Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, Referring to the Ongoing Israeli Genocide in Gaza Amid International Outrage, Has Described the Israeli Regime as the Most Hated in the World



Iran Has Dismissed U.S. President Donald **Trump's Accusations Regarding the** Country's Peaceful Nuclear Program, Saying They Are Outdated Remarks Made by an Ordinary Iranian Citizen

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DOMESTIC

INTERNATIONAL



Cybersecurity a Vital National Priority

Global Outrage as Israeli Strike Kills Reporters Covering Gaza War From Nasser Hospital



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President Praises Russia's Support for Iran's Nuclear **Rights**



TEHRAN - President Masoud Pezeshkian has thanked Russia for backing Tehran's right to uranium enrichment, while reaffirming that the Islamic Republic has no intention of developing nuclear weapons.

"In line with its ideological principles and defense doctrine, Iran has never sought, and will never seek, to produce nuclear weapons," Pezeshkian said during a phone call with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday.

Putin, for his part, reiterated Moscow's support for Iran's right to enrichment and voiced optimism that discussions surrounding UN Security Council Resolution 2231 would yield constructive results.

The two leaders also addressed a wide range of bilateral and regional issues

Pezeshkian expressed hope that the agreements reached between Putin and U.S. President Donald Trump at their mid-August summit in Anchorage, Alaska, would help accelerate efforts to resolve the conflict in Ukraine

Turning to regional connectivity, the Iranian president stressed his personal commitment to speeding up construction of the Rasht-Astara railway-an integral segment of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC)—as well as advancing other joint projects with Russia.

"Iran views regional and international organizations such as the Eurasian Economic Union, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and BRICS as effective platforms for cooperation with member states, particularly Russia and China, in confronting unilateralism," he said.

Zangezor Corridor Poses Direct Threat to Collective Security



TEHRAN - The Iranian Parliament (Majlis) has issued a strong warning that projects such as the Zangezor Corridor. which could alter recognized borders or impose transit routes, pose a direct threat to regional stability and collective security.

Ahmad Naderi, a member of the presiding board, read a statement endorsed by more than 150 lawmakers emphasizing the strategic significance of the South Caucasus and opposing risky initiatives along Iran's northwestern borders.

"In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful," the statement begins, noting that the South Caucasus is not merely a geographic frontier but an essential part of Iran's security buffer, strategic depth, and civilizational sphere. Historically, culturally, and strategically, the region has maintained deep ties with Iran and continues to play a vital role in safeguarding national sovereignty and security.

The Majlis stressed that Iran has consistently pursued the resolution of regional issues through direct dialogue among neighboring countries, without foreign intervention. "Any attempt to change recognized borders, impose corridors, or implement projects such as the Zangezor Corridor is incompatible with the interests of regional nations and constitutes a direct threat to collective

security," the statement warned. The Parliament also reminded that altering internationally recognized borders without consent violates the UN Charter and the principle of territorial integrity. Iran reserves the right to employ all political, legal, and legitimate measures to protect its national security and interests against any aggression.

Iran Reviews Russian Draft on Extending UN

TEHRAN - Iran is currently reviewing Russian draft proposal to extend United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231, the Foreign Ministry's spokesperson announced on Tuesday. Speaking at a press briefing, Esmail Baghaei extended congratulations on Doctor's Day and commemorated five Iranian doctors who were killed in recent Israeli attacks on Iran. He described ongoing regional developments as

by Israel against the people of Gaza. Baghaei also highlighted the deliberate killing of five journalists by Israel the previous day, emphasizing that these acts demonstrate Israel's resistance to global awareness of its actions

"concerning" and condemned continued crimes

The spokesperson noted that at the extraordinary session of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) foreign ministers held in Jeddah, Iran submitted specific proposals, many of which were reflected in the final statement of the meeting.

Regarding the Russian draft resolution on extending UN Resolution 2231, Baghai stated: "We are reviewing the draft text and wil announce our positions accordingly.

On Australia's recent expulsion of Iranian diplomats and its accusations of alleged anti-

Semitism, Baghaei stressed that inappropriate diplomatic actions naturally receive a response. He called the accusations "unfounded" and emphasized that anti-Semitism is not part of Iran's culture or history, characterizing it as a Western phenomenon

Baghai suggested that Australia's decision may be influenced by domestic developments, noting recent large-scale protests in Australia against Israeli actions in the occupied territories. He described the move as potentially aimed at compensating for the limited criticism of Israel within

Regarding a South African military official's visit to Iran and U.S. involvement, Baghaei described the American intervention as "unlawful and surprising." He emphasized that Iran maintains longstanding, positive relations with South Africa and other African countries, and normal exchanges between officials are routine

On relations with European countries, Baghaei reiterated that Iran's national interests remain the red line. He stressed that Iran is fully aware of the consequences of the "snapback" mechanism and does not intend to diminish its importance. He also said that European parties lack legal and moral grounds to invoke this mechanism.

Baghaei noted ongoing diplomatic efforts to ensure this issue does not become a psychological warfare tool against Iranian citizens and highlighted recent high-level talks in Geneva and Friday meetings with European counterparts.

Iran plans to participate in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit on September , with the President attending for the first time in a year. Baghaei emphasized that the summit, which includes SCO members and approximately 20 other nations in the Shanghai Plus framework, offers a key opportunity for bilateral consultations. He also highlighted Iran's strong and important relations with China, noting that the 25-year

strategic cooperation agreement is being actively implemented and strengthened

Regarding nuclear negotiations with Europe, Baghaei clarified that discussions remain focused on sanctions relief and transparency in Iran's peaceful nuclear program, with no fundamental



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change in the nature of the talks.

adependent state with diverse political and ectarian components, should make its own decisions through internal Lebanese onsultations, particularly regarding relations vith other countries. In response to a question about Tehran's

stance on developments in Lebanon, the ministry spokesperson said: "Our position regarding resistance has been clearly stated multiple times over the past two weeks. We believe that Lebanon, as an independent country with various factions and communities, must be able to make the best decisions on its internal matters through Lebanese-to-Lebanese consultations. including decisions about its foreign

He added that Iran's broader position is clear: "Living with dignity in a region where vou face continuous expansionist and aggressive actions from Israel requires specific measures. States must strengthen their military capabilities to protect territorial integrity, prevent Israeli encroachment, and

ensure national security and stability. This lesson has become increasingly apparent across the region over the past two years.'

