

Iran Has Summoned German Ambassador Markus Potzel Over Berlin Officials Meddling in the Internal Affairs of the Islamic Republic After Execution of German-Iranian Convicted Terrorist Jamshid Sharmahd

IRAN NEWS

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi a Congratulatory Message to his Turkish Counterpart Hakan Fidan on Tuesday Called for Developing the Relations Between Tehran and Ankara in Different Fields

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Iran Condemns Israel's Unchecked Impunity for Its Systematic Crimes in Gaza



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's UN ambassador has slammed the Israeli decision to ban the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, calling it an attempt to block the delivery of desperately needed aid in Gaza.

"We strongly condemn the recent Israeli legislation to target UNRWA which seeking to block it from delivering critical support," said Amir Saied Irvani who also slammed "Israel's unchecked impunity" for its systematic crimes in Gaza.

"UNRWA remains the backbone of all humanitarian response in Gaza. Its targeting denies Palestinians vital support and adds yet another layer of hardship during this crisis," Irvani wrote.

He added that Gaza "endures a relentless campaign of devastation and suffering. Over the past year, Israel's aggressive and genocidal acts have inflicted unprecedented damage on civilians in Gaza."

"The northern Gaza Strip is now under a brutal siege, and Israel's military operations have turned densely populated areas like Jabalia into active conflict zones, trapping civilians with no access to food, water, or medical care," he stated.

"This prolonged siege has forced civilians into impossible choices—flee under fire or risk death in place—while humanitarian aid remains blocked, in clear defiance of international humanitarian law," he said.

"Civilians, including countless children and families, are being systematically deprived of essential services, facing starvation, lack of medical aid, and a constant threat of displacement. Israeli apartheid regime continues to use starvation as a weapon," Irvani noted.

"For over two weeks, all humanitarian aid to Gaza has been halted. The blockade has suspended efforts to deliver essential vaccinations and other life-saving services indefinitely," the Iranian envoy said.

He added that this act of "collective punishment," as recognized by the UN Secretary-General, directly contravenes the UN Charter and Israel's legal obligations.

UN chief Antonio Guterres also penned a protest letter to the Israeli Prime Minister.

Guterres warned against the devastating impact of the UNRWA ban on the humanitarian situation in Gaza and the occupied territories.

Numerous Gazans Killed, Injured in Israeli Attack in Khan Yunis



GAZA (Dispatches) - Israel kills, injured large numbers of Palestinians killed in airstrikes on refugee tents in Gaza's Khan Yunis, on October 30, 2024.

Israeli warplanes have conducted airstrikes on the tents of displaced Palestinians in the southern Gaza city of Khan Yunis, as the occupying regime continues its brutal war on the besieged territory.

The official Palestinian news agency Wafa reported that Israeli fighter jets bombed the tents housing displaced Palestinians in Khan Yunis on Tuesday evening.

Al-Mayadeen news agency reports that "numerous" people have been killed and injured in the attack.

Separately, Israeli warplanes pounded a tent sheltering displaced Palestinians in the city of Deir al-Balah in central Gaza, killing at least two people.

The Palestinian Information Center said in a post on X that the bodies of two victims were brought to the Al-Aqsa Hospital following the Israeli regime's attack on a tent of displaced people located west of Deir el-Balah.

Earlier in the day, Israeli warplanes bombed a residential building sheltering displaced Palestinians in the city of Beit Lahia in the northern Gaza Strip, killing scores of people and trapping many others.

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EU Merely Stands for Hypocrisy

TEHRAN - Addressing the European Union Foreign Policy Chief Josep Borrell, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi said "do you have any opinion regarding the adoption of measures by the European Union to support the families of those who were killed by Jamshid Sharmahd? If you do not have an answer, it should be said that Europe is only a symbol of hypocrisy".

"I like to believe you when you say life and human dignity should be protected. The issue is that your fellow Europeans unashamedly support genocide in Gaza and carnage in Lebanon," Araqchi wrote on his X account in reaction to Borrell's earlier remarks on execution of an Iranian-German terrorist Jamshid Sharmahd.

The Iranian foreign minister asked how about "an EU measure" to end the killing of more than 50k Palestinians in Gaza?

He further asked how about "an EU measure" to allow 1.5m refugees in Lebanon to return to their homes?

"How about an EU measure to support the families of those killed by Jamshid Sharmahd? If not, Europe only stands for hypocrisy," Araqchi added.

The European Union's foreign policy chief had reportedly condemned the execution of the perpetrator (Jamshid Sharmahd) of the terrorist act of bombing and explosion of a mosque in Shiraz in 2008 and claimed that the European Union is considering measures in response to this issue.

Sharmahd was the ringleader of an anti-Iran group based in the United States, accused by Iran of planning and executing a series of terrorist attacks on Iranian soil.

Most notably, he was charged with organizing the 2008 Shiraz mosque bombing which killed and wounded around 200 innocent people.

Arachi said a German passport offers no impunity to anyone, not least to a terrorist, a day after Iran executed an Iranian-German convicted of terrorism.

He urged the German government to stop hiding "behind hypocritical human rights" slogans, reminding them of the chemical weapons supplied by Germany to Saddam Hussein's regime during the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s.

Germany protested the execution of Jamshid Sharmahd, the ringleader of a US-based terror group, who had German citizenship. On Tuesday, the German government recalled its ambassador to Tehran and summoned the Iranian charge d'affaires in Berlin in protest.

"Iranian national Jamshid Sharmahd openly and unashamedly led a terrorist attack on a MOSQUE that killed 14 innocent people—including women and children. More than 200 were injured. The evidence is public and available for all to see," Araqchi said.

"A German passport does not provide impunity to anyone, let alone a terrorist criminal," he added.

The top Iranian top diplomat accused the German government of complicity in the Israeli genocide in Gaza, pointing out that Germany is the second-largest supplier of lethal weapons to the Israeli regime.

"Look around. Even your own people ridicule your arrogant human rights claims," Araqchi said. Earlier Araqchi denounced as "a flagrant violation of internal law" Israel's latest aggression against Iran, saying the Islamic Republic will neither hesitate nor rush in responding to the occupying regime.

He made the remarks during a meeting on the latest developments in the region on Tuesday, attended by foreign ambassadors, heads of diplomatic missions and international organizations residing in the capital Tehran.

