

The Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Says "Medieval Acts" Will Not Guarantee Israel's "Disgraceful Life" in the Region, Stressing the Resistance Front Will Bring About the Regime's Death

# IRAN NEWS

The Permanent Mission of Iran to the United Nations in Geneva, in a Letter to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Called for the Establishment of a Special Committee to Probe and Address the Racist policies and Apartheid Crimes of Israeli Regime

## 2 DOMESTIC



### Iran-Kazakhstan Trade Could Reach \$10b

> SEE PAGE 2

## 3 INTERNATIONAL

### Hamas Proposes Terms for Ceasefire



> SEE PAGE 3

### Leader Hails Hashem Safieddine



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has paid tribute to Hashem Safieddine, a top-ranking Hezbollah leader recently assassinated by Israel, describing the resistance movement as the "strongest defender of Lebanon and the most solid shield against the Zionist regime's greed."

"He was one of Hezbollah's most prominent figures and a constant companion of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah. It was through the wisdom and courage of leaders like him that Hezbollah was able to shield Lebanon from the threat of disintegration and collapse, successfully neutralizing the threat posed by the occupying regime, whose brutal army at times trampled as far as Beirut," Leader said in the message issued on Thursday.

"His courage and sacrifices and those of other commanders and fighters of the Nasrallah axis were key in averting the threat of the occupation and annexation of southern Litani, Tyre, and other cities in the region by the Zionist regime," the message added.

"Their efforts safeguarded Lebanon from being absorbed into occupied Palestine. Hezbollah put its valuable lives, resources, and honor on the line to preserve Lebanon's territorial integrity, leaving the aggressive and criminal Zionist regime thwarted in its greed," the Leader said.

In his address to those concerned about Lebanon, the Leader emphasized the importance of "Hezbollah's selfless role," urging the public not to allow the enemy's false narrative about Hezbollah to be repeated.

"Today, Hezbollah remains Lebanon's strongest defender and the most solid shield against the Zionist regime's greed, which has long targeted the division of Lebanon. The enemy seeks to deny Hezbollah's selfless role in protecting Lebanon. Those who care for Lebanon must not allow this false narrative to be echoed by their (enemy's) voices," Leader said.

Ayatollah Khamenei also emphasized that Hezbollah is alive and thriving, adding, "As always, the Islamic Republic will, by the will of God, support the fighters of Al-Quds and those resisting the occupation by the criminal gang that has usurped Palestine."

The Leader also offered his congratulations and condolences to the family, comrades, and the resistance front over the martyrdom of Safieddine.

### Iran Envoy Slams Israeli Acts of Terror in Lebanon



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's UN ambassador has strongly condemned Israel's terrorist attacks on Iranian nationals in Beirut as a violation of international law and Lebanon's sovereignty.

Amir Sa'ed Iravani made the call on Thursday in a letter to the UN Secretary-General António Guterres and the president of the Security Council.

The letter followed the targeted assassinations of an Iranian mother of five children and a physician in Beirut by Israel.

"On 19 October 2024, an Israeli drone launched a missile strike on the personal vehicle of an Iranian national, Ms. Masoumeh Karbasi, and her Lebanese husband, in the densely populated area of Jounieh, Beirut. After narrowly escaping the first missile, the couple sought refuge at the side of the street, only to be struck by a second missile moments later, resulting in their martyrdom," Iravani wrote.

"This brutal attack, captured on surveillance cameras and broadcasted across media outlets, reveals the egregious disregard for civilian life and international legal norms," he added.

Iravani described the assassinations as a brazen act of violence and terrorism perpetrated by the regime.

He said the attacks also reveal Israel's egregious disregard for civilian life and international legal norms, including the 1949 Geneva Conventions.

### IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK



## Nasrallah and Sinwar's Struggle Changes the Region's Destiny

TEHRAN - Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei emphasized that the resilience and struggle of resistance leaders like Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah and Yahya Sinwar have altered the fate of the region. He stated, "The Zionist regime has been defeated, but an even greater defeat is that of Western culture, civilization, and politicians."

In a meeting with officials organizing the Congress of the 15,000 Martyrs of Fars Province, Ayatollah Khamenei highlighted the impact of regional events and the resistance's steadfastness, marking these actions as pivotal in changing the course of the region's history. He asserted that while the Zionist regime tried to dismantle the resistance—even at the cost of over 50,000 innocent lives—the true, greater loss lies in the exposure of Western culture, civilization, and leaders. "In the confrontation between the resistance front and the front of malevolence, victory belongs to the resistance," he declared.

Ayatollah Khamenei described the current issues in the region, including the crises in Gaza, Lebanon, and the West Bank, as historic. He added that without the sacrifices of leaders like martyr Yahya Sinwar, who fought until the last moment, and great figures like Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah, who brought courage, intelligence, and selflessness to the battlefield, the region's destiny would have unfolded differently.

The Supreme Leader further noted that the current trajectory of events reflects not just a setback for the Zionist regime but a substantial defeat for Western civilization and culture. He stated, "The Zionists thought they could easily eradicate resistance groups. Yet, despite the martyrdom of over 50,000 innocent civilians and several key resistance leaders, and despite heavy financial and political backing from the United States, they have failed. Resistance groups like Hamas, Islamic Jihad, Hezbollah, and others remain steadfast, which is a major defeat for the Zionist regime."

He also labeled the broader defeat as belonging to Western culture and civilization, pointing to the massacre of 10,000 innocent children by two-ton bombs and advanced weaponry, while Western politicians remained indifferent. "This has exposed the hypocrisy of Western politicians who claim to stand for human rights, demonstrating the moral decay of Western civilization for the world to see," he added.

The Supreme Leader described the supporters of the Zionist regime as the "front of malevolence" and expressed confidence that the resistance front, with divine aid, would prevail.

Additionally, Ayatollah Khamenei praised Fars Province as a profound blend of faith, valor, and art, honoring the legacy of its martyrs, including Masoumeh Karbasi, recently targeted by the Zionist regime in Lebanon. He encouraged the Congress of the Fars Province Martyrs to celebrate this unique combination of heroism, spirituality, and art.

He also referenced efforts by the former Pahlavi regime to secularize Shiraz and Fars Province,

dismissing such attempts, including the Shiraz Arts Festival, as futile. He noted that even today, some remnants of that regime seek to sever the link between art, spirituality, and heroism, but "what brings progress to the nation is this blend of faith, heroism, and art."

Meanwhile later Ayatollah Khamenei later in an address highlighted the importance of impactful initiatives, especially aimed at influencing the younger generation. He underscored the need for measurable outcomes in efforts and advised organizers to evaluate how their work resonates with young people.