Regarding the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) emergency meeting on Gaza, convened at Iran's request, the spokesperson said: "The extraordinary meeting of foreign ministers of Islamic countries was held yesterday based on proposals by Iran and a few other nations. The main goal was to keep the Palestinian issue alive within an organization whose primary purpose has always been supporting the legitimate struggle of the Palestinian people for self-

Baghaei added that the OIC has consistently pursued this mission since its establishment in 1969, holding several similar meetings over the past two years, each concluding with unanimous resolutions or statements.

"In this summit, Iran presented specific proposals, many of which were included in the final statement," he said. "A key focus was condemning the Israeli minister's acknowledgment of the 'Greater Israel' idea, which implies territorial ambitions over many regional and Islamic countries. The statement also called for halting arms exports to Israel, reviewing or severing diplomatic ties, urgent UN Security Council measures to aid Gaza, documentation of Israeli crimes by the International Criminal Court and International Court of Justice, and comprehensive investigation of atrocities in the occupied territories. Support for the UN Special Rapporteur on Palestinian human rights, who has faced intense Israeli pressure, was also included."

Baghaei further highlighted the summit's emphasis on protecting Islamic holy sites, including Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron, as well as preventing demographic and territorial changes and countering the long-standing Israeli policy of Judaization. He noted that implementing these measures requires follow-up in international bodies such as the UN General Assembly and Security Council, where U.S. veto power poses a challenge. Nevertheless, the timing of the resolution alongside the UN General Assembly session provides an opportunity for Islamic countries to intensify efforts to stop mass atrocities and assist the Palestinian people.

Iran Urges Israel Boycott, **Accountability Over Gaza** Genocide



TEHRAN - The Iranian foreign minister has called on Muslim countries to boycott Israel and hold the criminal regime responsible for its genocidal war against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

Abbas Araqchi made the remarks on Monday in an address to an extraordinary meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in the Saudi city of Jeddah on the ongoing Israeli aggression

He said that Muslim states should stop making "hollow and inactive condemnations" about the Gaza onslaught and instead impose sanctions on Israel and bring the usurping entity to account for its war crimes in the blockaded territory

Islamic countries must commit themselves to "mobilizing all political, economic, and legal tools, including sanctions, boycotts, and coordinated international pressure" against Israel, he added. They, he noted, must also pursue Israel's "accountability at all

levels, in every court," for genocide and immediately sever all relations with the occupying regime. Araqchi further urged Muslim nations to confront the governments

that are complicit in the Gaza bloodshed by arming Israel and shielding it from international condemnations.

"What is unfolding before our eyes is the organized destruction of besieged people by a ruthless apartheid regime that acts with complete impunity," he said.

Iran Welcomes Greater **Presence of Foreign Journalists**



TEHRAN - Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Seyed Abbas Salehi emphasized the importance of accurate international media coverage during a press conference on the government's first-year achievements. Speaking ahead of the annual State Week (September 2-9), Salehi also outlined cultural, artistic, and technological initiatives undertaken by the Ministry

Salehi stressed that one longstanding issue for Iranian artists is the lack of identification for cultural works, which obscures their economic value. "Artworks now have secure identifiers listing the artist, medium, dimensions, date, and ownership," he said, noting that these measures also enable artists to use their works as collateral for loans, strengthening both the cultural economy and artistic recognition.

Highlighting provincial development, the Minister noted that 24 libraries and three cultural complexes have opened in the past year, with additional initiatives for art schools and regional cinema councils underway. Mobile libraries and provincial book fairs are being reactivated, and state budget allocations now detail expenditures for each province.

On the economic front, Salehi introduced the "Farhang Card" program, providing 100,000 artists with 15 million IRR credit for cultural consumption, including cinema, concerts, and books, with six-month installment options He also announced the launch of the "Culture and Arts Support Fund," a stock-backed initiative designed to finance creative industries and encourage private investment in the cultural sector.

Qalibaf Warns Against "Presidential **Incompetence" Debate**

TEHRAN - Majlis Speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf has dismissed recent discussions questioning the competence of President Masoud Pezeshkian saying such rhetoric and "false statements" play directly into the hands of the country's adversaries.

Speaking at Tuesday's open session of the Iranian Parliament, Qalibaf emphasized the need for "strengthening unity between the government and the people, and among officials of the Islamic Republic." He described this as a clear and firm directive from Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, urging all political factions to prioritize national and Islamic erests over personal or partisan agendas.

"We must support the government wholeheartedly and see its success as our own," Qalibaf said. He praised President Pezeshkian as "hardworking and diligent" and pledged that Parliament would deploy all its institutional and social capacities to help the administration address the challenges facing ordinary citizens

Qalibaf's remarks also touched on the recent 12-day conflict, which he described as a "sacred defense" that demonstrated the resilience of Iran's 90 million-strong population. He credited nationwide solidarity and public support for the armed forces with thwarting what he called the enemy's designs to destabilize and fragment Iran.

"The people carried out their duty with a historic decision. Now it is our turn as officials to fulfill our responsibilities to this noble nation," he declared.

Qalibaf acknowledged that many Iranians are struggling with rising prices of essential goods, electricity outages, and water shortages. He warned that foreign adversaries were seeking to exploit these vulnerabilities but insisted the government had a "national duty" to finalize and implement its existing programs to resolve such problems.

He stressed that people need to be shown "clear and time-bound plans" so they can trust that their difficulties are being seriously addressed. He pointed to Iran's Seventh Development Plan as the roadmap for tackling structural issues, particularly in the energy sector and household livelihoods. According to Qalibaf, several short-term operational measures are ready for implementation, including plans to reduce energy imbalances and support household consumption. He singled out the proposed electronic coupon system—a program under which citizens would pay a fixed



outlets to take responsibility in countering Qalibaf also reassured the public that "most Iranians ignore such discordant voices" and that the

nation's enemies would once again be disappointed by the people's resilience. In the wake of the 12-day war, Qalibaf underscored the urgency of reinforcing Iran's defense systems. He revealed that the armed forces had already identified and resolved several weaknesses

exposed during the conflict, while bolstering their existing strengths. "Our military is now prepared to deliver a stronger response than ever before to any aggression against Iran," he said. He referenced recent naval missile drills as a "clear message" that Iran would expand the battlefield-including economic and political arenas-if attacked again.