"As we had previously warned in various ways, Iran has fully reserved its legal right to respond appropriately to such a clear aggression, and the Israeli regime will bear the consequences of its miscalculations regarding the might, resolve and adeptness of the Islamic Republic of Iran. However, in doing so, Iran will neither hesitate nor act hastily," Araqchi said.

He further noted that Iran was successful in neutralizing the Israeli aggression, adding that the occupying regime failed to achieve its malicious goals.

However, he said, "the assailant Zionist regime and its enablers cannot avoid the political and legal responsibility of this clear act of aggression and must be held accountable for it."

Araqchi further expressed gratitude "to all the peace-loving countries of the region and others who by realizing the severity of the situation, expressed their disgust and condemned the aggressive action of the occupying Israeli regime."

The top Iranian diplomat also noted that he deeply regrets the silence or support shown by some countries, saying such behavior emboldens the Israeli regime to continue its crimes.

He went on to say that the military support of some Western countries, particularly the United States, have led to the intensification of the Israeli regime's aggression against Lebanon, which has seriously jeopardized regional and international peace and security.

Araqchi further underscored the need for stopping Israeli aggression and crimes in Gaza and Lebanon, calling on the international community to take immediate and decisive measures to stop the killing of innocent Lebanese and Palestinians.

He also stressed that the region will not see peace until the aggression in Gaza and Lebanon is stopped.

Next Year's Inflation Set at 30%

TEHRAN - The head of Iran's Planning and Budget Organization announced that the budget bill for the fiscal year 1404 (March 2025 - March 2026), submitted to the Islamic Consultative Assembly, projects a 30% inflation rate for the coming year.

At the open session in Majlis, Seyed Hamid Pourmohammadi defended the budget proposal, stating, "This is the government's proposal, and once it passes through Parliament, it will become law. The government is prepared to collaborate with Parliament to ensure the best outcomes for the country."

Pourmohammadi highlighted an economic report accompanying the budget, urging Parliament members to review it. He noted that the report outlines projections for key economic variables if the government's budget proposal is implemented.

He further emphasized that if current conditions persist, economic growth will remain around 2.5%. However, with the proposed budget, growth could reach 4.4%.

Pourmohammadi outlined that liquidity growth would be managed, reducing from 29.5% to 26.5%, and inflation would decrease from 33% to 30.2%. Exports are expected to increase from \$65 billion to \$77 billion under the new budget, supporting production and employment across the country.

Addressing critiques on the alignment of the budget with the Seventh Development Plan, Pourmohammadi stated that a detailed analysis provided to Parliament demonstrates a close correlation between budgetary items and the development plan's mandates. He highlighted that

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68 specific cases were submitted to the Joint Commission, showing significant alignment with the Seventh Plan.

He acknowledged ongoing concerns over social security allocations, noting that this year, only 300 trillion rials (30 trillion toman) were allocated, while 2,000 trillion rials (200 trillion toman) have been proposed for next year. The budget for knowledge-based companies and retiree adjustments also saw considerable increases, with retirement adjustments doubling from

500 trillion to 1,040 trillion rials (104 trillion toman) to address key parliamentary concerns. For retirees, the budget allocation has risen from 220 trillion to 860 trillion rials (86 trillion toman) to meet Parliament's expectations.

Regarding the National Development Fund's inclusion in the budget, Pourmohammadi stated that spending aligns with guidelines from the Supreme Leader, adding that making these funds visible in the budget was a step toward transparency for Parliament.

Pourmohammadi addressed government debts, highlighting that the budget has set aside 2,000 trillion rials (200 trillion toman) to securitize government debt in line with Parliament's instructions to increase budgetary transparency and cohesion.

Pourmohammadi also revealed that the tax exemption threshold for low-income workers was raised from 1.2 million to 2.4 million toman, underscoring the government's priority to support these individuals. Furthermore, he explained that increased wages by 28% for families with more children aligns with Parliament's emphasis on supporting population growth policies.

Iran Capable of Conducting Dozens of True Promise-Like Ops



TEHRAN (Dispatches) - Defense Minister Brigadier General Aziz Nasirzadeh says Iran is capable of conducting dozens of retaliatory operations like Operation True Promise, which targeted the Israeli-occupied Palestinian territories back in April.

"Iran's defensive capability is high," the official was quoted as saying by Ebrahim Rezaei, spokesman for the Parliament's Committee on National Security and Foreign Policy, during a meeting held by the committee on Tuesday.

The operation saw the country firing more than 300 missiles and drones against the occupied territories in reprisal for deadly aggression by the Israeli regime that had targeted Iranian diplomatic facilities in the Syrian capital of Damascus earlier that month.

In early October too, the Islamic Republic launched 200 missiles toward Israeli military and intelligence bases all over the occupied territories as part of Operation True Promise II.

The second operation came in response to more deadly atrocities by the regime against the country and other regional nations, including Israel's assassinations of the Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh, Hezbollah's leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, and Abbas Nilforoushan, a commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC).

According to Rezaei, Nasirzadeh said up to 90 percent of the missiles that were fired during True Promise II hit their targets, but the regime tried to censor existing facts concerning the operation.

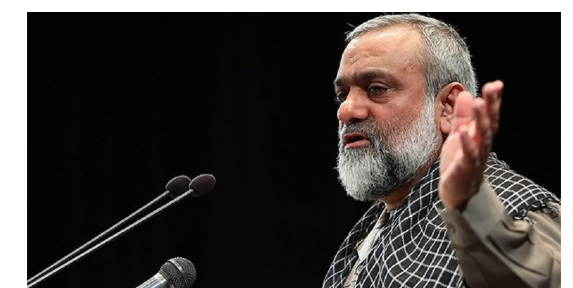
The defense minister, meanwhile, addressed the issue of the attacks that the regime carried out against defensive targets across the Iranian provinces of Tehran, Khuzestan, and Ilam last week.

The attacks failed to inflict any serious damage on the country's missile and defense system manufacturing cycle, he said, adding that whatever harm that was caused by the strikes had been repaired.

The regime had sought to slow down the Islamic Republic's offensive and defensive might through the strikes, but failed to realize any of its goals, Nasirzadeh was quoted.

Rezaei also said the Tuesday meeting saw some lawmakers protest the Jordanian and Iraqi governments' allowing their countries' skies to be used by the Israeli regime for conducting the attacks.