His speech was released today at the conference venue in Kermanshah. The event was held on October 7, 2024, in honor of the 9,800 martyrs from Kermanshah province.

In his address to the organizers of the National Congress in Kermanshah, Ayatollah Khamenei praised the region as a place of unity, where diverse ethnicities and faiths coexist, calling its people "honest and loyal guardians" of Iran. He paid tribute to Ayatollah Ashrafi Esfahani, Kermanshah's martyred Friday Prayer Leader, and noted the resilience of Kermanshah's people, particularly its youth.

He stated, "The people and youth of Kermanshah are truly brave, ready to defend the country with open hearts," referencing their historical role in defending the nation, both during the Iran-Iraq War and earlier conflicts against separatists.

He then asked, "What is our duty today in preserving the legacy of the martyrs and their sacrifices?" He emphasized that the country's need for the faith-driven lifestyle of young, sincere individuals is just as pressing as it was during the war. "While that war was physical and visible, today's conflict is hybrid," he said.

He pointed out the sophistication of current threats, which blend physical and psychological tactics aimed at harming Iran, saying, "Today, our adversaries use both physical arms and cultural warfare against us." Although the country is "undoubtedly a hundred times stronger" than during the war, he stressed that mere military readiness is insufficient; meaningful work must be done to reach hearts and minds.

He acknowledged the critical role young people played in the Iran-Iraq War and identified youth as the primary line of defense against today's adversaries. "Young people today must understand the values and virtues of the martyrs, including qualities like sincerity, sacrifice, and Islamic integrity, which set them apart from soldiers in other nations," he said.

Finally, Ayatollah Khamenei emphasized the need to measure the impact of cultural and artistic outputs. He said, "The spirit guiding all activities must be one of impact and tangible results, particularly for the younger generation. You must evaluate the influence your work has had on young people."

## Foundations of Unilateralism, Unipolar World Crumbling

### IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK



TEHRAN - President Masoud Pezeshkian says the foundations of unilateralism and the current unipolar world are crumbling.

"Coalitionism and efforts to create constructive and friendly relations are part of today's reality and the demand of many countries and international players to get rid of unilateralism," Pezeshkian said in an address to a meeting of the BRICS+ group in the Russian city of Kazan on Thursday.

Since its formation, the group has managed to turn into a "successful" model of cooperation and convergence among the countries in the regional and international scenes thanks to its lofty goals, he added.

He emphasized that a better word will be established when there is no trace of sanctions, imposition of will, aggression, war, conquests and genocide.

A better word will be a place where multilateralism will prevail over unilateralism, the majority outweighs the minority, discrimination is replaced by equity, transparency is chosen instead of deception, democracy is preferred over authoritarianism and dialogue has put an end to war, the Iranian president said.

Pezeshkian said illegal sanctions have destructive impacts on international relations and block access of countries to their own financial resources.

He warned that illegal sanctions will have adverse consequences on the countries' effective role in international cooperation aimed at countering the negative effects of climate change, global warming, environmental destruction and provision of humanitarian aid.

The Iranian president urged BRICS and BRICS+ to draw up and implement a clear, fair,

inclusive and non-discriminatory mechanism based on multilateral trade rules with a special focus on developing and less developed countries.

He noted that countries favoring unilateralism will continue to impede developing countries' access to modern technologies, stressing the need to accelerate collective cooperation and share experience to counter such moves.

Contrary to all recognized principles of international law and human rights, unilateral sanctions have challenged global norms and

human rights, he emphasized.

The president warned that many processes of development have faced numerous challenges due to coercive measures and political prejudice, expressing regret that a sustainable movement toward a safe and developed world has been disrupted.

Elsewhere in his address, Pezeshkian pointed to the regional developments over the last year and the serious threat to West Asia's peace and security, and said the Israeli regime has crossed many red lines regarding the countries' sovereignty in violation of international regulations.

He noted that Israel has added another dark page to the history of its widespread crimes by creating a new wave of violence and terror.

The Iranian president emphasized that international forums, particularly the United Nations Security Council, are not efficient enough to end the ongoing war in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon.

The unwavering support provided to the Israeli regime by the US and the West has made it difficult to establish peace and end war in Gaza and Lebanon, he pointed out.

### Iran Will Blind the Wrong Eye of Any Aggressor



TEHRAN - The commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy reaffirms Iran's unwavering stance on defending its sovereignty, warning that any aggressor attempting to infringe upon it will have "their leg broken and their wrong eye blinded."

"Any aggressor, no matter their position, who seeks to infringe upon this nation or take a wrong step, will have their leg broken and their wrong eye blinded," Rear Admiral Alireza Tangsiri said in a Thursday speech on the Persian Gulf islands of Abu Musa in the eastern Persian Gulf.

He also reiterated Iran's message of peace to its neighbors, saying, "We have consistently extended a message of peace and friendship to our neighbors."

Tangsiri highlighted the strong will of the Iranian people, referring to the massive turnout at Friday prayers led by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei on October 4, after Iran's retaliatory missile strike on Israel's military bases under Operation True Promise II.

Basij brigades of Iran's southern provinces listen to IRGC Navy chief Rear Admiral Alireza Tangsiri on the Persian Gulf island of Abu Musa on Oct. 24, 2024. (Photo by Tasnim)

Addressing the adversaries, he stated, "We know our enemy and will deliver a decisive blow, for we are a nation that never bows down."

The IRGC commander further unveiled the "UK's malicious plan" to sow discord among Muslim nations, stating that the UK has strategically positioned itself to pit Muslim countries against one another.

"The UK has devised a plan, not only for Iran but for all Muslim countries—from Iraq and Kuwait to Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the UAE and Oman—aiming to manipulate and create divisions whenever it pleases."

Reaffirming Iran's commitment to its territorial integrity, Tangsiri declared that the three Iranian islands of Abu Musa, the Greater and Lesser Tunbs remain an inseparable part of its land and will continue to do so.

He concluded by condemning the ongoing Israeli aggression in the West Asia region.

### IRGC Chief Warns Israel Not to Pin Its Faith in THAAD



TEHRAN (PressTV) - The chief commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) has warned the Israeli regime not to place its confidence in the US deployment of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) battery for repelling reprisal attacks from the resistance front.

Earlier this month, in its latest round of military assistance to the occupying regime, the United States sent its THAAD anti-missile defense system to Israel along with scores of soldiers and crew to operate it.

US President Joe Biden said the deployment was meant "to defend Israel," and bolster the regime's air defenses after heavy missile attacks by Iran and regional resistance groups, including Lebanon's Hezbollah.

