

Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi Has Met With Chinese President Xi Jinping, Ahead of a Meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SSCO)

IRAN NEWS

Defense Minister Brigadier General Aziz Nasirzadeh Has Stressed That Iran Does Not Trust the Ceasefire, While It Has Different Scenarios for Any New Act of Adventurism

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President Warns Against Israel's Destabilizing Role in Region



TEHRAN - President Masoud Pezeshkian has warned against Israel's destructive role in the region, urging regional countries to foster unity to counter the regime's plots.

In a meeting with Iraqi Minister of Interior Abdul Amir al-Shammari in Tehran on Monday, Pezeshkian said the Israeli regime is disrupting peace and security in the region.

"The Zionist regime is the arrogant system's project to undermine, occupy, and plunder the resources of the [regional] countries and disintegrate the region," he added.

"We must stand united in the face of such a common enemy, support each other and vehemently avoid division and duality," he emphasized.

The president hailed fraternal Tehran-Baghdad relations, which are based on deep religious and cultural bonds, and noted that Iran would make further efforts to reinforce unity and coherence among Muslim nations.

He expressed Iran's readiness to bolster cooperation with Iraq in all fields.

The Iraqi interior minister, for his part, extended his congratulations to the Iranian people over their victorious resistance against the Israeli regime during its 12-day acts of aggression against the Islamic Republic.

Shammari said the Iraqi government is using its utmost capacities to host millions of pilgrims who plan to mark Arba'een, the 40th day after the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein, the third Shia Imam and the grandson of Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him).

Meanwhile later in the day, Pezeshkian emphasized the need for Muslim nations to present a united front against the Israeli regime, highlighting the importance of solidarity within the Islamic community.

SCO Expanding Global Presence, Will Soon Transcend Regional Framework



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi says the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is steadily expanding its global presence and moving beyond its regional framework.

Speaking upon his arrival in China on Tuesday, Araqchi confirmed his participation in the SCO's 25th Foreign Ministers' Council meeting, scheduled for Wednesday in Tianjin.

"The Shanghai Cooperation Organization is gradually expanding its global foothold, transcending its regional framework. The organization has incorporated a diverse range of issues into its agenda, spanning economic, political, and security dimensions," Araqchi said.

He added that the summit would finalize the organization's development strategy across key sectors, including energy and trade, while also providing a platform for discussions on pressing international issues.

"I will have bilateral meetings with the foreign ministers of China and Russia, which naturally have special importance in the current circumstances," he said, adding that he is also scheduled to hold bilateral meetings with fellow SCO member states to discuss mutual relations and regional developments.

Araqchi welcomes SCO statement on US-Israeli aggression against Iran

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK



TEHRAN - Government spokesperson Fatemeh Mohajerani emphasized on Tuesday that Iran is by no means seeking war, as evidenced by its history, but will never bow to oppression or surrender.

Speaking at her weekly press conference, Mohajerani said, "The main message the government aimed to convey to the world over the past few days was that we do not want war, but at the same time, we will not accept submission."

She added that this key stance was clearly communicated in diplomatic meetings and media interviews: "Our history shows we have never sought war, but we will not tolerate injustice and will certainly not surrender."

Mohajerani stressed that the government would do everything in its power to ensure citizens enjoy the best possible quality of life.

"Our country's geographical location has repeatedly exposed us to enemy attacks," she noted. "But what has kept the Iranian people resilient is the nation's deep cultural roots and enduring identity."

She added, "Yesterday, the President's message to Iranians abroad emphasized that the people are the true owners of this country and its beating heart. Despite psychological and economic pressures, the world witnessed the historical unity of the Iranian nation, which has made it clear it will not allow foreign interference."

In response to a question about damages from the recent 12-day imposed war and the possibility of revising the 2025 budget, Mohajerani said: "We do not yet have a full assessment of the damages, especially in infrastructure. Therefore, for now, there is no need to amend the 2025 budget, but if necessary, this will be done."

Asked about the number of people affected psychologically by the recent conflict, she replied: "We have around 5,600 injured, and the Ministry of Health needs to examine how many of them are experiencing mental health issues."

She added that the government's 4030 hotline had received about 92,000 calls, and psychology experts had fully committed to helping those in need.

Mohajerani also addressed the recent offensive remarks by the US president against Iran's Supreme Leader. "Naturally, our society is angered by such insults," she said. "Religious scholars, as influential members of society, responded by issuing a fatwa. The government's official position

will be announced separately, and we will pursue this matter seriously through international legal channels."

She noted that the fatwa was issued specifically in reaction to these insults, highlighting that prominent figures like Ayatollah Sistani and Bosnia's Grand Mufti were among the first to respond. Regarding internet restrictions during the recent conflict, Mohajerani said: "From the beginning, our government's approach has supported open internet access. However, during the 12-day sacred defense, some drones that attacked civilians were guided via the internet. Naturally, to protect public safety, we temporarily migrated to the national internet, and as you saw, we later reverted."

"For the government, the key is to ensure that accurate information is conveyed," she explained. "If you were in our position, forced to choose between public safety and unrestricted news distribution, naturally, everyone would choose people's safety. But again, our policy remains in favor of open internet."

When asked about lifting the Telegram ban, she replied: "As I have said before, the government is not seeking to restrict the internet. However, the current situation and actions of the Zionist regime have unfortunately strengthened the arguments of those opposing the government's open internet policy."

Mohajerani urged journalists to help coin a new term instead of using "12-Day War." "Let's come together and find an alternative. It doesn't feel right to use terminology created by others, like 'Six-Day War' or '33-Day War.' Perhaps our own term, like '12-Day Sacred Defense,' would better reflect our narrative."

She continued, "We have a rich vocabulary, and it's worth starting a campaign to replace this term."

Reaffirming the government's support for free internet, she emphasized that until broader issues are resolved, journalists who need freer access should be accommodated. "People's right to open internet access remains our principle."

In conclusion, Mohajerani expressed her gratitude to the country's armed forces for their steadfast resistance against the Zionist enemy. "You have showcased a vital dimension of our national strength, and every Iranian is grateful to you. Some of the defense sector's needs have been included in the 2025 budget, and if more is required, it can be addressed through the office of the Commander-in-Chief."

