displace residents in the northern Gaza Strip escalates.

In a statement on Sunday, the Palestinian resistance movement called on Arab and Islamic countries, the UN, and other international bodies to take action to stop the "holocaust" led by the "new Nazis."

"The criminal Zionist enemy is racing against time with its massacres and atrocities that it commits around the clock against our Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip," read the statement.

"The Arab silence and international impotence have encouraged this fascist criminal enemy to commit further crimes and massacres in its attempt to empty the northern part of the Gaza Strip of its residents," it added.

The statement came after the "horrific massacre" on Saturday night targeting a densely populated residential area filled with civilians and displaced persons in the Beit Lahia Project area, northern Gaza Strip, killing, according to preliminary reports, at least 73 Palestinians and injuring dozens.

"We call on Arab and Islamic countries, the United Nations, and all relevant international entities to take effective action to stop this holocaust being perpetrated by the new Nazis, which will have significant repercussions on the security and peace of the region."

Hamas also urged Arab and Muslim populations, and the free people of the world, to exert more pressure on governments and international organizations to move beyond mere condemnation and denunciation, and to "assume their responsibility in stopping this holocaust being committed by the Zionist occupation, which feels secure in its crimes under American cover."

IRAN NEWS



Minister of Energy to Visit China

TEHRAN (ILNA) - The 3rd Conference of Energy Ministers of the "Belt and Road Initiative" is scheduled to be held from October 23 to 24, 2024 (Aban 2-3) in Qingdao, Shandong Province, China.

In this regard, the Minister of Energy, invited by China's National Energy Administration, will represent the Islamic Republic of Iran at the Belt and Road Energy Ministers' Conference. The objectives of the conference include strengthening cooperation in energy connectivity to diversify energy supply, advancing the integration of various energy sources to balance energy transition and security, investment in and construction of base-load energy resources for clean energy transition, and advancing technologies such as new energy storage (hydrogen energy, advanced nuclear energy technologies, carbon capture, utilization and storage (CCUS), and unconventional oil and gas exploration). Additionally, it will focus on applying new technologies like artificial intelligence and big data in the energy industry (energy digitalization and smart systems), and enhancing the role of green finance in promoting green energy cooperation and technological innovations.

Efforts to Boost Domestic Tourism Highlighted at Tabriz Exhibition

By: F. Taherpoor



TABRIZ - The director of the Association of Tourism Organizations of East Azerbaijan says the goal behind holding 11th National Handicrafts and 3rd International Tourism Exhibition is to boost domestic tourism and promoting all tourist destinations of the country.

Speaking in a presser on the sidelines of the event, Rashid Rajabpoor highlighted more details about the event and goals of its holding.

Rajabpoor said that the first goal of the exhibition is to promote tourist potentials of the province and he welcomes any criticism which will improve the quality of the exhibition and tourism in this province.

He went on to say that this year's event was held in three halls with 65 pavilions in the tourism section with participation of 5 countries like Turkey, Cuba, Tajikistan and the Kurdistan of Iraq, admitting the number was 8 but three countries failed to attend.

He reiterated that the exhibition is aimed at making familiar the visitors with the tourism potentials of the province and even the country.

He then urged Iran's national broadcasting to show more support for making more colorful the domestic tourism in order to encourage the people to visit the tourist attractions of the province and the country rather than going to other countries.

Rajabpoor then noted that in the past two years, the province has been witnessing blossom in the tourism, as rooms of hotels were occupied by the visitors.

He then noted that some 300 travel and tourism agencies are active in the province and are 180 of them are located in Tabriz.

He then reiterated that the association in collaboration with the East Azerbaijan Department of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts organizes the event and they are determined to improve the quality in order to attract more visitors for the province.

The 11th National Handicrafts and 3rd International Tourism Exhibition were held in Tabriz, East Azarbaijan, on October 16-19.



By: F. Taherpoor

TABRIZ - Ahmad Hamzehzadeh, Director General of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts of East Azerbaijan, has emphasized the importance of developing domestic tourism as a critical step toward attracting foreign tourists.

In a press briefing during the 11th Tabriz National Handicrafts and 3rd International Tourism Exhibition held in Tabriz on Saturday, Hamzehzadeh outlined the progress being made in the province's tourism sector and the broader strategy aimed at enhancing both domestic and international tourism.

Speaking on the sidelines of the exhibition, Hamzehzadeh said that boosting domestic tourism is a prerequisite for drawing more foreign visitors. He highlighted that a well-developed domestic tourism infrastructure creates a solid foundation for catering to international tourists and showcases the region's capacity to provide quality services. He noted that this approach is a strategic part of East Azerbaijan's tourism development plan.

"Developing domestic tourism is our priority," Hamzehzadeh said, "because it paves the way for increasing the number of foreign tourists. Without strengthening our domestic sector, we cannot expect sustainable growth in international tourism."