"Do not trust THAAD's pipes; these are limited and you are relying on limited power. Shoot as much as you wish, your enemies will shoot many times more than you. You cannot win in this and we will defeat you," Major General Hossein Salami said at a ceremony in commemoration of martyrs of the 1980s Iraqi imposed war in the western province of Kermanshah.

"A small land that 98% of its economy relies on the sea should be more mindful. Unwise decisions can lead to the downfall of a regime with an astounding acceleration. By the grace of God, we are standing up to this evil squad."

Salami censured the US for its untrammelled support of Israel in its long genocidal war against the besieged Gaza Strip and Lebanon.

"The Americans are also mistaken that tied their political dignity to [Israel's] crime and made themselves despicable and isolated among nations in the world," he said.

"Today, the world knows the US through the bombs that fall on the children of Gaza and Lebanon. Little is left of all the glory of America's superpower on earth and it will also not last."

Made by US aerospace manufacturer Lockheed Martin, THAAD is an advanced anti-missile defense system that uses a combination of radar and interceptors to thwart short-, medium-, and intermediate-range ballistic missiles, with its missiles ranging from 150 to 200 kilometers.

# IRAN NEWS



## Foreign Transit via Iran Reaches 13.2 Million Tons

TEHRAN (Dispatches) - According to a report from Iran Customs, the main customs points of origin for transit in the past seven months were Shahid Rajaei, Parvizkhan, and Bashmaq. These three customs offices accounted for the highest volume of transit goods among all origins.

The report notes that 3.5 million tons of goods were transported from Shahid Rajaei, 3.3 million tons from Parvizkhan, and 1.8 million tons from Bashmaq during this period.

Additionally, after these three major customs points, the highest transit volume originated from Sarakhs, Bazargan, Piranshahr, Bileh-Savar, Astara, Jolfa, and Lotfabad customs offices.

## Collaboration With China for Renewable Energy Development



TEHRAN - On the sidelines of the 24th Electricity Industry Exhibition, Deputy Minister of Energy for Electricity and Energy Affairs, Homayoun Haeri, discussed fuel supply for power plants. He stated, "We are working around the clock with the Ministry of Petroleum to secure and fill fuel reserves. If shortages arise, we will consider using liquid fuel with environmental considerations in mind. We also use fuel oil, but we are making every effort to avoid causing problems for the public, as winter fuel supply for power plants is a priority."

In response to question on the forecasted 25,000 MW electricity supply-demand gap for next summer, Haeri noted, "Looking at historical data from 2008 to 2018, annual consumption growth was about 2,000 MW. However, from 2018 to 2024, this growth has doubled to 4,000 MW annually, with a 6,500 MW increase in demand this year alone compared to last year."

He attributed this surge primarily to increased use of cooling systems and consistent high temperatures, which are tripling demand and making it difficult to meet. Haeri expressed hope that with consumption management and public cooperation, the supply-demand gap could be reduced by next summer.

He emphasized that achieving balance depends on consumption patterns, explaining that 35,000 MW of peak-time usage (45%) is due to cooling systems, which are outside the country's productive cycle.

Haeri also highlighted continuous efforts by the electricity industry to expand capacity and carry out maintenance on power units. "Renewable energy development is also a priority to help address the supply-demand gap," he added.

Regarding the role of renewables, he pointed out that the Energy Minister's recent trip to China aims to leverage China's investment capabilities in Iran's renewable sector. Renewable power plants, which do not require fuel, can be deployed faster and help alleviate shortages.

Haeri expressed optimism that renewables would contribute more to electricity production by next summer. He also noted that the current environment encourages private sector involvement in addressing the supply-demand gap, with private companies contributing through consumption optimization and demand management.

On electricity imports and exports, Haeri confirmed that Iran meets its export commitments and maintains a balance between imports and exports, ensuring that exports do not affect domestic supply.

In response to questions about Iran's participation in the Belt and Road Initiative, he stated, "The conference focuses on renewables, and Iran has reached the production chain for renewable power plants. However, to expand and increase its share in mitigating the electricity deficit, we are seeking joint investment from China."

Haeri continued, "Given China's advanced renewable technology, we aim to leverage it. China currently builds 1,000 MW of renewable capacity per day and exports it globally—a remarkable achievement."

## Energy Ministers of Iran, Pakistan Meet in China



TEHRAN (IRNA) - The energy ministers of Iran and Pakistan held a meeting on the sidelines of the international "Belt and Road Initiative" (BRI) summit in China, where they agreed to expand bilateral cooperation in the energy sector and regional connectivity.

According to a report from the Public Relations Office of Pakistan's Ministry of Energy in Islamabad on Thursday, Sardar Awais Leghari of Pakistan and Abbas Aliabadi of Iran met during the Third BRI Energy Ministers' Conference in the Chinese city of Qingdao.

The statement from Pakistan's Ministry of Energy noted that Awais Leghari discussed cross-border energy projects with his Iranian counterpart, emphasizing the importance of cross-border energy projects between Iran and Pakistan in enhancing bilateral trade and connectivity.

Both sides focused on future collaboration, particularly on developing electricity supply projects for the port city of Gwadar in Pakistan's Balochistan province.

They discussed the need to increase energy connectivity across regional countries and underscored the importance of strengthening energy cooperation in the operation and maintenance of power plants, along with the necessity of regular coordination and communication between officials from both countries.

The ministers also emphasized the importance of effective power plant management to sustain energy production and meet the region's growing energy needs.

According to the report, on May 18 last year, the inauguration of a joint border market and the Polan-Gabd electricity transmission line took place at the border point of Pishin-Mand, attended by the late Iranian President Seyed Ebrahim Raisi and Pakistan's Prime Minister.

## Iran-Kazakhstan Trade Could Reach \$10b



TEHRAN - In a meeting aimed at fostering trade relations between the province of Hamedan and Kazakhstan, a cooperation agreement was signed in the presence of the Kazakh Ambassador to Tehran, the President of the Hamedan Chamber of Commerce, and the President of the Iran-Kazakhstan Joint Chamber of Commerce, along with several economic activists from Hamedan.

In the meeting, Kazakhstan's Ambassador to Tehran, Ventalap Onalbayeva, expressed openness to forming a joint business council with Hamedan, involving members from various economic sectors. He reported that trade between Iran and Kazakhstan in the past year amounted to \$305 million, with 30% being exports to Iran and 70% to Kazakhstan. However, he emphasized that the trade potential between the two countries could reach \$10 billion.

Onalbayeva highlighted that Kazakhstan operates a one-stop-shop system that can grant business registration permits within a single day. He added that Kazakhstan has an active investment office, which insures investors' capital upon signing contracts, enabling them to export products to countries like China, the UAE, Russia, and others with ease.