Who Benefits Seeking Negotiation?



By Hamid Reza Naghashian

Twelve days of war with the U.S., decisively and undeniably orchestrated by the Zionist regime and supported by Western and Arab states backing the bloodthirsty Zionist regime, have melted the frozen zeal of those in Iran who lack honor but have not become un-Iranian.

The rotten and diseased minds of the Westernized deities residing in this land, under any pretext, have been pushing for negotiations with the U.S. in this period following the twelve-day war. For 47 years, our revolution has been plagued by a challenge that has caused all the miseries of our ailing economy. These people consider the "village head" (the U.S.) as God, hiding their true intentions behind the term "village head."

From them, nothing has been seen but the accumulation of wealth and bowing to the zeros of their ill-gotten fortunes, perceived through the lens of Western groveling. They are the ones who have created the class divide among the people of Iran today.

If only it were possible to measure the bowl of zeal, it would become clear that honor and dignity have no meaning in their bowl.

In reality, one must ask: How can you sit at the same table, or even indirectly engage in dialogue and exchange views, with the devilish germs who have shed the blood of our dearest scientists and commanders? Either you do not understand the meaning of dignity, or you pretend ignorance, and under the guise of diplomatic excuses, you fail to see the enemy's goals. Did you not realize that the enemy intended to destroy you?

Is it not true that the enemy openly planned to turn you into another Libya and rehearsed dismantling your 47-year-old authority? Did they not deceive the entire West to ensure no Iranian monogamous Iranian remains within a 24-hour period? Yet you still think of sitting face-to-face with them. How foolish to believe the war is over and that peace can now be considered?

Woe to you who did not see the hand of God and the Awaited Savior (Imam Mahdi, may his return be hastened) emerging from the sleeve of our supreme and unparalleled Leader?

Oh God, when will these germs of humiliation and wretchedness pack their bags and leave this land for their beloved "civilized" West? Their impure and irredeemable minds have left no room for understanding today's civilizational war between us and the West. Perhaps as long as they remain, the ground for the Savior's appearance will continue to be delayed. These parties, which lack followers and are mostly paper entities, have amassed wealth and use it to make grand claims.

Islamic Iran today, with its unparalleled unity around the ethos of resistance and defense, will one day sift these people through its sieve and confiscate their ill-gotten wealth for the benefit of the nation. The Iranian nation, awakened after the war, has no doubt that many of these individuals drink from the West's fountain and have no sense of homeland. As the late Imam Khomeini (may God's mercy be upon him) said, their numbers are few, but their claims are vast.

The German Chancellor spoke the truth when she said the Zionist regime carries out the dirty deeds desired by the West. And indeed, these people whitewash those same dirty deeds of the West within our borders, justifying them with diplomacy. Their fear that the national unity and cohesion forged under the imposed twelve-day war may no longer allow the West to set foot in Iran has left them trembling.

Can the Iranian nation, with its exemplary strength and resilience, remain indifferent to Trump's rhetoric of "death to Iran again" so that you may fulfill your desires?

The West waged a war against us that further exposed its true nature. This nation is moving forward to pave its path of independence without the West, relying solely on God, and to make its civilizational tree stronger than ever, visible to the world.

We will build Iran with valor and without begging from the West, and for this building, we will not think of negotiations.

2.5s

Aref: We Reject Unethical or Domineering Uses of Technology

TEHRAN - Iran's First Vice President, Mohammad Reza Aref, emphasized that the country's use of technology is focused solely on public welfare and improving citizens' lives, not on unethical or hegemonic purposes. Speaking at a meeting with managers of major retail distribution chains, Aref said Iran must show through negotiations that the West's conduct in nuclear talks has been driven by political motives rather than genuine engagement.

"We use technology to bring peace and a better life to the people. We do not seek unethical or domineering applications of technology," Aref stated.

Reflecting on the recent 12-day conflict, Aref noted that Iran faced its adversaries on multiple fronts. "Our victories in the economic and social arenas were no less significant than our achievements on the military front. The enemy assumed that a swift strike against our military would be followed by domestic unrest that could topple the government. Instead, what emerged was a single, united voice from the people of Iran," he said.

Aref praised the managers and staff of the economic front for maintaining stability during the crisis. "Thanks to your round-the-clock efforts, there was no rush on stores or panic buying. Shelves remained stocked, and shops continued operating as usual," he said.

He described Iran's merchant class as historically devout and deeply trusted by the public, especially in times of hardship. This spirit, he added, spread across distribution networks, which voluntarily reduced prices, sold products at cost, or even provided free goods in disadvantaged regions — actions that Aref called "a true source of pride for the nation."

He also commended distribution companies for going beyond their commercial duties to fulfill national responsibilities. "While profit is natural for any economic enterprise, in times of crisis these companies also adapted to meet national needs. For instance, during the COVID-19 pandemic, some manufacturers converted production lines to produce masks, eventually turning Iran into an exporter," he said.

Regarding the temporary ceasefire, Aref cautioned against complacency. "We place no trust in the adversary, as the nature of this malicious regime and its Western backers leaves no room for trust," he warned. He explained that the government, foreseeing challenges, had prepared a "wartime economic plan" early in the current administration, which proved crucial during the



12-day conflict.

He urged that while entering talks based on "dignity, wisdom, and expediency," Iran must remain fully prepared across all sectors. "Victory on the defensive front relies on unwavering support from the economic and social fronts," he added.

Recounting the early days of the conflict, Aref shared that the government acted swiftly to keep trade flowing. "We immediately ordered ports to be cleared, which doubled the volume of goods unloaded compared to pre-conflict days. Truck drivers, who had previously raised grievances, set those aside and kept working without even asking for payment up front — a testament to the resilience of the Iranian people," he said.

Aref reaffirmed the government's strategy to delegate responsibilities to the private sector and provincial authorities. "The private sector is the main stakeholder, and we aim for broad, unified management with independent decisions tailored to local needs," he said.

He stressed the importance of planning for adequate storage and production of essential goods, and addressing imbalances in power and water supplies. "While the government plans to add 30,000 megawatts of solar power, the efficiency of current technology is only about 30%. We must ensure that investment in these technologies meets public needs without creating new burdens," he noted.

