

The 3rd Round of Technical Negotiations Between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Was Held in Vienna to Work on Drafting a Procedure for Implementing Safeguards Commitments Under the New Circumstances

# IRAN NEWS

Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi in a Phone Call With His Venezuelan Counterpart Yván Eduardo Gil Pinto Has Strongly Condemned the U.S.' Unilateral and Bullying Measures Against Other Countries

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## 2 DOMESTIC

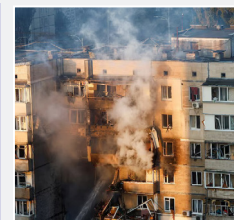


### Iran Urges Stronger Economic Mobilization to Expand Trade Ties With Japan

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### Ukraine's Main Gov't Building Ablaze in Massive Russian Air Attack



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### Iran Fought Against the Essence of Western and NATO Technology in 12-Day War



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - The Commander-in-Chief of the Iranian Army stated that during the recent 12-day conflict, Iran stood against the full spectrum of Western and NATO technology, emphasizing that these powers spared no assistance to the "Zionist enemy."

According to a report by the Army's Public Relations Office on Saturday, Major General Amir Hatami made the remarks during inspections of army units in Isfahan, Tabriz, and Hamedan. While assessing the combat readiness of the forces, he addressed commanders, soldiers, and pilots, highlighting Iran's nationwide mobilization against what he described as the "Zionist regime's aggression" in the imposed 12-day war.

"From the Army's ground, air defense, and air forces to the Basij, the Revolutionary Guards, and the Iranian people as a whole, everyone was on the battlefield. They fought and resisted so that the Islamic Republic would remain proud throughout history," Hatami said.

He honored the martyrs of the conflict as those who sacrificed everything to defend Iran's people, values, and borders, stressing the need to safeguard their ideals. "We must use the position gained through the sacrifices of the Iranian nation for greater progress and dignity," he added.

Hatami claimed that while the nuclear issue was cited as the main pretext by the enemy, their actual objectives were far broader, pointing to extensive planning against the Iranian people and the Islamic Republic. "Thanks to the courage and determination of our forces, we emerged from this battle with honor," he said.

### \$303m Prepayment for Iran's Urban Trains Finalized



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - The Minister of Interior emphasized that the development of public and rail transportation is now indispensable for improving citizens' quality of life, protecting the environment, and conserving energy. He announced that the 14th government has recently finalized a \$303 million prepayment for the purchase of new urban trains in the country.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony of Karaj Metro Line 2 at Shahid Soltani Station on Saturday, Eskandar Momeni said that this step will accelerate the procurement of new train fleets, with the first units expected to be operational by the end of this year or early next year.

He noted that the President, the Plan and Budget Organization, and the Central Bank have played key roles in this effort, expressing gratitude for their cooperation. Momeni expressed hope that with continued dedication and collaboration, other phases of Karaj Metro Line 2 will also be completed soon.

"Today we witness the operation of a section of Karaj Metro Line 2, a project brought to fruition through the efforts of the government, municipal management, the Karaj Islamic Council, and the contributions of experts, workers, and engineers," Momeni added.

### Beijing Prioritizes Expanding Relations With Tehran in Its Foreign Policy



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - China's Ambassador to Iran, Zhong Peiwu, said on Sunday that Beijing places the expansion of ties with Tehran as a priority in its foreign policy. His remarks came during a press briefing at the Chinese Embassy in Tehran following the recent Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit, hosted by President Xi Jinping.

The ambassador described the summit as the largest in SCO history, noting that President Xi introduced five major initiatives and commitments that, he said, gave the "Spirit of Shanghai" a new dimension in the current era.

Zhong emphasized that both China and Iran are committed to genuine multilateralism. He underlined Xi Jinping's Global Governance Initiative, which calls for defending international law, multilateralism, pragmatism, and a fairer global governance system.

"This was the most fruitful SCO summit to date," Zhong said, highlighting eight major outcomes, including the Tianjin Declaration and the organization's new 10-year roadmap, which he called a milestone for the SCO.

He also recalled the recent 80th anniversary of the victory in World War II, where Iran's President attended commemorations in China. "The history of resistance shows that the destiny of humankind is interconnected, and countries like China and Iran, both peace-loving, remain committed to multilateralism," he added.

Zhong confirmed that the bilateral meeting between Chinese President Xi Jinping and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian resulted in "important consensus." According to him, President Xi reiterated that developing relations with Iran is a top priority in China's foreign policy, and Beijing seeks to strengthen ties across all sectors.

He pointed to cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as an example of progress, with joint projects continuing to expand. "We want to pursue high-quality Belt and Road construction with Iran, guided by the principle of shared benefits and people's

livelihoods," he said.

Addressing a question on China's position regarding Iran's nuclear program, Zhong said the issue is at a "critical crossroads." He stressed that Beijing consistently advocates for a political and diplomatic resolution, opposes "bullying and illegal sanctions," and supports Iran's right to peaceful nuclear energy.

He criticized the U.S. withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear deal (JCPOA), saying it worsened the crisis. He noted that the SCO's Tianjin statement condemned U.S. and Israeli military actions against Iran, reaffirming that UN Resolution 2231 must be fully implemented.

"As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, China will continue constructive coordination with all parties to restore dialogue and foster regional stability," Zhong said, adding that Beijing is working closely with Tehran in New York, Vienna, and Geneva on the issue.

Responding to concerns over long queues at the Chinese Embassy in Tehran, the ambassador said the surge in visa requests after the resumption of consular services had led to delays. He assured that embassy staff were working overtime to reduce waiting times, with priority given to urgent cases such as students needing to travel before the new academic term.

Zhong also underlined the SCO's role in resisting unilateral sanctions, particularly U.S. measures against Iran. He said the organization is built on principles aligned with the UN Charter, fostering cooperation rather than "zero-sum games."

"China and Iran share common views in opposing unilateralism and promoting real multilateralism," he said. "Together, we continue to advance the founding goals of the SCO and promote a shared future."

### President Urges Efficient Use of Foreign Currency by Agriculture Ministry, Emphasizes Cost Reduction



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - President Masoud Pezeshkian highlighted that the Ministry of Agriculture Jihad is one of the largest consumers of government foreign currency, calling for stringent oversight to ensure that these resources are used efficiently and benefit the intended recipients.