The ambassador noted that Kazakhstan is currently in need of investments in the agricultural sector, adding that customs duties are waived for exports of oilseeds, dairy products, greenhouse goods, and irrigation equipment to countries such as Russia, Belarus, and Armenia. He hoped that these opportunities would be seized.

The President of the Hamedan Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture introduced the economic capacities of Hamedan across various sectors. He announced that a cooperation agreement focused on trade and cultural development between the two nations would be signed during the session, and expressed Hamedan's readiness to establish a sister-city agreement with Kazakhstan as well.

Rahim Mortazavi, the President of the Hamedan Chamber, highlighted that the province is home to 1,860 manufacturing companies, each with unique capabilities for collaboration and export to Kazakhstan. He also mentioned that 209 types of products from Hamedan are exportable to 154 countries around the world.

Discussing Hamedan's mining potential, Mortazavi pointed out that the province extracts 33 types of minerals from 300 active mines, which account for 3% of the country's mineral reserves. These resources, along with the expertise of local miners, could be beneficial for Kazakhstan.

Mortazavi also noted that Hamedan is rich in 19 types of gemstones and semi-precious stones, including sapphire, which, with the right investment, could offer substantial returns.

In terms of agriculture, Mortazavi stated that Hamedan is Iran's third-largest wheat producer and also exports high-quality raisins, garlic, potatoes, and walnuts. He noted that Iran's trade with Kazakhstan amounts to \$6 billion and emphasized that Hamedan could easily produce and supply agricultural products and industrial goods to meet Kazakhstan's needs.

He also stressed the importance of government and private sector cooperation between the two countries to enhance trade exchanges. He underlined the need to remove barriers such as visa issues, banking challenges, and logistical problems, and called for improved facilities in rail, sea, and air transport to increase trade volume between the two nations.

The President of the Iran-Kazakhstan Joint Chamber of Commerce, Amir Abedi, remarked that Kazakhstan's embassy, under the new government, has prioritized visits to Iranian provinces to familiarize itself with their capabilities. He noted that this visit to Hamedan was the ambassador's first provincial trip in Iran, made possible by the readiness of the Hamedan Chamber and the ambassador's willingness.

Abedi explained that Kazakhstan, after two decades of independence, has attracted billions of dollars in foreign investment but has not yet fully utilized the \$140 billion foreign trade capacity with Iran, of which only 0.5% is currently being used.

He also highlighted Iran's significant role in Kazakhstan's engineering services and encouraged Hamedan's business community to invest in Kazakhstan's livestock, grain, irrigation equipment, fisheries, and logistics sectors.

## Maduro, Pezeshkian Call for Unity to Confront West, Zionists



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian has stated that the future belongs to those driven by "freedom, justice, and independence," asserting that colonialism cannot hinder these aspirations.

Speaking on the sidelines of the BRICS 2024 summit in Kazan, Russia, on Thursday with Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, Pezeshkian emphasized his administration's commitment to both domestic and international affairs.

He characterized the "enhancement of internal unity and cohesion, along with strong ties to neighboring nations and countries worldwide," as essential pillars of power.

Iran officially became a member of the BRICS at the beginning of 2024, five months after it announced its acceptance as a full member of the group along with Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, the UAE and Saudi Arabia.

BRICS was formed by Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, which collectively represented around 40% of the global population and a quarter of the world's gross domestic product (GDP).

Pezeshkian also referenced the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh, martyred politburo chief of the Gaza-based resistance movement Hamas, by the Israeli regime in late July in Tehran, stating that the Zionist regime carried out the act of terrorism to "disturb the advancement" of his administration's stances.

"Despite the Zionist regime's intention to provoke the Islamic Republic of Iran into war, we exercised restraint in response to violations of Iran's sovereignty, with the goal of advancing and

concluding ceasefire negotiations (between the Israeli regime and Palestine). However, this regime (Israeli regime) has only become bolder in its crimes against innocent and defenseless women and children."

"The Zionist regime commits the most heinous terrorist acts under the pretext of fighting terrorism," said the Iranian president, posing a question: "Is the definition of combating terrorism the massacre of tens of thousands of defenseless women and children?"

He also warned against the ongoing Israeli aggression in the West Asia region, stating, "If the Zionist regime continues to escalate tensions, the entire region will be engulfed in conflict."

Elsewhere in his speech, Pezeshkian asserted that "the future belongs to those driven by freedom, justice, and independence, and colonialism will ultimately fail to limit these aspirations."

He urged BRICS member states and other free nations to strengthen their ties based on a new world order, independent of Western unilateralism.

For his part, Maduro described the strengthening of relationships among independent countries through regional and international unions like BRICS as "vital," particularly as Western nations attempt to impose their dominance and hegemony through war, violence, economic pressure, and sanctions.

He emphasized the need to address key issues within the "Joint Economic Cooperation Commission" to enhance relations, particularly focusing on investment and collaboration in the energy sector.

## Mashhad-Herat Passenger Train to Be Launched



TEHRAN - In May this year, a commercial freight train carrying transit cargo from Afghanistan entered the Khaf-Herat railway line. However, the train was halted at the zero border point by the Iranian Railway Company, led by the 13th administration, for undisclosed reasons. With a change in government and the appointment of a new head of the Railway Company, measures were taken to increase transit through Iran, facilitating the transit of Afghan goods through Iranian routes.

In an interview with ILNA, Hassan Mirshafi, the special representative of the Minister of Roads and Urban Development for Afghan Affairs, provided updates on Afghan trade train transit through Iran. He confirmed that issues regarding the Afghanistan-Turkey trade train's transit through Iran have been resolved, and commercial train services are operational.

He noted that with the new Railway Company's director, Mr. Zakari, addressing transit issues on his first day in office, multiple freight trains have since passed through this route. Recently, a train carrying Turkish and Iranian cargo reached Afghanistan.

Mirshafi further explained that regular commercial train services between Afghanistan, Iran, and Turkey have begun, with transit obstacles removed. This route has received positive feedback from cargo owners, who now have free access to transfer goods via this rail corridor.

Regarding the line's freight capacity, Mirshafi mentioned that, while the Afghan loading and unloading facilities are still under construction, freight capacity could reach 2 million tons once fully operational. Projections suggest at least 500,000 tons will be transported through this corridor by year-end, increasing to 1 million tons next year, and potentially 2 million tons in the third year upon completion of the Herat loading and railway infrastructure. Overall, the line has a maximum capacity of 7 million tons for freight.

Mirshafi also announced the planned launch of the Mashhad-Herat passenger train, a project spearheaded by a fully Iranian railway development consortium. He stated that the Mashhad-Herat passenger train service will be the first to operate on this route.