Aref concluded by reiterating Iran's stance: "We will harness all technologies to improve people's lives and well-being, but we reject unethical or domineering uses. And through negotiations, we must show that Western conduct has been part of a political game."

He directed the ministries of Industry, Agriculture, the Plan and Budget Organization, and the Central Bank to, within ten days, review and compile recommendations made by distribution managers — particularly those supporting more privatization.

Highlighting the 14th administration's increased engagement with neighbors and Eurasian nations, Aref called for the private sector to play a larger role in regional trade. "The government's policy is to use neighboring countries to safeguard our supply of essential goods, drawing on the strengths of the economic front," he said.

IRAN NEWS



First VP Emphasizes Need to Attract Foreign Investment, Overseas Iranians' Capital

TEHRAN (IRNA) - The First Vice President has underscored the importance of attracting foreign investment and investments from Iranians living abroad to achieve the goals of the Seventh Development Plan.

Mohammad Reza Aref, speaking at the 15th meeting of the Supreme Council for Steering the Seventh Development Plan—which was attended by the ministers of Justice; Culture and Islamic Guidance; Economic Affairs and Finance; the Secretary of the Cabinet; the heads of the Planning and Budget Organization and the Central Bank; the government spokesperson; and other officials—highlighted the need to attract foreign investors and capital from the Iranian diaspora. He stressed the importance of ensuring investors feel confident about investing within the country through cooperation among various branches and institutions.

Iran Committed to Diplomacy, Opposed to War



TEHRAN - President Masoud Pezeshkian has reaffirmed his government's dedication to pursuing diplomacy and constructive engagement, stressing that Iran remains committed to peace while firmly defending its national rights.

In a message addressed to Iranians living abroad, Pezeshkian described the recent 12-day conflict as a major national test that revealed the deep unity between the people and the government. "We believe the window of diplomacy remains open, and we will continue this peaceful path seriously, mobilizing all political resources," he wrote. "We support diplomacy and constructive engagement and oppose war. To keep war away from our country, we will draw on all political and diplomatic assets while defending the natural rights of the Iranian nation."

The president acknowledged that the conflict brought psychological pressure and hardships but noted that it also demonstrated "one of the rarest displays of public participation, national consensus, and social cohesion in contemporary Iranian history." Iranians inside and outside the country, he added, "stood as one hand against the aggressor and imposed their will on the enemy."

Pezeshkian highlighted the "calm, wisdom, and steadfastness" of Iran's Supreme Leader from the first day of the conflict, which helped create a national mobilization and reinforced the unity of the Islamic system.

Looking ahead, he called for "a new chapter of hope and movement towards a safer, calmer, and stronger Iran," which he said could only be achieved through national solidarity, the energy of young people, and fresh ideas. He stressed the importance of critically examining the past and rebuilding hope to create new paths forward through cooperation and nationality.

Addressing the international context, Pezeshkian noted that Iran had been engaged in negotiations with the United States to address misunderstandings and demonstrate the peaceful nature of its nuclear activities when Israel, backed by the U.S., launched its attack. The assault, he said, claimed the lives of military commanders, nuclear scientists, and innocent civilians, including women and children. "We have always declared that our nuclear doctrine is peaceful," he stressed, accusing Israel of intervening whenever Iran seeks peace and stability.

Iran, Iraq Form Joint Committees for Arbaeen Pilgrimage as Pakistan Pledges Cooperation

TEHRAN - In a high-level trilateral meeting in Tehran, the interior ministers of Iran, Iraq, and Pakistan reaffirmed their commitment to ensuring the security, orderliness, and dignity of this year's Arbaeen pilgrimage, which annually draws millions of pilgrims from around the world to Iraq.

At the meeting, held at the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) Hall in Iran's Ministry of Interior, Iraqi Interior Minister Abdul Amir al-Shammari announced the establishment of two joint committees between Iraq and the Islamic Republic of Iran—one focusing on security and the other on service provision. These committees are tasked with addressing all matters related to facilitating the Arbaeen pilgrimage for visitors of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him).

Al-Shammari underscored the deep cultural, religious, and social ties that bind Iraq and Iran, describing the Arbaeen pilgrimage as a shared heritage that transcends national borders. "Every year, around five million pilgrims from various Islamic and non-Islamic countries visit Iraq during Arbaeen," he said, adding that these efforts are directly supported by Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia' Al-Sudani.

Highlighting Iraq's readiness to collaborate further, al-Shammari said that Baghdad would work closely with Tehran to ensure Pakistani pilgrims traveling through Iran can complete their pilgrimage safely and peacefully. "We have made considerable progress in recent years, and these joint committees will continue to oversee and improve the experience of the pilgrims," he noted.

Iran's Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni opened the meeting by thanking his counterparts from Iraq and Pakistan for their participation. He highlighted the shared resolve of the three countries to organize a "safe, peaceful, and grand" Arbaeen event. "For the Islamic Republic of Iran, Arbaeen is more than a religious gathering—it is an expression of faith, regional solidarity, and an opportunity to deepen cooperation," Momeni stressed.

Momeni also praised Iraq's government and people for their tireless hospitality and especially acknowledged Minister al-Shammari for his efforts to ease the challenges pilgrims often face. He pointed out the crucial role of collaborative mechanisms in areas such as consular services, currency exchange, transport logistics, and security, explaining that agreements made at the deputy ministers' and committee levels would serve as the operational foundation during the pilgrimage.

"Our efforts aim to preserve the dignity of the pilgrims, manage large crowds, and ensure their safety," Momeni stated. "The participation of high-ranking delegations from Iraq and Pakistan today reflects a genuine determination for trilateral cooperation."

Turning to recent geopolitical tensions, Momeni condemned the Israeli military



offensive against Iran, which resulted in civilian casualties, including women and children, as well as the deaths of senior security commanders and scientists. "These attacks violate international law and human principles," he said. "Iran exercised its legitimate right to defend itself and responded decisively."

He thanked Iraq and Pakistan for condemning the Israeli aggression and standing by Iran's right to self-defense. "This unity shows the political solidarity and shared resolve of our nations in the face of common threats," Momeni concluded, adding that ensuring the security of Arbaeen pilgrims is inseparable from broader regional stability.