Speaking at a session with the Minister and senior officials of the ministry at the State Trading Company on Saturday, President Pezeshkian stressed that careful management of foreign currency spending is essential to prevent inflated prices and guarantee that benefits reach primary consumers.

"Reducing operational costs in executive agencies, including the Ministry of Agriculture, is among my top priorities," he said. "Eliminating redundant work, controlling administrative expenses, enhancing productivity, and streamlining bureaucratic structures are all measures that can help manage costs effectively."

President Pezeshkian noted that high operational costs directly impact inflation rates, making their management even more crucial. He emphasized the importance of maintaining balance between resources and expenditures, urging the ministry to base all planning on the principles of what, where, and how to cultivate crops according to available resources.

### Nation More United After 12-Day War



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - A senior Iranian Army commander praised the nation for demonstrating "exceptional unity" during the illegal Israeli-U.S. aggression against the country and disregarding calls by the Tel Aviv regime to take to the streets.

Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari, deputy chief of the Iranian Army for Coordination, made the remarks during an event commemorating 8,000 martyrs from Gilan Province, in the city of Rasht on Saturday.

He said the Iranian nation was behind the country's victory in the June aggression, noting that with its people, Iran will never be defeated by any enemy.

"Since the [1979 Islamic] Revolution, through the sacred defense [against the 1980s' Iraqi-imposed war] and the 12-day war, our nation has shown exceptional unity and solidarity," he added.

"During the 12-day war, the prime minister of the fake Zionist regime [Benjamin Netanyahu] repeatedly called on our people to take to the streets, but not a single person paid heed to those calls. Instead, our national unity and cohesion grew even stronger."

Sayyari also said that all of the enemies' conspiracies, including imposed wars, cultural invasion, soft warfare, and hybrid warfare, are aimed at defeating the Iranian nation. The top commander further emphasized that before the Islamic Revolution, the Iranian nation stood powerfully against an armed-to-the-teeth regime and ultimately emerged victorious.

Thanks to the people's active presence on the battlefield, he pointed out, Iran achieved victory during the eight-year war imposed on Iran by the Iraqi regime, which was supported by all Eastern and Western countries.

## Iran Very Close to New Framework for Cooperation With IAEA

TEHRAN - Iran says it is "very close" to devising a new framework for bilateral cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), months after Israeli and American airstrikes on the country's nuclear facilities prompted it to suspend all engagement.

Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi made the remarks in an address to a national conference on investment opportunities in Iran's Free Zones in Tehran.

He pointed out that the U.S. attacks on Iran's nuclear sites in June disrupted Tehran's cooperation with the IAEA. "We need a new framework for cooperation with the Agency. Fortunately, our negotiations with the Agency have begun," he added.

He noted that the new framework of cooperation with the IAEA will address all the country's concerns, including a parliamentary law approved in reaction to the attacks on the Iranian nuclear facilities.

On June 13, Israel launched a blatant and unprovoked act of aggression against Iran, assassinating many high-ranking military commanders, nuclear scientists, and killing hundreds of civilians.

On June 22, the United States also entered the war and bombed three Iranian nuclear facilities in Fordow, Natanz, and Isfahan, in a clear violation of international law and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

On June 25, the Iranian Parliament unanimously passed a law mandating the government to suspend all cooperation with the IAEA. Since then, the agency's inspectors have been barred from visiting the country's nuclear sites.

Iran's ambassador to the United Nations organizations in the Austrian capital Vienna, Reza Najafi, said on Friday that a new round of talks between an Iranian delegation and officials from the IAEA was held in the Austrian capital.

He noted that the negotiations were part of consultations between Iran and the UN nuclear agency on defining cooperation "within the framework of parliament's law under new conditions."

Iran open to resumption of talks with US based on common interests, mutual respect Araqchi said Iran was serious in talks with the United States aimed at lifting sanctions against Tehran before the beginning of the Israeli regime's acts of aggression.

He added that all conditions have changed after the Israeli-U.S. war. "I am not saying that negotiations have been removed from the agenda, no, but they have certainly taken on new forms



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

and dimensions."

He stressed the need to develop accurate plans that take the new concerns into account and engage in fresh negotiations with new arrangements.

Iran's negotiations with the U.S. continue, and the sides are exchanging messages through intermediaries, the top Iranian negotiator explained.

"The day the Americans come to the conclusion that they are ready for negotiations based on common interests and mutual respect, we will also be ready to begin the talks," Araqchi pointed out.

Iran and the United States held five rounds of indirect talks on Tehran's peaceful nuclear program before the beginning of the Israeli regime's acts of aggression.

Mediated by Oman, the 6th round of talks was planned to be held in the Omani capital of Muscat on June 15, but was called off due to the anti-Iran attacks.

Araqchi further said the European troika - France, Germany and Britain - made a "big mistake" by triggering the so-called snapback mechanism of sanctions against Iran.

The trio made the path more difficult and complex by invoking the snapback mechanism, the foreign minister added.

Last week, the European trio triggered the so-called snapback mechanism in Resolution 2231 to restore all UN sanctions against Iran. They gave the Security Council 30 days to decide whether it would continue sanctions relief against Iran or allow it to lapse.

Iran, Russia, and China sent a letter to the UN, saying the snapback activation by the three European countries contravenes Resolution 2231 and is "legally and procedurally flawed". They also stressed that the United States' unilateral withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear agreement, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and Europe's failure to mitigate the consequences of Washington's move bar any use of the snapback mechanism against Iran.

In a post on his X account on Friday, Araqchi said the European troika and the United States are losing credibility on the issue of non-proliferation by keeping silent over Israel's intensified work at the Dimona nuclear reactor site.



# IRAN NEWS



## IranPlast 2025 Exhibition to Open in Tehran This September

TEHRAN (Dispatches) - Tehran will host the 19th edition of IranPlast, the country's most significant plastics industry exhibition, from September 7 to 10, 2025, at the Tehran International Permanent Fairground. Organizers announced that the four-day event will gather leading companies, manufacturers, and industry experts to showcase the latest developments in plastics and polymer technologies. Recognized as the largest national platform for the sector, IranPlast aims to strengthen domestic production, foster innovation, and boost international cooperation. The National Association of Polymer Industries of Iran will take part through a dedicated pavilion, representing its member companies and highlighting their role in advancing the country's plastics industry.