Concluding his speech, Qalibaf congratulated Iran's student Olympiad teams for their recent international achievements, particularly the astronomy and astrophysics team, which won a world gold medal for the second consecutive year. "We take pride in you, the children of Iran, who elevate our country's name to the peaks of global scientific success," he said.

In his address, Qalibaf balanced praise for national resilience and the president's efforts with calls for concrete action on pressing domestic issues, while warning political rivals against rhetoric that could fracture the unity he described as Iran's greatest defense.





Iran, Algeria Emphasize Multilateral Cooperation

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi and his Algerian counterpart, Ahmed Attaf, have stressed the need to further bolster ties within international bodies.

Araqchi and Attaf held talks on the sidelines of the extraordinary meeting of foreign ministers from Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) member states in Jeddah on Monday.

During the meeting, both sides focused on enhancing cooperation within international bodies and reviewed the latest regional and international developments.

Exports to Africa Double in First Four Months of 2025



TEHRAN - Iran's exports to Africa increased 2.2 times in the first four months of the current Iranian year (1404/2025), according to the head of the Africa Office at the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran (TPO).

Mohammadreza Safari announced on Monday that the number of African countries targeted by Iran's exports rose from 29 to 34. He also noted that while imports from Africa declined, exports to the continent saw significant growth.

Safari attributed part of this rise to the Iran-Africa Economic Cooperation Summit, emphasizing that with the implementation of the resolutions of the Africa Headquarters, the upward trend could accelerate further.

Highlighting the need to shift trade strategies toward higher value-added products, Safari stressed that recent global developments—such as rising energy and transportation costs, reduced subsidies, and new U.S. tariffs on African exports-make it essential for Iran to prioritize final goods with higher value and to plan for joint production ventures in

The TPO official also pointed to specialized services, technical and vocational training, and technology transfer as key areas where Iran could offer competitive advantages compared to Chinese rivals.

Iran Reports 50% Increase in **Edible Oil Imports**



TEHRAN - The head of Iran's Customs Administration has announced a significant surge in the country's edible oil imports, assuring citizens that there is no cause for concern regarding shortages in essential food supplies.

Speaking at a press conference on Iran's trade performance during the first five months of the current year, Faroud Asgari, President of Iran's Customs Administration, stated that edible oil remains the top imported item. According to him, 930,000 tons of edible oil were cleared through customs, marking a 50 percent increase in volume and a 110 percent increase in value compared to the same period last year.

Asgari outlined the broader trade figures, noting that Iran exchanged 157 million tons of goods worth \$129 billion during this period. Of this, 118 million tons valued at \$159 billion were exports, representing a 14 percent increase compared to the previous year.

He further reported that foreign transit through Iran's customs reached 21 million tons, showing a modest 2 percent growth. Additionally, customs revenues transferred to the national treasury stood at 130 trillion tomans, which represents a robust 44 percent increase.

Turning to essential commodities, Asgari explained that imports are primarily managed by the Ministries of Agriculture, Health, and Industry. Over 10.95 million tons of basic goods worth \$7.515 billion entered the country in the past five months.

Edible oil was the leading import item, followed by rice. Customs data show that 836,000 tons of rice worth \$904 million were cleared during the same period. Asgari reassured the public that sufficient supplies of staple goods are available and that logistical operations are running smoothly.

The customs chief also addressed the agency's performance during a recent 12-day period of conflict. Despite the challenges, he emphasized that customs operations were not suspended. In fact, activities intensified: "In the very first days of the conflict, we managed to clear seven ships carrying gasoline," Asgari revealed.

Due to widespread flight cancellations during the hostilities, customs authorities coordinated the import and clearance of medicines through the Bazargan border crossing. Overall, 1.2 million tons of various goods were unloaded within just 12 days, demonstrating the resilience of Iran's customs system under extraordinary conditions.



TEHRAN - The Minister of Communications and Information Technology has underscored the critical role of local capacities in advancing Iran's digital economy, stressing that cybersecurity must remain a top national priority.

Speaking at a meeting with ICT private sector representatives, members of the Computer Trade Organization, and business leaders in Yazd, Seyed Sattar Hashemi highlighted the province's rich historical legacy and innovative achievements.

"Yazd has shown how great opportunities can be created out of natural constraints. Just as qanats once symbolized Iranian ingenuity, the province can now serve as a model for technological creativity and the digital economy," he said.

Hashemi noted that while the country's tech-driven economy has been relatively underdeveloped in recent years, Yazd's skilled workforce, strong universities, and active industries provide a solid foundation for expanding into the digital sector.

Referring to the 2025 national budget and provisions in the Seventh Development Plan, Hashemi emphasized that digital security is a matter of national necessity.

"Security cannot be built solely within government institutions. The private sector must lead this movement," he stated, pointing to the growing influence of Iranian cybersecurity companies both in Tehran and Yazd.

The minister also underlined the importance of "technology diplomacy" in achieving Iran's goal of securing a 10% share of GDP from the digital economy.

"To reach this target, we must focus on two areas: participation in global markets and boosting domestic efficiency," he said, noting successful projects by Iranian firms in Latin America and Africa. "With proper support, Iranian companies can compete with major international brands and claim a larger share of the global

Hashemi identified industrial digitalization as another national priority.

"Information technology can generate up to 20% savings in energy consumption - the equivalent of around \$20 billion annually. This demonstrates the urgent need

for digital transformation in mining, steel, and petrochemical industries," he explained, adding that collaboration between telecom operators and the private sector will be key to driving this transformation.

Presenting the Digital Iran initiative as a flagship project of his ministry, Hashemi said the program begins with digital skills training in secondary schools, preparing students for entry into digital businesses.

