

President Masoud Pezeshkian Says That He Will Stand by His Promise to Lift Internet Restrictions, Noting Minister of Information and Communication Technology Has Collected the Necessary Data and Presented a Report

IRAN NEWS

According to Kremlin, National Currencies Are Being Used in More Than 96% of Mutual Payments Between Russia and Iran as the Total Bilateral Trade Stood at Over \$4b in 2023, Despite a Certain Decline

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U.S. Responsible for Enabling Potential Israeli Aggression Against Iran



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's ambassador to the United Nations says the United States bears full responsibility for provoking and arming the Israeli regime towards carrying out potential acts of aggression against the Islamic Republic.

Amir Saeid Iravani made the remarks in a letter addressed to the UN Security Council on Monday after U.S. President Joe Biden said during a press conference in Berlin that he was aware of "how and when Israel intends to launch an attack against the Islamic Republic."

The envoy called the remarks "profoundly alarming and provocative," saying they indicated the US's "tacit approval and explicit support for Israel's unlawful military aggression against Iran."

Iravani said the support, which has seen Washington arming Tel Aviv with technical expertise and advanced weaponry, "would make the US government 'complicit' in any Israeli aggression against Iran and its consequences."

The Israeli regime, which enjoys all-out political and military support on the part of the United States, its biggest ally, has been threatening to attack the Iranian territory in response to the country's retaliatory strike against the occupied Palestinian territories in early October.

The retaliation saw Iran targeting the Zionist entity's military and intelligence bases in reprisal for the regime's deadly acts of aggression against the regional countries, including the Islamic Republic.

Tehran has defended the retaliation as a legitimate act of self-defense that took place after a long period of self-restraint.

Washington, Iravani reminded, was already complicit in the Israeli regime's October 2023-present genocidal war on the Gaza Strip and deadly escalation against Lebanon due to its providing Tel Aviv with ample military support.

The support that emboldens the Israeli regime to commit further acts of regional aggression contradicts the U.S.'s consistent claims of backing de-escalation in the region, the envoy noted.

Iravani called on the Security Council to unequivocally condemn such reckless behavior on the part of the American administration and demand it to rather fulfill its obligations under international law and the UN Charter.

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK



Iran Has Its Own Methods, Means to Protect Nuclear Facilities

TEHRAN - Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi has warned the Zionist regime against making any miscalculation, emphasizing the Islamic Republic relies on domestically-developed military hardware as well as methods in order to protect its own civilian nuclear installations.

Araqchi made the remarks during a press conference in Kuwait's capital, Kuwait City, on Tuesday.

"Israel has not stopped short of perpetrating any form of crime up until now. Unfortunately, it continues to commit such atrocities with the support of the United States and certain European countries.

"Some of these brutalities are recognized as war crime and can be pursued in international court of law," the top Iranian diplomat said.

He underscored that Israel does not commit itself to international principles, arguing that the international law has so failed to stop the Zionist regime's atrocities.

"If our critical infrastructure is attacked, the Zionist enemy knows what we can do in response," Araqchi said.

He said that Iranian military forces are closely and constantly monitoring all moves of US troops on the ground and in the air across the region.

The Iranian foreign minister further noted that Tehran will share its information about the United States Army installations in Kuwait with the Persian Gulf kingdom's authorities during his visit.

"Our friends have given us assurances that they will neither allow their soil nor their airspace to be used to launch an attack on Iran. All regional countries have expressed their opposition to any assault on Iran and its nuclear facilities," Araqchi stated.

Elsewhere in his remarks on Tuesday, Araqchi stressed that the Palestinian and Lebanese nations themselves should decide on a ceasefire with Israel, but stressed that Iran supports cessation of Israeli brutalities.

For his part, Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Abdullah Ali al-Yahya said that his country seeks an end to conflicts across the West Asia region, particularly the Israeli military offensives on Gaza and Lebanon.

"The Palestinian nation and Lebanese people alone should decide on securing a ceasefire with Israel. We only assist and support such a move," he pointed out.

Earlier Araq and King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain have met in Manama and discussed relations and the latest developments in the region, most notably the escalation of Israel's atrocities in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon.

Heading a delegation, Araqchi arrived in the Bahraini capital, Manama on Monday on a two-leg trip that will also take him to Kuwait.

The top Iranian diplomat placed a premium on the need for the regional countries to seriously work for an end to the Israeli barbarism, which includes the one-year-old campaign of genocide in Gaza and the aggression against Lebanon.

Araqchi called for the expansion of Tehran-Manama relations.

For his part, the Bahraini king called for an end to wars and aggression in the region.

Khalifa said Bahrain wants all the people in the region to live with dignity. He expressed hope that he would pay a visit to Tehran.

Any Israeli Mistake Will Trigger Decisive Response



TEHRAN (PressTV) - The chief commander of the Iranian Army says any mistake by Israel will be met with a decisive response, warning that the Islamic Republic is fully prepared to deliver a 'crushing blow' to the regime.

In remarks on Monday, the spokesman for Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, Ebrahim Rezaei, cited Major General Abdolrahim Mousavi as saying that in case the Zionist regime makes a slightest mistake, it would certainly face a decisive response from the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mousavi made the stern warning to Tel Aviv at a meeting with some members of the National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, Rezaei noted, adding that Iran's Army chief presented a report on the activities, plans, and actions of the Army of the Islamic Republic of Iran during the meeting.

"Major General Mousavi referred to the Army's recent naval drill, dubbed IONS, which was conducted with the participation of three countries and observers from 11 countries. He emphasized that the exercise was carried out peacefully, with full authority, and according to plan," Rezaei further said.

The IONS 2024 Joint Naval Exercise, also known as the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) Maritime Exercise "IMEX 2024", kicked off on Saturday in Iran's southern waters.

Russia and Oman deployed their fleets of warships to participate in the joint drills alongside the Iranian Navy, the Navy of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), and the country's coastguard forces.

As observers, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Qatar, Thailand, and Bangladesh also sent their representatives to take part in the exercise.

He added that Iran's Army chief had stressed the role of his force in performing Operation True Promise II, which came in response to Israel's assassinations of Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran, Hezbollah's leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, and Brigadier General Abbas Nilforoushan, an IRGC Iranian military advisor in Lebanon, and warned Israel of committing any further mistake.

Iraq's Nujaba Warns Will Punish Americans If Israel Attacks Iraq



BAGHDAD (Dispatches) - An Iraqi anti-terror group has warned of retaliation against the interests of the United States in case of an Israeli act of aggression against the Arab country.