## Iran's Exports to Africa Surge 2.2 Times in First Four Months of This Year



TEHRAN - Iran's exports to Africa recorded a significant 2.2-fold increase in the first four months of the current Iranian year (March-July 2025) compared to the same period last year, according to the Iran-East Africa Joint Chamber of Commerce. The number of African export destinations also expanded from 29 to 34 countries.

Masoud Barhaman, head of the Iran-East Africa Joint Chamber, told Iran Chamber Online that official customs data show Iran's exports to Africa reached around \$260 million during spring 2025, marking an 85% growth year-on-year. He added that the trend extended into the first four months of the year, with trade continuing its sharp upward trajectory.

Barhaman noted that while the five-month statistics have not yet been published, preliminary indications suggest that Iran's trade with Africa in that period also experienced considerable growth compared with last year.

Despite the surge, Barhaman highlighted several challenges hampering trade with Africa, including:

Logistics issues such as a lack of direct shipping lines from Iran and delays at African ports.

Regulatory and standards-related hurdles, including strict requirements for registering food and pharmaceutical products, halal and quality certifications.

Currency risks, such as the devaluation of local African currencies and restrictions on currency transfers.

Non-tariff barriers, including complex customs rules, labeling obligations, local testing, high inland transport and insurance costs, and limited after-sales service networks for industrial goods.

According to Barhaman, the main factors fueling the rise in trade include: Active Iran-Africa diplomacy and broader export outreach.

## Talks with Sinosure for Financing Petrochemical Projects



TEHRAN - The Director of Planning and Development at the National Petrochemical Company expressed hope that at least two or three projects will benefit from China's line of credit.

Speaking to ILNA, Hossein Alimorad outlined the goals of Iran's petrochemical industry under the Seventh Development Plan. He said that, according to Article 46 of the plan, the country must reach a production capacity of 131 million tons by the end of the program. To achieve this, 66 projects are currently underway, requiring \$24 billion in investment.

Alimorad explained that the main obstacle facing the projects is not delays or technical setbacks, but financing. He noted that measures such as bank credit lines, Central Bank foreign exchange services, bonds issued by banks, and bank-led financing consortia are being pursued to address this issue.

The senior official identified feedstock supply as a key challenge, stressing that maximizing the use of available capacity depends on resolving this issue. He added that petrochemical companies are being encouraged to invest upstream in gas fields to secure feedstock, which would help ensure the planned production capacity is achieved.

On the issue of foreign financing, Alimorad revealed that in a recent meeting with the Plan and Budget Organization, a request was made for priority petrochemical projects to be included in the line of credit currently under negotiation with Sinosure, China's export credit agency.

He said that negotiations are ongoing between the Central Bank and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance, and once the final terms are agreed, the level of financing will be determined. Project prioritization will then be finalized by a joint committee of the Plan and Budget Organization and the Presidential Office.

Three Projects in Line for Chinese Finance  
Alimorad voiced optimism that at least two or three projects will be financed through the Chinese credit line.

# Iran Urges Stronger Economic Mobilization to Expand Trade Ties With Japan

TEHRAN - The inaugural session of the Sakura Summit, held at Iran's Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), witnessed a key proposal: the creation of a dedicated business platform to link Iranian and Japanese companies, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Organizers believe the initiative could open the way for closer commercial cooperation between the two countries.

Speaking at the event, ICCIMA Vice President Payam Bagheri emphasized that the current level of trade between Iran and Japan does not reflect the long-standing diplomatic and cultural relationship shared by the two nations.

"Today more than ever, we need to deepen our international ties. Iran and Japan have nearly a century of formal relations and share many affinities," Bagheri said. He noted that Iran has significant competitive advantages in sectors such as energy, mining, medical equipment, tourism, handicrafts, and carpet production.

However, he acknowledged that obstacles—particularly those outside the private sector's control—have hampered growth. "Strengthening this relationship requires mobilizing all arms of the national economy, especially government institutions, to create a favorable environment for private enterprise," he added.

Bahram Shakouri, Vice President of the Iran-Japan Joint Chamber of Commerce, pointed out that bilateral trade has continued without interruption for over three decades, despite political shifts. He expressed hope that with Japan's interest in Iran, relations could expand further.

"If the profiteers of sanctions allow, Japan can meet a large share of our technological needs and serve as a key market for Iranian exports," Shakouri said. He also highlighted the role of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in facilitating collaboration, particularly in bringing modern technologies to Iranian SMEs.

Board member Kamyar Montaser praised Japan's ability to preserve its traditions while embracing modernity, describing it as a model that offers valuable lessons for Iran.

Meanwhile, fellow board member Hamidreza Nabizadeh reflected on Japan's post-World War II recovery, crediting its "developmental bureaucratic state" for prioritizing expertise, empowering the private sector, and promoting exports. He



lamented that Iran had failed to build deep commercial links with Japan, making trade relations vulnerable to external shocks.

Former Iranian ambassador to Japan Morteza Rahmani-Movahhed noted that trade volumes between the two countries have dwindled to around \$100 million since the U.S. withdrawal from the nuclear deal—"a disappointing figure," he said.

Rahmani highlighted that 97 percent of Japan's economy is driven by SMEs, with strong government support. He suggested focusing on areas outside the reach of international sanctions, including environmental protection, healthcare, sports, IT, and tourism.

"Japanese companies never fully shut down their offices in Iran, nor abandoned their presence here," he observed. "If we create a platform for technology and knowledge transfer, with Iranian investors, traders, and engineering firms at the table, Japanese companies will be willing to join. This way, when restrictions ease, cooperation can quickly accelerate."

Ali Masoudi, head of ICCIMA's ICT Commission, underscored the need for joint training programs and technology-sharing initiatives with Japan. He stressed that while sanctions complicate formal cooperation, determined entrepreneurs will continue to find channels for trade.

"Japan is a global leader in technology. With careful planning for joint events and training courses, we can strengthen cooperation in equipment supply and services," Masoudi said. "Iran-Japan political relations have always been positive, and businesses on both sides are creative in finding ways to sustain partnerships."