Pakistan's Interior Minister Syed Mohsin Naqvi also addressed the gathering, expressing appreciation to Iran for hosting the meeting and reaffirming Islamabad's commitment to collaborate on the pilgrimage. "We have already reached agreements in earlier meetings regarding the facilitation of Pakistani pilgrims," he said.

Naqvi congratulated Iran on what he described as its victory in the recent 12-day conflict with Israel and praised Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, for guiding the country through this period. "Pakistan firmly condemned the Israeli attacks and fully supported Iran's right to defend itself," he declared.

Focusing on practical measures, Naqvi explained that Arbaeen involves the movement of large numbers of people over extended days, which presents complex logistical and security challenges. "We are fully committed to supporting the efforts of Iran and Iraq and will not withhold any assistance," he said.

Naqvi announced a new policy: starting January 2026, Pakistani citizens will only be allowed to leave Iraq after Arbaeen if they hold the necessary official permits. "We ask all Pakistani pilgrims to ensure they carry their passports when entering Iraq," he added.

He also shared plans to deploy monitoring teams to ensure pilgrims traveling in groups return with the same groups, preventing unauthorized stays. "We emphasize organized group management to help Iraq enforce its border and security protocols," Naqvi said, thanking Iran and Iraq for supporting the millions of pilgrims who make this journey.

The meeting also included input from governors of six Iranian provinces—Ilam, Kermanshah, Khuzestan, Kurdistan, Sistan-Baluchestan, and West Azerbaijan—that serve as transit points or host facilities for Arbaeen pilgrims. They shared practical proposals to further streamline pilgrim movements and services.

As this year's Arbaeen pilgrimage approaches, the coordinated efforts of Iran, Iraq, and Pakistan underline a shared vision: to uphold the spiritual essence of the event while ensuring safety, dignity, and order for millions of pilgrims who come together in one of the world's largest annual gatherings.

Iran Ranks Fourth Globally in Registering GIAHS Sites



TEHRAN - According to the Ministry of Agriculture Jihad, Iran has so far succeeded in registering six Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS), placing the country alongside Spain in fourth place worldwide in this field.

As reported on Monday by the Ministry of Agriculture Jihad, Iran's GIAHS focal point within the FAO — the Agricultural Planning, Economic and Rural Development Research Institute — has registered six of Iran's agricultural heritage systems with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). This achievement ranks Iran and Spain fourth globally, following China, Japan, and South Korea.

In its latest announcement, FAO has added new sites in South Korea, Portugal, and Tajikistan to the list of GIAHS.

In South Korea, the newly recognized sites include the traditional "Jukbangnyeom" fishery system in the Jijeok Strait. This unique fishing method uses special wooden structures to reflect the deep-rooted interaction between humans and marine resources in Korea's coastal regions.

Another recognized site in South Korea is the traditional pine forest agroforestry system in Uljin. Designed around the sustainable coexistence of pine trees, agricultural activities, and natural resource conservation, this system plays an important role in local livelihoods and ecosystem preservation.

In Portugal, the newly listed site is the "Montado" agrosilvopastoral system in the Serpa highlands. This multifunctional system combines agriculture, forestry, and livestock farming, offering a unique landscape that showcases traditional knowledge and regional biodiversity in southern Portugal.

In Tajikistan, the newly recognized "Almassy Valley" site features an integrated livestock and agricultural system adapted to the mountainous terrain. Relying on traditional practices, this dynamic system helps local communities maintain sustainable livelihoods in the face of climate change.

Khorramabad Valley Added to UNESCO World Heritage List through Blend of Archaeological Expertise and Cultural Diplomacy



TEHRAN - In a landmark achievement for Iran, Khorramabad Valley—dating back over 60,000 years—has been inscribed as the country's 29th entry on UNESCO's World Heritage List. The announcement was made during a press conference attended by officials from Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, as well as the governor of Lorestan Province. This recognition is expected to boost sustainable tourism and further promote Iran's rich cultural legacy on the global stage.

Farhad Azizi, Director of World Heritage Sites at the ministry, described the listing as the result of a "complex and highly technical process," highlighting Iran's growing influence in international cultural affairs. He expressed hope that strengthened collaboration with local authorities would enhance preservation efforts, particularly around the Falak-ol-Aflak Castle—a national landmark that plays a key role in narrating the region's history.

Lorestan Governor Seyed Saeed Shahrokhi congratulated the people of Iran, especially residents of the historic valley, calling the listing "a great national honor." He noted Khorramabad Valley's significance as one of the earliest known habitats of modern humans, which helped draw UNESCO's attention. The province itself boasts over 5,000 valuable historical and natural sites, with 2,600 nationally registered, including 14 located within Khorramabad Valley.

First Meeting of Iran's Economic Dialogue Council Held With New Economy Minister

TEHRAN - In his first official appearance at the Government-Private Sector Dialogue Council, Iran's new Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance, Ali Madanizadeh, outlined his ministry's top priority: strengthening the real private sector and increasing public participation in the national economy.

The meeting, hosted at Iran's Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture, opened with condolences from Madanizadeh for the recent loss of civilians, military commanders, and nuclear scientists during the recent twelve-day conflict. He emphasized that his term at the ministry begins under the shadow of war, which has already caused significant human and economic losses.

Madanizadeh highlighted the government's swift wartime response to protect the economy and ensure the steady supply of essential goods to the public. He praised the solidarity and coordination among government institutions, producers, business associations, and the broader private sector, noting their efforts helped ease the public's concerns about shortages in basic necessities.

Acknowledging the broader economic damage from the conflict, Madanizadeh explained that businesses suffered reduced activity levels, leading to a decline in both supply and demand. "We observed a domino effect," he said, warning that without proper planning, these economic disruptions could persist. He stressed the need for accurate risk perception, explaining that if people overestimate risks, it discourages investment—a critical issue in a year designated as the "Year of Investment for Production."

To address these challenges, Madanizadeh announced new government support packages aimed at large industries, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and trade associations. He expressed



hope that these measures would help mitigate the war-related damages over time.