"Practical skills and content production will replace purely formal qualifications. With the involvement of the Ministry of Education, the private sector, and provincial companies, we aim to expand the Digital Iran ecosystem — particularly in Yazd, which already leads the country in several digital transformation indicators," he

Hashemi further highlighted Iran's growing role as a regional hub for data transit. "In the past year alone, our data transit capacity has increased by more than 60%. Our goal is a 500% increase, leveraging Iran's geopolitical position to become a major route for data transfer between Asia, Europe, and the Persian Gulf," he said.

Concluding his remarks, the minister outlined four key priorities for his ministry: cybersecurity, technology diplomacy, industrial digitalization, and the Digital Iran project. He stressed that achieving these goals will be possible only through active private sector engagement.

During the session, participants raised concerns about workforce migration, insurance and banking challenges, the lack of cybersecurity hardware testing infrastructure, and power outages. They also discussed opportunities such as AI workforce development, expansion of technical and engineering exports, optimal use of Iran-Oman submarine fiber-optic links, and support for domestic game development. Yazd-based companies expressed readiness to cooperate with the ministry in advancing cybersecurity initiatives.

Billion



TEHRAN - Minister of Agriculture Jihad announced that the country's agricultural trade balance recorded a \$3 billion improvement in 2024 compared to the previous year, despite ongoing international sanctions.

Speaking on Monday evening at the inauguration ceremony of a livestock and poultry feed factory in Razan County, Minister Gholamreza Nouri Ghezeljeh said agricultural exports rose by about 32 percent in 2024, while imports declined by

According to the minister, the agricultural trade balance improved from minus 11 percent in 2023 to minus 8 percent in 2024, marking a significant step toward a positive trade balance

He emphasized that Iran is among the top five countries in terms of the number of poultry and dairy cattle farms, but stressed the need to lower production costs and move toward more competitive economic production.

Nouri Ghezeljeh highlighted the importance of developing value-chain units and encouraged the widespread adoption of concentrated feed, even in traditional farming systems. He also called for stronger investment in agricultural production and processing industries in Hamedan Province, where farming plays a leading role.

The minister further underlined the expansion of greenhouse complexes as a key strategy for enhancing food security and generating foreign currency revenues. He noted that agricultural exports increased by 32 percent in the past year alone.

At the ceremony, the Soltani livestock and poultry feed factory was inaugurated, with an annual production capacity of 216,000 tons. The facility was built with an investment of 2 trillion rials (approximately \$40 million) and is expected to create 80 iobs

Meanwhile for the first time in the country, the Village Productivity Project for 400 villages was unveiled in Hamadan Province as a pilot program during Government Week in a ceremony attended by the Minister of Agriculture Jihad.

Nouri Ghezeljeh said on Tuesday at this ceremony, which was held on the sidelines of the Administrative Council meeting: "Three thousand rural markets will be opened across the country as part of this plan."

Tourist Arrivals in Iran Rise by 15% as Gov't Seeks to Expand Int'l Ties

formation of Iran's 14th administration, the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts reports significant progress in strengthening tourism's role in governance and promoting tourism diplomacy on the international stage. From March 2024 to March 2025, Iran attracted over seven million foreign visitors, marking a 15.93% increase compared to the previous year.

According to officials in the Tourism Deputy Ministry, the sector faced numerous obstacles when the new administration took office. These included a lack of sufficient support for tourism enterprises, excessive

government involvement in activities that could be delegated to professional associations, overlapping responsibilities among institutions, lengthy approval processes for tourism projects, and the suspension of many developments mid-construction.

Other hurdles included weak cooperation between public and private entities in infrastructure building, delays in issuing permits, natural and health crises such as COVID-19, as well as political and regional tensions, most recently a 12-day conflict sparked by Israeli

Despite these difficulties, foreign arrivals rose from 6.38 million in 2023-2024 to 7.39 million in 2024-2025. Diplomatic efforts also sought to establish tourism exchanges with countries like Egypt, though the momentum was interrupted by the recent conflict.

In response to wartime losses, tourism authorities are now prioritizing both domestic and inbound travel through two key Stimulating domestic tourism, to keep the industry active despite

external shocks. Focusing on neighboring countries, in hopes of quickly restoring

regional visitor flows. One major challenge has been taxation. To address this, tax exemptions for tourism businesses—outlined in Iran's Direct Taxation Law-were extended under the Seventh Development

To reduce government dominance in matters that can be managed by professional associations, a new regulation has been drafted and is awaiting cabinet approval. Other measures, coordinated with the Ministry of Economy, aim to streamline project approvals and

encourage private-sector participation. Authorities are also reviewing halted tourism projects and engaging with relevant agencies to push forward essential infrastructure developments. Lessons learned from recent crises, including the pandemic, had initially helped put the industry back on a growth trajectory—until the recent war once again brought stagnation. In response, the Tourism Deputy Ministry is preparing new support packages for industry stakeholders.



guesthouses.

office, several concrete actions have been carried out: Issuance of 80 operation permits

for hotels and hotel-apartments. Issuance of 19 permits for

Issuance of 228 permits for ecolodges, 33 for traditional accommodations, and 50 for tourism complexes. Opening of 14 recreational

centers, 62 roadside service units, and 83 traditional restaurants. Authorization of 133 other tourism

facilities. Licensing of 408 travel agencies.

Issuance of 1,243 tour guide cards

and 69 medical tourism certificates. Approval of 2,684 preliminary licenses for future tourism establishments.

In addition, six tourism projects attracted \$30 million in foreign investment. Provinces across Iran registered 110 cultural, historical, ethnic, agricultural, and culinary events in the official national calendar of tourism activities.

Capacity-building initiatives have also expanded: 55 training courses for tourism professionals were held in 11 provinces, and two rounds of comprehensive tourism exams were conducted for more than 8,000 participants, preparing them for careers in the sector.

The government has also sought to elevate tourism within Iran's political and administrative system. Notable efforts include: Direct engagement of senior leaders, such as meetings between

tourism stakeholders and the Supreme Leader, participation of the President in major tourism events, and the involvement of the judiciary chief in resolving legal matters affecting foreign visitors. Attendance by the First Vice President at national tourism ceremonies, as well as cabinet members' discussions with privatesector representatives.

Consultations with Parliament to align policies and expand opportunities for tourism development.

Meetings between the Tourism Deputy Minister and the Central Bank Governor to secure funding for tourism projects.