Participants at the Sakura Summit agreed that Iran must take proactive steps to overcome barriers to international commerce. Establishing a business platform between Iran and Japan was widely viewed as a practical first step to deepen engagement, foster trust, and prepare the ground for expanded trade once financial and political constraints ease.

The summit concluded with calls for Iran's government and private sector to work hand in hand, ensuring that the country's untapped potential—particularly in technology partnerships and SME cooperation—can be realized in its relationship with Japan.

# Indonesian Ambassador Calls for Increasing Number of Indonesian Students in Iran

TEHRAN - The Ambassador of Indonesia to the Islamic Republic of Iran, Roulansyah Sumarat, emphasized the importance of expanding academic exchanges and highlighted the need to increase the number of Indonesian students studying in Iran during his visit to Hazrat Masoumeh University in Qom.

According to ILNA, Sumarat, who recently began his diplomatic mission in Iran, described academic, research, and cultural cooperation between Iranian and Indonesian universities as a key element of modern diplomacy.

"Although I have been in Iran for only a month, I prioritized visiting Hazrat Masoumeh University because I believe that academic relations are among the most effective ways of strengthening ties between countries," he said.

The ambassador noted that this year marks the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Iran and Indonesia, calling it an opportunity to further enhance scientific, educational, and cultural collaboration.

Currently, more than 200 Indonesian students are studying in Iran. However, Sumarat said this figure should grow: "We hope to create more opportunities for Indonesian students to benefit from Iran's academic resources, while Iranian students should also have the chance to study in Indonesian universities."

Highlighting his government's policies on women's empowerment, Sumarat praised Hazrat Masoumeh University, a women's higher education institution, as a valuable example for Indonesia. He acknowledged existing challenges in international cooperation but expressed optimism that strong will on both sides could pave the way for broader academic exchanges.



Hazrat Masoumeh University President, Dr. Bordbar, welcomed the ambassador's visit, calling it a sign of Indonesia's recognition of Iranian women's academic and cultural potential. He outlined the university's achievements since its founding in 2007 as the first women-only university established after the Islamic Revolution, noting its leading position in scientific output among young Iranian universities and recent national awards.

The university currently hosts around 1,700 students and has expanded its mission beyond education to cultural enrichment, family development, and women's empowerment, including entrepreneurship initiatives in collaboration with Iran's Ministry of Labor.

Bordbar also highlighted the university's growing international activities, including agreements with countries such as Iraq, the acceptance of international students, joint conferences, Persian language courses, and shared research publications. He encouraged greater promotion of the university within Indonesia's higher education system to strengthen bilateral ties.

Hojatolislam Akhoundzadeh, the representative of the Supreme Leader's Office at Hazrat Masoumeh University, also spoke at the event, stressing the importance of academic institutions for women in the Islamic world. He called for removing barriers to student and researcher exchanges between Iran and Indonesia, underlining that such cooperation fosters not only academic growth but also cultural and civilizational dialogue.

Officials concluded that continued collaboration, facilitated by the Indonesian Embassy, could turn Qom into a hub for joint scientific and cultural activities across the Islamic world.

## Iran's Path to Development Runs Through FTZs



TEHRAN - Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance said that the country's path to economic development lies in its free trade zones.

Speaking at the National Conference on Capabilities and Investment Opportunities in Iran's Free and Commercial Zones, Ali Madanizadeh noted that while the Foreign Ministry continues diplomatic efforts to ease economic sanctions, the Economy Ministry is focusing on empowering the private sector, securing export-oriented investment financing, and prioritizing the role of free zones.

"We believe that the gateway for Iran's economy to enter the stage of development is through free trade zones," the minister stated.

Madanizadeh argued that Iran has become trapped in a state-dominated economy, weighed down by high subsidy payments and heavy government intervention. He stressed that such economic models have failed worldwide. Citing other nations' experiences, he noted that while economic liberalization—such as freeing prices and labor markets—was a common remedy, it often led to industrial collapse, import dependency, rising unemployment, and prolonged inflation.

In contrast, he praised China's use of free trade zones as a mechanism to avoid the pitfalls of "shock therapy." He explained that China fostered competitive, export-driven economies within these zones by removing heavy subsidies and creating flexible labor markets. This approach allowed free zones to gradually expand and capture a major share of the Chinese economy.

"The Chinese experience showed that free zones can be a pathway to development," Madanizadeh emphasized.

The minister acknowledged that Iran has failed to replicate such success because of constant legal changes that diverted free zones from their original mission. He said the government now intends to reverse this trend through a Free Zones Transformation Plan, which will specialize zones and implement genuine economic liberalization within them.

## Iran Reports Strong Strategic Reserves



TEHRAN - Iran's Deputy Minister of Agriculture says the country's strategic reserves of essential goods—including wheat, sugar, rice, and cooking oil—are currently in good condition, with no shortages reported.

Seyed Saeed Rad, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and CEO of the Government Trading Corporation of Iran (GTC), told ILNA that supply security remains stable and sufficient stocks are available to meet domestic demand.

Rad confirmed that wheat reserves are covered until the end of the year. To ensure consistency and quality in flour production, the government has adopted a wheat blending strategy, mixing domestically produced wheat with imports. In this context, Iran has purchased shipments from Russia, which are now en route to the country.

"Through this approach, flour of national standard 103—recognized as high-quality flour—will be delivered to bakeries nationwide," Rad said.

The official also highlighted stability in other key commodities. He said sugar, both domestically produced and imported, is widely available in markets, with no shortages detected. Similarly, cooking oil stocks are sufficient, with many retail chains currently offering 30 to 40 percent discounts on certain frying oil brands, a sign of healthy supply levels.

Rad stressed that blending imported and domestic wheat will guarantee the delivery of premium flour to bakeries across Iran, helping maintain both product quality and supply reliability.

In addition to maintaining reserves, the ministry has prioritized clearing debts to domestic wheat farmers. Rad said more than 95 percent of payments owed to wheat growers have already been settled, a record not seen in over a decade.