Akram al-Kaabi, secretary general of Harakat Hezbollah al-Nujaba, made the remarks on Monday during a ceremony held in remembrance of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, leader of Lebanon's Hezbollah resistance movement, who was assassinated last month in an Israeli airstrike on southern Beirut.

"If the Zionist enemy's planes attempt to enter Iraqi skies, which are occupied by the Americans, we will retaliate strongly against the Americans," he said.

"To the American enemy: Know that you will not be exempt from punishment if the entity commits any foolishness on Iraqi soil."

He added that the Americans, who claim to be seeking an end to the war, are actually supplying the occupying regime with money, weapons, intelligence, and plans.

Kaabi emphasized the martyrdoms of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, Ismail Haniyeh, Yahya Sinwar, and all the martyred leaders have "instilled strength, resilience, and determination in the hearts of the resistance fighters. Their pure blood will drown the usurping entity."

He censured Muslim states for their inaction in the face of the Zionist-American-Western killing machine in Gaza and Lebanon.

"If each of these Islamic countries fired just one missile per day at the entity, the number would exceed 1,500 missiles per month, forcing it to stop its aggression and massacre of the innocent," he noted.

Over the past year, the Islamic Resistance in Iraq has been conducting numerous operations against sensitive targets across the occupied territories in solidarity with the Palestinians in Gaza.

It has also carried out retaliatory attacks against the US occupation bases in Iraq and Syria over Washington's unbridled political, military, and intelligence support for Israel's war crimes.

Since early October 2023, Israel has been waging brutal two-front aggression that has killed at least 42,603 people in the Gaza Strip and 2,483 others in Lebanon, among them several resistance leaders.

Hezbollah Launches Attacks on Israeli Military Positions



BEIRUT (Dispatches) - Fighters from the Hezbollah resistance movement have carried out multiple attacks on Israeli military positions in the occupied territories, in solidarity with Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and the Lebanese nation amid ongoing Israeli offensives across the coastal sliver and Lebanon.

Hezbollah announced in a brief statement that its fighters bombed two positions at the Nirit area in the suburbs of Tel Aviv with a salvo of guided missiles on Tuesday morning.

Shortly afterwards, the group said a barrage of missiles targeted the Stella Maris naval base northwest of Haifa, and the projectiles precisely struck the designated sites.

Hezbollah said that the operation was conducted in support of Palestinians in Gaza as well as brave and honorable resistance groups there, in defense of Lebanon and its nation, and as retaliation for Israeli acts of aggression and massacre.

Separately, several explosions were reported across the Israeli-occupied lands, and the impacts were recorded in Caesarea resort town as well as the town of Zikhron Ya'akov, located 35 kilometers (22 miles) south of Haifa.

Hezbollah resistance fighters also fired rockets at Israeli positions in Ma'agan Michael kibbutz and south of Haifa.

Earlier, Hezbollah claimed responsibility for an attack on the Gilot military base near Tel Aviv with a missile salvo.

Alerts sounded in the Samaria area and in Modi'in Illit, the Israeli military said in a statement.

Air traffic has been completely stopped at the Ben Gurion airport, according to the Israeli media.

And Israeli authorities have declared a state of emergency in the Tel Aviv area.

President Highlights Transparency, Unity, and Realism in 2024 Budget Bill

TEHRAN - President Masoud Pezeshkian has presented a draft state budget to the parliament for the calendar year 1404 that will start on March 21 as he urged the lawmakers to cooperate with his administration and ratify the bill.

In a statement emphasizing transparency, realism, and the comprehensive nature of the 2024 budget bill, the President declared that the government has made efforts to engage honestly with both the public and parliamentary representatives. He stressed that the figures in the budget are realistic, and only achievable commitments are included.

During the open session of the Parliament, Masoud Pezeshkian, addressing lawmakers while presenting the first section of the 2024 budget bill, expressed hope that with the support of the representatives, the government can advance with unity and cooperation.

Pezeshkian emphasized that the 2024 budget, which is the result of two months of continuous work by government officials, was drafted with an awareness of the representatives' concerns and based on his electoral commitments to both them and the public. He reiterated his commitment to fostering national unity, stating that economic reforms can only be achieved through collective agreement.

The budget, especially in the area of economic reforms, was shaped through extensive consultations with university professors and heads of the Parliament's economic commissions.

The government's primary priorities in drafting the budget, according to Pezeshkian, were adhering to the requirements of the seventh development plan, promoting justice, strengthening the country's defense capabilities, fostering economic growth, and reducing inflation. He stressed that these four principles guided the drafting process, with particular emphasis on supporting the disadvantaged, ensuring that budget provisions are aligned with the mandates of the seventh development plan, and securing adequate resources for defense in light of



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regional threats.

Pezeshkian pointed out that one of the key distinctions of the 2024 budget is its integration, transparency, and comprehensiveness. The budget has been submitted to Parliament in compliance with the law and the new annual budgetary system, giving legislators ample time for review. He highlighted that the distribution of funds across various government sectors differs significantly from previous budgets, calling for serious reconsideration and strategic planning.

One major reform in the budget's structure is the use of specialized identifiers, ensuring that all sections, lines, and tables are aligned with the specific duties of the government. This change, Pezeshkian noted, follows the ninth article of the country's legislative policies. He explained that a comprehensive identification system has been implemented, and this innovation is outlined in the third chapter of the budget report.

The 2024 budget totals over 118 trillion Iranian rials, covering areas such as budget provisions, public government resources, operational and financial balances, and estimated expenditures and revenues. Government public budget resources exceed 64 trillion rials, with 59 trillion rials in public revenues, while state-owned companies, banks, and other financial institutions account for over 504 trillion rials.

In terms of social equity, Pezeshkian highlighted the doubling of tax exemptions for wage earners and business owners, a move aimed at supporting lower-income groups and reducing income inequality. He noted that many teachers, workers, and small business owners would benefit from increased tax exemptions, ensuring that middle-income earners can cover their basic living expenses.

In conclusion, Pezeshkian emphasized that the government's realistic approach to the figures and commitments outlined in the budget, especially in terms of taxation and income distribution, reflects its dedication to fairness and social justice.

IRAN NEWS



Iranian, Japanese FM's Stress Continuation of Talks

TEHRAN (IRNA) - The foreign ministers of Iran and Japan, in a telephone conversation, have emphasized the need for joint meetings to enhance overall relations between the two countries.

Abbas Araqchi and Takeshi Iwaya discussed and exchanged opinions in a 40-minute telephone conversation on Monday.