New Surprises, Heavier Blows Await Israel in Coming Days



TEHRAN (PressTV) - A high-ranking commander of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) has warned that new initiatives will catch Israel by surprise in the future and deal heavier blows to the criminal regime.

Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Naqdi, the IRGC's deputy commander for coordination, made the remarks on Tuesday, three days after Israel waged a deadly attack on Iranian military installations, for which Iran has vowed a response.

The terrorist aggression came at the time, when the occupying regime is bogged down in the quagmire of its bloody wars on the Gaza strip and Lebanon.

"In the coming days, you will see more crushing blows awaiting the Zionist regime and new measures and initiatives to take it by surprise," he said, adding that the Israelis "will face bigger defeats."

Naghdi also noted that the resistance in Gaza and Lebanon has incapacitated the global arrogance.

He said the form of support for Israel is now different from the one provided to it by its supporters, due to the resistance front's stronger position.

Previously, the United States and Britain only provided Israel with weapons, financial and intelligence assistance, he said.

But today, both countries send military forces and warships to the occupied territories because of the Israeli regime's failure in the face of Hamas and Hezbollah resistance fighters.

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Tehran to Host 5th Int'l Exhibition Laser, Photonics

TEHRAN (IP) - The fifth edition of Iran's specialized laser and photonics exhibition will be held from November 3 to 6 with the presence of 35 knowledge-based companies at Tehran International Fairground.

Briefing about the event, the CEO of Iran's National Center for Laser Science and Technology, elaborated on the center, saying it has the capability of manufacturing and growing active solid crystals, which are demanded by special foreign customers.

Adasollahi said the center has a mission to provide laser services and research and move on the edge of the scientific frontier and align with the knowledge at the world level, and that it started its activity with about 20 people, but today it has more than 300 staff.

He said: We are happy that we have achieved high-power lasers of more than 10 kilowatts. The policy of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization is to open doors in the development of nuclear knowledge and emphasis on the service of knowledge in the field of lasers."

Iran Seeks to Increase Trade with Iraq by 50%



TEHRAN - The head of the Ahvaz Chamber of Commerce announced a goal to increase trade with Iraq by 50%, aiming to boost exports from \$1 billion to \$1.5 billion by the end of the current year.

Mohammad Javad Amani, speaking at a meeting with a commercial delegation from Iraq's Kurdistan region, attended by the Governor of Khuzestan, emphasized that expanding exports to Iraq has been a top priority for Khuzestan province.

He highlighted that the number of Khuzestan's economic advisors in embassies has increased from 23 to 53, facilitating trade and investment efforts with target countries.

Vice President of the Ahvaz Chamber of Commerce, Shahla Amouri, reported that this delegation from Iraqi Kurdistan visited Khuzestan for the first time to explore its economic potential. The chamber is focused on strengthening trade connections with investors from neighboring countries. She noted that Iraqi Kurdistan's stable and favorable economic environment has turned it into a secure hub for economic activity.

Amouri also mentioned that, due to Kurdistan's favorable economy and abundant opportunities, investors from Iraqi Kurdistan have been invited to consider investing in the Arvand Free Zone in Khuzestan.

The President of the Kurdistan Region's Union of Exporters and Importers, Sheikh Mustafa Abdulrahman, emphasized that Iraq's Kurdistan has longstanding ties with Iran, with Iran ranking as the region's primary trade partner.

Abdulrahman reported that trade between Iraqi Kurdistan and Iran exceeds \$6 billion annually, with plans to raise this to \$7 billion by year's end. He highlighted the presence of six official and six informal border crossings, facilitating close and accessible trade routes between the two regions.

The Governor of Khuzestan, Mohammad Reza Moalazadeh, remarked that Khuzestan and Iraqi Kurdistan hold vast potential for cooperation in oil and petrochemicals due to Khuzestan's extensive petrochemical infrastructure.

During his meeting with the delegation from Iraqi Kurdistan, Moalazadeh confirmed that Iran, following the policies set by its Supreme Leader, has consistently sought closer ties with its neighboring countries.

Iran and Turkey Play Key Roles in East-West Trade and Energy Transit



TEHRAN - During the National Day of the Republic of Turkey ceremony in Tehran, Iran's Minister of Roads and Urban Development, Farzaneh Sadeghi, highlighted the pivotal role of Iran and Turkey in East-West trade and energy transit. As the head of the Iranian-Turkish Joint Economic Cooperation Commission, Sadeghi attended the celebration on Tuesday night, extending congratulations to Turkey's government and people on their National Day (October 29) and expressing hopes for the country's prosperity.

Sadeghi underscored the significance of such events in celebrating the deep-rooted friendship between Iran and Turkey, as well as the numerous cultural and religious commonalities shared by both nations. Emphasizing the commitment of both nations' leaders to enhancing solidarity and cooperation, she noted that mutual understanding is essential for addressing today's regional and global challenges.

The minister began her remarks by condemning the recent terrorist attack at Ankara's TUSAŞ aerospace center, which resulted in the deaths and injuries of Turkish citizens. She offered condolences to the victims' families and called for a swift recovery for those injured. Sadeghi also paid tribute to victims of Israeli state terrorism in Gaza and Lebanon, condemning Israel's ongoing actions in Palestine and Lebanon as war crimes and criticizing the lack of action by international human rights bodies.

Sadeghi stressed that Iran and Turkey's shared history, cultural ties, and geographic proximity have fostered a longstanding relationship marked by peace and stability along their shared border. She added that enhancing the relationship between the two countries has become even more important in today's complex regional and global context. "Iran and Turkey are key players in West Asia, with a long-standing influence on regional developments," she said.

The minister emphasized that maintaining strong relations with Turkey has always been a priority for Iran's foreign policy, a stance that remains consistent under Iran's current administration. "We are continuously working to expand our relations in various domains, including political, economic, cultural, scientific, and security sectors," she added. Sadeghi pointed to recent high-level meetings between officials from both countries as evidence of their commitment to strengthening these ties.

The Iranian minister also highlighted 2025 as the designated "Cultural Year" for Iran and Turkey, marking a unique opportunity to reinforce bonds of friendship between the two nations. Sadeghi stated that plans are underway to celebrate this occasion with programs aimed at enhancing cultural connections between Iranian and Turkish people.