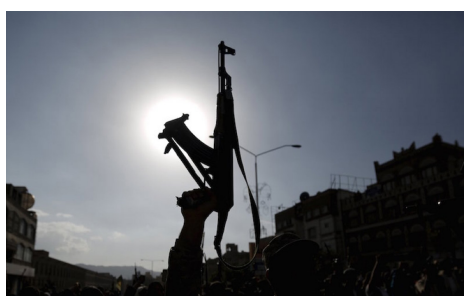


## Jihadists Kill 63 in Attack on Resettled Nigerian Town

MAIDUGURI (Dispatches) - Jihadists killed at least 63 people in north-eastern Nigeria while storming a town whose residents had been returned from a displacement camp, the state governor said.

The Friday night assault struck the town of Darul Jamal, which hosts a military base on the Nigeria-Cameroon border in a zone ravaged by jihadist attacks.

Babagana Zulum, governor of the embattled Borno state, said that five soldiers were among the dead, a figure confirmed to AFP by a security source.



## British Police Arrest More Than 400 at a London Palestine Action Support Rally



LONDON (Dispatches) - More than 400 people were arrested in London on Saturday during a tense protest in support of the Palestine Action group, which has been banned under terror laws, police said.

Several hundred people demonstrated in front of the UK parliament, with some holding placards that read: "I oppose genocide. I support Palestine Action."

The capital's Metropolitan Police force (Met) had warned people that it would not hesitate to arrest anyone who explicitly expressed support for the prohibited group.

The Met said in a statement late on Saturday that it had arrested "more than 425 people... in relation to the protest".

"The majority of these arrests were made for supporting a proscribed organisation," the force said.

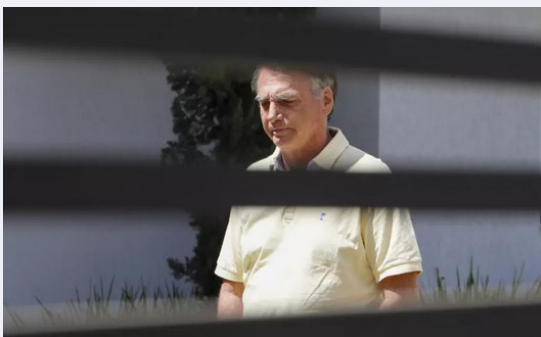
Polly Smith, a 74-year-old retiree, said those at the rally "are not terrorists", adding: "The ban must be lifted."

Nigel, a 62-year-old CEO of a recycling company who declined to give his surname, said the government's ban imposed in July was "totally inappropriate".

"They should spend more time working on trying to stop genocide, rather than trying to stop protesters," he told AFP before being arrested as protesters chanted "Shame on you!" at police.

Skirmishes broke out between officers and demonstrators who tried to prevent arrests.

## Bolsonaro Supporters Called to Streets Ahead of Coup Trial Verdict



SAO PAULO (AFP) - Former Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro will test his political strength Sunday with demonstrations in the country's main cities, days before the Supreme Court decides whether he is guilty of attempting a coup.

The far-right leader, also a former army captain, risks up to 43 years in prison if convicted of attempting to cling to power after losing 2022 elections to his leftist rival Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

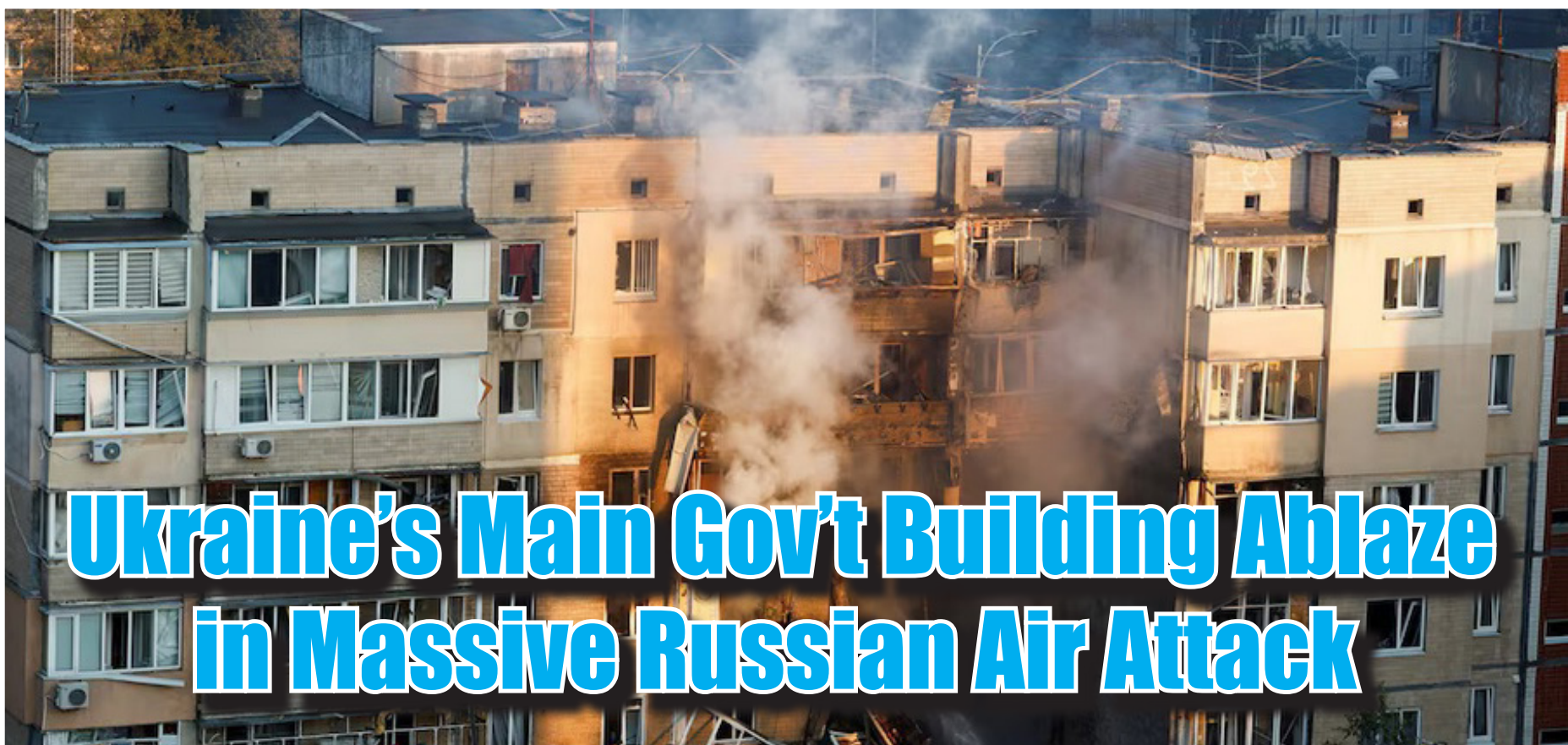
The court is set to deliver its verdict next week in a case which has sparked the ire of US President Donald Trump, an ally of Bolsonaro.