The top Iranian diplomat congratulated Iwaya on his appointment as Japan's Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The two ministers discussed the latest situation in West Asia, especially the developments in Gaza and Lebanon, along with other international and bilateral issues.

Araqchi and Iwaya also emphasized their commitment to continue the dialogue between Iranian and Japanese officials on a regular basis.

Tourism Vital to Promote Bilateral Relations



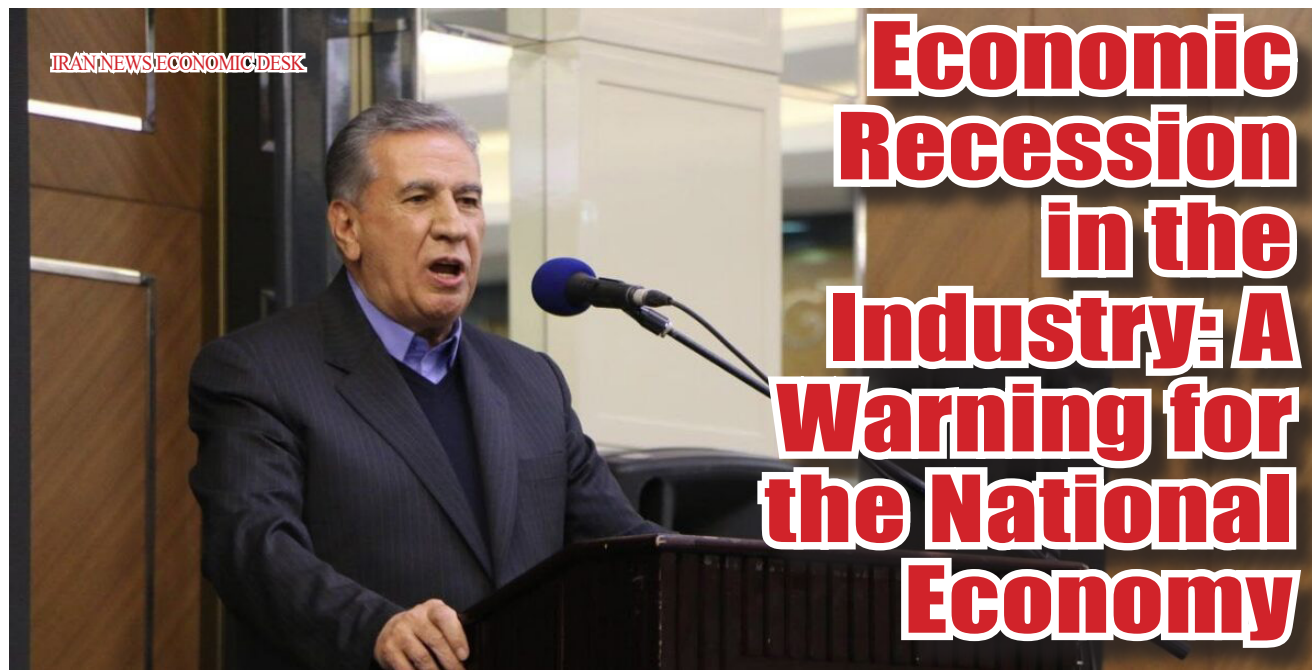
TEHRAN - Pakistan Embassy, Tehran received members of Cross Route Motorcycle Club today. Members of Pakistani community along with embassy staff attended the event. "Lahore to Turkey friendship" motorcycle rally comprising of 11 members, started its journey from Lahore. On their way to Turkey, friendship rally is visiting Iran to explore its beauty and grandeur.

Ambassador H.E. Muhammad Mudassir Tipu welcomed the members of the rally. He appreciated the bikers for their efforts to promote adventure tourism between the neighbor countries. He further added that such efforts play a great role in strengthening bilateral relations through promotion of tourism attractions, culture and people-to-people contacts.

Ambassador Tipu emphasized on the potential of tourism between both neighbors, who share 900 km border and have cultural similarities. We are taking measures to explore the commonness of cuisine, language, dress and tradition between Pakistan and Iran, he added.

The bikers rally led by Mr. Muqarram Tareen Khan thanked the Ambassador and both Governments to facilitate their tours. The members of rally were also presented certificates of appreciation by the Ambassador.

IRANNEWS/ECONOMICDESK



Economic Recession in the Industry: A Warning for the National Economy

TEHRAN - The President of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Hassanzadeh, emphasized the urgent need for policymakers to shift their approach toward exports during the 17th meeting of the Chamber's board of representatives. He pointed out that a large portion of the country's exports consist of raw and semi-processed materials, making the national economy highly vulnerable to both internal and external shocks. Hassanzadeh stressed the importance of not only taking advantage of the country's comparative advantages but also creating new ones, particularly by enhancing high-value-added production and exports, thereby improving the quality of the nation's export portfolio.

Hassanzadeh further discussed the upcoming 2024 national budget, revealing that a joint meeting had been held with the Organization for Budget and Planning. He stated that before the draft budget is submitted to the government, the Chamber of Commerce has requested that the private sector's views be considered. One of the key concerns is to avoid the inclusion of provisions that could harm private enterprise.

The president reiterated that the Chamber had submitted its budget proposals to the relevant authorities and called for a dialogue between the Chamber and policymakers. On October 19th, a significant meeting took place between the Chamber and officials from the Budget Organization, including Hamid Pourmohammadi, its head. The private sector's suggestions were discussed, as well as potential harmful elements of the upcoming budget that could negatively impact businesses. Additionally, a meeting was arranged with Central Bank Governor, Dr. Mohammadreza Farzin, to address concerns regarding foreign exchange issues in the 2024 budget.

The state of Iran's industrial sector also came under focus in Hassanzadeh's speech. For the fifth consecutive month, economic activity in September continued its downward trend. The industrial sector, especially, has been stuck in a recession for four months, exacerbated by continued power outages at factories. According to economic experts, if this situation persists, it could lead to more capital flight, sounding an alarm for the entire economy.

In contrast, neighboring countries are rolling out the red carpet for foreign investors, seeking to attract capital into their economies. Iran's producers and industrialists, however, are under increasing pressure, which could lead to further capital leaving the country. Hassanzadeh pointed out that while

electricity shortages were a major issue in the first half of the year, similar problems are expected in the second half due to gas shortages, which could prolong the industrial sector's recession.