In her remarks, Sadeghi described Iran and Turkey as critical transit hubs in the region, facilitating the flow of goods and energy between East and West. She noted that the strategic location of both countries, bridging Asia and Europe, creates unparalleled opportunities for developing regional and international transport and transit networks. Iran and Turkey, she stressed, are well-positioned to leverage this geographical advantage to enhance their influence in global logistics and trade.

Sadeghi referred to President Masoud Pezeshkian's recent statement following Iran's elections, which emphasized the importance of strengthening regional alliances and building closer ties with neighboring countries. "This topic has been a focal point in recent bilateral discussions," she said, highlighting the mutual commitment to peace, stability, security, and development in the region. The minister expressed her confidence that collaboration between Iran and Turkey will contribute to a more stable and secure Middle East.

Good Grounds for Deepening Tehran-Tokyo Cooperation



TEHRAN - Japan's Ambassador to Iran highlighted the longstanding relationship between Tehran and Tokyo, emphasizing that the thousand-year-old ties provide a strong foundation for deepening cooperation in human settlement, knowledge exchange, technology transfer, and organizing training courses.

Tsukada Tamaki met with Iran's Minister of Roads and Urban Development on Tuesday, expressing satisfaction with the progress made in these areas and calling for further development of bilateral cooperation.

In response, Iran's Minister of Roads and Urban Development, Farzaneh Sadigh, emphasized expanding cooperation between the two nations in infrastructure, transportation, and technology sectors. She outlined Iran's geostrategic and geoeconomic position as a bridge between Asia and Europe, noting that Japan could leverage Iran's connectivity to access regional markets, including Central Asia and the Caucasus.

Sadigh added that the two countries could collaborate in areas like intelligent transportation systems, safety, infrastructure technologies, and resilient urban planning technologies, especially those resistant to earthquakes.

During the meeting, Sadigh extended an invitation to Japanese officials to visit Iran and witness its unique infrastructure capabilities, including its bridges and tunnels, as part of a dialogue on potential areas of collaboration.

Another significant point of discussion was the need for direct flights between Iran and Japan, which both parties underscored as essential for facilitating trade and people-to-people connections.

Additionally, the Minister proposed holding a meeting between the port authorities of both countries to explore avenues for collaboration in maritime transport.

Transit of 10.4m Tons in First Half of This Year



TEHRAN - According to the Ministry of Roads and Urban Development, Amin Tarfa, acting head of the International Affairs Center, announced a significant increase in the country's transit volume for the first half of 1403 (2024). Transit volumes have reached 10.4 million tons in the first half of this year.

Tarfa detailed that out of this total, 9.3 million tons were transported by road and 1.1 million tons by rail. This represents a 60% increase compared to the same period last year.

Highlighting the rise in both oil and non-oil product transit over the past year, he noted that transit volumes for the first half of 1403 have equaled the total transit volume for the entire year of 1401.

Tarfa also stressed the importance of border terminals as critical transit gateways. Over 90% of the nation's transit traffic is carried out via roads, with border terminals playing a vital role in facilitating this flow.

The acting head stated that the Ministry of Roads and Urban Development is responsible for the infrastructure and organization of these terminals. He underscored the importance of improving border processes and re-engineering the transit system, alongside enhancing physical infrastructure, as essential steps for further transit development and smoother goods movement.

To facilitate these processes, he mentioned the need for coordination with neighboring countries and joint initiatives, such as electronic exchange of transport and customs documents.

He further explained that, in the rail sector, electronic document exchanges allow for uninterrupted, delay-free passage, speeding up the transit of goods.

Finally, Tarfa noted that the Ministry's International Affairs Center is working with neighboring countries through joint cooperation committees to implement electronic exchanges of transport and customs documents. This initiative aims to remove obstacles, minimize delays, and increase the speed of goods movement at borders.

Tarfa concluded by emphasizing that the Ministry, as the unified manager of border terminals, is committed to using all available resources to improve both physical and procedural infrastructures. He added that transitioning to electronic coordination among border authorities will enhance cross-border synchronization and significantly reduce existing obstacles.

Conversion of 2.6m Barrels of Crude Oil into Valuable Products in the Next 10 Years



TEHRAN - Head of the National Petrochemical Company Hassan Abbaszadeh highlighted that Iran's petrochemical industry achieved an average annual growth of 8% under the Sixth Development Plan, reaching an annual nominal capacity of 96 million tons. He stated that under the Seventh Development Plan, the industry is projected to grow at an average of 8% per year, reaching a capacity of 132 million tons.

He pointed to the diversity of feedstocks used by petrochemical complexes across the country, noting that unlike the Mahshahr region, which is based on crude oil and petroleum products, the Pars Special Economic Energy Zone has been developed around gas-based resources.

The head of the National Petrochemical Company continued by explaining that the petrochemical industry can produce methanol, urea, ammonia, and ethylene from raw gas and ethane.

Abbaszadeh explained that half of Iran's petrochemical industry has been developed within the Pars Special Economic Energy Zone near the South Pars phases. He said that the current daily capacity to receive gas in the petrochemical sector is 100 million cubic meters, which is expected to double to 200 million cubic meters per day by 2033 due to newly planned expansion projects.

He pointed out that while the country produces a large amount of gas, it is not being efficiently utilized. About 46% of the produced gas is consumed by households, commercial sectors, and minor industries, while 31% is used in power plants, which are not particularly efficient in energy use.

Currently, around 9% of the nation's gas is utilized in the petrochemical industry, half of which is used for utilities such as

water, electricity, and steam generation, with 4.5% used as feedstock in petrochemical production.

Abbaszadeh emphasized that the petrochemical industry received feedstock equivalent to 1 million barrels of crude oil in 2023, with the value of products generated from this amount estimated at around \$23 billion. Approximately \$13 billion of this was exported, with \$10 billion sold domestically.

He mentioned that 61 petrochemical projects with an investment requirement of \$24 billion have been planned under the Seventh Development Plan, with about half of the required capital already secured and an average progress of 60% achieved across these projects.

The Chairman of the National Petrochemical Company Board stated that 48 petrochemical projects with a capital investment of \$40 billion have been defined under the Eighth Development Plan. Currently, the petrochemical industry's feedstock capacity from hydrocarbon sources is equivalent to around 1 million barrels of crude oil, a figure expected to increase to 2.6 million barrels by the end of the Eighth Development Plan's 10-year outlook, transforming into high-value products.