Preparations, including border and passport arrangements, are underway for the passenger service. Additionally, a 40-kilometer section of the rail from Herat to Rozanak Station is being completed, with Afghan authorities actively laying the tracks.

## 24th International Electricity Industry Exhibition Kicks Off in Tehran



TEHRAN - The 24th International Electricity Industry Exhibition has begun, running from Thursday to Sunday (October 26-29) at the Tehran International Permanent Fairground. The event brings together 500 domestic and 120 international companies, showcasing the latest in electrical industry advancements and innovations.

The exhibition covers an area of 45,408 square meters, with 24,292 square meters dedicated to domestic exhibitors and 1,596.5 square meters allocated to international participants. Companies from China, South Korea, India, Russia, Italy, Turkey, Germany, Taiwan, France, and Spain are among the attendees.

The exhibition highlights a wide range of products and services, including high-, medium-, and low-voltage power generation, transmission, and distribution equipment; electrical panels; lighting systems; smart equipment; diesel generators; electric motors; batteries and UPS systems; earthing and cathodic protection systems; transformers; cables and wires; industrial automation; measurement equipment; and services from contractors, consultants, and research centers. Renewable energy technologies and related equipment are also showcased.

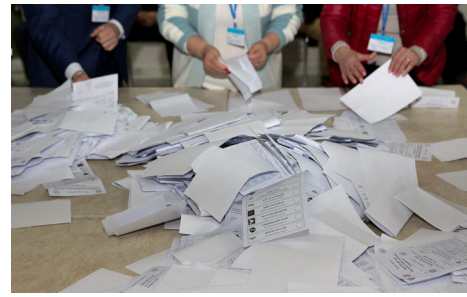
The exhibition aims to present new technological horizons within the industry, direct technology-oriented efforts, hold specialized technology exchange sessions, and provide a platform for introducing ideas and commercializing research findings. Key themes include the display of innovative products and services from tech companies and startups, support for financing technological projects, and the promotion of research and development within the energy sector. Additional highlights include discussions on the latest global advancements in the electrical industry and presentations of the technical and engineering capabilities within Iran's power sector.

### Moldovan President Says Bribery Affected Election

CHISINAU (Dispatches) - Moldova's pro-European president said that mass bribery had affected a presidential election and a referendum on joining the European Union, but vowed to press on with a Nov. 3 runoff vote to win a second term, instead of ordering a new election.

Maia Sandu issued her pledge, saying it was up to the people to determine Moldova's future, after police said pro-Russian fugitive businessman Ilan Shor had channeled \$39 million to voters in September and October.

Moldovan authorities have said the campaign for last Sunday's dual poll was overshadowed by a massive Russia-linked election-meddling scheme aimed at defeating the pro-Europe side.



### Georgia Set for Tense Elections



TBILISI (Dispatches) - Georgians vote today (Saturday) in watershed elections, with a union of pro-Western opposition forces facing off against a ruling party accused of democratic backsliding and shifting towards Russia.

Brussels has warned the October 26 vote will be crucial for the fate of Georgia's fledgling democracy and its long-held aspiration for European Union membership.

Opinion polls indicate opposition parties could get enough votes to form a coalition government to supplant the ruling Georgian Dream party, controlled by powerful billionaire Bidzina Ivanishvili.

The current government says it wants to win a supermajority in parliament to allow it to pass a constitutional ban on the pro-Western opposition.

"Georgia's traditionally fractured opposition forces have managed to forge an unprecedented united front against Georgian Dream," said analyst Gela Vasadze at Georgia's Strategic Analysis Centre.

"But if the ruling party attempts to stay in power regardless of the election outcome, then there is the risk of post-electoral turmoil."

In power since 2012, Georgian Dream initially pursued a liberal pro-Western policy agenda. But over the last two years the party has reversed course.

Its campaign has centred on a conspiracy theory about a "global war party" that controls Western institutions and is seeking to drag Georgia into the Russia-Ukraine war.

In a country where the scars of Russia's 2008 invasion remain unhealed, the party has offered voters bogeyman stories about an imminent threat of war, which only Georgian Dream could prevent.

In a recent TV interview, Ivanishvili painted a grotesque image of the West where "orgies are taking place right in the streets".

The party's passage of a controversial "foreign influence law" this spring, targeting civil society, sparked weeks of mass street protests and was criticised as a Kremlin-style measure to silence dissent.

The move prompted Brussels to freeze Georgia's EU accession process, while Washington imposed sanctions on dozens of Georgian officials.



GAZA (Dispatches) - Israel said its spy chief will attend Gaza ceasefire talks and Hamas vowed to stop fighting if a truce is reached, as long-stalled efforts to end the war appeared to gain momentum.

Previous bids to stop the year-long war have failed, though the United States has voiced hope the killing of Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar last week could serve as an opening for a deal.

A senior Hamas official told AFP that a delegation from the group's Doha-based leadership discussed "ideas and proposals" related to a Gaza truce with Egyptian officials in Cairo yesterday.

"Hamas has expressed readiness to stop the fighting, but Israel must commit to a ceasefire, withdraw from the Gaza Strip, allow the return of displaced people, agree to a serious prisoner exchange deal and allow the entry of humanitarian aid into Gaza," the official said.

The talks in Cairo were part of Egypt's ongoing efforts to resume ceasefire negotiations, he added.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he welcomed Egypt's readiness to reach a deal "for the release of the hostages" still held by militants in Gaza.

After the Cairo meeting, Netanyahu directed the head of Israel's Mossad spy agency to leave for key mediator Qatar on Sunday to "advance a series of initiatives that are on the agenda," the prime minister's office said.

Earlier yesterday, the United States and Qatar said Gaza ceasefire talks would resume in the Qatari capital.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken met with Qatar's leaders in Doha yesterday on his 11th trip to the region since Hamas's October 7, 2023 attack on Israel sparked the Gaza war.

During the trip, which comes less than two weeks before US elections, Blinken said that mediators would explore new options.

He said they were seeking a plan "so that Israel can withdraw, so that Hamas cannot reconstitute, and so that the Palestinian people can rebuild their lives and rebuild their futures".

Qatar said that US and Israeli teams would fly to Doha, with Prime Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani adding that Qatari mediators had "re-engaged" with Hamas since Sinwar's death.

Israeli and US officials as well as some analysts said Sinwar had been a key obstacle to a deal allowing for the release of 97 hostages still held in Gaza, 34 of whom the Israeli military says are dead.

An Israeli group representing families of hostages called on Netanyahu and Hamas to secure an agreement to free the remaining captives.

"Time is running out," the Hostages and Missing Families Forum said.

Blinken landed late yesterday in London, where a US official said he would meet today with the foreign ministers of Jordan and the United Arab Emirates, two key partners in a post-war plan for Gaza.