On the occasion of National Export Day, held the day before, Hassanzadeh expressed his gratitude to exporters and private sector stakeholders for continuing their efforts despite the challenges posed by economic sanctions. He acknowledged the ongoing difficulties related to currency rates, foreign exchange obligations, and transportation. However, he was optimistic about the government's willingness to cooperate with the private sector. President Ebrahim Raisi, who attended the Export Day ceremony, emphasized that the Chamber of Commerce should prepare and submit expert plans to address these economic issues. He reassured that the government would take these proposals into account to help resolve the problems facing exporters.

One of the key points Hassanzadeh highlighted was the need for a change in the way policymakers view exports. With much of Iran's export portfolio still reliant on raw or semi-processed materials, he warned that this made the economy vulnerable to both domestic and international shocks. He called for greater focus on creating competitive advantages, particularly by promoting the export of high-value-added goods, which would raise the overall quality of Iran's exports.

Turning to regional issues, Hassanzadeh expressed concern over the escalation of violence in the Middle East, particularly with regard to Israel's actions. He condemned the destruction of infrastructure and the killing of civilians in Muslim countries, warning that such conflicts inflict irreparable human and material losses. These geopolitical tensions, according to Hassanzadeh, also have severe negative impacts on economic activities. He urged Iranian leaders to pursue diplomatic initiatives to reduce tensions in the region and protect Iran from the dangers of war.

He concluded by affirming the Chamber's readiness to collaborate closely with the government on economic diplomacy, helping to mitigate regional tensions through peaceful means. He also responded to recent provocative claims regarding Iran's territorial integrity, particularly its islands in the Persian Gulf. He stressed that the private sector stands firmly with the Iranian government in safeguarding the nation's sovereignty, particularly the three disputed islands, which are seen as integral parts of the Iranian homeland.

BRICS Important Opportunity to Strengthen Multilateralism



TEHRAN (MNA) - The Iranian Foreign Minister of Foreign Affairs says the annual BRICS economic bloc summit is a special and important opportunity to strengthen multilateralism which is a key to his country's foreign policy initiative.

Araqchi made the remarks on Monday while presenting a report to the president on the joint meeting between Iran and the BRICS member countries.

He said, "I participated in a meeting that was to review Iran's joint cooperation with the BRICS countries, chaired by President Masoud Pezeshkian, along with some of my colleagues in the government, including the head of the president's office, the ministers of road and urban development, oil, communications and information technology, industry, mining and trade, economic and financial affairs, the governor of the central bank, the secretary of the Supreme National Security Council."

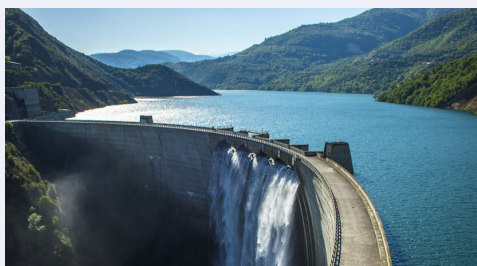
He added that the ways to solve problems and obstacles and accelerate the implementation agreements and joint projects between Iran and BRICS members were discussed in detail.

Referring to the BRICS summit that would be opened Tuesday in Kazan, Araqchi said that the venue is "a special and important opportunity to strengthen multilateralism in the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran".

Our country can be a reliable and strategic partner for all members of this group by benefiting from countless economic and geopolitical capacities, the top Iranian diplomat underscored.

Araqchi also said after concluding his current regional tour he will be part of a high-ranking Iranian delegation accompanying the president to the Russian city of Kazan to attend the BRICS summit.

12% Increase in Water Volume in the Country's Dams



TEHRAN - The current water situation in the country's dams during the first month of the current water year shows a 12% increase compared to last year.

The major dams of the country have completed the first month of the current water year, even though rainfall has not been very favorable yet.

The latest report from the National Water Information and Data Office indicates that from the start of the current water year (beginning of October 1403/2024) until October 18, 23.18 billion cubic meters of water have been stored in the dams.

This amount represents a 12% increase compared to the same period last year, when 20.75 billion cubic meters of water were stored in the dams.

Despite the 12% increase in stored water volume, the inflow of water into the dams has decreased by 11%.

From the start of the current water year until October 18, a total of 1.03 billion cubic meters of water has flowed into the dams. This represents an 11% decrease compared to the 1.15 billion cubic meters of water that flowed into the dams during the same period last year.

The amount of water released from major dams for drinking, agriculture, industry, and environmental purposes has reached 2.42 billion cubic meters from the start of the current water year until October 18.

This marks a 5% decrease compared to the 2.57 billion cubic meters released during the same period last year.

Currently, 45% of the dams' reservoirs are full, while 55% remain empty.

Start of Construction of 110 Residential Units on Abu Musa Island



TEHRAN - Ehsan Maleki, Deputy Minister of Roads and Urban Development, in an interview with ILNA's economic correspondent, announced the beginning of the construction of 110 residential units on the Iranian island of Abu Musa. He said: "We have legal approval to build housing on the fully Iranian island of Abu Musa for the residents and those interested in living on the island, and the approval for constructing 110 units has been issued to the province. Construction will begin soon."

Emphasizing that they consider Abu Musa as their own land where they have the right to manage and develop, he said: "All lands on Abu Musa are registered in the name of the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran as national lands under the National Land and Housing Organization."

The head of the National Land and Housing Organization stated: "Certainly, the island of Abu Musa is an inseparable part of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and according to our country's laws, we have the authority to build on Abu Musa, and housing projects on the island will be implemented."

21st IPAS Int'l Exhibition Kicks Off



TEHRAN - Brigadier General Nazer, CEO of the FARAJA Cooperative Foundation, highlighted the significant progress in domestic production of police equipment at the opening ceremony of the 21st International IPAS Exhibition. He noted that in the first edition of the IPAS exhibition, over 90% of the products were imported. However, two decades later, there has been remarkable growth in domestic, knowledge-based production in this field.

Nazer further added that about 50% of the products showcased this year are produced by local companies, while an additional 15% were produced in cooperation with NAJA (Iran's police force). With the participation of over 222 companies and more than 120 domestic brands, the exhibition showcases the dynamism and growth of the country's security industry. This success is the result of continuous efforts by local experts and industrialists, proving that Iran is capable of producing advanced, high-quality equipment domestically.

Regarding recent developments in West Asia, including Israel's aggression against the people of Lebanon and Palestine, Nazer pointed out that the exhibition is taking place amid a tense situation in the region. He expressed regret that regional countries are not standing up as firmly as needed against such oppression.

Brigadier General Ghasem Rezaei, Deputy Commander of the National Police, also spoke at the opening ceremony, emphasizing that the unjust sanctions provided an opportunity for domestic producers in the security sector. Over the past five years, all the police equipment used has been domestically produced.

