

The Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Emphasizing That a Permanent Agreement Can Only Be Achieved Through a Diplomatic Solution, Stated That If the “Trigger Mechanism” Is Activated, Engagement With Iran Will Continue in Order to Mitigate Its Impact and Reach an Agreement

IRAN NEWS

The Spokesperson of Iran Foreign Ministry, Referring to the Diplomatic Restrictions Imposed on Iranian Diplomats in New York, Described These Restrictions as Being Contrary to the United States’ Legal Obligations Under the Headquarters Agreement

VOL. XXIX, No. 8370 TEHRAN Price 50,000 Rials

www.irannewsdaily.com

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 25, 2025 MEHR 03, 1404

2

DOMESTIC



Economic Security and Stability Tied to Structural Reforms

> SEE PAGE 2

3

INTERNATIONAL

Trump Blasts UN, Europe in Fiery UN Speech

> SEE PAGE 3



FM Urges Global Cooperation to Tackle Development, Humanitarian Challenges



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araqchi highlighted the need for multilateral cooperation and equitable development at the High-Level Meeting of the Global Development Initiative (GDI), held under the theme “Renewing Commitment to Core Principles, United for a Brighter Future in Global Development.”

Araqchi described the GDI as a “valuable platform to strengthen collaboration and solidarity among member countries in pursuit of sustainable development.”

The minister stressed that structural inequalities in global economic, financial, and trade systems continue to disproportionately affect developing nations. He noted that eradicating poverty remains a pressing challenge, with hunger, malnutrition, and food insecurity rising, and famine threatening large parts of the world.

Araqchi also raised concerns over widening digital divides, particularly in emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence. He called for inclusive, transparent, and equitable governance of digital tools, ensuring full participation of developing countries in global decision-making.

“Structural reforms are essential to guarantee meaningful involvement of developing nations in shaping international policies,” he said, cautioning that some developed countries persist in unilateral measures and protectionist policies instead of honoring longstanding commitments. Such actions, he added, undermine economic growth, poverty reduction, and sustainable development in vulnerable regions.

Official Announces Potential for Foreign Workers Via Work Visas



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Tehran Governor Mohammad-Sadegh Motamedian announced the possibility of hiring foreign labor through work visas while emphasizing legal measures against those who provide housing or employment to unauthorized foreign nationals.

Speaking on a television program, Motamedian said that at the start of Iran’s 14th government, Tehran ranked 28th nationwide in educational space per capita. “With the measures implemented, the province has improved by seven positions,” he noted.

Regarding unauthorized foreign residents, the governor highlighted that strict penalties have been established for individuals or organizations housing or employing them. So far, 1.4 million unauthorized foreign nationals have left the country, with 70 percent voluntarily responding to government notices. “The conditions for their return have also been prepared,” he added.

Motamedian said the measures have had a tangible impact on local communities. In counties with high migrant populations, rent levels have decreased by 30–35 percent. In schools, the reduction in classroom density has effectively freed up over 3,000 classrooms, contributing significantly to addressing Tehran’s shortage of 13,000 classrooms.

Leader Rejects Talks With U.S., Warns of Serious, Irreparable Harms

TEHRAN – Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has rejected Washington’s demands over nuclear negotiations, saying that accepting talks under threat is something “no honorable nation would ever do, and no wise statesman would ever endorse.”

Speaking in a televised address to the nation on Tuesday, Ayatollah Khamenei said negotiations with Washington under the current circumstances would bring “no benefit” to Iran and instead carry “serious and possibly irreparable harms.”

“Accepting negotiations under such threats would mean that the Islamic Republic of Iran is susceptible to intimidation.”

“If we were to negotiate under such threats, it would mean that we tremble and surrender whenever threatened,” the Leader said.

“If such susceptibility to threats were established, it would never end. Today, they say: if you enrich, we will do this. Tomorrow they will say: if you have missiles, we will do that ... There would be endless threats, forcing us to retreat step by step.”

Ayatollah Khamenei said the United States is predetermining the outcome of any dialogue, and that Washington’s demands amount to dictation rather than negotiation.

“They have announced that the only acceptable result of negotiations is the shutdown of Iran’s nuclear activities and enrichment. So, we would sit at the table, and the outcome of the talks would be exactly what they had dictated in advance.”

“That is not negotiation,” the Leader stated, “that is dictation, that is imposition.”

“To negotiate with a party where the result must necessarily be what they want, and what they say; is that negotiation?”

The Leader pointed to recent American calls for Iran to abandon not only long-range but even short-range missiles.

The aim of such demands, Ayatollah Khamenei said, was to render Iran so weak and defenseless that it could not respond in any form if attacked.

Ayatollah Khamenei reiterated that Iran would never abandon its nuclear enrichment program, and vowed that the nation would resist both sanctions and military intimidation.

He criticized Washington for insisting that Iran give up enrichment altogether, calling it an attempt to erase a hard-won national achievement.

The Leader said Iran had endured decades of pressure aimed at forcing it to abandon enrichment, but had “not surrendered and will not surrender.”