Outlining his main agenda, the minister emphasized a strategy of reducing state involvement and promoting genuine privatization. "We must transfer not only ownership but also management to the private sector so it can truly expand," he said. Additionally, he announced plans to revitalize state-owned assets, reform the country's financial systems, and strengthen the role of capital markets. Currently, he noted, Iran's production sector relies too heavily on bank financing, and there is a serious plan

to boost capital market contributions.

During the meeting, Samad Hassanzadeh, President of Iran's Chamber of Commerce and Secretary of the Dialogue Council, also paid tribute to those killed in the conflict. He commended the private sector's "responsible and coordinated" response in managing production and distribution under wartime conditions. Hassanzadeh praised the Iranian people's national solidarity, which he said helped prevent widespread economic hardship.

Keyvan Kashefi, Deputy Chair of the Dialogue Council, stressed the importance of implementing the council's decisions promptly. By law, the government must address these decisions within 30 days, yet Kashefi noted this deadline is sometimes missed. He recommended that the minister include provincial dialogue council meetings in his travels to better address regional economic challenges.

The meeting reflected shared resolve between the government and private sector to stabilize Iran's economy and pursue long-term reforms despite recent adversities. Madanizadeh concluded by reiterating his commitment to empower the private sector as the engine of economic growth.

Gov't Outlines 14 Compensation Plans to Revive Tourism After War



TEHRAN - Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts has announced the development of 14 targeted and comprehensive recovery programs to compensate for damages caused by the recent 12-day war. Emphasizing the unique role of tourism in rebuilding national hope, he stated that the government now stands firmly beside both his ministry and the private sector with a problem-solving approach.

Seyed Reza Salehi Amiri, at a consultative meeting with senior economic officials, representatives of professional associations, and private sector stakeholders in tourism and handicrafts, revealed these 14 compensation packages aimed at reviving the sector in the post-war period.

"Tourism is both the most vulnerable sector and, at the same time, the first area to regenerate in crisis situations," he noted.

The minister explained that during the 12-day war, part of the country's tourism and handicrafts capacity and opportunities were damaged.

"Immediately and tirelessly, in cooperation with key economic institutions, we began drafting recovery plans. Today, these 14 support programs are finalized and ready for implementation."

Highlighting the significant growth in international tourism before the crisis, Salehi Amiri said:

Romanian Gov't Survives No Confidence Vote, Pushes Tax Hikes Through

BUCHAREST (Dispatches) - Romanian Prime Minister Ilie Bolojan's three-week old coalition government survived a no confidence vote on Monday, allowing it to push through unpopular tax hikes needed to lower the European Union's largest budget deficit. The government has fast-tracked through parliament an increase in value-added tax, excise duties and other levies from August to prevent a ratings downgrade to below investment level and to unblock access to EU funds. The broad coalition of four pro-European parties took power at the end of June, ending months of political deadlock after a presidential election was cancelled in December and was re-run in May.



Berlin Pledges Decision on Patriots for Kyiv Within Days or Weeks



WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - Berlin and Washington will take a decision about sending two U.S.-made Patriot air defense systems to Kyiv within days or weeks, German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius said on Monday after talks with U.S. Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth.

Germany has offered to buy U.S. Patriot units to supply them to Ukraine which has suffered some of the heaviest Russian attacks of the war over the past weeks.

Speaking in Washington, Pistorius said talks would continue at the working level to finalize details, including the number of launchers and missiles that might be included in the agreement.

With a deal in place, the first Patriot unit could be sent to Ukraine within months, he said. He declined to comment on whether the talks also addressed offensive weapons for Kyiv.

Germany has donated three of its own Patriot units to Kyiv, retaining nine systems - much fewer than the 36 Patriot batteries it had at the height of the Cold War.

Pistorius received a warm welcome in Washington, reflecting Germany's evolving role as a major contributor to NATO's largest military buildup since the Cold War after being a laggard in defense spending for decades.

As European officials fret over a possible future attack from Russia and brace for a drawdown of U.S. forces, Germany loosened its constitutional debt brake to meet NATO's new core military spending target of 3.5% of national output by 2029.

The move will boost German defense spending to 162 billion euros (\$189 billion) in 2029 from 95 billion euros in the draft budget for 2025.

Pistorius said Berlin had sent a letter of request to Washington for the purchase of U.S. Typhon missile launchers, with a decision on whether to place an order to be taken later.

Portugal Aims to Reach NATO's Defense Spending Goal Without Harming Finances



LISBON (Dispatches) - Portugal is preparing a "credible" plan of gradual annual increases in defense spending to reach NATO's new target of 5% of gross domestic product by 2035 without jeopardizing its finances, the country's prime minister said on Monday.

Luis Montenegro said that despite very large planned defense expenditures, he counted on the economy's ability to create more wealth and on the return from those investments to the rest of the economy.

"Portugal wants to make small annual increases that translate into a credible upward trajectory to reach the 5% target by 2035. We will manage it in an appropriate way for state budget execution", he told a conference on defense.

At a NATO summit in The Hague three weeks ago, leaders agreed to hike the alliance's defense spending target to 5% over the next decade, with 3.5% dedicated to core defense and 1.5% to dual-use investments, such as infrastructure.

The objective will be reassessed in 2029.

Montenegro said Portugal and Europe "need to increase their capabilities and Europe needs more strategic autonomy".

Portugal needs to boost its maritime and air capacity as it has a huge coastline and one of the largest exclusive economic zones in the world, he said.

The Portuguese government said a month ago that it would increase its defense spending to 2% of GDP this year, four years ahead of schedule.

"The objective is ambitious, but it's more ambitious in its material execution than in its financial execution", Montenegro said.

Trump Allocates Arms for Ukraine, Threatens Russia With Tariffs If No Truce in 50 Days

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - During an Oval Office meeting with NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte on Monday, U.S. President Donald Trump said he would punish Russia and its allies with tariffs if there is no Ukraine peace agreement within 50 days. Trump and Rutte also unveiled a deal under which NATO would buy U.S. arms to send to Ukraine.

"We're going to be doing very severe tariffs if we don't have a deal in 50 days, tariffs at about 100 percent," U.S. President Trump said.

He gave few details on how they would be implemented, but said they would be "secondary tariffs," meaning they would target Russia's trading partners in an effort to isolate Moscow in the global economy.

"I use trade for a lot of things," he added. "But it's great for settling wars."