Rezaei stated that Iranian police equipment is now competitive on a global scale, adding that the police serve the people, operate for the people, and are proud of being people-centric. He remarked that Iran's experience of turning sanctions into opportunities can serve as a model for other countries.

The general further explained that the IPAS exhibition is based not on necessity but on competition, as Iran has achieved self-sufficiency in the production of security equipment. He also commented on the ongoing atrocities by Israel in Gaza and Lebanon, lamenting the suffering of the innocent, while praising the resilience and resistance shown in the region.

The IPAS exhibition will run for four days at Tehran's Mosalla, with over half of the participating companies being knowledge-based. Additionally, 80% of the producing companies involved in the exhibition are private sector entities specializing in security and equipment manufacturing.

One-Third of Iranians' Food is Wasted



TEHRAN - The head of the Agricultural Research, Education, and Extension Organization (AREEO) highlighted that Iran produces 133 million tons of agricultural products annually. However, he warned that 25 to 30 percent of this, equivalent to one-third of the nation's food, is lost due to waste.

Speaking at the first National Conference on Ethics in Agriculture and Food, Seyed Mojtaba Khayam-Nekouei said, "The waste of just one spoonful of rice by every Iranian leads to the loss of food for 500,000 people, which is equivalent to the amount of rice imported annually."

He further explained that despite remarkable advancements in science and modern technologies, today's global problems are rooted in a lack of ethics.

Khayam-Nekouei criticized imperialist nations for using nuclear technology for mass destruction. He noted that while nuclear technology has been applied to agriculture for 70 years, helping increase production and improve quality, unethical actions by oppressive powers have turned such technologies into biological weapons threatening humanity.

The Deputy Minister of Agriculture added, "As we move away from ethical principles, we approach downfall."

He also emphasized that after the Islamic Revolution, the first National Food Security Plan was developed, involving the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution and various branches of the Ministry of Agriculture. The plan focuses on ensuring sufficient, quality food while preserving human dignity and avoiding waste.

Khayam-Nekouei concluded by stating that conferences like this aim to implement the policies outlined in the National Food Security Plan throughout the entire food chain, from production and distribution to consumption at the dinner table.

Peru's Ex-President Toledo Gets 20 Years for Corruption

LIMA (Dispatches) - A Peruvian court on Monday sentenced former president Alejandro Toledo to more than 20 years in prison for accepting multi-million-dollar bribes from scandal-hit Brazilian construction conglomerate Odebrecht. The Superior Court accepted the prison term recommended by the prosecution, it announced at a hearing attended by the 78-year-old, who led the South American nation from 2001 to 2006. Toledo, a U.S.-trained economist with a doctorate from Stanford University, maintained he was innocent and asked for leniency, saying he has cancer and heart problems.

"I want to go to a private clinic. I ask you please to let me get better or die at home," he said at a hearing last week.



India, China Reach Pact to Resolve Border Conflict



NEW DELHI (Reuters) - India and China have reached a deal on patrolling their disputed frontier to end a four-year military stand-off, the Indian foreign minister said, paving the way for improved political and business ties between the Asian giants.

The news came on the eve of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Russia for an Oct. 22-24 summit of the BRICS regional grouping, during which he could hold talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping, Indian officials said.

Relations between the world's two most populous nations - both nuclear powers - have been strained since clashes between their troops on the largely undemarcated frontier in the western Himalayas left 20 Indian and four Chinese soldiers dead in 2020.

The two sides had since stopped patrolling several points along the border in the Ladakh region to avoid new confrontations, while moving tens of thousands of new troops and military equipment closer to the freezing highlands.

"We reached an agreement on patrolling, and with that we have gone back to where the situation was in 2020 and we can say... the disengagement process with China has been completed," Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar said at a NDTV media conclave.

The "understanding was reached only today," he said, adding: "We always said that if you disturb the peace and tranquillity how can the rest of the relationship go forward?"

To avoid clashes, the two militaries will patrol contested points along the border according to an agreed schedule, a senior Indian military officer aware of the details told Reuters.

Both sides will monitor the area in Ladakh to ensure that there are no violations, the officer added.

Authorities in Beijing offered no immediate response to India's remarks.

Officials in New Delhi said the pact clears the path for a likely bilateral meeting between Modi and Xi on the sidelines of the BRICS summit, which will be their first since 2020.

Hospitals Under Fire as Israeli Forces Deepen Operations in Gaza



CAIRO (Dispatches) - Israeli military forces besieged hospitals and shelters for displaced people in the northern Gaza Strip yesterday as they stepped up their operations, preventing critical aid from reaching civilians, residents and medics said.

Troops rounded up men and ordered women to leave the Jabalia historic refugee camp, they said. An Israeli airstrike on a house in Jabalia killed five people and wounded several others, medics said.

The UN Palestinian refugee agency UNRWA said Israeli authorities were preventing humanitarian missions from reaching areas in the north of the Palestinian enclave with critical supplies, including medicine and food.

"People attempting to flee are getting killed, their bodies left on the street," UNRWA head Philippe Lazzarini said on X.

Medics at the Indonesian Hospital told Reuters that Israeli troops stormed a school and detained the men before setting it ablaze. The fire reached hospital generators and caused a power outage, they added.

Health officials said they had refused orders by the Israeli army, which started a new incursion into the territory's north over two weeks ago, to evacuate the three hospitals in the area or leave the patients unattended.

Later yesterday, Hussam Abu Safiya, director of Kamal Adwan Hospital said at least two critically wounded patients at the facility's intensive care unit died because of the lack of medical supplies.

"The hospital's blood units have run out completely... We are implementing a priority treatment method for patients. This is the reality," said Abu Safiya in a video message to media outlets.

Troops remained outside the hospital but did not enter, they said. Medics at a second hospital, Kamal Adwan, reported heavy Israeli fire near the hospital at night.

"The army is burning the schools next to the hospital, and no one can enter or leave the hospital," said one nurse at the Indonesian Hospital, who asked not to be named.

Palestinian health officials said at least 18 people had been killed in Jabalia and eight elsewhere in Gaza in Israeli strikes.

The Israeli military said in a statement its troops had dismantled infrastructure and tunnel shafts and killed alleged fighters in

the Jabalia area.

Troops had helped thousands of civilians to evacuate safely through organised routes, it said, contradicting reports from the UN aid agency. Israel was in contact with the international community and Gaza's healthcare system to ensure hospital emergency services were operating, it said.