The official said Blinken would also meet with Lebanon's Prime Minister Najib Mikati to discuss the parallel conflict in that country.

On the battlefield, the Israeli military has kept up pressure on Hamas, launching an operation earlier this month in the north of Gaza where tens of thousands of civilians are trapped.

"More than 770 people have been killed" in the territory's north in the 19 days since the operation started, Gaza civil defense agency spokesman Mahmud Bassal said, adding that the toll could rise as people were buried under the rubble.

He also said a strike on a school-turned-shelter killed 17 people yesterday in central Gaza, where the Israeli military said it was targeting Hamas militants.

One Palestinian woman, Umm Muhammad, told AFP she was sitting in a classroom when the strike hit.

"I hugged my little girl and I couldn't see anything through the thick plume of smoke," she said.

"I ran and screamed for my sister and found her alive downstairs, but there were (some) children torn to pieces."

The civil defence agency said it can no longer provide first responder services in northern Gaza, accusing Israeli forces of threatening to "bomb and kill" its crews.

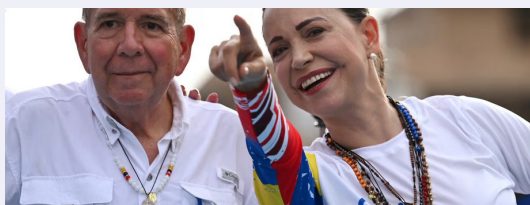
After nearly a year of war in Gaza, Israel expanded its focus to Lebanon a month ago, vowing to secure its northern border against near-daily attacks by Hamas ally Hezbollah.

It launched a massive bombing campaign targeting mainly Hezbollah strongholds around Lebanon, and sent in ground troops on September 30.

Since September 23, the war in Lebanon has killed at least 1,580 people, according to an AFP tally of Lebanese health ministry figures, though the real toll is likely higher.

The ministry said three children were among 12 people killed in Israeli strikes on two villages in eastern Lebanon yesterday.

### Venezuelan Opposition Leaders Machado, Gonzalez Awarded Sakharov Prize



BRUSSELS (Dispatches) - The EU parliament awarded the bloc's top rights Sakharov prize on Thursday to Venezuelan opposition leader Maria Corina Machado and her ally, former presidential candidate Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia.

They won the prestigious award for their fight for democracy under President Nicolas Maduro's iron-fisted rule.

Machado, 57, played a key role in Venezuela's presidential election in July. Although the authorities proclaimed Maduro the winner, the opposition believes its candidate Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia won.

Gonzalez Urrutia, 75, went into exile in Spain in September.

European Parliament chief Roberta Metsola said the two figures represented "all Venezuelans inside and outside the country fighting to restore freedom and democracy", as she announced the award in the parliament in Strasbourg, France.

"Edmundo and Maria have continued to fight for the fair, free and peaceful transition of power and have fearlessly upheld those values that millions of Venezuelans and this parliament hold so dear: justice, democracy and the rule of law," Metsola added.

"This parliament stands with the people of Venezuela and with Maria and Edmundo in their struggle for the democratic future of their country," Metsola said.

## Paris Conference for Lebanon Raises \$1b in Pledged Aid

PARIS (Dispatches) - France's foreign minister said an international conference for Lebanon raised \$1 billion in pledges for humanitarian aid and military support to help the country where war between Hezbollah militants and Israel has displaced a million people, killed over 2,500, and deepened an economic crisis.

Jean-Noël Barrot said: "We have collectively raised \$800 million in humanitarian aid and \$200 million for the security forces, that's about \$1 billion," in his closing speech at the Paris conference, which gathered over 70 nations and international organizations.

"We're up to the challenge," Barrot said.

The United States pledged to provide about \$300 million, he said.

French President Emmanuel Macron had called on participants to bring "massive aid" to support the country, as France promised \$100 million.

The United Nations had previously estimated the urgent humanitarian needs in Lebanon to be \$426 million.

Germany pledged a total of 96 million euros in humanitarian aid to both Lebanon and neighboring Syria, also deeply affected by escalating violence in the Middle East. Italy announced this week an additional 10 million euros (\$10.8 million) in aid for Lebanon.

However, experts warn that delivering aid could be challenging as Lebanon's growing dependence on informal and cash economy increases lack of transparency and corruption risks.

The Paris conference also aimed at coordinating international support to strengthen Lebanon's armed forces so they can deploy in the country's south as part of a potential deal to end the war. Such a deal could see Hezbollah withdraw its forces from the border.

This support to the Lebanese military includes "helping with health care, fuel, small equipment, but also supporting the plan to recruit at least 6,000 additional soldiers and to enable the deployment of at least 8,000 additional soldiers in the south," Macron said.

Paris also seeks to help restore Lebanon's sovereignty and strengthen its institutions. The country, where Hezbollah effectively operates as a state within



a state, has been without a president for two years while political factions fail to agree on a new one.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres, in a pre-recorded video, called on Lebanon's leaders "to take decisive action to ensure the proper functioning of state institutions in order to meet the country's urgent political and security challenges."

Acting Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati urged the international community to take action.

"The devastating impact of this war on our nation cannot be overstated, and it has left a trail of destruction and misery in its wake. The Israelis' aggression has not only caused immense human suffering and loss of lives, but also inflicted severe damage to the country's infrastructure, economy and social fabric," Mikati said Thursday in Paris.

In Lebanon, an Israeli airstrike killed early Thursday three Lebanese soldiers, including an officer, as they were evacuating wounded people in southern Lebanon. The Lebanese army said Israeli forces have targeted it on eight occasions since an all-out war broke out between Israel and Hezbollah in September.

The Israeli army apologized for a strike on Sunday that it said mistakenly killed three soldiers, and on Wednesday said it was looking into whether "a number of soldiers of the Lebanese army were accidentally harmed" after it targeted what it says was Hezbollah infrastructure.

Israel in the past month has launched a major aerial bombardment and ground invasion of Lebanon as it says it's targeting Hezbollah, with strikes hitting the capital, Beirut, and elsewhere.

The International Organization for Migration has said about 800,000 people are displaced, with many now in overcrowded shelters, while others have fled across the border into Syria. Mikati on Thursday estimated the number of displaced people is over 1.4 million, including 500,000 children.

The cash-strapped Lebanese government is ill-prepared to deal with the crisis or the increased demands on its health system. Several have been evacuated because of nearby airstrikes and fears that they might be targeted.

## Putin Warns of Middle East Conflagration and Debates Ukraine at BRICS

KAZAN (Dispatches) - Russian President Vladimir Putin told BRICS leaders on Thursday that the Middle East was on the brink of a full-scale war after a sharp rise in tension between Israel and Iran, though the Kremlin chief also faced calls to end the war in Ukraine.