Trump and Rutte also unveiled a deal under which the NATO military alliance would buy arms from the United States - including Patriot anti-missile batteries - and then distribute them to Ukraine to help it battle Russia's invasion.

"This is billions of dollars' worth of military equipment is going to be purchased from the United States, going to NATO ... and that's going to be quickly distributed to the battlefield," Trump said.

Rutte, a former Dutch prime minister, said Ukraine would get "massive numbers" of weapons under the deal.

He added Germany, Finland, Canada, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom and Denmark would be among the buyers to supply Ukraine. He said "speed is of the essence here," and said the shipments should make Putin "reconsider" peace negotiations.

While the EU is not allowed under its treaties to buy weapons, individual EU member countries can and are, just as NATO member countries are buying and sending weapons.

The EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said Trump's deadline for Russia to end its war with Ukraine, while "very positive", was too far into the future.

"Fifty days is a very long time if we see that they are killing innocent civilians every day," Kallas said.

The announcements came amid a diplomatic flurry on Monday in Kyiv, where Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky said he hosted US special envoy Keith Kellogg for "productive" talks on air defence and sanctions on Russia.

Rutte also planned to hold talks with US Defense Secretary Hegseth and Secretary of State Marco Rubio as well as members of Congress.

The U.S. president's announcement of the much-needed weapons for Ukraine came after he earlier said he would make a "major statement ... on Russia" on Monday.

Trump said on Sunday he would send Patriot air defense missiles to Ukraine, saying they are necessary to defend the country because Russian President Vladimir Putin "talks nice but then he bombs everybody in the evening".

Moscow's offensive on Ukraine has lasted for more than three years, with attacks intensifying this summer and US-led negotiations so far yielding no results to end the fighting.

"We will send them Patriots, which they desperately need," Trump said, without specifying how many weapons he would send to Ukraine.

"I haven't agreed on the number yet, but they're going to have some because they do need protection," he told reporters at Joint Base Andrews on Sunday as he returned from watching the FIFA Club World Cup final in New Jersey.

The administration has U-turned from an announcement earlier this month that it would pause some arms deliveries to Kyiv, instead announcing a new deal which would involve NATO paying the United States for some of the weapons it sends to Ukraine.

"We basically are going to send them various pieces of very sophisticated military and they're going to pay us 100 percent for them," Trump said.

"It'll be business for us," he added.

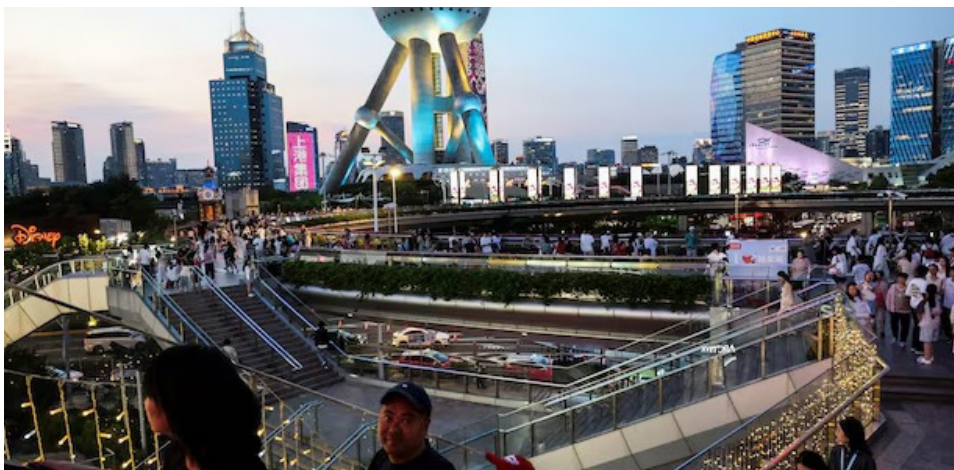
Trump also repeated that he was "disappointed" in the Russian leader, as he grows increasingly exasperated with Putin.

"Putin really surprised a lot of people. He talks nice and then he bombs everybody in the evening," said Trump.

When he first returned to the White House in January, Trump insisted he could work with the Russian leader to end the war, holding off on hiking sanctions unlike European allies.

But Russia has for months refused a ceasefire proposed by the United States and Kyiv.

China's Second-Quarter GDP Growth Tops Forecast



BEIJING (Dispatches) - China's economy slowed in the second quarter even as it topped market forecast in a show of resilience against U.S. tariffs, though analysts warn of underlying weakness and rising risks that will ramp up pressure on Beijing to roll out more stimulus.

The world's No. 2 economy has so far avoided a sharp slowdown in part due to a fragile U.S.-China trade truce and policy support, but markets are bracing for a weaker second half as exports lose momentum, prices continue to fall, and consumer confidence remains low.

Data on Tuesday showed China's gross domestic product (GDP) grew 5.2% in the April-June quarter from a year earlier, slowing from 5.4% in the first quarter, but just ahead of analysts' expectations in a Reuters poll for a rise of 5.1%.

"China achieved growth above the official target of 5% in Q2 partly because of front loading of exports," said Zhiwei Zhang, chief economist at Pinpoint Asset Management.

"The above target growth in Q1 and Q2 give the government room to tolerate some slowdown in the second half of the year."

On a quarterly basis, GDP grew 1.1% in April-June, the National Bureau of Statistics data showed, compared with a forecast 0.9% increase and a 1.2% gain in the previous quarter.

Investors are closely watching for signs of fresh stimulus at the upcoming Politburo meeting due in late July, which is likely to shape economic policy for the remainder of the year.

Beijing has ramped up infrastructure spending and consumer subsidies, alongside steady monetary easing. In May, the central bank cut interest rates and

injected liquidity as part of broader efforts to cushion the economy from U.S. President Donald Trump's trade tariffs.

Further monetary easing is expected in the coming months, while some analysts believe the government could ramp up deficit spending if growth slows sharply.

But China observers and analysts say stimulus alone may not be enough to tackle entrenched deflationary pressures, with producer prices in June falling at their fastest pace in nearly two years.

Zichun Huang, China economist at Capital Economics, said the GDP data "probably still overstate the strength of growth."

"And with exports set to slow and the tailwind from fiscal support on course to fade, growth is likely to slow further during the second half of this year."