At present, of the 72 active petrochemical complexes in the country, 24 are located in the Pars Special Economic Energy Zone, accounting for 33% of all complexes and nearly 50% of the installed capacity of Iran's petrochemical industry.

Abbaszadeh noted that in 2023, the petrochemical industry produced 74 million tons of products, with 37 million tons produced in the Pars Special Economic Zone.

Outlook for \$5b Trade Between Iran and Uzbekistan



TEHRAN - The head of Iran's Trade Development Organization's Central Asia, Caucasus, and Russia Office outlined a long-term vision of achieving \$5 billion in trade between Iran and Uzbekistan, announcing the initial agreements for a preferential tariff agreement between the two countries.

According to a report by the Public Relations Office of the Iran Trade Development Organization, Akbar Godari highlighted recent economic agreements made during the visit of Uzbekistan's Minister of Investment, Industry, and Trade to Iran. Godari mentioned that both countries are committed to expanding trade relations, with Iran set to host the 16th Iran-Uzbekistan Joint Commission in March, aimed at boosting trade exchanges. Talks also covered details on the establishment of a joint investment fund, expected to launch soon.

Godari announced the preliminary agreements for a preferential tariff agreement between Iran and Uzbekistan, noting that the groundwork was laid last year when Iran's then-Minister of Industry, Mines, and Trade, Abbas Aliabadi, visited Uzbekistan and engaged in discussions with his counterpart on the matter. Over the past six months, both countries have worked on finalizing the terms of the preferential tariff agreement and the certificate of origin document, overcoming obstacles along the way. Now, the initial agreements for signing this agreement are in place.

He added that the Iran Trade Development Organization has outlined specific product codes that will be eligible for preferential tariffs, with efforts underway to increase the number of items covered under these terms in the near future.

According to Godari, domestic laws and regulations in both countries have delayed the signing of the preferential trade agreement.

He emphasized the importance of fostering reciprocal trade activities and noted that, while trade between Iran and Uzbekistan currently stands at around \$500 million, the inclusion of sectors such as technical and engineering services, railcar production, turbines, steel, and petrochemical products could significantly boost trade relations. During recent discussions, efforts were made to resolve issues between steel companies in both countries.

Godari expressed optimism that trade between the two nations could exceed \$1 billion in the medium term, with a long-term goal of reaching \$5 billion.

Indonesia and Russia to Hold First Joint Naval Drills Next Month

JAKARTA (Dispatches) - Indonesia and Russia will hold their first joint naval drills next month, Jakarta's navy said, as the Southeast Asian archipelago's new leader seeks to boost ties with Moscow. The region's biggest economy maintains a neutral foreign policy, refusing to take sides in the Ukraine conflict or in great power competition between Washington and Beijing. But newly inaugurated Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto has pledged to be bolder on the world stage and in July visited Moscow for talks with Vladimir Putin. The Indonesian navy said the drills would take place from November 4 to 8 in the Java Sea near a naval base in Surabaya.



Finland Warns Xi of Provocation by N Korea in Ukraine War



BEIJING (Dispatches) - Finnish President Alexander Stubb said he told China's President Xi Jinping that North Korean activities with Russia were an escalation and provocation in a message on behalf of NATO and the EU during talks in Beijing on Tuesday.

Stubb and Xi met as North Korea's foreign minister arrived in Russia, with Western military alliance NATO and South Korea warning that Pyongyang's troops could soon be entering the Ukraine war on Moscow's side.

The U.S. estimates 10,000 North Korean troops have been deployed in eastern Russia.

"My message to the president was that North Korean activity right now, both in terms of arms exports, especially in terms of sending troops to (...) Russia, is escalation, expansion and provocation. So we had a good discussion about this," Stubb told reporters.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has not denied the presence of North Korean troops, while Pyongyang has not commented.

Stubb, who met various European leaders in recent weeks, said he delivered to Xi messages coordinated with Finland's allies in NATO and the EU.

"There is dislike of the fact that NATO has partners such as South Korea or, say, Japan," Stubb said. "If North Korea is basically facilitating a war on the borders of Europe, we must be sure that it doesn't do that south of its border."

Stubb said he felt the Chinese-North Korean relationship "is not very comfortable at the moment", and that he had warned Xi supporting Russia would have negative implications for EU ties.

"The more China supports Russia, the more difficult the relationship with Europe, and especially the European Union, becomes," Stubb said.

There are also frictions with China over Brussels' hefty tariffs on Chinese EVs, set to be imposed next month for five years. Finland abstained in the vote.

Finland, which shares a 1,340-km (830-mile) border with Russia, joined NATO last year in a policy shift prompted by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.



Kyiv Announces New Drive to Mobilize 160,000 Troops as Moscow Advances

KYIV (Dispatches) - Ukraine announced a fresh mobilisation drive Tuesday as Moscow seized the mining hub of Selydove and the US said some North Korean troops were in Russia's Kursk region, warning that thousands more were on their way.

Russia has been making swift advances in the eastern Donetsk region for weeks and on Tuesday said it "fully" captured Selydove -- whose estimated population of around 21,000 people has fled from Moscow's drone and rocket attacks.

Concern has grown in Kyiv and the West over North Korea's military cooperation with Russia -- with neither the Kremlin nor Pyongyang denying that the reclusive country's troops were in Russia.

The Pentagon said a "small number" of Pyongyang's troops have been deployed in the Kursk region, where Ukrainian forces have held onto land since summer.

Its spokesman Major General Pat Ryder said the US had information that "a couple thousand more (North Korean troops) that are either almost there or due to arrive imminently."

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy spoke with South Korea's president Tuesday and agreed on deeper cooperation. Ukraine has been struggling with deepening manpower shortages over recent months and is embroiled in an unpopular debate about how to bolster the military's ranks.

On Tuesday, the Secretary of Ukraine's National Security Council Oleksandr Lytvynenko told Parliament that the army planned to recruit another 160,000 people. An AFP source said the recruitment would take place over three months.

Moscow also said it had wrested control of the nearby villages of Bogoyavlenska, Girmyk and Katerynivka, also in the Donetsk region, which President Vladimir Putin claimed was formally part of Russia in late 2022, the year Moscow invaded.