Bolsonaro, who has been under house arrest since August, will be the absent protagonist of the Independence Day events calling for an amnesty for hundreds of his supporters who were convicted over the January 8, 2023 storming of the Supreme Court, presidential palace and Congress.

The "Bolsonaristas" hope Congress will vote for an amnesty which could also extend to the former president even if he is convicted.

Bolsonaro was in the United States at the time but is accused of inciting the rioters, who called for the military to depose Lula a week after his return to power.

Bolsonaro's allies have organized rallies for Sunday under the slogan "Brazil Reacts," with events starting in Rio de Janeiro before the main demonstration Sunday afternoon in Sao Paulo on Avenida Paulista.



## Ukraine's Main Gov't Building Ablaze in Massive Russian Air Attack

KYIV (Dispatches) - An infant was among two people killed in a Russian drone and missile attack on Kyiv that set fire to scores of buildings in the capital, including the main government building, Ukrainian officials said Sunday. At least four people were killed and dozens wounded across Ukraine as Russia launched more than 800 drones and 13 missiles in overnight attacks, Ukraine's air force said Sunday.

Kyiv's Mayor Vitali Klitschko said a fire broke out at the government building in the city centre after the attack, which began with drones raining down, followed by missile strikes.

The drone attacks killed the infant and a young woman, Klitschko said on the Telegram messaging app, while a pregnant woman was among the five injured admitted to hospital.

The roof and upper floors of Ukraine's cabinet of ministers building, the seat of the government in Kyiv, were damaged in a Russian strike early Sunday, Ukraine's prime minister said.

"For the first time, the government building was damaged by an enemy attack, including the roof and upper floors," said Prime Minister Yulia Svyrydenko. "We will restore the buildings, but lost lives cannot be returned."

Smoke billowed out of apartment buildings as fires broke out in several Kyiv neighbourhoods, including the historic Pecherskyi district, where the country's main government building is located.

"It's a very worrying development because this is the governmental district of Kyiv, the area that is considered probably the most strongly protected in all of Ukraine by the country's air defences," said FRANCE 24's Gulliver Cragg, reporting from Kyiv.

Russia launched 805 drones into Ukraine overnight and 13 missiles, with Ukrainian defence units downing 751 drones and four missiles, Ukraine Air Force said Sunday.

That was the highest number of drones Russia has used to attack the country since Moscow launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

Russia was "deliberately and consciously striking civilian targets", Timur Tkachenko, the head of the capital's military

administration, said on Telegram.

Dozens of explosions shook Ukraine's central city of Kremenchuk, cutting power to some areas, Mayor Vitalii Maletskyi said on Telegram.

Russian strikes on Kryvyi Rih, President Volodymyr Zelensky's hometown in central Ukraine, targeted transport and urban infrastructure, Oleksandr Vilkul, the head of the military administration, said on Telegram. No injuries reported.

In the southern city of Odesa, civilian infrastructure and residential buildings were damaged, with fires breaking out in several apartment blocks, regional governor Oleh Kiper said on Telegram.

Russian denies targeting civilians, but thousands have died in the war Russia launched with a full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

The barrage came after two dozen countries, led by France and Britain, pledged Thursday to join a "reassurance" force to patrol any agreement to end the war, unleashed by Moscow's February 2022 invasion.

Kyiv says security guarantees, backed by Western troops, are crucial to any pace deal to ensure Russia does not invade again in the future.

However, Russian President Vladimir Putin has dismissed any Western forces in Ukraine as unacceptable and said they would be "legitimate" targets.

Efforts in recent weeks by US President Donald Trump to end the war have so far yielded little progress.

Russian forces occupy around 20 percent of Ukrainian territory in total.

Tens of thousands have been killed in three and a half years of fighting, which has forced millions from their homes and destroyed much of eastern and southern Ukraine in Europe's bloodiest conflict since World War II.

With western Ukraine facing the threat of air attacks, Poland activated its own and allied aircraft to ensure air safety, the operational command of the Polish armed forces said.

## U.S. President Threatens War on Chicago, Triggering Fierce Backlash

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - President Donald Trump threatened to unleash his newly rebranded "Department of War" on Chicago, further heightening tensions over his push to deploy troops into Democratic-led US cities.

The move seeks to replicate an operation in the US capital Washington, where Trump deployed National Guard troops and boosted numbers of federal agents, sparking a backlash and a fresh protest on Saturday that drew thousands.

"Chicago about to find out why it's called the Department of WAR," Trump posted yesterday on his Truth Social account.

The Democratic governor of Illinois, where Chicago is located, voiced outrage at Trump's post.

"The President of the United States is threatening to go to war with an American city. This is not a joke. This is not normal," Governor JB Pritzker wrote in a post on X.

"Illinois won't be intimidated by a wannabe dictator," he added.

The post featured an apparent AI image of Trump and the quote: "I love the smell of deportations in the morning" — both references to the 1979 Vietnam War film Apocalypse Now.

In the film, the line is spoken by Lt. Col. Bill Kilgore who says he loves the smell of "napalm" — not "deportations" — as the American military drops the highly flammable weapon on Vietnamese targets.

9-year-old Republican has steadily ramped up threats against Chicago, since an early mention of it at the end of August.

Anti-Trump protesters took to the streets of Chicago yesterday,



carrying signs that read "stop this fascist regime!" and "no Trump, no troops."

The protest route also went past Chicago's Trump tower, and protesters made rude gestures at the president's building as they walked past.

On Saturday in the U.S. capital, where National Guard troops have been deployed since Trump declared a "crime emergency" in August, a thousands-strong protest march wound through downtown with participants demanding an end to the "occupation."