The BRICS summit, attended by more than 20 leaders including Chinese President Xi Jinping, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Turkey's Tayyip Erdogan, has shown the depth of Russia's relations beyond the Western world.

Much discussion at the summit in the Russian city of Kazan was dedicated to the war in Ukraine and the violence in the Middle East, though there were no sign that anything specific would be done to end either conflict.

"The degree of confrontation between Israel and Iran has sharply increased. All this resembles a chain reaction and puts the entire Middle East on the brink of a full-scale war," Putin, sitting beside Chinese President Xi Jinping, said.

Xi, speaking after Putin, said that China wanted a political settlement in Ukraine, and suggested joint efforts by Beijing and Brasilia offered the best chance of peace.

"We need to work for an early de-escalation of the situation and pave the way for a political settlement," Xi said.

On the Middle East, Xi said that there should be a comprehensive ceasefire in Gaza, a halt to the spread of war in Lebanon and a return to the two-state solution under



which states for both Israel and Palestine would be established.

Putin said that unless Palestinians got their state, they would feel the burden of "historical injustice" and the region would remain in "an atmosphere of permanent crisis with inevitable relapses of large-scale violence."

BRICS leaders in their summit declaration called for the establishment of a sovereign, independent and viable Palestinian state within the borders of 1967. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas attended the summit.

At one of the BRICS+ meetings on Thursday, Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar sat in for Modi who also missed one of the group photographs. Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva said he could not travel to Russia due to a head injury.

China, which together with India buys about 90% of Russia's oil, supported more Global South countries joining the BRICS grouping in various formats, Xi said.

United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres, who was criticised by Kyiv for attending the meeting in Russia, said peace was needed in Gaza, Lebanon, Sudan and Ukraine.

"We need peace in Ukraine," Guterres told the BRICS+ meeting that was chaired by Putin. "A just peace in line with the UN Charter, international law and UN General Assembly resolutions."



## Richarlison Lifts Spurs in Europa League, United's Euro Woes Continue

PARIS (Dispatches) - Tottenham Hotspur made it three wins from three in the Europa League with a 1-0 win at home to AZ yesterday but Manchester United remain winless after being held to a 1-1 draw at re-carded Jose Mourinho's Fenerbahce.

Spurs are one of three teams to have won all three matches alongside Lazio and Anderlecht who enjoyed 2-0 wins over Twente and Ludogorets respectively.

The London side made a host of changes to the side that beat West Ham 4-1 in the Premier League at the weekend and one of the newcomers, 17-year-old Mikey Moore, almost gave them an early lead but headed wide.

The introduction of Brennan Johnson at half-time moved Spurs up a gear and they were awarded a penalty in the 53rd minute when Lucas Bergvall was brought down as he went to shoot.

James Maddison passed the ball to Brazilian striker Richarlison who slammed the ball down the middle to put Spurs in front.

AZ had Moller Wolfe sent off for a bad tackle on Johnson as Spurs held on for the win.

Manchester United came up against their old boss Mourinho in Istanbul and had to settle for their third draw in Europe after a feisty encounter which saw Mourinho sent off in the second half after protesting too vigorously when the referee turned down a penalty appeal.

Joshua Zirkzee teed up Christian Eriksen to blast United ahead after 15 minutes from the edge of the area.

Marcus Rashford was inches away from doubling the visitors' lead with a low shot that clipped the outside of the post but they were soon on the backfoot with goalkeeper Andre Onana making a superb double-save to parry two Youssef En-Nesyri headers to protect their lead at half-time.

It was wiped out within four minutes of the restart as more sloppy defending allowed En-Nesyri to head in Allan Saint-Maximin's inviting cross.

Ajax sit fourth with seven points after a testy 3-0 win at Qarabag which saw the Azerbaijani side ending the match with nine players. Julio Romao sent off after just 15 minutes and Elvin Jafarguliyev following him 11 minutes from time.

Rangers produced one of the performances of the night with Vaclav Cerny scoring twice in a 4-0 win over FCSB which lifts them to 11th in the table.

Ajax sit fourth with seven points after a testy 3-0 win at Qarabag which saw the Azerbaijani side ending the match with nine players. Julio Romao sent off after just 15 minutes and Elvin Jafarguliyev following him 11 minutes from time.

Kenneth Taylor put the Dutch side ahead in the 36th minute. A penalty from Wout Weghorst made the game safe in the 74th minute with Chuba Akpom sealing it three minutes later.

## Ex-Morocco and Marseille Midfielder Barrada Dies Aged 35



PARIS (Dispatches) - Former Morocco and Marseille midfielder Abdelaziz Barrada has died at the age of 35.

The cause of death has not yet been confirmed, but media reports in Morocco claim he suffered a heart attack.

Barrada retired from football in 2021 having made 26 international appearances for his country, including playing at the 2012 Olympic Games in London. He scored four goals, with his last one in 2015.

The Moroccan Football Federation paid tribute on social media, describing his passing as "a great loss".

"The Royal Moroccan Football Federation extends its sincere condolences to the family of the former Moroccan international, the late Abdelaziz Barrada, and through them to all his family and relatives, as well as the national football family," it said.

Barrada also played 64 times for Spanish club Getafe between 2011-2013, and scored twice for Marseille during his two seasons there between 2014-2016.

"The club would like to extend its sincere condolences to his family and share in the grief of his loved ones," Marseille posted on social media.

Following his spell at the Ligue 1 club, Barrada played for Al-Nasr in the United Arab Emirates, Turkish side Antalyaspor and finally Lusitanos Saint-Maur in France, although he did not make any appearances before calling time on his career three years ago.

## Dimitrov Bows Out in Vienna

VIENNA (Dispatches) - Tomas Machac of the Czech Republic rallied for a 6-7 (5), 6-4, 6-3 win over third seed Grigor Dimitrov of Bulgaria in two hours and 31 minutes to reach the Erste Bank Open quarterfinals in Vienna, Austria.

Dimitrov out-aced Machac 12-9 and had the same number of winners (32), but he committed 21 unforced errors along the way. Dimitrov is now in danger of not qualifying for the Nitto ATP Finals; he is 10th in the race for one of eight spots.

Machac advanced to face No. 7 seed Jack Draper of Great Britain, who defeated Italy's Luciano Darderi 7-5, 6-1. Russia's Karen Khachanov charged back to beat Brandon Nakashima 1-6, 6-3, 6-4, and Czech qualifier Jakub Mensik beat Serbia's Miomir Kecmanovic 6-3, 7-6 (7).