“It means that this great achievement, for which our nation has worked so hard, paid so much, endured so many difficulties, should entirely be destroyed and wasted. That is the meaning of ‘no enrichment.’ Clearly, a proud nation like Iran will reject such words outright and will not accept them,” he said.

The Leader noted that Iran is now among the only 10-strong countries worldwide with 60-percent enrichment capability, a signature scientific achievement.

“Today, in terms of uranium enrichment, we are at a high level. Of course, countries that want to build nuclear weapons take enrichment up to 90 percent purity. Since we do not need weapons and have decided against nuclear weapons, we have not taken it that far. We have raised it to 60



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

percent, which is a very high and very good figure, and it is necessary for some of our domestic needs.”

Ayatollah Khamenei added that dozens of leading scientists, hundreds of researchers, and thousands of trained specialists are currently active in the field.

“Science cannot be destroyed. Science does not disappear with bombs, threats, or such things. It continues to exist,” he said, referring to the unprovoked and illegal Israeli-American attacks on Iranian nuclear facilities in June that failed to prevent the country from continuing to pursue its peaceful nuclear activities.

The Leader stated that the unity among the Iranian people during the 12-day Israeli-American war – which featured the strikes on the nuclear installations – thwarted enemy plans to destabilize the country.

“During the 12-day war, the unity and cohesion of the Iranian people disappointed the enemy. From the early and middle days of the war, the enemy realized that it would not achieve its intended goals,” Ayatollah

Khamenei noted.

The Leader said that foreign adversaries had sought to assassinate commanders and influential figures in hopes of sparking unrest in Tehran and elsewhere across the country.

“The enemy’s aim was not [merely] to target commanders. That was [just] a means. The enemy had thought that by targeting military commanders and some influential figures of the [country’s Islamic] establishment, unrest would erupt in the country, especially in Tehran, where their agents would provoke riots and disturbances, dragging people into the streets and creating an incident against the Islamic Republic using the people. That was the goal. The real target was, therefore, the Islamic Republic itself,” Ayatollah Khamenei remarked.

The Leader added that outside powers had prepared for “the day after” the Islamic Republic, aiming to incite street riots, organize factions, and “uproot Islam” in Iran.

However, the scheme collapsed in its very initial stages, with the martyred commanders being swiftly replaced, Ayatollah Khamenei stated.

“Replacements were appointed for them, and the structure, order, and discipline of the Armed Forces remained just as strong, with even higher morale.”

Nevertheless, it was the people, who dealt the biggest blow to the adversary’s designs, the Leader pointed out, noting how the public filled the streets not against the establishment, but against the enemy.

“The people, who were the most decisive factor, were not influenced at all by what the enemy wanted. Demonstrations did take place, the streets were filled, but against the enemy, not against the Islamic establishment,” Ayatollah Khamenei said.

The Leader, meanwhile, warned that foreign actors were now trying to portray Iran’s unity as temporary and create the impression that it would fade into divisions.

Notwithstanding such campaigns, Ayatollah Khamenei stated, “the factor of national unity still remains” and must be preserved against ongoing efforts to sow discord.

Iran Always Ready for “Rational and Fair Negotiations”



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - Ali Larijani, Secretary of Iran’s Supreme National Security Council and advisor to the Supreme Leader, said on Tuesday that Iran remains open to “rational and fair negotiations” while stressing that there is no justification for imposing a security-oriented approach on the country’s Chamber of Commerce, a civilian institution.

Speaking at a meeting with members of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Larijani thanked private-sector representatives for their efforts during the recent “12-day war,” noting that by keeping factories operational, they had made “a significant contribution to the nation’s resilience.”

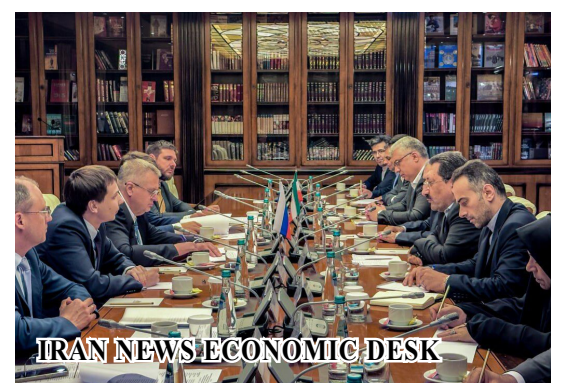
Larijani described the Islamic Republic’s recent steps as measures to promote national development. “Our goal is to resolve security issues and create a proper environment for the country’s progress,” he said. He welcomed a proposal to establish a permanent mechanism for communication between the Chamber of Commerce and the Supreme National Security Council Secretariat, ensuring that business leaders’ views are considered in policy decisions.

He also underlined the usefulness of private-sector participation in international talks, saying that “some negotiations can pave the way for resolving other issues as well.”

Larijani emphasized that the Chamber of Commerce is a legally recognized civic body for economic actors, adding: “There is no reason for a security-based outlook to dominate such institutions, and any unlawful interference will be countered.”