For the first time, cultural heritage, tourism, and handicrafts have been given a dedicated chapter in the Seventh Development Plan. Establishment of a Tourism and Iranology Commission in the Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Iranians Abroad, to strengthen cultural ties and promote Iran's image internationally.

Despite wars, regional tensions, and structural barriers, Iran's tourism industry managed to record growth in the past year. The government's dual focus on domestic and regional tourism, coupled with structural reforms and new investments, aims to restore momentum and ensure tourism continues to serve as both an economic driver and a diplomatic tool.

6th Iran Int'l Transport and Logistics Exhibition in Tehran

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - The Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture, along with several provincial private-sector associations, is set to participate in the 6th Iran International Transport, Logistics and Related Industries Exhibition, taking place from August 27 to 30 at Tehran International Permanent Fairground.

The exhibition brings together stakeholders across all sectors of transport and logistics-including road, maritime, rail, air, and urban systems. Participants will showcase their latest achievements and capabilities with the aim of enhancing services for the national economy, expanding cooperation, and strengthening international

The event opens on Thursday, August 27, and will run for four days until Sunday, August 30. Visiting hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. daily.

The Tehran Chamber of Commerce is taking an active role, hosting a pavilion in Halls 8 and 9, Booth 22, where provincial private-sector associations are also represented. Beyond the exhibition floor, the chamber is engaged in business events and academic sessions organized during the fair.

Throughout the exhibition, chamber managers and advisors will be present at the Tehran Chamber pavilion to respond to inquiries from business leaders and chamber members.

Iran's Agricultural Trade **Balance Grows by \$3**

North Korea Military Denounces U.S.-South Korea Drills

SEOUL (Dispatches) - North Korea said U.S.-South Korea joint military drills proved Washington's intention to "occupy" the Korean peninsula and aim at its enemy countries in the region, state media reported.

"If they continuously persist in the military rehearsal, they will certainly face up the unpleasant situation and pay a dear price," Kim Yong Bok, first vice-chief of the General Staff of the Korean People's Army, was cited by state media KCNA as saying.

The army general did not mention the summit meeting between South Korea President Lee Jae Myung and U.S. President Donald Trump.





French Opposition Parties Vow to Overthrow Bayrou Gov't



PARIS (Dispatches) - France's minority government looked increasingly likely to be ousted next month after three main opposition parties said they would not back a confidence vote which Prime Minister François Bayrou announced for September 8 over his plans for sweeping budget cuts.

The far-right Rassemblement National (National Rally or RN), the Greens and later the Socialists, on whose vote Bayrou's fate largely lies, said they did not see how they could back him

If he loses the confidence vote in the National Assembly, Bayrou's government will fall.

The uncertainty spooked investors, pushing the risk premium on French bonds over their German equivalents up 5 basis points to their highest level since mid-June.

The CAC-40 index of leading French shares ended the day down 1.6% If the government falls, President Emmanuel Macron could name a new prime

minister immediately or ask Bayrou to stay on as head of a caretaker government, or he could call a snap election.

Macron lost his last prime minister, Michel Barnier, to a no-confidence vote over the budget in late 2024, after just three months in office following another snap election in July that year

Bayrou acknowledged seeking the confidence of a very fragmented parliament was

"Yes, it's risky, but it's even riskier not to do anything," he told a press conference, referring to what he said was the major danger the country faced due to its huge debt

U.S., Russian **Officials Discussed Energy Deals Alongside Latest Ukraine Peace Talks**



LONDON (Dispatches) - U.S. and Russian government officials discussed several energy deals on the sidelines of negotiations this month that sought to achieve peace in Ukraine, according to five sources familiar with the talks. These deals were put forward as incentives to encourage the

Kremlin to agree to peace in Ukraine and for Washington to ease sanctions on Russia, they said. Russia has been cut off from most international investment in its

energy sector and from striking major deals due to sanctions following the Ukraine invasion that began in February 2022.

The officials discussed the possibility of Exxon Mobil re-entering Russia's Sakhalin-1 oil and gas project, three of the sources said. They also raised the prospect of Russia purchasing U.S. equipment for its LNG projects, such as Arctic LNG 2, which is under western sanctions, four sources said.

None of the sources could be named because they were not authorised to speak publicly on the negotiations.

Another idea was for the U.S. to purchase nuclear-powered cebreaker vessels from Russia, Reuters reported on August 15.

The talks were held during U.S. envoy Steve Witkoff's trip to Moscow earlier this month when he met with Russian President Vladimir Putin and his investment envoy Kirill Dmitriev, three of the sources said. They were also discussed within the White House with U.S. President Donald Trump, two of the sources said.

Global Outrage as Israeli Strike Kills Reporters Govering Gaza War From Nasser Hospital

GAZA (Dispatches) - Israel struck Nasser hospital in the south of the Gaza Strip on Monday, killing at least 20 people, including five journalists who worked for Reuters, the Associated Press, Al Jazeera and others.

Cameraman Hussam al-Masri, a Reuters contractor, was killed near a live broadcasting position operated by Reuters on an upper floor just below the roof of the hospital in Khan Younis in an initial strike, Palestinian health officials said.

Officials at the hospital and witnesses said Israel then struck the site a second time, killing other journalists as well as rescue workers and medics who had rushed to the scene to help.

The journalists killed included Mariam Abu Dagga, who freelanced for the Associated Press and other outlets, Mohammed Salama, who worked for Qatar-based broadcaster Al Jazeera, Moaz Abu Taha, a freelance journalist who worked with several news organisations including occasionally contributing to Reuters, and Ahmed Abu Aziz

Photographer Hatem Khaled, also a Reuters contractor, was wounded.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said Israel deeply regretted what he called a "tragic mishap". Israel

valued the work of journalists and medical staff, he said, adding that Israel's war was with Hamas.

Israel's military, the Israel Defense Forces, acknowledged striking the area of Nasser hospital and said the chief of the general

The IDF "regrets any harm to uninvolved individuals and does not target journalists as such. The IDF acts to mitigate harm to uninvolved individuals as much as possible while maintaining the safety of IDF troops," it said.