Hamzehzadeh pointed out the success of this year's National Handicrafts and International Tourism Exhibition in Tabriz, which attracted significant attention both nationally and internationally. The event, covering an area of 11,000 square meters, featured 220 handicrafts pavilions, 70 tourism-related pavilions, and other attractions such as vintage car displays. The exhibition, which has been approved to be held annually every October, saw a strong turnout and received widespread appreciation.

Hamzehzadeh expressed his satisfaction with the event's success, acknowledging the collaboration of the Association of Tourism Organizations of East Azerbaijan in organizing it. The exhibition's success, he said, underscores the province's growing role as a tourist destination, and efforts are being made to further enhance its appeal in the future.

East Azerbaijan has witnessed significant growth in its tourism sector over the past year, according to Hamzehzadeh. He reported that over 2.5 million people stayed in the province during the summer season, with total visitors exceeding 11 million. Hotel occupancy rates surged to 95%, a testament to the province's rising popularity. Museums across the province also saw high foot traffic, with 870,000 people visiting these cultural sites.

He noted that these figures reflect a broader trend of increased interest in the region, which the provincial authorities are working to sustain by improving infrastructure and expanding accommodation options. Currently, 118 tourism projects worth 46,000 billion toman are underway in East Azerbaijan, accounting for 10% of the entire country's tourism projects.

To further boost tourism, Hamzehzadeh revealed that the province has prepared 100 investment packages for potential investors interested in participating in tourism-related projects. This initiative aims to attract both domestic and international investments to accelerate the development of tourism infrastructure, including hotels and recreational facilities.

Hamzehzadeh also highlighted the ongoing efforts to improve East Azerbaijan's hospitality sector, noting that the province currently has 86 active hotels, including five five-star establishments. An additional 45 hotels are nearing completion, which will provide even more options for both domestic and international tourists.

While the focus remains on developing domestic tourism, Hamzehzadeh stressed that East Azerbaijan is actively promoting its attractions to foreign tourists as well. The province has participated in numerous international tourism exhibitions in key target markets to raise awareness about its unique offerings. As a result, the number of foreign visitors to the province reached over 370,000 last year, with 86,000 international tourists visiting in the first half of the current year.

However, Hamzehzadeh acknowledged that the recent developments in the region has impacted on the arrival of the tourists into the country and therefore the province has been affected by it. Despite these hurdles, the province has still experienced a 10% increase in foreign tourist numbers this year.

To enhance its international appeal, East Azerbaijan has prepared promotional materials in seven languages, showcasing the province's diverse tourism opportunities to potential visitors from around the world.

In addition to tourism, East Azerbaijan's rich handicrafts industry plays a vital role in attracting visitors. Hamzehzadeh highlighted that more than 30,000 people are employed in the handicrafts sector, which adds cultural depth to the province's tourism offerings. He reiterated that the handicrafts exhibition, part of the larger tourism event, was a success and showcased the region's unique artistic traditions.

He concluded by outlining the department's goals for the future, which include continuing to develop a positive image of East Azerbaijan and enhancing its appeal to both domestic and foreign tourists. He expressed optimism about the future of tourism in the province, despite challenges such as lower-than-expected foreign participation in the recent exhibition, due to ongoing international developments.

Iran-Malaysia Cultural Event Showcases Rugs and Textiles in Tehran



TEHRAN - A cultural event celebrating the artistry of Persian rugs and Malaysian textiles was held in Tehran, strengthening cultural ties between Iran and Malaysia. Organized by the Embassy of Malaysia in Tehran and Arsin Rug Gallery, the event, titled "Threads of Heritage: Persian and Malaysian Artistry," attracted ambassadors, business leaders, and cultural enthusiasts, with the aim of deepening connections through shared artistic heritage.

The showcase featured Iran's world-renowned Persian carpets alongside Malaysia's traditional Songket and Batik textiles, highlighting the rich craftsmanship and cultural histories of both nations. Malaysia's Ambassador to Iran, H.E. Khairi bin Omar, emphasized the significance of such exchanges in fostering bilateral relations. He praised the artistry of Malaysia's Songket and Batik, calling them "living art forms" that represent the country's cultural identity and creative spirit.

A key feature of the event was a presentation by Mr. Arsin, head of the distinguished family-run Arsin Rug Gallery, which has been a prominent figure in Persian rug artistry since its founding in 1910. Mr. Arsin discussed the evolution of Persian rugs and their cultural importance, calling them "artistic treasures and symbols of Iran's heritage."

Guests were captivated by the range of Persian carpets on display, from antique to modern designs, each reflecting the intricate craftsmanship of Iranian artisans. In addition, embassy staff provided insight into the weaving of Songket, known as the 'Queen of Fabrics' in Malaysia, and the vivid patterns of Batik, created using the traditional wax-resist method.