The gains announced by Moscow on Tuesday are just the latest in a string of Russian advances that have gained momentum

since February with the collapse of Ukraine's defences in the stronghold town of Avdiivka.

Russia has advanced 478 square kilometres (185 square miles) in October alone -- a record since March 2022 -- according to an AFP analysis of data from the American Institute for the Study of War.

Two-thirds of the Russian gains -- or 324 square kilometres -- were in the Donetsk region.

Zelenskyy said he had discussed North Korean troop deployment with South Korea's president, Yoon Suk Yeol.

Both countries, along with leaders of the NATO military alliance and the United States, are sounding the alarm over the transfer of some 10,000 North Korean troops to Russia.

"The conclusion is clear: this war is becoming internationalised, extending beyond two countries," Zelenskyy told the South Korean leader, according to a readout of the call released by Kyiv.

Yoon meanwhile said the involvement of North Korean troops in the Ukraine conflict was "unprecedented and dangerous" and warned about the potential transfer of sensitive military technology and combat experience from Moscow to Pyongyang.

Ukraine will host a delegation from South Korea to discuss the escalation in the near future, a high-ranking official at the Ukrainian presidency said.

"We expect to hear some sensitive details that cannot be conveyed over the phone. It's clear that we have to work more together in the face of what Pyongyang is doing," the official told AFP.

At the same time, North Korean Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui arrived in the far eastern Russian city of Vladivostok, TASS state news agency reported, citing a diplomatic source, who said that "tomorrow she will be in Moscow".

Deadly Israeli Strike in Gaza Amid Anger Over UN Agency Ban

GAZA (Dispatches) - An Israeli air strike on a single residential block killed nearly 100 people on Tuesday, Gaza's civil defense agency said, leaving rescuers scrambling for survivors as Israel pursued its offensives in Gaza and Lebanon.

Israel's key ally and backer the United States called the strike -- which killed a large number of children -- "horrifying".

The bombing came with Israel facing an international backlash after its parliament voted overwhelmingly to ban UNRWA, the main United Nations aid agency working with Palestinians in Gaza and the occupied West Bank.

Palestinian rescuers and desperate family members gathered around the demolished five-storey block in Beit Lahia in northern Gaza.

A charred body with long hair hung from an upper-storey window and bodies in blankets were lined up in the street as stunned relatives sought to identify loved ones.

"The number of martyrs in the massacre of the Abu Nasr family home in Beit Lahia has risen to 93 martyrs, and about 40 are still missing under the rubble," Gaza civil defence agency spokesman Mahmud Bassal told AFP.

Israel's military said it was "looking into the reports" of the strike. It earlier reported its forces had killed 40 Hamas fighters, and the loss of four soldiers in Gaza.

"The explosion happened at night and I first thought it was shelling, but when I went out after sunrise I saw people pulling bodies, limbs and the wounded from under the rubble," said Rabie al-Shandagly, 30.

"Most of the victims are women and children, and people are trying to save the injured, but there are no hospitals or proper medical care," he told AFP.

Washington expressed deep concern. "This was a horrifying incident with a horrifying result," State Department spokesman Matthew Miller told reporters.

"We have reached out to the government of Israel to ask what happened here."

Israel's military has been conducting a sweeping air and ground assault in northern Gaza since October 6 -- particularly around Jabalia, Beit Lahia and Beit Hanoun -- saying it aims to prevent Hamas regrouping.

Tens of thousands of Palestinians have fled the area, more than 12



months into the war sparked by Hamas militants launching a bloody cross-border assault into Israel on October 7 last year.

International concerns mounted after the Israeli parliament voted overwhelmingly to ban UNRWA, the UN agency for Palestinian refugees.

Israel strictly controls all humanitarian aid shipments into Gaza, and UNRWA has provided essential aid, schooling and healthcare across the Palestinian territories and in the diaspora for more than seven decades.

"There is a deep connection between the terrorist organisation (Hamas) and UNRWA, and Israel cannot put up with it," lawmaker Yuli Edelstein said in parliament as he presented the proposal.

But several of Israel's Western allies including the United States voiced deep disquiet.

Miller reiterated a warning to Israel that Washington could withhold military assistance without improvements in humanitarian aid into Gaza.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said London was "gravely concerned" and the French foreign ministry said it "very strongly regrets" the law.

Germany, a staunch defender of Israel's security, warned it would "effectively make UNRWA's work in Gaza, the West Bank and east Jerusalem impossible".

UN chief Antonio Guterres said the Israeli law could have "devastating consequences" if implemented.

In a letter he sent to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, seen by AFP, Guterres argued that under international law an occupying power must implement mechanisms for aiding the people living in that occupied territory.

"If Israel is not in a position to meet such needs, it has an obligation to allow and facilitate the activities of the United Nations," Guterres wrote.

Israel's neighbour Jordan, which also hosts UNRWA offices, condemned the ban as a "continuation of Israel's frantic efforts to assassinate the UN agency politically".

Netanyahu said on social media that Israel was "ready" to continue providing aid to Gaza "in a way that does not threaten Israel's security".

In Lebanon, Israeli tanks entered the outskirts of the village of Khiam, their deepest incursion yet in the ground operation they launched against Hezbollah last month, state media reported.

Late Tuesday, the health ministry said an Israeli strike on Sarafand in south Lebanon killed at least eight people.

Europe Will Pay a Big Price, Trump Warns on Tariffs



WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - Republican U.S. presidential candidate Donald Trump said on Tuesday the European Union would have to "pay a big price" for not buying enough American exports if he won the Nov. 5 election.

"I'll tell you what, the European Union sounds so nice, so lovely, right? All the nice European little countries that get together," Trump said during a rally in the battleground state of Pennsylvania, after promising to pass the "Trump reciprocal trade act."

"They don't take our cars. They don't take our farm products. They sell millions and millions of cars in the United States. No, no, no, they are going to have to pay a big price," he said.

Trump has vowed to impose a 10% tariff on imports from all countries, and 60% duties on imports from China. These would hit supply chains throughout the world, likely triggering retaliation and raising costs, economists warn.

He has unnerved democratically governed Taiwan by saying that Taiwan should pay the United States for its defence and that it had taken America's semiconductor business. The U.S. is bound by law to provide Chinese-claimed Taiwan with the means to defend itself despite the lack of formal diplomatic ties.