A Reuters spokesperson said in a statement: "We are devastated to learn that cameraman Hussam al-Masri, a contractor for Reuters, was killed this morning in Israeli strikes on Nasser hospital in Khan Younis in Gaza. Moaz Abu Taha, a freelance journalist whose work had been occasionally published by Reuters, was also killed, and photographer Hatem Khaled, a Reuters contractor, was wounded.'

"We are urgently seeking more information and have asked authorities in Gaza and Israel to help us get urgent medical assistance for Hatem," the spokesperson added.

U.S. President Donald Trump expressed his displeasure when asked for a reaction. "When did this happen?" he asked a reporter in the White House. "I didn't know that. Well, I'm not happy about it. I don't

want to see it. At the same time, we have to end that whole nightmare.

The AP said it was "shocked and saddened" to learn of the deaths of Abu Dagga and other journalists, adding that Abu Dagga

number of journalists and media workers killed since the war began at 197 including 189 Palestinians in Gaza, called for "the international community to hold Israel accountable

on October 7, 2023.

children.a

for its continued unlawful attacks on the press". Israeli military spokesperson Brigadier General Effie

had often based herself at the hospital for coverage, which

recently included stories on starving and malnourished

In the Israeli-occupied West Bank, the Palestinian

presidency urged the international community, particularly

the U.N. Security Council and the United Nations, to

provide protection for journalists and hold Israel accountable

The Palestinian Journalists Syndicate condemned Israel

for the strikes, saying it represented "an open war against

free media, with the aim of terrorising journalists and

preventing them from fulfilling their professional duty of

The syndicate said more than 240 Palestinian journalists

had been killed by Israeli fire in Gaza since the war started

The Committee to Protect Journalists, which put the

exposing its crimes to the world".

Defrin said in a statement late on Monday that the military, in line with international law, was obligated to investigate.

"As always, we will present our findings as transparently as possible," he said. "Reporting from an active war zone carries immense risk, especially in a war with a terrorist organisation such as Hamas, who cynically hides behind the civilian population," he said.

In a separate incident on Monday, Nasser Hospital doctors said Israeli gunfire at a tent encampment in the Mawasi area of Khan Younis had killed local journalist Hassan Dohan and had wounded other people.

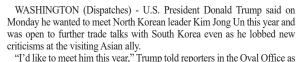
Two weeks ago, Israel killed prominent Al Jazeera correspondent Anas Al-Sharif and four other journalists in a strike. In that attack, Israel acknowledged targeting Sharif and said he worked for the Hamas militant group, which the broadcaster denied. On Monday the Reuters live video feed from the hospital, which Masri had been operating, suddenly shut down at the moment of the initial strike

Reuters and other news providers often deliver live video feeds to media outlets worldwide during major news events to show the scene from the ground in real time. Reuters has frequently broadcast a feed from Nasser hospital during the Gaza conflict, and for the past several weeks has been delivering daily feeds from the Nasser hospital position that was hit.

Israel has barred all foreign journalists from entering the Gaza Strip since the start of the war in 2023. Reporting from the territory throughout the war has been done by Palestinian journalists, many of whom have worked for many years for

Trump Wants to Meet North Korea's Kim

This Year



he welcomed South Korea's new president, Lee Jae Myung, to the White House for the first time. "I look forward to meeting with Kim Jong Un in the appropriate future."

Despite clinching a trade deal in July that spared South Korean exports harsher U.S. tariffs, the two sides continue to wrangle over nuclear energy, military spending, and details of a deal that included \$350 billion in promised South Korean investments in the United States.

After meeting with Trump, Lee attended a business forum with senior U.S. officials and CEOs of South Korean and U.S. companies. To coincide with the visit, South Korea's flag carrier, Korean Air announced an order for 103 Boeing aircraft, the largest order in the airline's

North Korea did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Trump's remarks. Its state media said later that U.S.-South Korea joint military drills proved Washington's intention to "occupy" the Korean peninsula and

target countries in the region. Since Trump's January inauguration, Kim has ignored Trump's repeated calls to revive the direct diplomacy he pursued during his 2017-2021 term in office,

which produced no deal to halt North Korea's nuclear program. In the Oval Office, Lee avoided the theatrical confrontations that dominated a February visit by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy and a May visit from South African President Cyril Ramaphosa.

Lee talked golf and lavished praise on the Republican president's interior decorating and peacemaking, telling reporters earlier he had read the president's 1987 memoir, "Trump: The Art of the Deal," to prepare.

"I hope you can bring peace to the Korean Peninsula, the only divided nation



in the world, so that you can meet with Kim Jong Un, build a Trump World (real-estate complex) in North Korea so that I can play golf there, and so that you can truly play a role as a world-historical peacemaker," Lee told Trump, speaking in Korean.

Lee's office said he and Trump discussed shipbuilding and the assassination attempts against both men. Lee also invited Trump to attend the summit of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) grouping in October, and suggested the American president try to meet with Kim during the trip, Lee's

"Despite the massive sanctions imposed to deter North Korea, the result has been the continuous development of nuclear weapons and missiles," Lee said during an event at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in

He said North Korea now has the capacity to build 10 to 20 nuclear warheads on its largest ballistic missiles that can reach the U.S.

South Korea's economy relies heavily on the U.S., with Washington underwriting its security with troops and nuclear deterrence. Trump has called Seoul a "money machine" that takes advantage of American military

"I think we have a deal done" on trade, Trump told reporters. "They had some problems with it, but we stuck to our guns." He did not elaborate, and the White House did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Trump said while sitting with Lee he would raise "intel" he had received about South Korean investigations he said targeted churches and a military base. The White House did not respond to a request for more information. This month, Seoul police raided Sarang Jeil Church, headed by an

evangelical preacher who led protests backing Lee's ousted predecessor Yoon Suk Yeol. In July, prosecutors investigating Yoon's declaration of martial law served a search warrant on the Korean part of a military base jointly operated with

the U.S. Officials have said U.S. troops and materials were not subject to the South Korea's far-right movement, especially evangelical Christians and

Yoon supporters, sees him as a victim of communist persecution.

Trump was expected to pressure Lee to commit to more defense spending, including toward upkeep of the 28,500 U.S. troops in South Korea.