The evening was further enriched by a musical performance blending Iranian and Malaysian elements, symbolizing the unity between the two cultures. Both Ambassador Khairi and Mr. Arsin expressed optimism for future collaborations, not only in the arts but also in broader diplomatic and commercial efforts.

The event successfully showcased the importance of preserving cultural heritage while building stronger ties between Iran and Malaysia.

Tehran to Host Meeting of Transport Corridor Ministers of "TRACECA" Countries



TEHRAN - Iran's Minister of Roads and Urban Development, during a meeting with the Secretary-General of TRACECA (Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia), presented Iran's initiatives for enhancing cooperation among TRACECA member countries and boosting Iran's transit role in the region. He also announced Iran's readiness to host the meeting of TRACECA member state ministers in the next three months in Tehran.

Farzaneh Sadegh, during a meeting with Assat Assavbayev, the Secretary-General of TRACECA, discussed preparations for the upcoming ministerial meeting.

The Head of TRACECA's Intergovernmental Commission visited Tehran after traveling to Astara by land, reviewing rail and road routes along the way. The visit culminated in talks with Iran's Roads Minister on organizing the ministerial meeting and transferring TRACECA's rotating presidency.

According to "Amin Tarfa," head of the Ministry's International Affairs Department, the TRACECA Ministerial Meeting, chaired by Iran and attended by 14 member countries, will be held in Tehran in February 2025.

He added that today's meeting focused on the necessary preparations for Iran to host and preside over the event.

Tarfa emphasized that during the meeting, Iran's TRACECA presidency initiatives were presented, focusing on increased cooperation among TRACECA members and strengthening Iran's regional transit role.

The Minister issued directives to ensure the meeting is held at the highest level in Tehran.

It is worth mentioning that the TRACECA Secretary-General also met with Seyed Jaleddin Alavi Sabzevari, Director General of Multilateral Economic Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Daryoush Amani, Head of the Road Maintenance and Transportation Organization, and Jabar Ali Zakeri, CEO of Iran Railways.

Iran Expands Trade and Political Cooperation With SCO



TEHRAN - The 23rd meeting of heads of government from the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) member states took place with a focus on strengthening and expanding trade and political cooperation, resulting in the signing of eight cooperation agreements.

The SCO was initially founded in 1996 by the leaders of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, under the name "Shanghai Five." The organization aimed to balance power against the influence of the United States and NATO. After Uzbekistan joined, it was renamed the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

The 23rd summit took place on October 16, 2024, in Islamabad, Pakistan's capital. Key participants included Seyed Mohammad Atabak, Iran's Minister of Industry, Mines, and Trade, alongside the prime ministers of Russia, China, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Belarus, and India's foreign minister, representing the permanent members of the SCO.

As per Iran's Ministry of Industry, Mines, and Trade, approximately 25% of the global GDP is generated by SCO member countries, with Iran's trade with SCO members exceeding \$30 billion.

At the meeting, Minister Atabak emphasized the importance of expanding cooperation among member states, positioning the SCO as a cornerstone of multipolarity in global and regional developments. He noted that the organization plays a crucial role in fostering peace, stability, development, and mutual trust among members, as well as between the SCO and other

multilateral mechanisms.

Iran remains committed to strengthening its neighborhood policy and deepening friendships and cooperation with neighboring countries and SCO members. Atabak condemned the blatant aggression by the Zionist regime against Lebanon and the oppressed Gaza, calling the massacre of innocent women and children a clear case of genocide and a violation of international law and fundamental human rights, posing a threat to global peace and security.

He further stated that the new Iranian government prioritizes neighborhood policy and seeks to achieve sustainable convergence with regional countries, including SCO members. Iran is ready to contribute its strategic and geopolitical capabilities, including skilled human resources, energy advantages, scientific and technological advancements, and its prime location in communications and transit, to the region's progress.

The SCO leaders highlighted the importance of sustainable economic and social development, implementing the SCO's economic development strategy through 2030, and promoting multilateral trade and economic cooperation among member states.

The summit concluded with a joint declaration reaffirming the SCO's commitment to fostering multilateral cooperation in areas such as politics, security, trade, economy, investment, cultural and human exchanges, aiming to create a peaceful, secure, prosperous region with a clean environment.

Iranian Saffron Sold Under Spanish Brand



TEHRAN - Mohammad Hassan Didevar, a member of the board of the Iran-Spain Joint Chamber of Commerce, in an interview with ILNA, provided an update on the trade situation between Iran and Spain. He noted that while the trade volume between the two countries hasn't increased significantly this year, the rise in the value of the euro has led to higher trade revenue. However, he emphasized that accurate trade statistics are still needed from embassies, which are often slow to provide this data, complicating traders' efforts to assess trade performance accurately.

Didevar highlighted the ongoing challenge Iranian traders face globally due to the inability to conduct banking transactions, a situation that is even more severe in Spain. Many Iranians have purchased properties and obtained residency in Spain, but they are not permitted to open bank accounts, even for daily transactions. This is particularly problematic as Spain does not permit cash payments.