Turning to the snapback dispute at the UN Security Council, Larijani said Iran had explored every possible avenue for a negotiated solution but accused Western powers of making excessive demands and failing to honor commitments. He cited France’s earlier message through the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), offering to withdraw its snapback request if Iran reached special arrangements with the agency. “Our foreign minister signed this agreement in Egypt, but they failed to keep their promise,” Larijani said.

Russia Says Trade With Iran Rises 35% Following FTA



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Russia’s Deputy Prime Minister announced that trade turnover between Russia and Iran has increased by 35% since the implementation of the free trade agreement between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).

According to the Russian government’s official website, Deputy Prime Minister Alexey Overchuk said during a meeting with Iranian Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade Seyed Mohammad Atabak on Tuesday evening that the surge in trade exchanges was recorded from May to July 2025.

The meeting, held at the Russian government headquarters in Moscow, was also attended by Iran’s Ambassador to Russia, Kazem Jalali. Overchuk noted: “We are currently witnessing positive momentum in trade exchanges with Iran.”

He added that in the first seven months of this year, bilateral trade turnover between Tehran and Moscow grew by 11.8% compared with the same period in 2024.

Overchuk emphasized that the Iranian minister’s programs in Moscow would contribute to deepening Iran’s integration into the Eurasian economic space.

Iran’s Foreign Currency and Gold Reserves in “Secure Condition”

TEHRAN - The governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) said the country’s foreign currency and gold reserves are in a safe and accessible position, emphasizing that special measures have been adopted this year to strengthen economic resilience under challenging conditions.

According to the Central Bank, Mohammad Reza Farzin highlighted steps taken to ensure reliable access to hard currency and gold reserves, along with monetary policies aimed at controlling liquidity and preparing for potential economic shocks. “Right now, the Central Bank has secure and accessible reserves of both foreign exchange and gold,” he said.

Farzin made the remarks in a three-hour meeting with the Iran Entrepreneurs Association, three days after a session with the president. The meeting brought together eight leading entrepreneurs from industries such as home appliances, auto parts, food, petrochemicals, and health products. Discussions focused on easing financing challenges, supporting export-oriented businesses, and introducing new mechanisms for supply-chain financing.

He announced that the CBI will facilitate the use of foreign currency resources for traders, provide new foreign exchange facilities for exporters, issue up to €200 million in sukuk bonds, and develop innovative financial instruments to support entrepreneurs.

Farzin ordered the creation of a joint committee between the CBI and the Entrepreneurs Association to address banking-related challenges. The committee, which will meet quarterly, will explore issues such as the “single beneficiary” regulation that affects large business groups, the establishment of a special department for major borrowers, and proposed reforms to Iran’s check law.

CBI’s deputy for regulation noted that under current laws, if one subsidiary of a large corporate group defaults on a check, all related entities are affected—an issue tied to Article 5 of the check law. Farzin suggested drafting new regulations to address this problem, stressing that large



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

borrowers should be evaluated differently than smaller clients.

Farzin also addressed concerns about how importers and businesses can use foreign currency resources held abroad. He stressed that the CBI’s goal is to simplify processes without creating restrictions, while ensuring legal compliance.

He explained that importers bringing goods with foreign-sourced currency face no issue, but if they intend to use that currency to settle obligations within Iran, they must declare the source and comply with regulations. “Just as in many countries, amounts over \$10,000 must be declared. In our system too, once declared, there is no obstacle,” Farzin said.

He added that foreign investors can convert their dollar assets into rials through Iranian banks at agreed rates, provided they declare the funds. Alternatively, they may import gold instead of cash, sell it on the Iran Currency and Gold Exchange or the commodity exchange, and reinvest the proceeds in rials.

The governor noted that even importing physical banknotes is welcomed, with the Central Bank itself ready to purchase the cash. “Restrictions only apply in two areas: settling foreign exchange obligations for imports and verifying the origin of foreign currency. Otherwise, the process is open and flexible,” he said.

Farzin reiterated that controlling inflation and ensuring financial stability are the Central Bank’s top priorities. “All decisions in financing, monetary, and foreign exchange policy are centered on achieving these goals,” he stated.

He also underlined that the CBI welcomes financing methods such as finance, refinancing, and usance arrangements, and is prepared to remove obstacles—even if restrictions arise from other ministries.



Iran, Saudi Arabia Will Shape the Future of the Region

TEHRAN (IRNA) - The Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Alireza Enayati, has emphasized the importance of the strategic relations between Tehran and Riyadh, noting that Iran and Saudi Arabia will shape the future of the region. Enayati congratulated the King, the government, and the people of Saudi Arabia on the occasion of the Saudi National Day on Tuesday. The diplomat highlighted the significance of the strategic relations between Tehran and Riyadh, describing them as a model for regional cooperation and a guarantee of security and sustainable development in West Asia. He noted the remarkable progress made in bilateral relations in a short period, stating, "Through the firm resolve of both countries, we have achieved results beyond expectations and covered a long journey in a very brief time."