Asked if he would reduce those numbers to give the U.S. more regional flexibility, Trump said: "I don't want to say that now," but that maybe Seoul should give the U.S. ownership of the "land where we have the big fort," an

apparent reference to Camp Humphreys, a U.S. Army garrison in South Korea. Before the meeting, Lee told reporters it would be difficult for Seoul to accept U.S. demands to adopt such "flexibility" - a reference to using U.S. forces for a wider range of operations, including China-related threats.

India's Election Commission Under Fire From Opposition

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) - Opposition leaders and critics have alleged that large-scale rigging of elections is impacting the overall results of the vote.

The ECI has denied all charges, the first against it in India's history. Heading the charge is the leader of the opposition in New Delhi's parliament, Rahul Gandhi of the Congress party, who previously alleged that India's electronic voting machines are flawed.

Now Gandhi has accused the ECI of refusing to share digital voter records, detailing what he said was a list of errors after his supporters spent weeks combing through vast piles of registration lists by hand.

Gandhi, 55, said his party lost dozens of seats in the 2024 parliamentary elections because of vote rigging.

The largest democratic exercise in human history across the country of 1.4 billion people was staggered over six weeks.

Gandhi claimed that the ECI manipulated voter rolls to favour Prime Minister

Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Modi, 74, won a historic third term last year but fell short of a majority. The alleged rigging involved a string of tactics, according to Gandhi.



He said some people voted multiple times, citing bulk registrations

from one dwelling and seemingly bogus addresses. In a presentation to reporters on August 7, Gandhi pointed to a parliamentary constituency his party narrowly lost as an "open and shut"

example of the alleged irregularities. Over 100,000 "fake" votes were cast in the constituency, he said, courtesy of duplicate voters.

His Congress party lost the seat by just over 30,000 votes.

"Our demand from the ECI is clear -- be transparent and release digital

voter rolls so that people and parties can audit them," Gandhi said. The ECI has called Gandhi's accusation "false and misleading".

India's chief election commissioner said they would "never" back down from their constitutional duties.

"Politics is being done using the Election Commission... as a tool to target India's voters," Gyanesh Kumar told a news conference this month.



LICENCE HOLDER: SOKHAN GOSTAR INSTITUTE

Switchboard: (+98) (21) 44253448 Public Relations Tel: (+98)(21) 44253450 Editorial Board: 44253449

Public Relations Fax: (+98)(21) 44253395

Advertising Department:

Tel/Fax:(+98) (21) 44253335-9/44253234

Website: http://www.irannewsdaily.com
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SPORTS WEDNESDAY AUGUST 27, 2025



NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Carlos Alcaraz cruised into the second round of the U.S. Open with a straight-sets mauling of big-serving American Reilly Opelka, while veteran Venus Williams made an emotional exit at the hands of 11th seed Karolina Muchova.

Alcaraz, sporting a new buzz cut that has sparked plenty of chatter on social media, dismantled Opelka 6-4 7-5 6-4 under the bright lights of Arthur Ashe Stadium to set up a second-round encounter with Italian Mattia Bellucci.

Williams, back at Flushing Meadows at the age of 45 after a year's hiatus, fought bravely against Muchova, forcing a deciding set before bowing out 6-3 2-6 6-1.

"I'm year ground of how I played" said Williams, who was besten 6-1 6-1 on her left U.S. Open

"I'm very proud of how I played," said Williams, who was beaten 6-1 6-1 on her last U.S. Open appearance in 2023.

"I think for me getting back on the court was about giving myself a chance to play more healthy," added Williams, who disclosed in 2011 that she had been diagnosed Sjogren's, an autoimmune disease that causes fatigue and joint pain.

"When you play unhealthy, it's in your mind. It's not just how you feel. You get stuck in your mind

too. So it was nice to be freer."

Talented teen Mirra Andreeva crushed Alycia Parks 6-0 6-1 with a near-flawless performance on

Talented teen Mirra Andreeva crushed Alycia Parks 6-0 6-1 with a near-flawless performance on Louis Armstrong Stadium but an error-strewn showing from Madison Keys saw the Australian Open champion upset 6-7(10) 7-6(3) 7-5 by Renata Zarazua in the first match on Arthur Ashe.

At number six, Keys is the highest seed to fall so far.

Zarazua, the only Mexican player in the main draw, saved see

Zarazua, the only Mexican player in the main draw, saved seven break points across the match for her first win over a top-10 player in a gruelling, three-hour and 10-minute affair.

"Coming into the match I was like almost crying because I was really nervous but I think the crowd made it so chill for me," she said. "I could hear some Mexican (fans) cheering so that was very nice." She will hope to recreate the magic in the second round against Frenchwoman Diane Parry, who had no problems eliminating twice Wimbledon winner Petra Kvitova 6-1 6-0 in her final professional

Two-times major winner Barbora Krejcikova has struggled with injuries this year but looked strong in knocking out Victoria Mboko 6-3 6-2, just weeks after the promising Canadian teenager's career breakthrough in Montreal.

Krejcikova next plays Japan's Moyuka Uchijima.

Men's 17th seed Frances Tiafoe lifted the home fans after Keys was sent packing, beating Japan's Yoshihito Nishioka 6-3 7-6(6) 6-3 and closing out the afternoon programme on Ashe with his 19th ace

The twice semi-finalist, who plays U.S. qualifier Martin Damm next, joins fourth seed Taylor Fritz and sixth seed Ben Shelton in the second round as they aim to become the first American man to lift the U.S. Open trophy in 22 years.

Jack Draper, a semi-finalist last year, dismissed Argentine qualifier Federico Agustin Gomez 6-4 7-5 6-7(7) 6-2 and plays Belgian Zizou Bergs next.

The British fifth seed is joined in the second round by compatriot Cameron Norrie, who advanced after American Sebastian Korda retired when trailing 7-5 6-4. He will next play Argentinian Francisco Comesana

Liverpool's Teen Star Ngumoha Makes History at Newcastle

NEWCASTLE (Dispatches) - The absent Alexander Isak dominated the build-up to Newcastle United's clash at home to Liverpool but the Swede was temporarily forgotten in a rip-roaring contest that ended 3-2 to the reigning champions thanks to a stoppage-time winner by teenaged Premier League debutant Rio Ngumoha.