Democrat Kamala Harris warned tens of thousands of people gathered in Washington at her biggest rally on Tuesday that her Republican opponent Donald Trump was seeking unchecked power as their tightening race for the presidency entered its final week.

"This is someone who is unstable, obsessed with revenge, consumed with grievance and out for unchecked power," Harris said during what her campaign called her closing argument before a tightly contested Nov. 5 election.

EU's Extra Tariffs of Up to 35.3% on Chinese EVs Angers Beijing

BRUSSELS (Dispatches) - The EU's decision to impose hefty tariffs on Chinese-made electric cars prompted anger from Beijing on Wednesday, after an anti-subsidy probe concluded China's support undercut European automakers.

The extra taxes have been controversial, with strong opposition from Germany and Hungary amid fears of provoking China's ire and setting off a bitter trade war.

Beijing slammed the European Union's decision, saying it did not "agree with or accept" the tariffs and has filed a complaint under the World Trade Organization (WTO) dispute settlement mechanism.

"China will... take all necessary measures to firmly protect the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese companies," Beijing's commerce ministry said.

The EU trade chief Valdis Dombrovskis said Tuesday that "by adopting these proportionate and targeted measures after a rigorous investigation, we're standing up for fair market practices and for the European industrial



base".

"We welcome competition, including in the electric vehicle sector, but it must be underpinned by fairness and a level playing field," he said.

But Germany's main auto industry association warned the tariffs heighten the risk of "a far-reaching trade conflict", while a Chinese trade group slammed the "politically motivated" decision even as it urged dialogue between the two sides.

The duties will come on top of the current 10 percent on imports of electric vehicles from China.

The decision became law following its publication in the EU's official journal later on Tuesday and the duties will enter into force from Wednesday.

Brussels' probe found that China's state subsidies were unfairly undercutting European automakers.

Once they come into effect, the tariffs will be definitive and last for five years.

Mavericks Fend Off Timberwolves 120-114 in West Finals Rematch



MINNEAPOLIS (Dispatches) - Kyrie Irving scored 16 of his 35 points in the third quarter, Luka Doncic had a late surge to finish with 24 points, nine assists and eight rebounds, and the Dallas Mavericks held off the Minnesota Timberwolves 120-114 in the first rematch of last season's Western Conference finals.

Anthony Edwards had 24 of his 37 points in the first quarter to set a Target Center record, going 7 for 13 from 3-point range. He also went just 6 for 12 from the free-throw line.

Doncic put his stamp on the game with a 33-footer with 1:04 left to stretch the lead to eight points, barking at fans as he skipped back to the bench after a timeout. That was his only make in eight tries from behind the arc.

P.J. Washington added 17 points and eight rebounds for the Mavericks, who played on back-to-back nights after beating Utah 110-102 at home on Monday. Doncic went 5 for 22 from the floor and 1 for 9 from 3-point range for 15 points against the Jazz.

Julius Randle had 20 points, seven rebounds and seven assists for the Timberwolves.

With Doncic in a mini-slump, not only did the Mavericks get a superstar performance from Irving, the other half of their leading duo, they were especially active on defense with 12 steals.

The breathtaking first quarter by Edwards gave way to some sloppy stretches. Minnesota had 20 turnovers that led to 25 points for Dallas.

Irving went 6 for 8 from 3-point range, including a swish with 2:31 left and Randle tightly guarding him at the top of the key after the Timberwolves pulled within 109-107.

Meanwhile Devin Booker scored 33 points, Kevin Durant added 30 and the Phoenix Suns rallied to beat the Los Angeles Lakers 109-105.

The Lakers took an 83-76 advantage into the fourth, but couldn't hold on, suffering their first loss of the season after winning three in a row. Durant made back-to-back jumpers to give the Suns a 105-101 lead with 2:17 left.

LeBron James responded with a 3-pointer with 1:58 left to cut the margin to 105-104, but the Lakers never regained the lead. James finished with 11 points, narrowly extending his NBA-record streak of at least 10 points in a game to 1,226.

The Suns bounced back from an early 18-point deficit to get the win. The Lakers beat the Suns 123-116 on Friday at home after climbing out of an early 22-point hole.

Austin Reaves hit a 3-pointer with 5:16 left in the first quarter to give the Lakers a 26-8 lead, but the Suns rallied to take a 50-48 lead by halftime. L.A.'s Anthony Davis scored 20 points before the break on 9-of-14 shooting. He finished with 29.

Spanish Media Slams Real Madrid Over Ballon d'Or Boycott Masquerade

MADRID (Dispatches) - Spanish media said Tuesday that Real Madrid had cheapened themselves by boycotting the Ballon d'Or ceremony, with even the normally loyal Marca weighing in while Spain's national coach admitted it was "not good for football".

European champions Real announced their decision to skip Monday night's gala ceremony in Paris just hours before it took place after apparently learning that their Brazilian striker Vinicius had not won the men's award.

"This masquerade is unworthy of the greatest club in the world," said Marca, which is normally staunchly pro-Real, in an editorial, adding that the club had ignored its own mantra that calls on its players "to shake hands even when you lose".

In fact Real Madrid won other awards, including men's team of the year, but there was no one to collect them.

It was a big night for Spanish football in general with Manchester City and Spain midfielder Rodri and Barcelona's Aitana Bonmati collecting the men's and women's awards, but the seats left empty by Real's delegation cast a shadow over the event.

"It's not good for football for an entity like Real Madrid not to be present at a gala of this dimension," said Spain's Euro 2024-winning coach Luis de la Fuente on the red carpet.

Alfredo Relano, editor-in-chief of Spanish sports daily AS, one of the 100 journalists who voted for the Ballon d'Or, lamented that "the first Ballon d'Or for a Spanish player since 1960, which was keenly



awaited, did not provoke the state of collective excitement that was expected, but rather a controversial day".

Real Madrid are at loggerheads with UEFA over the proposed Super League, which the club support but which most other major European clubs have rejected, and they were quick to blame the European governing body for Vinicius missing out on the award.

"It is clear that Ballon d'Or-UEFA does not respect Real Madrid," they said on Monday. "And Real Madrid does not go where it is not respected."

Vincent Garcia, the editor-in-chief of France Football which organises the event, denied there was any anti-Vinicius or anti-Real Madrid conspiracy.