No Country Can Decide the Nature of Iran-Azerbaijan Relations



TEHRAN - Minister of Roads and Urban Development has stressed that the main decision-makers in the region are the two neighboring and brotherly countries, Iran and Azerbaijan, and no third party can determine the nature of their interactions.

Farzaneh Sadegh made the remarks at the conclusion of the Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation between Iran and Azerbaijan, highlighting the positive results of the meeting and the steady pace of bilateral contacts. She said the two countries see a bright future for expanding ties, especially in transportation, transit, and infrastructure.

Sadegh recalled that after a three-year pause, the 16th Joint Economic Commission was held last year. Since then, the two sides have held six meetings at the level of commission heads, signaling strong determination to deepen cooperation.

Referring to President Masoud Pezeshkian's recent visit to Baku, she noted that the trip paved the way for swiftly resolving several long-standing issues, including banking obstacles that had hindered trade for years. Direct flights between Baku and the Iranian cities of Tabriz and Tehran have also been launched and expanded.

On transport collaboration, the minister said key projects are being pursued both in customs and transit processes as well as in infrastructure development. She added that the issue of truck drivers facing difficulties at border crossings was raised during talks. A trilateral working group of Iran, Azerbaijan, and Russia will soon be formed to present practical solutions at a three-way meeting scheduled within a month.

Highlighting infrastructure initiatives, Sadegh pointed to the construction of a border bridge between Kalaleh in Iran and Aghband in Azerbaijan. She said the project, already underway by Azerbaijan, has made significant progress and is expected to be completed by the Persian New Year, enabling direct road transit between the two countries.

She also cited the strategic 107-kilometer Kalaleh-Jolfā road project, emphasizing that despite difficult terrain and numerous tunnels, Iran is committed to completing the route within a year. The road will serve as part of the East-West Corridor, complementing the North-South Corridor and strengthening Azerbaijan's connectivity to other countries.

Iran, Uzbekistan Target 2 Million Tons in Rail Freight by 2026



TEHRAN - The managing director of the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways has announced plans to raise rail freight exchanges between Iran and Uzbekistan to 2 million tons by 2026, following discussions with Uzbekistan's railway chief.

According to the railway authority, Jabarali Zakari met with Zufar Narzullaev, head of Uzbekistan Railways, and stressed the importance of setting quantitative goals for international cooperation, particularly between Iran and Turkmenistan. He noted that in the first eight months of this year, 476,000 tons of cargo had already been exchanged, with expectations that the volume will reach 1 million tons by year's end and 2 million tons in 2026.

Highlighting Uzbekistan's role along the East-West transit corridor, Zakari called for the adoption of a joint tariff system to boost cooperation and increase freight volumes.

He further reported a rise in Iranian exports and the transit of goods from Uzbekistan toward Iran and open waters this year, pointing out that more than 1,300 loaded wagons are currently positioned en route to the Sarakhs border for shipment to Uzbekistan.

The deputy minister of roads and urban development expressed hope that continued joint meetings would expand transit, exports, imports, and wagon exchanges not only between Iran and Uzbekistan but also with neighboring countries.

For his part, Narzullaev thanked Iran's railway company for its cooperation during a visit to the Sarakhs rail terminal and confirmed Uzbekistan's readiness to receive Iranian freight wagons via Turkmenistan.

IRANNEWS ECONOMIC DESK



Economic Security and Stability Tied to Structural Reforms

TEHRAN - The President of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) has stressed that achieving economic security and restoring stability requires comprehensive structural reforms in the country's economy.

Speaking during a meeting with the Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), Samad Hassanzadeh highlighted the challenges businesses are facing and called for immediate action to address them.

Hassanzadeh urged Ali Larijani, the newly appointed SNSC Secretary, to use his position to safeguard national authority, resolve issues undermining economic security, and restore confidence in the country's economic landscape.

"Security in all its dimensions is important, but economic security has a special place," Hassanzadeh said. "Unfortunately, in recent years this has been neglected, leading to instability and a loss of trust."

The ICCIMA president underlined the need to amend certain economic laws and regulations, noting that exporters have been discouraged by restrictive policies. "If these laws are reformed, exports will increase and more foreign currency will enter the country," he added.

Hassanzadeh also pointed to capital flight driven by high inflation, multiple exchange rates, and unfavorable policies toward exporters. Since 2018, he said, regulations on foreign exchange commitments have created further challenges, despite the Chamber submitting proposals to resolve them—proposals that have largely been ignored.

He warned that export obstacles have encouraged illegal practices, including the misuse of rented export licenses, which deprive the government of rightful revenues.

On international cooperation, Hassanzadeh expressed readiness to expand economic and trade relations with all countries, particularly neighbors, emphasizing that the private sector stands beside the government and state institutions in carrying out reforms.

"The private sector's proposals are based on genuine concern for the country's prosperity and dignity," he said, highlighting the Chamber's wide network and experience. He recalled that during the 12-day war, Iranian industries continued production without interruption, ensuring stability in domestic markets.