He also noted that the rejection of Iranian goods by Spain has significantly decreased, thanks to the high quality of Iranian products. However, banking restrictions continue to threaten the presence of Iranian goods in the Spanish market. In fact, Afghan traders are performing better than Iranians in Spain, and Afghan citizens are allowed to open bank accounts.

Didevar stated that Iranian traders, both in Europe and other parts of the world, are forced to find alternative solutions to circumvent sanctions. Many conduct financial transactions through money exchange agencies in African and Arab countries, which increases the cost and risk of trade. Despite these obstacles, Iranian traders continue to persevere, although the path to doing business remains difficult.

He pointed out that Iran's primary exports to Spain include pistachios, saffron, and dried fruits, with petrochemical products also playing a significant role. Additionally, tiles and ceramics have become a part of the export list. While Iran used to export carpets to Spain, Afghan carpets, which are cheaper but of lower quality than Iranian ones, have taken over the market.

Cuba Restores Power to One-Fifth of Population

HAVANA (Reuters) - Cuba's government said late on Saturday it had restored power to nearly one-fifth of the island's people after the national grid collapsed twice in 24 hours, plunging millions of people into darkness.

The unprecedented nationwide blackout is the latest blow in the nation of 10 million, already suffering from dramatic shortages of food, medicine and fuel.

Cuba's top electricity official, Lazaro Guerra, said the grid operator was working to restore electricity but that the process would be slow and rushing the job could lead to more blackouts and a deterioration of service.

"I cannot assure you that we will be able to complete linking the system today, but we are estimating that there should be important progress today," Guerra said on a TV newscast earlier in the day.



Ukraine Launches Drones at Moscow, Western Russia



KYIV (Dispatches) - Ukraine launched a series of drones targeting Moscow and western Russia, regional officials said early on Sunday, adding that there were no injuries or significant damage reported.

Russia's air-defence units destroyed at least one drone flying towards Moscow, the mayor of the Russian capital, Sergei Sobyanin said on the Telegram messaging app.

According to preliminary information, there was no damage or casualties where debris fell in the Ramensky district of the Moscow region.

Drone debris sparked several short-lived fires in the Lipetsk region in southwestern Russia, the region's governor said on Telegram. There were no injuries reported, he added.

Governors of the Bryansk and Oryol region, also in western parts of Russia, reported that air defence units destroyed several drones there.

Reuters could not independently verify the reports. There was no immediate comment from Ukraine.

Kyiv has often said in the past that its air attacks target infrastructure key to Russia's war efforts and are a response to Moscow's continued air attacks on Ukraine.

Russian officials often do not disclose full extent of damage inflicted by the drone attacks, especially on military, transport or energy infrastructure.

Meanwhile the involvement of North Korean troops in the Russian invasion of Ukraine would be a "huge" escalation risk, Ukraine's foreign minister told a joint press conference alongside his French counterpart in Kyiv on Saturday.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy accused North Korea this week of deploying officers alongside Russia and preparing to send 10,000 soldiers to help Moscow's war effort.

Russia and North Korea both deny they have engaged in arms transfers. The Kremlin has also dismissed South Korean assertions that North Korea may have sent some military personnel to help Russia against Ukraine.

Israel Continues Crime by Pounding Beirut and Gaza

BEIRUT (Dispatches) - Israel struck what it said were Hezbollah arms facilities in southern Beirut on Saturday after the Lebanese armed group fired rockets into northern Israel and a spokesman said a drone was launched at Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's holiday home.

Netanyahu was not there at the time, and it was not immediately clear if the building was hit. But he described it as an assassination attempt by "Iran's proxy Hezbollah" and called it a "grave mistake", as Israel prepares to retaliate for an Iranian missile barrage earlier this month.

The strikes came as medics and Hamas media in Gaza, where Israel has been fighting to root out the Palestinian militant group for more than a year, said Israeli bombardments had killed more than 100 people across the coastal enclave and a siege around three hospitals had tightened.

Promises by Israel and its enemies Hamas and Hezbollah to keep fighting have chilled hopes that the death of Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar on Wednesday might lead to truces in Gaza and Lebanon and prevent further escalation in the Middle East.

Officials, diplomats and other sources say that with U.S. elections approaching, Israel is seeking to use intensified military operations to try to shield its borders and ensure its rivals cannot regroup.

On Saturday, Israeli planes dropped leaflets over southern Gaza with a picture of Sinwar and the message: "Hamas will no longer rule Gaza".

Israeli strikes later on Saturday on a multi-floor building in the northern Gaza town of Beit Lahia killed at least 73 people and wounded dozens, medics and Hamas media said.

The Israeli military is checking reports of casualties from an airstrike in northern Gaza, an Israeli official said, adding that a preliminary examination suggested the numbers had been exaggerated and did not match information it had received.