Last week, the United States told Israel it must take steps in the next month to improve the humanitarian situation in Gaza or face potential restrictions on US military aid.

Israel has intensified its campaigns both in Gaza and Lebanon after the killing of Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar last week had raised hopes of an opening for ceasefire talks to end more than a year of conflict.

It has vowed to eradicate Hamas, the group who formerly controlled Gaza and whose attack on Israel last year triggered the war, but in doing so has laid waste to much of the territory and killed tens of thousands of people. More than 1.9 million people have been left destitute and desperate for food.

"We are facing death by bombs, by thirst and hunger," said Raed, a resident of Jabalia camp. "Jabalia is being wiped out and there is no witness to the crime, the world is blinding its eyes."

Hadeel Obeid, a supervisor nurse at the Indonesian hospital, said they were running out of medical supplies, including sterile gauze and medications. The water supply has been cut off and there was no food for the fourth consecutive day, she told Reuters.

The United Nations said it had been unable to reach the three hospitals in northern Gaza.

The UN Human Rights Office accused Israeli forces of unlawful interference with humanitarian assistance and issuing orders that were causing forced displacement. It said their conduct "may be causing the destruction of the Palestinian population in Gaza's northernmost governorate through death and displacement".

UNRWA's Lazzarini said injured people were lying without care in hospitals that had been hit.

"UNRWA remaining shelters are so overcrowded, some displaced people are now forced to live in the toilets," he said.

China Launches Live-Fire Exercise in Taiwan Strait



BEIJING (Dispatches) - China's military began a live-fire exercise near Taiwan on Tuesday, maintaining pressure on the self-ruled island after staging large-scale drills and President Xi Jinping called for troops to prepare for war.

China's Communist Party has never ruled the island, but it claims Taiwan as part of its territory and has said it will not renounce the use of force to bring it under its control.

This month it sent planes and warships around the island in what Beijing said was a "stern warning to the separatist acts of 'Taiwan Independence' forces".

On Monday, the Maritime Safety Administration (MSA) in the eastern island of Pingtan announced that "gun firing" would take place in a limited area close to the Chinese mainland, about 105 kilometres (66 miles) from Taiwan.

The MSA said they would start and take place for four hours in an area encompassing about 150 square kilometres (60 square miles).

Pingtan is the closest point in mainland China to Taiwan's main island.

Maritime authorities did not say which Chinese force would carry out the live firing, or its objective.

In response to the drills, Taiwan's defense ministry said it was closely monitoring China's "military activities and intentions".

Moldova's Sandu Secures Knife-Edge EU Vote

CHISINAU (Dispatches) - President Maia Sandu said on Monday Moldovans had won a "first battle in a difficult fight" for their future, a day after a slim majority of 50.46% backed EU accession in a referendum that was clouded by allegations of Russia-backed meddling.

The knife-edge finish was a shock for supporters of Sandu, who had hoped the vote would deliver a firm message of intent to bring the ex-Soviet agricultural economy into the European Union by 2030 and leave Moscow's orbit for good.

"The people of Moldova have spoken: Our EU future will now be anchored in the constitution. We fought fairly in an unfair fight — and we won," Sandu wrote on X.

The result means a clause will be added to the constitution defining EU accession as a goal. Moldova began the long process of formal accession talks in June.

In a presidential election held alongside the referendum, Sandu won 42.45%, short of the 50% needed to win outright and paving the way for a Nov. 3 runoff against former prosecutor-general Alexandr Stoianoglo, who won 25.98%.

Earlier, Sandu, 52, had told Moldovans there was "clear evidence" that criminal groups backed by "foreign forces hostile to our national interests" had aimed to buy off 300,000 votes.

"Criminal groups... have attacked our country with tens of millions of euros, lies



and propaganda, using the most disgraceful means to keep our citizens and our nation trapped in uncertainty and instability," she said.

In the run-up to the vote, authorities said there had been Moscow-backed meddling attempts spearheaded by fugitive tycoon Ilan Shor, including an effort to bribe 130,000 people to vote "no" and support a specific candidate at the election. Shor denies wrongdoing.

The Kremlin, which denies interfering, denounced the votes in Moldova as "unfree", casting doubt on what it said was a "hard-to-explain" increase in votes in favour of Sandu and the EU, and challenging her to "present evidence" of meddling.

The EU defended Sandu and said Moldova had faced "unprecedented intimidation and foreign interference by Russia and its proxies ahead of this vote".

Ursula von der Leyen, president of the European Commission, welcomed the outcome of the referendum in a post on X: "In the face of Russia's hybrid tactics, Moldova shows that it is independent, it is strong and it wants a European future!"

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe said the voting campaigns had been marred by foreign interference and active disinformation efforts.

White House national security spokesperson John Kirby said Russia had been actively working to undermine Moldova's election and its European integration.

"Russia did not succeed, as the results demonstrate. Moldovan democracy is strong," Kirby said, but added that he expected Moscow to try to influence the runoff election.

The future of the southeast European nation of under 3 million has been in the spotlight since Russia's invasion of neighbouring Ukraine at a time of mounting confrontation between Moscow and the West.

U.S. Claims N.Korea Sending Troops to Ukraine Would Be Dangerous Development

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - The United States on Monday said it would be a dangerous development for North Korea to send troops to support Russia in Ukraine, as Seoul has asserted.

"We have seen reports the DPRK has sent forces and is preparing to send additional soldiers to Ukraine to fight alongside Russia," Robert Wood, US ambassador to the United Nations, told the Security Council.

"If true, this marks a dangerous and highly concerning development and an obvious deepening of the DPRK-Russia military relationship," Wood said, using the acronym for the North's official name.

"We are consulting with our allies and partners on the implications of such a dramatic move," he added.

Seoul's spy agency said on Friday that North Korea had decided to send a "large-



scale" troop deployment to support Moscow's war in Ukraine, with 1,500 special forces already in Russia's Far East and undergoing training.

The agency estimated the North could send around 12,000 soldiers in total.

The US State Department is "not yet at a point where we're able to confirm those reports and whether they are accurate," deputy spokesman Vedant Patel said Monday.

France's UN envoy Nicolas de Riviere told the UN Security Council that the deployment of North Korean soldiers would constitute a further escalation.

He added that Pyongyang's "increasing support for the Russian war effort is very worrying."

The United States and its allies have already voiced concern about North Korea providing weapons to Russia, which invaded Ukraine in February 2022.