Demonstrators in DC carried inverted U.S. flags as they marched past the country's national monuments, traditionally a symbol of a country facing existential peril.

Trump's troop and federal agent deployments — which first began in June in Los Angeles, followed by Washington — have prompted legal challenges and protests, with critics calling them an authoritarian show of force.

Local officials in Los Angeles spoke out against the deployments and the violent tactics employed by ICE agents in Los Angeles, who often wore masks, drove in unmarked cars and chased down and snatched people from the streets without cause or warrants.

In addition to Chicago, Trump has threatened to replicate the surges in Democratic-led Baltimore and New Orleans.

On Friday, Trump signed an order changing the name of the Department of Defence to the Department of War, saying it sends "a message of victory" to the world.

Pentagon chief Pete Hegseth cheered the move, saying the US will decisively exact violence to reach its aims, without apology.

## Israeli Military Warns Gaza City Residents to Leave, Bombs High-Rise Tower

TEL AVIV (Dispatches) - The Israeli military warned Palestinians in Gaza City to leave for the south before bombing a high-rise tower as its forces advance deeper into the enclave's largest urban area.

Israeli forces have been carrying out an offensive on the suburbs of the northern city for weeks after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu ordered the military to capture it.

Netanyahu says Gaza City is a Hamas stronghold and capturing it is necessary to defeat the Palestinian Islamist militants, whose October 2023 attack on Israel sparked the war.

The assault threatens to displace hundreds of thousands of Palestinians sheltering there from nearly two years of fighting. Before the war, around a million people, nearly half of Gaza's population, lived in the city.

Israeli military spokesperson Avichay Adraee wrote on X that residents should leave the city for a designated coastal area of Khan Younis in southern Gaza, assuring those fleeing that they would be able to receive food, medical care and shelter there.

The designated area was a "humanitarian zone", Adraee said.



The military also issued so-called "evacuation warnings" to civilians in certain areas of the city, warning it was about to carry out attacks.

The military later bombed a high-rise Gaza City tower that it said was being used by Hamas, without providing evidence to support the assertion. It said civilians were warned in advance.

Israel's Defence Minister Israel Katz shared a video on X of what appeared to be the multi-storey building collapsing after the strike, sending a cloud of dust and debris into the air.

It was not immediately clear if there were any casualties.

The Israeli military said Hamas used the building to gather intelligence and that explosive devices had been planted nearby. Hamas denied using the building for military purposes, and Palestinians said it had been used to shelter the displaced.

"These towers are strictly monitored, entry is permitted exclusively for civilians," Hamas said in a statement, adding the Israeli allegations constitute "a systematic forced displacement" plan.





## Ronaldo, Felix Shine as Portugal Thrash Armenia 5-0 Away

YEREVAN (Dispatches) - Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo and Joao Felix both struck twice as the visitors brushed aside Armenia 5-0 on Saturday, giving Jose Martinez's side a perfect start in their World Cup qualifiers.

The Nations League champions had little trouble neutralising Armenia's limited attacking threat and, after their fourth goal, rotated key players and used their momentum to showcase a more creative style, sealing a perfect start in Group F.

It took 10 minutes before Portugal went ahead when Joao Cancelo reached the byline and lifted a precise cross onto the head of Felix who had little trouble breaking the deadlock.

Ronaldo doubled the lead after 21 minutes, underlining Portugal's dominance as he brushed past his marker to meet a cross from close range for his 139th international goal.

The rout continued as Cancelo added a third for Portugal, finishing from Felix's cut-back after 32 minutes.

A minute after the restart, Ronaldo produced a moment of brilliance, unleashing a thunderous volley from distance that rocketed into the net, with Armenia goalkeeper Henri Avagyan managing the faintest of touches but powerless to stop it.

With the fourth goal confirming Portugal's dominance, the visitors began to play with greater freedom as they looked for inventive ways to carve out further chances.

Just past the hour, Felix combined fortune with finesse as he raced into the box to meet a rebound from a blocked shot that seemed to slip past him, only for the forward to flick the ball in with a clever back-heel to give Portugal their fifth.

The visitors pressed for a sixth late on, but Avagyan produced two fine saves before the referee blew for full time almost the instant stoppage time began, ending the rout.

Meanwhile England needed an own goal to open the scoring during a laboured 2-0 win over Andorra in their World Cup qualifier before Declan Rice made the result somewhat more respectable against the tiny principality ranked 170 places below them.

A fourth win in four for Thomas Tuchel's team in their campaign for next year's finals put them in command of Group K on 12 points ahead of Tuesday's game in Serbia.

But their often slow build-up play did not excite the near-40,000 Villa Park crowd and will fuel grumbles that they have become a duller team in nearly a year under German coach Thomas Tuchel despite his perfect record in qualifiers.

England's opener came in the 25th minute when a fine cross from Noni Madueke skimmed off Andorra defender Christian Garcia's head into the net with Harry Kane lurking behind him.

Rice added the second in the 67th minute when he met another superb cross, from Reece James this time, to steer a downward header past goalkeeper Iker Alvarez to wrap up the victory against 174th-ranked Andorra.

Andorra, who draw their squad from a population of 80,000, stuck doggedly to their gameplan of packing the defense, often keeping nine men behind the ball and leaving Ricard Fernandez totally isolated up front.

That gave England a remarkable 83% possession, but the hosts fashioned few clear-cut chances beyond Eberechi Eze forcing a save, captain Kane narrowly missing a toe-poke and Marcus Rashford curling a shot wide.

One positive for Tuchel, though, was an impressive debut from midfielder Elliot Anderson, who looked assured and slick, albeit against opposition far inferior to what he normally faces in the Premier League for Nottingham Forest.

## Sabalenka Crowned Queen of Queens With Back-to-Back U.S. Open Titles

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - World number one Aryna Sabalenka retained her U.S. Open crown with a battling 6-3 7-6(3) win over American eighth seed Amanda Anisimova in the U.S. Open women's final, underlining her claim as the modern queen of the hardcourt.

The Belarusian has not missed a hardcourt major final since 2022. Her latest trophy brings her Grand Slam haul to four, as she became the first woman to win back-to-back U.S. Opens since Serena Williams claimed three straight from 2012 to 2014.