In Beirut's southern suburbs, Israel carried out heavy strikes on several locations, leaving thick plumes of smoke

hanging over the city into the evening.

The strikes targeted "a number of Hezbollah weapons storage facilities and a Hezbollah intelligence headquarters command center", Israel's military said.

Israel had issued evacuation orders for four separate neighborhoods within the suburbs, urging residents to get 500 meters (yards) away, but carried out strikes in other areas as well, witnesses said.

Tens of thousands of people have fled the southern suburbs - once a densely populated zone that also housed Hezbollah offices and underground installations - since Israel began regular strikes there about three weeks ago.

An Israeli air attack on Sept. 27 killed Hezbollah's secretary general Hassan Nasrallah, and strikes nearby have killed other top figures from the Iran-backed group.

The United States would like to see Israel scale back some of its strikes in and around Beirut, U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said.

Earlier on Saturday, an Israeli strike killed two people as they were travelling on Lebanon's main highway near the Christian-majority town of Jounieh. Israel's military said it was looking into the incident.

Another strike killed at least four people in Lebanon's Bekaa valley, health authorities said. One of them was the mayor of a nearby town, the second mayor to be killed this week.

In a series of Hezbollah rocket salvos in Israel, one person was killed and at least nine injured, the Israeli ambulance service said.

There was no immediate comment from Hezbollah on any drone attack targeting Netanyahu's house in the northern Israeli town of Caesarea, which the prime minister said was aimed at killing him and his wife.

The conflict over the past year has caused direct Iranian-Israeli confrontations, including missile attacks on Israel in April and on Oct. 1.

Netanyahu has vowed to respond to the October ballistic missile attack.

Moldova Votes in Election, EU Referendum in Shadow



CHISINAU (Dispatches) - Moldovans voted on Sunday in a presidential election and EU referendum at a pivotal moment that could bolster the small agricultural economy's drive to join the European Union, after allegations of Russian election meddling.

As the war in Ukraine rages to the east and turns the political and diplomatic spotlight on the former Soviet republic, it has accelerated its push to escape Moscow's orbit and embarked on the long process of EU accession talks.

Polls show pro-Western incumbent Maia Sandu has a comfortable lead over her 10 rivals on the ballot, though the race will go to a Nov. 3 run-off if she fails to reach the 50% threshold to win outright.

Polls show she is likely to face Alexandr Stoiianoglo, a former prosecutor-general backed by the traditionally pro-Russian Party of Socialists, if the vote goes to a second round.

Sandu hopes to see a resounding "yes" at the referendum, which will decide whether to insert a clause into the constitution defining EU accession as a goal.

"Our fate is decided on Sunday. Everyone's vote matters, no matter where we are," she wrote on Facebook on Friday.

Polls show a majority support joining the 27-nation bloc, though five of the candidates have told their supporters to vote "No" or boycott, saying the timing of the referendum is a ruse to boost Sandu's haul at the election.

German and Turkish Leaders Cooperate on Defense

BERLIN (Dispatches) - Turkey's Recep Tayyip Erdogan thanked Germany's Olaf Scholz for his help in advancing a defense contract following talks in Istanbul on Saturday, although the pair remained starkly at odds over the Middle East crisis.

The German chancellor arrived on Friday night for his first visit since March 2022 with tensions in the Middle East high on the agenda alongside migration and other bilateral issues.

"We expect all political actors to take the initiative and put a stop to Israel's aggressive policies," said Erdogan, denouncing "the genocide carried out by Israel in the Palestinian territories and the attacks in Lebanon".

But Scholz said Germany did not accept the claims that there had been a genocide and insisted that Israel had a right to defend itself from attack.

"Germany does not consider... that the accusation of genocide is legitimate and justified," he said, calling for a ceasefire and the release of hostages held by Gaza's ruling Hamas movement.

Turkey's relations with Germany -- home to Europe's largest Turkish diaspora of three million people -- are sensitive and Berlin has voiced concerns over the state of human rights and democracy under Erdogan.

The Israel-Hamas war has further strained ties, with Scholz and Erdogan clashing over the conflict in Berlin in November.

Erdogan is a fierce critic of Israel's military campaign in Gaza and its recent push into Lebanon, but Berlin is a strong supporter of Israel and has defended its right to self-defence.

Despite their differences, Erdogan acknowledged Scholz's efforts to lift German restrictions on defence sales to Turkey, notably Ankara's desire to buy 40 Eurofighter Typhoons.

"We wish to leave behind the past difficulties in the context of the supply of defence industry products and develop our cooperation," said Erdogan, expressing his "appreciation" for Scholz's efforts to find solutions to the issues.



The Eurofighter Typhoons are built by a four-nation consortium grouping Germany, Britain, Spain and Italy. Although London is leading the talks with interested parties, any of the four nations can veto a sale.

Last year, Ankara said it was keen to acquire Eurofighter jets but the talks have been slow to get off the ground, largely because of Berlin's opposition to Turkey's stance on the Gaza conflict.