Chiefs Harass Niners, Stay Ubeaten

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Kareem Hunt rushed for two touchdowns in the first half and the Kansas City Chiefs stayed unbeaten with a 28-18 victory over the San Francisco 49ers in Santa Clara, Calif. Patrick Mahomes completed 16 of 27 passes for 154 yards with two interceptions for Kansas City (6-0) in a rematch of last season's Super Bowl, won by the Chiefs. He also ripped off a career-high 33-yard run to set up a key fourth-quarter touchdown. The Chiefs outrushed San Francisco 184-101 and possessed the ball for more than 35 minutes. Brock Purdy hit on 17 of 31 passes for 212 yards but tossed three interceptions, two of them ending potential scoring drives in the second half. The 49ers (3-4) were missing three offensive starters by the time the game ended. Wide receivers Deebo Samuel (illness) and Brandon Aiyuk (knee) left before halftime, and tackle Trent Williams was ejected late in the fourth quarter for throwing a punch. San Francisco pulled within 14-12 with 10:29 left in the third when Purdy rushed for the first of his two touchdowns from 1 yard out, but the 49ers failed to make the ensuing two-point conversion. They were later driving for a possible go-ahead score when Purdy was picked off by Chris Roland-Wallace at the Kansas City 21-yard line. Jake Bates drilled a go-ahead, 44-yard field goal with 15 seconds remaining and Detroit Lions held on in Minneapolis to defeat previously unbeaten Minnesota Vikings 31-29. Jared Goff completed 22 of 25 passes for 280 yards and two touchdowns for Detroit (5-1). Jahmyr Gibbs had 15 carries for 116 yards and two touchdowns, and Amon-Ra St. Brown recorded eight catches for 112 yards and a score. Sam Darnold completed 22 of 27 passes for 259 yards, one touchdown and one interception for Minnesota (5-1). Aaron Jones had 93 rushing yards and a touchdown, and Justin Jefferson led the team's receivers with seven catches for 81 yards and a touchdown. Newly signed Brandon McManus kicked a game-winning 45-yard field goal as time expired to lift host

Green Bay Packers 24-22 over Houston Texans. McManus, who joined the Packers (5-2) on Tuesday after the team released inconsistent rookie Brayden Narveson, drilled the game-winner after the Packers drove 44 yards in the game's final 1:44. The Texans (5-2) had taken a 22-21 lead on the previous possession on Ka'imi Fairbairn's third field goal of the game, a 35-yarder. Packers quarterback Jordan Love completed 24 of 33 passes for 220 yards with three touchdowns and two interceptions. Josh Jacobs had 76 yards on 12 carries, and Romeo Doubs finished with eight catches for 94 yards. Houston running back Joe Mixon rushed 25 times for 115 yards and two TDs. C.J. Stroud was 10-for-21 passing for 86 yards. Saquon Barkley rushed for 176 yards and a touchdown against his former team and Jalen Hurts was responsible for three scores, lifting Philadelphia Eagles 28-3 over New York Giants in East Rutherford, N.J. Barkley, who spent his first six seasons with the Giants, received a chorus of boos from the crowd at MetLife Stadium. He scored on a 3-yard run in the first quarter and rolled off long runs of 55, 38 and 41 yards. Hurts completed 10 of 14 passes for 114 yards and a touchdown and rushed for two scores to send the Eagles (4-2) to their second straight victory. Daniel Jones completed 14 of 21 passes for 99 yards and took seven sacks before being replaced by Drew Lock early in the fourth quarter. Lock fared no better and was sacked once as the Giants (2-5) fell to 0-4 at home this season. Dante Fowler Jr. returned an interception for a touchdown and Washington Commanders overcame the loss of quarterback Jayden Daniels to roll past Carolina Panthers 40-7 in Landover, Md. Brian Robinson Jr. rushed for 71 yards and a touchdown and Austin Seibert made field goals of 23, 49, 31 and 29 yards, helping the Commanders (5-2) stay unbeaten in three home games. Daniels left with a rib injury in the first quarter.

Neymar Return Overshadowed as Al-Dawsari's Hat-trick Seals Al-Hilal Win



HONG KONG (Dispatches) - Saudi Arabia's Al-Hilal handed defending champions Al-Ain a dramatic 5-4 defeat in the Asian Champions League Elite on Monday as Salem Al-Dawsari's hat-trick in an incident-filled clash overshadowed Neymar's return to competitive action. Neymar, who has been sidelined since a cruciate ligament rupture last October, was a 77th minute substitute as the Saudi Pro League side avenged last season's semi-final loss against Al-Ain despite playing the closing stages with 10 men. The win keeps Al-Hilal on top of the league standings in west Asia after three rounds with nine points, where they are joined by fellow Saudi side Al-Ahli after their 2-1 win over Qatar's Al-Rayyan. Gabri Veiga scored direct from a corner to give Al-Ahli a 16th minute lead before Feras Al-Brikan headed in his side's second seven minutes from the break, although Fahad Al-Hamad's own goal left his side clinging on for the final 25 minutes. Qatar's Al-Sadd picked up their second win of the campaign to move onto seven points as Matheus Uribe's first half goal dented Persepolis of Iran while Al-Shorta from Iraq and Pakhtakor of Uzbekistan played out a 0-0 draw. Al-Hilal's third consecutive win in the competition came as Jorge Jesus' side edged their hosts in a nine-goal thriller at Hazza bin Zayed Stadium in which both Al-Dawsari and Al-Ain's Soufiane Rahimi scored hat-tricks. "There were a lot of goals, a lot of chances and we managed to win the game with one player less in the end, so it's a big win for us," said Al-Hilal striker Aleksandar Mitrovic. Al-Hilal had taken the lead in the 26th minute through Renan Lodi's low strike but Rahimi levelled from close range with six minutes left in the first half. However, an injury-time header from Sergej Milinkovic-Savic was quickly followed by a strike from an acute angle by Al-Dawsari that gave the visitors a two-goal cushion going into the interval.