The clash between two of tennis's hardest-hitting, biggest-serving women boiled down to unforced errors as Sabalenka kept them to 15 compared to 29 from the racket of her opponent.

"I want to thank everyone who came here, who flew in to be there in my box," said Sabalenka, who fell to her knees after clinching victory with an unreturnable serve and embraced her coaches in the stands in a scene of utter joy.

"I'm going to reach a lot more finals and I don't care where you are in the world, I want you in my box."

Playing in only her second major final, New Jersey-born Anisimova had the partisan fans at the famed Arthur Ashe Stadium on her side but could never hang



onto the momentum.

"It's been a great summer, losing in two finals in a row is great but it's also super hard," said 24-year-old Anisimova, who was left in tears yet again after the heartbreak of her 6-0 6-0 drubbing in the Wimbledon final two months ago.

"I didn't fight hard enough for my dreams today."

Ticket-toting fans ducked a sudden downpour at Flushing Meadows that forced organisers to put on the retractable roof at Ashe, where the usual array of A-listers packed the stands.

The rain slowed down as the players warmed up and Sabalenka brought a perfect storm of tenacious tennis to her opponent.

Sabalenka, 27, had ice in her veins as she saved three break points in a nervy first game and Anisimova handed over the early break when she sent a shot past the baseline in the second.

Anisimova hit her stride when she won a 12-shot rally with a forehand winner out of Sabalenka's reach to break back in the third game and she went up a break as Sabalenka hit one beyond the baseline in the fifth.

## Granollers, Zeballos Win U.S. Open Men's Doubles Title



NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Marcel Granollers and Horacio Zeballos saved three championship points against all-British pair Joe Salisbury and Neal Skupski yesterday to win their first U.S. Open men's doubles title.

Salisbury and Skupski were a point away from winning with their opponents serving down 5-4 down in the third set but Granollers and Zeballos fought back to prevail 3-6, 7-6 (7/4), 7-5.

It is a second Grand Slam triumph for Spain's Granollers and Argentina's Zeballos. They also beat Salisbury and Skupski in three sets at this year's French Open final.

"When you play these kind of matches it's so unfair there's a winner and a loser," said Zeballos.

"I don't really know how we... won those last points after what we did during the match. We kept fighting. I think if I had to describe the match with one phrase is 'never give up'."

Granollers had finished on the losing side in five Grand Slam doubles finals before this year, three of those playing with Zeballos.

"Tennis sometimes is crazy, because we were talking coming here that how close you are to lose the match, and then in 20 minutes you win the trophy," said Granollers.

Salisbury fell short in his bid for a fifth Grand Slam crown in men's doubles after winning four times with Rajeev Ram. Skupski won at Wimbledon in 2023.

"We did everything we could. We competed well. I don't think there's anything we could have done differently," said Salisbury.

"It was literally just one point."

Meanwhile Canadian-Kiwi duo Gabriela Dabrowski and Erin Routliffe overcame Czech Katerina Siniakova and American Taylor Townsend in the U.S. Open women's doubles final 6-4 6-4, lifting the trophy in New York for a second time.

Dabrowski and Routliffe took the court in matching purple kits and appeared totally in sync as they avenged their defeat to the same opponents in the 2024 Wimbledon final, saving five of the seven break points they faced in a fine defensive effort.

Siniakova and Townsend were in terrific form after winning the Australian Open earlier this year but struggled to chip away at their opponents' defenses and lost their momentum in a feisty second set.

"What a wild ride," the Canadian Dabrowski said to her teammate. "We've been through so much together, I feel extremely grateful to be standing alongside you as a champion today."

In the first set, Routliffe got her team up a break with a swift backhand volley at the net in the sixth game but the battle was on as Townsend converted a fourth break point chance with a forehand winner in the ninth.

## Marquez Claims First Pole of Season for Catalunya MotoGP



MONTMELÓ (Dispatches) - Alex Marquez swept to a first pole of the 2025 season in qualifying for the Catalunya MotoGP, smashing the lap record in front of an adoring home crowd.

The 29-year-old posted the fastest time of 1min 37.536sec on his BK8 Gresini Ducati at Montmelo to edge out Yamaha's Fabio Quartararo.

Alex's Marquez's brother Marc Marquez, a six-time world champion and the current overall leader, came in third.

The two brothers are battling for the championship although Marc leads his younger sibling by a dominant 175 points at the top of the standings after a seventh successive victory a fortnight ago at the Hungarian MotoGP.

"Alex is the fastest, I'll try to stay close to him. I have a better chance in the long race," said Marc Marquez ahead of today's sprint.

"The weekend is going perfectly... I'm confident it can be a great Sprint for us," said Alex Marquez.

Despite a strong practice session on Friday KTM's Brad Binder could only come in 11th.

Francesco Bagnaia continued to struggle and will start from 21st on the grid, his worst result since starting last in the 2022 Portuguese Grand Prix.

## Record-Breaker Verstappen Sets Fastest Lap in F1 History

MONZA (Dispatches) - Max Verstappen took pole position for the Italian Grand Prix with the fastest lap in Formula One history in qualifying to give the reigning world champion a chance of striking a blow against dominant McLaren.

Dutchman Verstappen, who has won the last four world titles, will start on the front row alongside Lando Norris who was just ahead of his McLaren teammate and championship leader Oscar Piastri.

Having led for much of Q3, Verstappen snatched back first place in the final seconds of qualifying from Norris, who has been strong this weekend and seemed to have pipped the Red Bull man at the last.

Verstappen completed his astonishing lap in one minute and 18.792 seconds to beat by 0.095s the previous benchmark set



by Lewis Hamilton for Mercedes at the same track in 2020.

Verstappen was 0.077s ahead of Norris—who also bettered Hamilton's previous record—and 0.190s faster than Piastri, who leads Norris by 34 points at the top of the drivers' standings.

"I think that final lap was pretty decent, and to get pole here for us, I think, is big as it's not always been a good track for us," Verstappen told reporters.

However, Verstappen, who trails Piastri by 104 points, will have both McLaren cars chasing him down from the green light on Sunday, an ominous prospect given that the British team have won 12 of this year's 15 GPs.

"Difficult to say," said Verstappen when asked about his chances in the race.