"Turkey is a member of NATO and that's why we always take decisions that lead to concrete deliveries," Scholz said.

"There are certain projects that are just getting started... one that the UK government is taking forward and for which negotiations have now begun," he added, referring to the London-led negotiations with Ankara over the Eurofighter jets.

Speaking to journalists in Brussels on Thursday, he said that Berlin was in favor of the talks.

According to the German weekly Der Spiegel, Berlin recently authorised major arms deliveries to Ankara, including anti-aircraft missiles worth several hundred million euros.

This marks a clear change of direction, after Germany drastically reduced its arms exports following the Turkish offensive in Syria in 2016.

Trade relations between Germany and Turkey have now reached \$50 billion, Erdogan said on Saturday, expressing hope to increase that figure "to \$60 billion".

On the migration issue, Erdogan said there were currently around 3.5 million Syrian refugees in Turkey and that Ankara would not close the door to them.

"Our door has been open for refugees coming from Syria. It is still open... (and) for those who come from Lebanon," he said.

Scholz thanked Erdogan for Turkey's efforts to help tackle migration and said Germany would continue to support Ankara with the influx of migrants coming from Syria.

G7 Reassures Ukraine on NATO Bid, Frets Over Threat to UN in Lebanon

NAPLES (Dispatches) - Defense ministers of the Group of Seven (G7) wealthy democracies on Saturday backed Ukraine's "irreversible" path to NATO membership and expressed concern over threats to United Nations peacekeepers targeted by Israel in Lebanon.

The first ever gathering of G7 defence ministers took place as Israel and Lebanese armed group Hezbollah exchanged fire, with one drone directed at Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's holiday home, according to his spokesperson.

Italy holds the G7 rotating presidency for 2024 while the West also grapples with the Russian advance in Ukraine and China's military activities around Taiwan, as well as heightened tensions along the border of North and South Korea.

Italian Defense Minister Guido Crosetto, who hosted the meeting in the southern city of Naples, told reporters the G7 could not solve global tensions alone, but needed to stimulate action across the international community.

"The G7 must be like a gadfly that has the strength to sting the rest of the world," he said at a news conference.

Along with Italy, the G7 includes the United States, Canada, France, Germany and Britain. Representatives of NATO, the European Union and the Ukrainian defense minister Rustem Umerov also joined the talks.

In an earlier speech to kick off the meeting, Crosetto warned of a "deteriorated security framework" across the world and said near-term forecasts for conflict resolution "cannot be positive".

Tensions are fuelled by confrontation between "two different, perhaps incompatible visions of the world," he said.



In its final statement, the G7 backed Kyiv's "irreversible path to full Euro-Atlantic integration, including NATO membership".

This week, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy pitched his "victory plan" to the EU and NATO but failed to get the immediate membership invitation he was calling for.

German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius said he was worried by the North Korean contribution to the Russian war effort.

"(It) makes it clear that this conflict is spreading to other regions of the world in terms of its reach," he said, as the G7 also expressed concern at China's support to Moscow and Beijing's recent military drills around Taiwan.

Before the meeting, Crosetto welcomed photographers holding a model of a tiny red animal horn, a symbol of good luck according to time-honoured Neapolitan tradition.

The aerobatics team of the Italian Air Force flew over the Naples Royal Palace which housed the event, leaving behind a trail of smoke in the red, white and green colours of the national flag in the overcast sky.

A few hundred demonstrators gathered under the rain, and paraded through the city centre holding Palestinian flags and asking for an immediate stop to the war in Gaza. Some minor clashes with police were reported.

The G7 joint declaration called for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and the release of Israeli hostages still held by Hamas, saying attacks and retaliation risked "fuelling uncontrollable escalation in the Middle East".

The EU's chief diplomat Josep Borrell said Thursday's killing of former Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar could raise the chances of an end to the conflict in Gaza, finally allowing more humanitarian support for the war-battered population.



Djokovic Tops Nadal in Saudi

RIYADH (Dispatches) - Novak Djokovic implored long-time adversary Rafael Nadal to put off his planned retirement after defeating the Spaniard in what was likely to be the final chapter of their "amazing rivalry".

"Don't leave tennis, man," Djokovic said in an on-court interview after beating Nadal in straight sets 6-2, 7-6 (7/5) at the "Six Kings Slam" exhibition in Saudi Arabia. He added that their battles over the years had been "very intense" and told Nadal he hoped they could one day "sit on a beach somewhere" and have a drink.

Nadal, 38, announced on October 10 that he would retire from tennis after the Davis Cup Finals in Malaga next month.

Organisers of the Saudi event billed Saturday's match as perhaps Nadal's last singles contest as a professional.

Nadal said Thursday he was unsure whether he would be fit enough to play singles in Malaga.

Djokovic and Nadal — two of the sport's famed "Big Three" along with Roger Federer—had faced each other 60 times on the main tour prior to Saturday's exhibition match, with Djokovic holding a narrow 31-29 edge.