Referring to disruptions in the banking system during that period, Hassanzadeh noted that despite the inability to transfer funds, the distribution of strategic goods such as wheat and flour was carried out even faster. "This commitment by economic actors reflects their integrity and resilience," he concluded.

Meanwhile in the meeting, Peyman Bagheri, Vice President of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture, said that the country is at one of the most critical junctures since the Revolution and called for economic decisions that differ from past approaches.

Bagheri described Larijani's image among private-sector representatives as

"positive and constructive." He stressed that the most serious problem facing the national economy is the government's heavy-handed intervention.

"Despite development plans requiring the state to become smaller and more efficient, the government grows larger and costlier every day," Bagheri said.

Highlighting the country's entrenched budget deficit, he noted that government expenditures have expanded so much that virtually all available resources are consumed by day-to-day administration.

Bagheri argued that strong resistance within the bureaucracy prevents the transfer of state-owned enterprises to the private sector. "Wherever the bureaucracy's engine shuts down, the country is managed more efficiently," he said, recalling the rapid release of goods from customs during a 12-day war when simple directives enabled private-sector capacity to surface.

He emphasized the need to create a more competitive business environment, warning that semi-state-owned companies ("quasi-privates") dominate the market and obstruct private-sector activity.

On financing and investment, Bagheri said the oil-driven economy has long injected petroleum revenues into infrastructure and operations, leaving little room for private-sector growth and competitiveness. He called for a reassessment of both domestic and foreign investment structures.

"Iran is rich in underground resources, but due to insufficient investment, these capacities are underutilized," he said, adding that liquidity often flows into non-productive markets instead.

Turning to the power industry, Bagheri noted that private investment in building new power plants has been absent for over two decades. "The sector is entirely non-competitive and non-transparent, with the government competing against the private sector," he said.

He underscored the importance of foreign capital and exports: "Attracting foreign investment is essential. International engagement ensures economic security. Without integrating into global trade and value chains, achieving 8% economic growth is impossible. Such growth requires relying on the private sector."

Bagheri described the Chamber's provincial branches, joint chambers, specialized commissions, and associations as vital assets for the nation. He urged policymakers to draw lessons from past crises and entrust more responsibility to the private sector.

He also criticized the country's anti-smuggling law, warning against turning the economy into a security-driven environment. "When the market feels securitized, entrepreneurs are pushed toward unproductive sectors," he said, calling for revisions to the legislation.

In closing, Bagheri proposed that the Secretariat of the Supreme National Security Council establish mechanisms to strengthen economic security oversight and coordination.

UN Sanctions Snapback Unlikely to Halt Iran's Tourism Industry

TEHRAN - As the possibility of the UN "snapback" mechanism and renewed international sanctions against Iran looms, questions have emerged about the future of the country's tourism industry. Will tougher sanctions deepen stagnation, or will a weaker national currency turn Iran into one of the world's cheapest destinations for foreign travelers?

Industry experts suggest the latter. They note that in the years before the 2015 nuclear deal, when Iran faced severe oil and financial sanctions, foreign tourists could stretch their money to extraordinary lengths. At the time, a meal in Europe or the United States cost the equivalent of a night in a four- or five-star Iranian hotel. The World Tourism Organization even ranked Iran as the cheapest travel destination worldwide. Observers now predict a similar scenario—only more extreme. With the Iranian rial continuing to depreciate, foreign visitors may soon find Iran to be nearly a free destination. Just days ago, the dollar crossed the 1.05 million rial threshold, meaning that a single \$100 bill is worth over 100 million rials. At that rate, tourists could book ten nights in a four-star hotel for \$100, compared with just one night before the nuclear agreement.

While ordinary Iranians bear the brunt of inflation and economic decline, international travelers may increasingly view the country as a bargain. "For outsiders, Iran risks becoming a tourism paradise, even as it grows harsher for local residents," one analyst noted.

Seyed Mostafa Mousavi, head of the Tourism Commission of Iran's Chamber of Commerce, said tourism remains a sustainable development pillar worldwide and plays an important role for Iran as well.

"Last year more than seven million foreign tourists visited Iran,



representing 14 percent growth," Mousavi told ILNA news agency. He noted that the industry has rebounded since the COVID-19 pandemic, growing from four million visitors to six million, and surpassing seven million in the past year.

According to Mousavi, most visitors come from neighboring countries. Around three million were from Iraq, over one million from Afghanistan, and some 700,000 from Turkey. Others

traveled from the Gulf states and Armenia.

By contrast, European arrivals have sharply declined. Mousavi said European tourists—often older visitors over the age of 50—once brought the most foreign currency into Iran, attracted largely by the historic cities of Isfahan, Yazd, and Shiraz. But fears linked to sanctions and perceptions of insecurity have kept them away.

"In contrast, visitors from neighboring countries usually travel for religious pilgrimages, health tourism, and medical services," he explained.

Mousavi believes the snapback mechanism will not damage Iran's core tourism segments, and may even boost demand. "If sanctions return, the value of the rial may fall further, making travel for pilgrimage and health purposes even more affordable for foreign tourists," he said.