Data on Monday showed China's exports regained some momentum in June while imports rebounded, as factories rushed out shipments to capitalise on a fragile tariff truce between Beijing and Washington ahead of a looming August deadline.

China is aiming for full-year growth of around 5%.

The latest Reuters poll projected GDP growth to slow to 4.5% in the third quarter and 4.0% in the fourth, underscoring mounting economic headwinds as U.S. President Donald Trump's global trade war leaves Beijing with the tough task of getting households to spend more at a time of uncertainty.

China's 2025 GDP growth is forecast to cool to 4.6% - falling short of the official goal - from last year's 5.0% and ease even further to 4.2% in 2026, according to the poll.

June activity data also released on Tuesday painted a mixed picture: industrial output grew 6.8% year-on-year in June, quickening from the 5.8% pace in May and

beating forecasts, but retail sales growth slowed down.

Fixed-asset investment grew 2.8% in the first six months from a year earlier, slowing from 3.7% in January-May and missing analysts' forecast of 3.6%.

China's property downturn remained a drag on overall growth, with investment in the sector falling 11.2% year-on-year in the first six months, after slumping 10.7% in January-May.

New home prices in June tumbled at the fastest monthly pace in eight months, separate data showed on Tuesday, underscoring the challenges policymakers face in reviving demand in the sluggish sector even after multiple rounds of support policies.

EU Threatens Retaliatory Levy on Billions in U.S. Goods After Trump's Surprise 30% Tariffs

BRUSSELS (Dispatches) - The European Commission on Monday said it was putting forward a new list of US goods worth 72 billion euros (\$84 billion) that could be targeted by EU levies if tariff talks with Washington fail.

The bloc's trade chief, Commissioner Maros Sefcovic, announced the proposal, "accounting for some 72 billion euros' worth of US imports", at a meeting with EU ministers in Brussels.

The move came after US President Donald Trump threw months of painstaking negotiations with the EU into disarray by threatening to impose tariffs of 30 percent on the bloc's goods if there is no deal by August 1.

EU trade ministers agreed they were still keen to secure an agreement with Washington before that deadline to head off the damaging duties.



But at the same time Brussels is moving to ready potential retaliation if Trump presses ahead with the sweeping tariffs.

"There was a total unified position among the ministers that we should be ready to respond if needed," said Denmark's foreign minister, Lars Lokke Rasmussen, whose country holds the EU's rotating presidency.

The EU has already prepared a separate list of US imports worth 21 billion euros that it is ready to target over earlier tariffs from Trump on steel and aluminium.

European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen delayed rolling out those measures on Sunday -- a day before they were set to kick in -- as a sign of goodwill towards Washington.



LONDON (Dispatches) - Carlos Alcaraz said he could hold his head high despite being unseated from his Wimbledon throne by Jannik Sinner on Sunday and the Spaniard praised their hot rivalry for being several notches higher than the others on the men's tour.

Alcaraz's bid for a third straight title at the All England Club ended with a 4-6 6-4 6-4 6-4 loss on Centre Court, leaving him to digest his first Grand Slam final defeat.

"It's always a bad feeling losing matches. It's a little bit worse when you lose in a final," said Alcaraz, who narrowly beat Sinner in a five-set humdinger at the French Open last month.

"I'm just proud about everything I've done in the last four weeks on grass at London. I leave Wimbledon, the court, with my head held really high because I did everything that I could.

"I played against someone who played an unbelievable game. So I'm just a little bit sad about losing, but with my head held really high."

Alcaraz said his rivalry with Sinner was great for the pair and also for tennis, which has had to endure the retirements of Roger Federer, Rafa Nadal and Andy Murray in recent years with fellow great Novak Djokovic in the twilight of a glorious career.

The young duo have now shared eight of the last nine Grand Slam titles, with each winning four.

"Every time we play each other, I think our level is really high. We don't see a level like this ... I don't see any player playing against each other, having the level that we're playing when we face each other," Alcaraz added.

"This rivalry, it's becoming better and better ... we're playing in the finals of Grand Slams, finals of Masters and the best tournaments in the world. It's going to get better.

"I'm just really grateful for that because it gives me the opportunity to just give my 100% every practice, every day, just to be better. The level that I have to maintain and I have to raise if I want to beat Jannik is

really high."

Sinner's coach Darren Cahill admitted that while the Italian did not take any of his rivals for granted, he does pay extra attention to Alcaraz.

"Jannik watches more Carlos matches than he does anybody else because he's fascinated with the improvements that are coming in his game, and he's pushing us as coaches to make sure that he's improving as a tennis player," Cahill said.

Sinner, who ended Alcaraz's 24-match winning run across all events and 20-match streak at Wimbledon, was most pleased with ending his own run of five successive defeats against the Spaniard.

"When you lose several times against someone, it's not easy," said Sinner, who narrowed his win-loss record against Alcaraz to 5-8.

"At the same time in the past, I felt I was close ... I never pushed myself down. I keep looking up to Carlos because even today I felt like he was doing a couple of things better than I did. So that's something we'll work on and prepare ourselves because he's going to come for us again.

"There's not only Carlos, but everyone. We have a big target on us so we have to be prepared. Then we'll see what's happening in the future."

Alcaraz said he had no doubt that Sinner would learn from his near 5-1/2-hour loss at Roland Garros, where the Italian squandered three championship points, and hit back.

"I know he's a really nice player and a huge champion. Champions learn from their losses," Alcaraz said.

"I knew from the beginning he was going to learn from that final and not make the same mistakes. The way he played today, it was really high.

"I wasn't surprised at all."

Modric Joins Milan in One-Year Deal



MILAN (Dispatches) - Croatia captain Luka Modric, who left Real Madrid after 13 years at the LaLiga club, has completed his move to AC Milan on a one-year deal with an option to extend until June 2027, the Serie A side said.

The midfielder's arrival was confirmed by newly-appointed Milan coach Massimiliano Allegri earlier this month.

"Very happy to be here to start a new chapter in my career," said Modric, who turns 40 in September, in an Instagram video shared by Milan.

Milan said Modric will wear the number 14 shirt, which he previously wore during his four years at English side Tottenham Hotspur to honour Dutch great Johan Cruyff.