Their last encounter came during the Paris Olympics on the same Roland Garros courts where Nadal won 14 French Open titles, though Djokovic triumphed easily 6-1, 6-4.

Djokovic has racked up 24 Grand Slam titles in his career, two more than Nadal.

The match was mostly one-sided, with Nadal spraying errors and Djokovic wrapping up the first set in just 31 minutes.

Feeding off the support of the partisan crowd who openly cheered Djokovic's double-faults, Nadal rallied to push the second set to a tie-break, reeling off winners and even treating fans to one last iconic fist pump before succumbing to Djokovic.

"It's great to see him still fighting even though he's had injuries and struggles," Djokovic, 37, told a post-match press conference.

It was "a very emotional day, special day" because it was the "last time I play my biggest rival, Nadal,"

he added.

"I've witnessed Andy Murray retiring this year, Roger (Federer) a few years ago as well. And now Rafa, you know. It's tough in some way to see them go, because all of my career, basically, I've played with them."

After being presented with a golden tennis racket, Nadal in turn thanked Djokovic for the "amazing rivalry" and "for all the moments that we shared on court".

In the exhibition final yesterday, Australian Open and US Open winner Jannik Sinner outlasted French Open and Wimbledon champion Carlos Alcaraz, avenging his loss in Beijing earlier this month.

"I wake up in the morning trying to understand the ways how to beat him," Sinner said in an on-court interview after winning the match 6-7 (5/7), 6-3, 6-3, adding that he hoped their rivalry would last "as long as possible".

Alcaraz has a 6-4 edge in head-to-head four contests.

Saudi Arabia's push into tennis took off last year with its first ATP Tour event—the Next Gen ATP Finals in Jeddah—and exhibition matches pitting Djokovic against Alcaraz and Aryna Sabalenka against Ons Jabeur.

The Women's Tennis Association (WTA) announced in April that Riyadh would host the next three editions of the Tour Finals, featuring the top eight singles players and doubles teams.

The 2024 showpiece will be staged from November 2-9.

Earlier this year, Nadal was named ambassador for the Saudi Tennis Federation.

The tennis world's embrace of Saudi Arabia has drawn some criticism, notably from greats Chris Evert and Martina Navratilova who have voiced concern about the kingdom's record of human rights abuses.

Djokovic said he did not know if he, like Nadal, would spend more time in Saudi Arabia post-retirement but he said he was focussing on what he described as the positives there.

"There's always going to be criticism. You can always focus on good things or bad things," he said.

"You know, it just depends on the perspective, like anything in life."

Mbappe Strikes in Real Madrid Win Over Celta Vigo



VIGO (Dispatches) - Kylian Mbappe and Vinicius Junior's goals earned Real Madrid an entertaining 2-1 win at Celta Vigo to pull them level with La Liga leaders Barcelona.

France striker Mbappe started and sent the Spanish champions ahead amid reports he is being investigated for an alleged rape during a visit to Sweden.

The 25-year-old was criticised in his homeland for not appearing in his country's recent Nations League matches before the Swedish media reports emerged following his trip during the international break, which Mbappe labelled "fake news".

Williot Swedberg levelled for Celta, who might have snatched a draw, but Vinicius tucked home what proved Madrid's winner after 66 minutes.

Madrid, unbeaten in 42 La Liga matches, host Barcelona next weekend in the Clasico, after the Catalans welcome Sevilla on Sunday.

"I'm happy because we won after the international break which is not always easy," Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti told Real Madrid TV.

"When they equalized our changes gave new energy to the team and it was a very important win."

"(Mbappe and Vinicius) trained very well in the break, improved their conditions, and they started today's game very well and they have to continue."

With captain Dani Carvajal sidelined for months to come, Ancelotti replaced the Spanish right-back with Lucas Vazquez.

The Italian set up with a three centre-back system, breaking away from his favoured four-man defensive line to accommodate Vazquez as a wing-back.

Guardiola Pledges to Quit Football When He Loses Love of the Game



LONDON (Dispatches) - Pep Guardiola says he will quit football entirely when he loses the passion to manage after revealing he has no ambition to take a different role in the game. The Manchester City manager's contract ends next summer but he is yet to decide whether to stay, although he would consider managing elsewhere.

City travel to Molineux, where they suffered their first league defeat of last season, on Sunday hoping to maintain their unbeaten start, having won five of their opening seven matches. Guardiola is chasing a fifth consecutive Premier League title and the seventh of his nine-year tenure.

"I like my job, as I've said many times, I love what I do," Guardiola said. "In terms of number of titles, I never, ever expected when I arrived here. I don't speak on behalf of Txiki (Begiristain) but I think Txiki and myself never expected this when we arrived here."