He added that tourism itself is not targeted by sanctions. If Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, cultural attachés, and the private sector can counter negative perceptions abroad, the industry could thrive despite broader economic restrictions.

"Tourism can be one of the few sectors to experience growth even under renewed sanctions," Mousavi concluded.

Technological Cooperation with China a Strategic Bond



TEHRAN - Minister of Information and Communications Technology has underlined the strategic importance of Iran-China relations, describing technological and digital cooperation as a cornerstone of the two countries' partnership. His remarks came during a ceremony marking the 76th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, hosted by the Chinese Embassy in Tehran.

According to the ministry, Seyed Sattar Hashemi told the gathering—attended by numerous ambassadors and foreign representatives—that the establishment of the People's Republic in 1949 marked the beginning of a path through which the Chinese nation, drawing on its ancient civilization and wisdom, has achieved major advances in science, technology, the economy, and global peace.

Hashemi highlighted the deep-rooted cultural and historical ties between Iran and China along the ancient Silk Road, saying this long-standing friendship has now evolved into a comprehensive strategic partnership. He noted that the recent meeting between the presidents of the two countries underscored their shared commitment and placed emphasis on fully implementing the 25-year Comprehensive Cooperation Plan, providing a clear roadmap for future collaboration.

The minister described technological cooperation between Iran and China as a "strategic bond," stressing that information and communications technology (ICT) is not only a foundation for economic and social development but also a decisive factor in shaping the future of the global order. With Iran's scientific capacity and China's leading position in the digital economy and innovation, he said, the two countries can jointly build a shared ecosystem for the digital future.

Iran's Exports to Iraq Decline



TEHRAN - The Director General of the West Asia Department at Iran's Trade Promotion Organization has highlighted several key reasons behind the sharp decline in Iran's exports to Iraq, citing currency repatriation issues, Iraqi tariff policies, and the slowdown of trade talks due to upcoming elections.

Abdolamir Rabiavi, speaking to ILNA, explained that both domestic and external factors have created significant obstacles for Iranian traders. "Sanctions, internal challenges in Iraq, and that country's economic growth issues have all contributed to trade fluctuations. These ups and downs may balance out in the coming months, but exports could also continue on a downward trend before reaching a new level of stability—likely lower than last year," he said.

Rabiavi pointed to Iraq's upcoming elections as a major factor. "Many Iraqi ministries that we negotiate with are waiting for the new government and ministers to take office. New ministers may not recognize previous agreements, which has slowed trade discussions and disrupted economic activities. This political uncertainty has been a key driver of the sharp fall in our exports to Iraq," he noted.

Another challenge, according to Rabiavi, is Iraq's policy of supporting domestic industries. "Iraq enforces a law called the 'Support for Domestic Production Law,' which allows the government to impose higher tariffs on imported goods. This makes Iranian products less competitive compared to locally produced Iraqi goods, leading to reduced export volumes," he explained.

On the domestic side, Rabiavi emphasized that problems with the repatriation of export revenues have discouraged many Iranian exporters. "Meeting currency obligations and navigating export regulations reduce enthusiasm for continuing trade with Iraq. Some exporters are unwilling to face the financial and bureaucratic challenges," he said.

Brazil's Lula Announces \$1b Investment in Global Forest Fund

BRASILIA (Dispatches) - Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva announced a \$1 billion investment in the Tropical Forests Forever Facility, a multilateral funding mechanism it has proposed to support conservation of endangered forests, at a United Nations event in New York.

The announcement, which confirmed an earlier report by Reuters, makes Brazil the first country to commit a contribution to the forest fund, which may be the Brazilian government's main deliverable at the U.N. climate summit known as COP30 that it will host in the Amazonian city of Belem in November.

"Brazil will lead by example," Lula said. "I invite all partners present to put forward equally ambitious contributions so that the TFFF can become operational at COP30."



Multiple Drones Attack Aid Flotilla Full of Activists Headed for Gaza



GAZA CITY (Dispatches) - Late Tuesday, activists aboard a Gaza-bound flotilla were attacked by multiple drones, were targeted by falling devices, and had their communications jammed. Those aboard, including Greta Thunberg, were carrying humanitarian aid that they hoped would break through Israel's blockade.

Organizers of a Gaza-bound flotilla carrying aid and pro-Palestinian activists said late Tuesday they heard explosions and saw multiple drones that targeted some of their boats, currently situated off Greece.

"Multiple drones, unidentified objects dropped, communications jammed and explosions heard from a number of boats," the Global Sumud Flotilla said in a statement, without adding whether there were any casualties.

"We are witnessing these psychological operations firsthand, right now, but we will not be intimidated," the statement said.

German human rights activist and flotilla member Yasemin Acar said in a video she posted on Instagram that five vessels had been attacked.

"We are carrying only humanitarian aid," she said. "We have no weapons. We pose no threat to anyone. It is Israel who is killing thousands of people (and) starving a whole population."

In an earlier video, Acar said the activists had "sighted 15 to 16 drones," adding that their radios had been jammed as loud music could be heard.