Isak's desire to leave Newcastle, with Liverpool his destination of choice, guaranteed a boisterous St James' Park atmosphere and it seemed Arne Slot's visitors had buckled as they threw away a flattering 2-0 lead against a side reduced to 10 men by Anthony Gordon's red card in first-half stoppage time.

But 16-year-old Ngumoha broke Newcastle's hearts shortly after coming off the bench, thrashing in the winner with a first-time right-foot shot in the 10th minute of stoppage time to become Liverpool's youngest ever scorer and the fourth youngest in Premier League history.

It was a sickening blow for Newcastle who were again without outcast striker Isak, but who began the game in superb fashion.

Even when the red mist and fate had dealt them multiple blows they still showed great resilience to fight back but it all counted for nothing in the end.

"We know there was a lot of oil on the fire this week to



get Newcastle fired up," Liverpool skipper Virgil van Dijk said.

"I enjoy these type of atmospheres, so I was really looking forward to it but we could've made it easier. We gave them the boost and the feeling and the drive with the fans behind them but we managed to get the three points and move on."

Liverpool had been forced to soak up Newcastle pressure for half an hour and had made little headway but took the lead completely against the run of play when Ryan Gravenberch cut in from the left and dispatched a low shot just inside Nick Pope's post in the 35th minute.

Newcastle's frustration got the better of Gordon who was sent off in first-half stoppage time for a rash tackle that left stud marks on the back of van Dijk's calf – his initial yellow card being upgraded to a red by referee Simon Hooper.

And when Hugo Ekitike, who Newcastle had wanted to sign possibly as a replacement for Isak, struck 20 seconds after the break with the sort of clinical side-foot finish that makes you wonder whether Liverpool even require more strikers, it looked all over for the hosts.

Inter Thrash Torino With Five-Goal Masterclass to Start Campaign

MILAN (Dispatches) - Inter Milan wasted no time flexing their attacking muscle as they dismantled Torino 5-0 at home to open their Serie A campaign on Monday.

Marcus Thuram scored twice as Inter at times turned the Torino box into a playground, creating far more chances than the scoreline suggested.

Inter asserted their superiority from the first whistle at San Siro, with Thuram almost striking inside the opening minute when his header flashed just over the bar.

The hosts' dominance was rewarded in the 18th minute when Alessandro Bastoni rose highest at a corner and guided a looping header over the Torino defence and inside the far post.

looping header over the Torino defence and inside the far post. Nine minutes before the interval, Petar Sucic slipped Thuram through inside the Torino box, and the Frenchman finished with ease from an acute angle to double Inter's lead.



The goal appeared to free Inter up creatively in attack, with both the forwards and midfield carving out chance after chance against a disorganised Torino defence who looked relieved at the halftime whistle.

Inter carried their superiority into the second half, as Lautaro Martinez pounced on a misplaced Torino backpass in the box and calmly slotted home Inter's third seven minutes in.

Thuram continued the onslaught in the 62nd minute when he rose high to head in a cross from Bastoni.

In the 72nd minute Torino were punished again for sloppy defending when Denzel Dumfries intercepted a misplaced pass out from the back. A quick exchange of passes left Ange-Yoan Bonny unmarked in the box, and he calmly slotted home to complete the rout.

Venus Williams Hints at Possible Farewell After Gutsy U.S. Open Defeat



NEW YORK (Dispatches) - An emotional Venus Williams was non-committal about her future on Monday after the 45-year-old battled bravely before suffering a first-round defeat at the US Open.

The American former world number one delighted a packed house on the Arthur Ashe Stadium court with a gutsy 6-3, 2-6, 6-1 defeat to Czech 11th seed Karolina Muchova.

Williams only returned to competitive tennis in July following a 16-month absence from the sport and was granted a wild card into the main draw at Flushing Meadows, a decision that met with criticism in some quarters.

Yet she did enough against her 29-year-old opponent – who was not even born when Williams turned professional in 1994 – to more than justify the decision to give her a place in the main draw.

Williams said she does not expect to play again this year, citing a reluctance to travel, but was coy about whether she would consider seeking a place in the Australian Open next season.

"That's kind of far too," Williams, the U.S. Open champion in 2000 and 2001, said when asked about the Australian Open.

"My goal is to do what I want to do. I'm so grateful for all the folks who gave me a wild card. They could have said, 'Hey, listen, you've been gone too long, you haven't won a lot of matches in the last few years.' I wasn't lucky with my health and with injuries," she said.

"But there were a lot of people who believed in me in these tournaments. I'm very grateful to have had that chance and that opportunity to make good on it and have a chance to really strike the ball.

"I play an exciting brand of tennis. It's a lot of fun to go literally hog wild out there and hit as hard as I can. I'm happiest when I can just hit hard."

Seven-time major singles champion Williams contrasted Monday's performance with her defeat to Muchova at the U.S. Open in 2020, when she lost in straight sets in the first round.

Browns Trading QB Kenny Pickett to Raiders



NEW YORK (Dispatches) - The Cleveland Browns are trading quarterback Kenny Pickett to the Las Vegas Raiders for a 2026 fifth-round pick, according to reports.

The Raiders were reportedly searching for a quarterback after backup Aidan O'Connell suffered a fractured wrist in Las Vegas' Week 3 preseason game against Arizona. O'Connell is expected to miss at least six weeks, opening the door for Pickett to slot in behind starter Geno Smith to start the season.

Pickett, 27, was a first-round pick of the Steelers in the 2022 NFL Draft but was traded to Philadelphia after his second season in Pittsburgh.

Pickett appeared in just five games last season with the Eagles, with his only start coming in Week 17 after the team had clinched a playoff spot.

The Browns acquired Pickett from the Eagles in March, hoping he would compete for the team's starting quarterback spot.

The team would later sign veteran Joe Flacco and draft QBs Dillon Gabriel and Shedeur Sanders. Flacco was named the starter last week.

Meanwhile veteran free agent wide receiver Amari Cooper is signing a one-year deal with the Las Vegas Raiders,

according to multiple media reports Monday.

Cooper, 31, is returning to the organization that made him the fourth overall pick in the 2015 NFL Draft.