Zverev Sympathizes After Routing Local Wild Card in Vienna

VIENNA (Dispatches) - No. 3-ranked Alexander Zverev was sympathetic for Joel Schwaerzler after hammering the 18-year-old wild card in his hometown debut at the Erste Bank Open. Zverev won by a quick 6-2, 6-2 then gave 347th-ranked Schwaerzler, appearing in his second ATP tour-level match, encouragement when they met at the net. "When you come to your home tournament and probably the biggest crowd you have played in front of, as an 18-year-old and you're playing the world No. 3, it's not the easiest thing in the world," Zverev said. "I've been there. I did that as a 17-year-old in Hamburg, where I got to the semifinals and all of a sudden had a sold out stadium and was playing against a certain David Ferrer. "The match was over half an hour later and I won one game. I know exactly how (Schwaerzler) feels. It's not an easy situation to be in but he's a wonderful player and he's going to have a wonderful career." Zverev's 60th win of the year equalled his season best from 2018. In other matches, Italians Matteo Berrettini and Flavio Cobolli were also winners. Meanwhile in Basel, top-seeded Andrey Rublev won on his Swiss Indoors debut and bolstered his hopes of qualifying for a fifth consecutive ATP Finals next month. No. 7-ranked Rublev accounted for Nuno Borges of Portugal 6-3, 6-2. He is eighth in the race for the top-eight Finals, trying to stay ahead of ninth-placed Alex de Minaur, who is playing in Vienna. Fifth-seeded Ugo Humbert fired 13 aces while battling past Swiss qualifier Jerome Kym 6-4, 6-7 (5), 7-5. Humbert's second-



round opponent will be lucky loser David Goffin, who had his own struggles to put down Matteo Arnaldi of Italy 6-7 (5), 6-3, 6-2. Seventh-seeded Arthur Fils also had trouble with German qualifier Daniel Altmaier, winning 7-6 (5), 6-3 only after saving two set points in the first set and coming from a break down in the second. Meanwhile eighth-seeded Leylah Fernandez of Canada survived a first-round challenge from Aliaksandra Sasnovich at the Toray Pan Pacific Open in Tokyo. Fernandez was ahead 5-7, 6-2, 5-2 when her Russian opponent was forced to retire due to difficulty breathing after a 2-hour, 44-minute battle in the last WTA 500 tournament of the year. Fernandez will next face France's Varvara Gracheva, a 6-1, 7-6 (4) winner over Japan's Mai Hontama. Turkish qualifier Zeynep Sonmez upset No. 7 seed Magdalena Frech of Poland 1-6, 6-4, 6-3. Bianca Andreescu of Canada picked up her first win since July with a 7-5, 6-3 victory over Japan's Mei Yamaguchi. Viktoriya Tomova of Bulgaria knocked out defending champion Veronika Kudermetova of Russia 7-6 (3), 6-3. Sijia Wei of China also rolled to a 6-1, 6-4 upset against sixth-seeded Rebecca Sramkova of Slovakia in opening-round action in China. The 20-year-old Wei, ranked No. 135 in the world, saved four of five break points in the 75-minute victory and will face either Arantxa Rus of the Netherlands or China's Xiyu Wang in the second round. Olga Danilovic of Serbia defeated Russia's Erika Andreeva 6-4, 6-4 and Romania's Jaqueline Cristian outlasted Viktorija Golubic of Switzerland 6-4, 2-6, 6-1 in other first-round matches.

Henderson Howler Hands Forest Victory Over Crystal Palace



NOTTINGHAM (Dispatches) - Dean Henderson's error against his former club cost Crystal Palace as Chris Wood's second-half strike moved Nottingham Forest up to eighth in the Premier League with a 1-0 win. The England goalkeeper allowed Wood's low shot from outside the box to slip through his grasp to leave the Eagles still in the bottom three and without a league win this season. Eddie Nketiah and Eberechi Eze hit the woodwork for Palace, but they remain the lowest scorers in the division with just five goals from their opening eight games. Forest, by contrast, are enjoying a stunning start to the campaign and move above Manchester United and Newcastle into the top half. Nuno Espirito Santo had to watch his side's first home win since April from the stands as he began a three-match touchline ban, while Forest owner Evangelos Marinakis started a five-game stadium suspension for his behaviour in a 1-0 defeat to Fulham last month. Morgan Gibbs-White and James Ward-Prowse were also suspended for the hosts, but they possess what Palace do not in a striker in form. Only Erling Haaland and Cole Palmer have scored more Premier League goals than Wood since Nuno took charge of Forest in December last year. Henderson played a major role in keeping Forest up during his spell on loan at the City Ground in the 2022/23 season but had a moment to forget as he got a hand to Wood's effort but could not keep it out 25 minutes from time. "I've not scored many from outside the box. I try to keep them inside the box because it's a lot easier," said Wood. "You just try to get it on target and then anything can happen. It just trickled under Dean's hand. But it is one of those you have to take the shot and thankfully it went in." It was a tale of contrasting fortunes for the two goalkeepers. Matz Sels produced an outstanding stop to turn Eze's piledriver onto the bar seconds before the goal and then tipped over Jeffrey Schlupp's rising drive. Nketiah struck the outside of the post from long range in the first half as his wait for a Premier League goal since a £30 million (\$39 million) move from Arsenal goes on.

Defending Champion Celtics Tip Off New Season With Chip on Shoulders

BOSTON (Dispatches) - Jaylen Brown, Jayson Tatum and the Boston Celtics appeared to have finally won the respect of the NBA when they dominated the regular season and playoffs to win their elusive 18th title last season. And then came the Paris Olympics. Fresh off winning Finals MVP, Brown was left off the roster for Team USA and made it clear on social media that he was taken aback by the decision. Brown was also overlooked when it came time to hand out All-Defensive and All-NBA honors last season, but the 27-year-old said the snubs have only inspired him to work harder. "As a competitor, you're always looking for any key identifiers that could help you be motivated, stay motivated, and add to that chip on your shoulder," he told NBC Sports Boston last month. "I'm that type of guy already. I'm always looking for something. But when things don't go your way or when those voices get louder, it makes you wake up even more to drive and be better." Tatum, who struggled with his shot last post-season, was named to the Olympic squad but sat on the bench for two games including the semi-final against Serbia and played just 11 minutes in the gold medal game against France. He described his limited role on the team as a "tough" experience. "Did I need any extra motivation coming into the season?" he said



during a recent press conference. "No, I'm not going to give anyone in particular credit that they're motivating me this season. "It was a unique circumstance, something I hadn't experienced before in my playing career. I was coming off a championship, highest of the highs ... and then that happened. "Whatever the reason is, I haven't figured it out yet, but it was a good experience. We won the gold medal, I won my second one, and I was around some of the best players to play the game on a daily basis." Celtics fans are eager to see their stars back in action. Ticket demand for the team is nearly double that of last season, according to retailer StubHub, trailing only the New York Knicks. The Celtics season opener against the Knicks, where the storied franchise will raise their NBA record 18th championship banner at TD Garden, is the most in-demand game of the 2024-2025 season, StubHub said. The Celtics are also heavy betting favorites to hoist the Larry O'Brien trophy this season, and Tatum said he and the team are hungry for more success and to permanently silence the doubters.