One video posted by the flotilla's official Instagram page showed an explosion it said was recorded from the Spectre boat at "01:43 GMT +3".

Super Typhoon Ragasa Soaks Hong Kong, Death Toll Rises in Taiwan



HONG KONG (Dispatches) - Super Typhoon Ragasa, the world's most powerful tropical cyclone this year, lashed Hong Kong with hurricane-force winds and torrential rain on Wednesday, while heavy downpours in Taiwan resulted in the deaths of 14 people.

A barrier lake in Taiwan's eastern Hualien county overflowed and sent a wall of water into a town, as heavy rains from Ragasa battered the island, the Taiwan fire department said on Wednesday.

Make sense of the latest ESG trends affecting companies and governments with the Reuters Sustainable Switch newsletter. Sign up here.

Taiwan has been hit since Monday by the outer rim of Ragasa, which has brought torrential rains to the island.

In Hong Kong, huge waves crashed over areas of the Asian financial hub's eastern and southern shoreline, submerging some roads alongside residential properties.

At the Fullerton hotel on the island's south, videos on social media showed a torrent of seawater surged through its glass doors before flooding the floor area. Calls to the property remained unanswered on Wednesday.

In teeming Tseung Kwan O, built largely on reclaimed land, huge waves submersed swathes of waterfront promenade adjacent to towering residential towers.

Trump Blasts UN, Europe in Fiery UN Speech



NEW YORK (Dispatches) - U.S. President Donald Trump blasted the United Nations and Europe on his return to the world body yesterday, warning that migration is sending Western nations "to hell" and dismissing climate change as a "con job."

In a blistering speech during his first UN General Assembly appearance since his White House comeback, Trump also accused the world body of failing to help him as he tried to broker peace deals including in Gaza and Ukraine.

"What is the purpose of the United Nations?" asked Trump in a wide-ranging speech lasting nearly an hour. "It has such tremendous potential, but it's not even coming close to living up to that."

Trump's first speech to the UN back in 2018 saw fellow leaders laughing at the Republican, but this time his full-frontal attack on the global organization and U.S. allies was received in near total silence.

The 79-year-old's litany of complaints even extended to a broken escalator and teleprompter at the New York headquarters of the UN.

After the speech, he met with Ukraine's wartime leader Volodymyr Zelensky and caused surprise by announcing a short while later that he now thought Kyiv could regain all its territory invaded by Russia — a complete shift from his previous statements.

Trump's fieriest words of the speech were on migration, as he advised the world to follow his lead on one of the core political messages that drove his two U.S. election victories.

Trump lambasted the UN for "funding an assault" on Western nations that he described as an "invasion," before turning his fire on his supposed allies in Europe.

"Your countries are going to hell," he told European leaders.

Trump also criticized the UN for failing to get involved in what he claims are seven wars that he has ended, or in his failed attempts to end Russia's invasion of Ukraine and Israel's war in Gaza.

"All they seem to do is write a really strongly worded letter," he said. "It's empty words, and empty words don't solve war."

But the U.S. leader later dramatically escalated his rhetoric on Ukraine, saying that NATO nations should shoot down

Russian planes violating their territory.

And after talks with Zelensky on the sidelines of the summit, he posted on Truth Social that he thinks "Ukraine, with the support of the European Union, is in a position to fight and WIN all of Ukraine back in its original form."

On Gaza, a subject that has dominated the UN summit, Trump called recognition of a Palestinian state by U.S. allies including France and Britain a "reward" to Hamas for "horrible atrocities" "in the armed group's October 7, 2023 attack on Israel.

French President Emmanuel Macron said on Tuesday, however, that Trump could only achieve his long-held goal of a Nobel Peace Prize if he stopped the Gaza war.

The U.S. president meanwhile took a typically strident stance on climate change too, saying he was "right about everything" as he pushes for oil drilling and the rolling back of green policies.

"Climate change — it's the greatest con job ever perpetrated on the world," said the billionaire property tycoon.

Trump's second term has opened with a blaze of nationalist policies curbing cooperation with the rest of the world.

He has moved to pull the United States out of the World Health Organization and the UN climate pact, severely curtailed U.S. development assistance and wielded sanctions against foreign judges over rulings he sees as violating U.S. sovereignty.

Opening the annual summit, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warned that aid cuts led by the United States were "wreaking havoc" in the world.

After meeting Guterres, Trump appeared to call for a change in leadership, telling reporters: "The UN could be unbelievable with certain people running it."

Trump's other meetings included his Argentinian counterpart and close ally Javier Milei, with the U.S. president saying he did not believe the struggling South American country needed a bailout.

Security was tight for the summit, with New York's UN district swarming with heavily armed police.

The U.S. Secret Service said they had disrupted a plot to potentially disrupt telecommunications around the UN that involved "nation-state threat actors."

Macron Says Trump Should Stop Gaza War If He Wants Nobel Peace Prize

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - If U.S. President Donald Trump really wants to win the Nobel peace prize, he needs to stop the war in Gaza, French President Emmanuel Macron said.