"I still like coming here in the morning to work - I love it. I am thinking about Wolves and the messages I have to tell [the players], the images I have to see, the training I have to prepare. Still I like it - and this is the main reason I am a manager. When I don't feel this - and not just at Man City - I will not be a manager and I will not even train, that's for sure."

Close ally Begiristain will leave his role as director of football next summer and be replaced by Hugo Viana. Could Guardiola take a step back from day-to-day football to see himself move upstairs? "I would criticise my manager a lot," he said, laughing. "I can't do it. I like the green grass. To be the man in the tie, I do not like it."

Even if Guardiola remains at City, reaching Sir Alex Ferguson's record of 13 Premier League titles would be difficult but many will continue to debate who will go down in history as the better manager. "I want to be happy every day," Guardiola said.

"In this country and all around the world, Sir Alex Ferguson is the best. For the time, for the change of teams, for the trophies. Being close to one of the most important managers of all time is more than enough. It's an incredible honour for me and for all the staff, all the assistants and all the players I've had."

"When people say: 'Pep is one of the best' that's because of the players I had, the assistant managers and the assistant coaches we have had - and we have had many. All of them create this sense that we are good - and that is enough. I don't fight for anything else."

Guardiola was linked with replacing Gareth Southgate as England manager before the appointment of Thomas Tuchel this week. It is understood Guardiola was a serious candidate and shortlisted by the Football Association which contacted him to gauge his interest with the German eventually getting the job.

Saliba Sent Off as Arsenal Slump to 2-0 Loss at Bournemouth

BOURNEMOUTH (Dispatches) - A brilliantly-worked goal by Ryan Christie and a Justin Kluivert penalty gave Bournemouth a shock 2-0 Premier League win at home to 10-man Arsenal on Saturday, with Gunners defender William Saliba shown a straight red card in the first half.

The defeat brought Arsenal's unbeaten start to the league season to a shuddering halt and leaves them third in the standings on 17 points, one behind leaders Liverpool and behind Manchester City on goal difference, with both sides in action on Sunday.

There was an early sign of the error-strewn display that was to come when Arsenal goalkeeper David Raya gave the ball away cheaply in the 16th minute, resulting in a shot over the bar from in-form Bournemouth winger Antoine Semenyo.

Already missing Martin Odegaard and Bukayo Saka through injury, Arsenal then lost Saliba on the half-hour mark when a yellow card for bringing down Evanilson was upgraded to red after a VAR review, and it turned out to be the pivotal moment of the game.

Semenyo was in the thick of things again in the 36th



minute with a powerful dribble and shot that Raya parried behind for a corner, and five minutes later the Arsenal keeper spilled a cross from him, forcing a hasty recovery to block Marcus Tavernier's follow-up.

After making the most of their one-man advantage to pin the visitors back, Christie finally broke the deadlock in the 70th minute when fellow substitute Kluivert flicked a low corner into his path, and the 29-year-old drilled it into the top corner to give Bournemouth the lead.

Things went from bad to worse for Arsenal seven minutes later when Raya upended Evanilson in the box, and Kluivert scored from the spot to make it 2-0 and secure three well-deserved points for the Cherries.

"They are a top, top team, the football they have played in the last few years, but the lads dug deep, controlled the game in big spells and got the win," Bournemouth midfielder Lewis Cook told Sky Sports.

Arsenal midfielder Declan Rice was frustrated at his side's third sending-off in eight league games this season.

Kane Ends Drought With Hat-Trick

MUNICH (Dispatches) - Bayern Munich sporting director Max Eberl described striker Harry Kane as a "killer" after his 23-minute hat-trick carried the side to a 4-0 home win over Stuttgart.

The victory came after a three-game winless run in all competitions. Earlier on Saturday, RB Leipzig's 2-0 win at Mainz sent them provisional top, before Bayern took over the Bundesliga summit on goal difference.

The match was still scoreless after 57 minutes before Kane stepped up and drilled home a long-range effort.

Kane had not scored in four games for club and country, his longest drought since moving to Germany.

The hat-trick was Kane's sixth for Bayern in the league as he brought up 57 goals in all competitions for the club.

"It was nice with that first goal, and the two afterwards showed what a killer he is," Eberl said of Kane.

The England captain told Sky Germany: "There's always talk when you don't score for a while as a striker."



"I always believed in myself, my abilities and my teammates—that was clear today."

The 31-year-old took the match ball home for chalking up another hat-trick, and joked that his teammates "were probably a bit sick of signing them".

"The last few results we've had, we've played really well but haven't found a way to win the games."

"From there the game opened up and we took them to a level they couldn't sustain."

Bayern coach Vincent Kompany said he "did not waste a second thinking about whether he scored or not."

"He's always hungry, even in training. He's always scored goals and always will—that will never change."

Bayern travel to Barcelona in the Champions League midweek, where they will come face to face with former coach Hansi Flick, who now manages the Catalans.

Kompany said: "We can celebrate a bit, but then it keeps going against Barcelona."