No. 2 seed Alex de Minaur of Australia was ahead 7-6 (2), 3-1 when Italian opponent Flavio Cobolli retired.

Frenchman Giovanni Mpetshi Perricard upset eighth seed and two-time defending champion Felix Auger-Aliassime of Canada 6-1, 7-6 (6) to make the quarterfinals in Switzerland.

Mpetshi Perricard fired 22 aces, had a 30-16 advantage in winners and prevailed on 32 of 39 first-service points (82.0 percent) in the thorough victory. His next opponent will be Canadian wild card Denis Shapovalov, who defeated Spain's Roberto Bautista Agut 6-3, 7-6 (4).

Third seed Stefanos Tsitsipas of Greece, fourth seed



Holger Rune of Denmark, sixth seed Ben Shelton of the United States and seventh seed Arthur Fils of France all advanced in straight sets. Rune is aiming to return to the final, where he lost to Auger-Aliassime in 2022.

Meanwhile no. 1 seed Qinwen Zheng of China swept the last nine games against Japan's Moyuka Uchijima to move into the Toray Pan Pacific Open quarterfinals in Tokyo.

Trailing 5-4 in the first set, Zheng rolled to a 7-5, 6-0 victory in 77 minutes. The reigning Olympic gold medalist will next face No. 8 seed Leylah Fernandez of Canada.

Third-seeded Daria Kasatkina of Russia rallied for a 3-6, 6-3, 6-1 win over McCartney Kessler. Kasatkina will take on Sofia Kenin, who outlasted Denmark's Clara Tauson 6-7 (8), 6-4, 7-6 (6) in 2 hours and 51 minutes. No. 9 seed Katie Boulter of Great Britain crushed Japan's Kyoka Okamura 6-1, 6-2 in 69 minutes.

Top-seeded Czech Katerina Siniakova avoided the upset bug with a swift 6-1, 6-4 victory against Alycia Parks in China.

Siniakova saved all seven break points she faced and converted four of five break chances in the 78-minute win. Her opponent in the quarterfinal will be Bernarda Pera, who rolled to a 6-2, 6-2 win against China's Shuai Zhang.

Siniakova's compatriot, No. 2 seed Marie Bouzkova, was not as fortunate and lost to Caroline Dolehide 6-7 (3), 6-4, 7-6 (6) in 3 hours and 18 minutes. Thailand's Manachaya Sawangkaew wiped out No. 3 Yue Yuan of China 6-2, 6-3 in just 67 minutes.

## Sharapova, Bryan Brothers Elected to Tennis Hall of Fame



LONDON (Dispatches) - Former world number one Maria Sharapova and the US doubles team of Bob and Mike Bryan were announced on Thursday as 2025 inductees to the International Tennis Hall of Fame.

Sharapova, a five-time Grand Slam champion, is among only 10 women to have achieved a career singles Grand Slam. She was atop the world rankings five times in a WTA career that spanned from 2001-2020.

The Bryan brothers teamed to win 16 major doubles titles and became the ATP's most successful duo, with a record 438 weeks atop the ATP doubles rankings.

Induction ceremonies will be conducted at the Hall of Fame in Newport, Rhode Island, on August 21-23 -- just ahead of the start of next year's US Open.

Sharapova won Wimbledon in 2004, the US Open in 2006, the Australian Open in 2008 and the French Open in 2012 and 2014.

## Erling Haaland Scores Spectacular Backheel

MANCHESTER (Dispatches) - Erling Haaland back-heeled home a stunning strike, the first of two goals on the night for Manchester City's goal-scoring machine, as City cruised past Sparta Prague 5-0 this morning to remain unbeaten in their Champions League campaign.

Phil Foden, John Stones and Matheus Nunes also scored for Pep Guardiola's side who climbed to third in Europe's elite club competition with seven points after three games, while Sparta have four points.

City are now unbeaten in 26 successive Champions League matches, the longest unbeaten streak by any club in the competition's history, breaking the record of 25 by Manchester United from 2007-2009.

Haaland was the star of the show, bringing the blue-clad City fans out of their seats at Etihad Stadium when he scored in spectacular fashion in the 58th minute, leaping high to backheel home Savinho's cross from out of the air.

"I saw it when the ball came in. It's unbelievable. He's a statue. So tall and so flexible," Guardiola said. "I like it, he has this sense of humour. Unbelievable."

Nunes added: "What an amazing goal. I was speechless after that. When he scored a similar goal against Dortmund I was watching on TV so to see this live it was amazing."

The 24-year-old Norwegian completed his brace with a more traditional finish in the 68th minute, easily slotting home a pass from Savinho to put his scoring tally at 44 Champions League goals in 42 games.

Haaland climbed level with Didier Drogba in 16th spot



on the all-time scoring list in the European competition, although Drogba took 92 games to reach the mark.

Foden got the 2023 Champions League winners on the scoreboard in the third minute when he latched on to a pass from Manuel Akanji and slotted the ball into the bottom corner.

Stones padded City's lead in the 64th minute when he leapt to head home from a superb cross from Nunes.

Both Foden and Stones were instrumental in City's 2-1 Premier League victory at Wolverhampton Wanderers on Sunday, with Foden delivering the corner which led to Stones's stoppage-time winner.

City were awarded a penalty in the 88th minute, for a foul by Angelo Preciado, and Nunes fired his shot past keeper Peter Vindahl Jensen.

While Czech champions Sparta had a few chances on the counter-attack in the first half, City pummeled the visitors with 22 shots to their five on the night, with 10 of them on target.

"We played against the best team in the world," Sparta manager Lars Friis said. "We played against the best players in the world. We handled Haaland well and then he pops up with a goal like this."

City, who drew 0-0 with Inter Milan and then thrashed Slovan Bratislava 4-0 in their first two games, next visit Sporting in the new 36-team league phase, with the top eight automatically making the last 16.

## Norris Says He Needs to Change to Be at Verstappen's Level



MEXICO CITY (Dispatches) - McLaren's Lando Norris said he needed to make some changes to be able to fight at the same level as Red Bull rival and Formula One leader Max Verstappen.

The Briton, second in the standings but now 57 points behind with five rounds remaining, finished fourth in last weekend's U.S. Grand Prix with Verstappen third after two controversial corner clashes.

"Max is the best in the world in that style of defence and attack, and I'm going up against the best in the world so therefore I need to be at his level," he told F1 television at the Mexico City Grand Prix on Thursday.

"And I'm not quite at his level. Which is a shame to say but is probably the truth, but it's experience for me and I can learn and get better."

Speaking to reporters at the Autodromo Hermanos Rodriguez, the Briton said he needed to "adapt a little bit more" against a rival whose only task was to finish ahead of him rather than go for the win.