"UEFA has been involved in supporting the gala this year but it is France Football that awards the prize," he told L'Equipe. "There is no possibility of manipulation."

Garcia also offered a more rational explanation for Rodri, voted the best player at Euro 2024, taking the award.

"It was close," he said. "Vinicius certainly suffered from the presence of (fellow Madrid players) (Dani) Carvajal and (Jude) Bellingham in the top five, as that lost him some votes... which may have benefited Rodri."

Another potential explanation, raised by several specialist media, was the fact that voters were asked to consider the "fair play" aspect of a player's game.

This may have been detrimental to the occasionally temperamental and provocative Brazilian while benefiting the model image of Rodri.

Meanwhile, former Real Madrid president Ramon Calderon also lamented the club's absence from the awards ceremony by telling Sky Sports: "We are the greatest club in the world but we have to behave properly."

English Fans Don't Realize How Beautiful Premier League Football Is

LONDON (Dispatches) - Chelsea coach Enzo Maresca lauded the "beautiful" culture of English football, saying the excitement generated by the Premier League was unrivalled anywhere else in Europe.

Five of the 10 top-flight games in England last weekend saw the result change in stoppage time, including Brentford's 4-3 win over Ipswich and West Ham's 2-1 defeat of Manchester United — Erik ten Hag's last match as boss of the Red Devils.

Maresca, spared a dramatic climax to his team's 2-1 win against Newcastle, suggested supporters in England do not realize their good fortune.

"It's the reason why people are so in love with the Premier League," the Italian said. "You're from England, you don't realize how the Premier League is (viewed) abroad."

"One of the reasons why is that the game is never finished here. In different countries, my country for instance, if you're 2-0 up last five minutes, you can have five or six players that fall down for 20 seconds, half an hour. It's difficult to come back.



"In England it's a different culture. It's probably the reason why it's so beautiful."

Sunday's win was Chelsea's fifth in nine league games and left them fifth in the table, just a point adrift of a Champions League place as a youthful side continued their encouraging progress under Maresca.

"The club never mentioned to me about top four," he said. "They always said the target is to build something important for the next four, five years."

"For sure we're working every day to build something important. Could it be a pressure for the players? I don't think so, because if you go game by game you can see yourself where you are in that moment."

"If you start to think about top four or top six, you're thinking about May, June. For me it's too far."

Maresca has a fully fit squad ahead of re-match against Newcastle in the fourth round of the League Cup at St James' Park, with Wesley Fofana available despite landing awkwardly on his knee during the first half on Sunday.

Alcaraz Reveals Prize Money Attracted Him to Saudi's Six Kings Slam



LONDON (Dispatches) - Spain's Carlos Alcaraz said the record prize money on offer at the Six Kings Slam in Saudi Arabia earlier this month was a motivation for playing in the tournament as the world number two prepares for the Paris Masters.

Italian rival Jannik Sinner dismissed earlier claims that he joined the exhibition event for financial rewards, emphasising that he went to Riyadh for the sporting challenge.

However, Alcaraz acknowledged the financial aspect played a role as he earned \$1.5 million over four days in mid-October.

"I love playing tennis. You know, most of the time I don't think about the money. I just play for love or for fun. But you have to be realistic. You have to think that you want to earn money, you know, and that's it," Alcaraz told reporters on Monday.

"...in Arabia is the most highest prize money ever in the history, so that was a good motivation, at least for me."

The Spaniard has not experienced much success at the Paris Masters in recent years, with a quarter-final appearance being his best result. Alcaraz captured the French Open and Wimbledon titles this year but said that the season has taken its toll.

"I haven't played good tennis here in this tournament. Probably at the end of the year, I have been tired, or yeah, as I said last year, I had to understand that the season is still going after September," he said.

"The calendar is super tight, super demanding, as well. So coming to the last tournament of the year, probably I have been tired the last year, didn't play as well as I wanted, but coming to this year, I think I'm feeling different."

The top seeds begin their campaigns on Tuesday while some matches started earlier on Monday.

Sporting Confirms Man United Set to Sign Amorim After Ten Hag Axing



LONDON (Dispatches) - Sporting Lisbon confirmed that Manchester United's interest in signing their Portuguese coach Ruben Amorim after the English giants sacked Erik Ten Hag.

United pulled the plug on Dutchman Ten Hag's two-year reign on Monday after a 2-1 defeat by West Ham the previous day left one of the world's wealthiest clubs 14th in the Premier League.

Amorim, 39, quickly emerged as the leading contender to replace Ten Hag following the Red Devils' woeful start to the season.

And a statement issued by Portuguese club Sporting to the Lisbon stock exchange revealed United's willingness to meet his 10 million euro (approx. RM47 million) release clause.

"Manchester United have expressed their interest in recruiting coach Ruben Amorim and have said they are ready to pay the 10 million euro release clause," Sporting said.

Amorim was guarded when asked after Sporting's League Cup win against Nacional on Tuesday night if that was his farewell match with the club.

"Nobody knows whether this was my farewell match. Nothing is decided yet. So let's focus on analysis of the game," he said in the post-match interview, reported by sports daily A Bola.

Despite spending heavily in the transfer market in the summer, United have won one of their last eight games in all competitions.

Former United striker Ruud van Nistelrooy has been named interim boss but United appear to be concentrating on Amorim, who is considered one of Europe's leading young coaches.

He has won two Portuguese titles with Sporting since joining the club in March 2020.

Amorim had earlier dismissed the speculation when quizzed on Monday ahead of the League Cup match.

"I'm not going to talk about my future," he said. "I'm very proud to be the coach of Sporting Lisbon."

Brighton's Fabian Hurzeler, a young manager already making his way in the Premier League, was asked Tuesday what advice he'd give Amorim should he leave Portugal for Old Trafford.

"39 and he's eight years older than me," said Hurzeler. "He's already achieved great things in Portugal. I've seen some games of him, he plays incredible football."

Amorim was linked with the manager's role at Liverpool following the departure of Jurgen Klopp this year, but Dutch coach Arne Slot headed to Anfield instead.

The position of Ten Hag, 54, had been repeatedly called into question after United co-owner Jim Ratcliffe, who made overtures to other managers, retained him following an internal review at the end of last season when the club finished eighth in the league but won the FA Cup with a shock victory over Manchester City.

But United, who last won the Premier League in 2013, have shown little improvement this season.