"It's an immense honour for them to compare me to (Cruyff)... I wore the no. 14 at Tottenham in honour of him, and because the no. 10 wasn't available," Modric had said after winning the Ballon d'Or award in 2018.

Modric, regarded as one of the greatest midfielders of all time, announced in May that he would leave Real after the Club World Cup. He has made 597 appearances for the Spanish club, winning 28 trophies including four LaLiga and six Champions League titles.

He played his last game for Real on Wednesday, coming on as a second-half substitute during a 4-0 loss to Paris St Germain in the Club World Cup semi-finals.

"It's a bitter end... he's a legend of world football and of Real Madrid. He'll be remembered for many more good things than for the 25 minutes he played today," Real Madrid manager Xabi Alonso said after the match.

Modric, considered Croatia's greatest player of all time, has represented the country a record 188 times, scoring 28 goals. He won the Golden Ball at World Cup 2018, where he led Croatia to the final for the first time.

He won the Ballon d'Or in December that year, becoming the first player other than Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo to win the prestigious annual award since 2007.

Modric's arrival reinforces a Milan midfield that also features Youssouf Fofana, Yunus Musah and Ruben Loftus-Cheek, with Samuele Ricci joining from Torino earlier this month.

Real Madrid Sign Benfica's Carreras to Continue Summer Rebuild



MADRID (Dispatches) - Real Madrid signed defender Alvaro Carreras from Benfica on a six-year deal, the Spanish giants said on Monday.

The 22-year-old Spanish left-back, who played for Madrid's youth academy before joining Manchester United in 2020, is reported to have cost close to 50 million euros (US\$58 million).

"Real Madrid and Benfica have reached an agreement for the transfer of Alvaro Carreras, who will be under contract with our club for the next six seasons, until 30 June 2031," said Los Blancos in a statement.

The defender played 62 times for Benfica, scoring five goals for the club, including an initial loan spell before they signed him for six million euros from United in 2024.

Carreras becomes Madrid's fourth signing of a significant summer rebuild after Trent Alexander-Arnold, Dean Huijsen and Franco Mastantuono, at an estimated cost of around 170 million euros in transfer fees.

After finishing last season without a major trophy coach Carlo Ancelotti departed and was replaced by Xabi Alonso.

The Spaniard steered Madrid to the Club World Cup semi-finals but they were hammered 4-0 by runners-up Paris Saint-Germain.

Simon Yates Wins Tour de France 10th Stage

MONT-DORE (Dispatches) - Ben Healy rode himself into the ground in a nail-biting finale to become the first Irishman in 38 years to wear the yellow jersey at the Tour de France, as Britain's Simon Yates claimed victory in stage 10 on Monday with a perfectly timed attack.

Giro d'Italia champion Yates emerged from the day's breakaway to secure his third career Tour stage win, pulling away on the final climb to beat Thymen Arensman of the Netherlands and Healy, who finished second and third, respectively.

Heading into the first rest day, Healy leads defending champion Tadej Pogacar by 29 seconds in the general classification, after the Slovenian eased off on the final ascent.

"It was insanely tough, it was a battle against myself really. I just had to dig deep. My teammates put in so much work today, Harry (Sweeny) and Alex (Baudin), I really, really wanted to pay them back and I'm happy I could do that in the end," Healy, who won stage six last week, told reporters.

"I kind of gambled a bit. I had the stage win in the bank and how often do you get the opportunity to put yourself into yellow so I felt I had to take that and really go for it."

Belgian Remco Evenepoel sits third, one minute further back, after losing six seconds in the closing



kilometres when Pogacar briefly surged in an attempt to test Jonas Vingegaard, widely seen as his main rival for the overall title.

Vingegaard stayed locked onto Pogacar's wheel and remains 1:17 behind the UAE Team Emirates leader.

As Pogacar approached the finish, Healy smiled while watching the Slovenian on the giant screen.

With Pogacar visibly backing off, the EF Education-EasyPost rider crossed the line to become the first Irishman to lead the Tour since Stephen Roche won the race in 1987.

Healy had looked one of the strongest riders in the breakaway on the 165.3-km hilly route from Ennezat, but Yates timed his move to perfection, attacking solo on the final climb to seal a tactical victory.

While Yates rode cleverly to win the stage, the Visma-Lease a Bike team strategy was somehow puzzling as the Briton is expected to ride in support of his leader, Vingegaard.

"The plan was to be in a breakaway in case someone (from the team) would attack from behind, but the gap became too big," Yates explained, six years after winning his last Tour stage.

"It's been a long time, I did not expect it. We're here for Jonas."

Starc Record as Australia Bowl Out Windies for 27 to Win Third Test

LONDON (Dispatches) - Mitchell Starc delivered the fastest five-wicket haul in test history on Monday as Australia crushed the West Indies by 176 runs in the third test in Kingston, Jamaica to complete a 3-0 series sweep.

In his 100th test, Starc took 15 balls to wreck the West Indies top order and leave the home side's run chase in tatters, before returning for his sixth wicket after Scott Boland became Australia's 10th bowler to take a test hat-trick.

West Indies were bowled out for 27, the second-lowest total in test history after New Zealand's 26 against England in 1955.

Starc shattered the previous record for a "five-for" by four balls, surpassing Ernie Toshack (1947), Stuart Broad (2015) and Boland (2021), who needed 19 deliveries to achieve the feat.

"You talk about 100 tests and skill and fitness ... but I think today showed the real Mitchell Starc - what he can bring to a



team. Which is, out of nowhere, tear an opposition apart and win a game for you," said Australia captain Pat Cummins.

The drama began on the first delivery of West Indies' second innings, when Starc enticed John Campbell to nick an outswinger to wicketkeeper Josh Inglis.

Debutant Kevlon Anderson shouldered arms to a ball that jagged back and struck his pad four balls later, before Brandon King edged on to his stumps as the hosts found themselves three wickets down with no runs on the board.

Starc, named player-of-the-match and series, then trapped Mikyle Louis lbw to become the fourth Australian to reach 400 test wickets alongside Shane Warne, Glenn McGrath and Nathan Lyon.

Two balls later, he trapped Shai Hope lbw and finished with figures of 6-9.