Speaking to France's BFM TV from New York, Macron said only Trump had the power to put pressure on Israel to end the war.

"There is one person who can do something about it, and that is the U.S. president," Macron said.

"And the reason he can do more than us, is because we do not supply weapons that allow the war in Gaza to be waged. We do not supply equipment that allows war to be waged in Gaza. The United States of America does."

Trump gave a combative, wide-ranging speech to the United Nations General Assembly on Tuesday that rejected moves by Western allies to endorse a Palestinian state, saying that would be a reward for



Hamas militants.

"We have to stop the war in Gaza immediately. We have to immediately negotiate peace," Trump said.

Discussing Trump's speech, Macron said: "I see an American president who is involved, who reiterated this morning from the podium: 'I want peace. I have resolved seven conflicts', who wants the Nobel Peace Prize. The Nobel Peace Prize is only possible if you stop this conflict," Macron said.

Countries such as Cambodia, Israel and Pakistan are among those that have nominated Trump for the annual prize for brokering peace pacts or ceasefires.

Trump has said he deserves the Norwegian-bestowed accolade given to four of his White House predecessors.

"President Trump has done more for peace than everyone present at the United Nations combined," said White House spokeswoman Anna Kelly.

"Only this president could have accomplished so much for global stability because he has effectively Made America Strong Again."

NATO Warns Russia to Stop Escalatory Actions After Estonian Airspace Violation

BRUSSELS (Dispatches) - NATO warned Russia on Tuesday that it would use "all necessary military and non-military tools" to defend itself as it condemned Moscow for violating Estonian airspace in a "pattern of increasingly irresponsible behaviour".

The warning came after Estonia said on Friday that three Russian MiG-31 fighter jets violated its airspace for 12 minutes before NATO Italian fighter jets escorted them out.

The week before, some 20 Russian drones entered Polish airspace, prompting NATO jets to shoot some of them down and the alliance to beef up the defence of Europe's eastern flank.

U.S. President Donald Trump appeared to come out in favour of a robust NATO response to any future incursions as he spoke to reporters at the United Nations General Assembly.



Asked whether NATO countries should shoot down Russian aircraft that enter their airspace, he told reporters: "Yes, I do."

The NATO statement followed a meeting of the North Atlantic Council, made up of ambassadors from the alliance's 32 member countries, which was called after Estonia invoked Article 4 of NATO's founding treaty.

Pentagon chief Pete Hegseth held a call with Estonian Defence Minister Hanno Pevkur on Tuesday and told him that Washington "stands with all NATO allies and that any incursion into NATO airspace is unacceptable," the Pentagon said in a statement.

Separately, the Group of Seven nations issued a joint statement saying the airspace violations in Estonia, Poland and Romania were unacceptable and undermined international security.



Qualifier Tabilo stuns Musetti to Win Chengdu Open

CHINA (Dispatches) - Qualifier Alejandro Tabilo stunned world number nine Lorenzo Musetti 6-3 2-6 7-6(5) to win the Chengdu Open, while French Open quarter-finalist Alexander Bublik edged Valentin Royer 7-6(4) 7-6(4) in the Hangzhou Open final.

Tabilo saved two match points to force a tiebreak in the third set and set up his own championship point with a drop-shot. The 28-year-old fell to the floor as exhausted Musetti's forehand hit the net, sealing the Chilean's third ATP 250 title.

"It's been a very, very tough year. Lots of injuries. So, just being here right now, it's unbelievable. I still can't believe it," said Tabilo, ranked 112th in the world.

Italy's Musetti, who reached the French Open semi-finals this year, has now lost the Chengdu Open final twice in a row, having gone down to China's Shang Juncheng last year.

"It's a tough night for me, I guess. Probably was not my day," said Musetti, who has now lost five consecutive finals on the ATP tour.

"It's three years now that I've made some finals but never lifted a trophy. (But) every time we're a step closer, so hopefully next is the lucky one."

Bublik's Hangzhou Open triumph has made him the second most successful singles player on the ATP tour so far this year with four titles behind Carlos Alcaraz who has lifted seven trophies.

World number 19 Bublik was tested by French qualifier Royer in the final as neither player could break serve, with both sets going to a tiebreak.

Third seed Bublik's superior serve made the difference as he landed 21 aces in the match, while world number 88 Royer produced eight.

"I really had to serve and do my best in order to win ... it was one of the toughest finals I have played in terms of nerves," Kazakh Bublik said.

"He was really, really difficult. So I wish him a lot of success."

Meanwhile former Croatian tennis player and coach Nikola Pilic, who led Germany to three Davis Cup titles and mentored 24-time Grand Slam winner Novak Djokovic, has died at the age of 86, his country's tennis association said.

Pilic, a French Open finalist as a player, captained Germany to three Davis Cup trophies between 1988 and 1993. He later led Croatia to their first Davis Cup title in 2005, and served as a consultant when Serbia won in 2010.

Djokovic, who joined Pilic's academy in Germany when he was 12, described the coach as his "tennis father" in an Instagram post in 2018.

"Niki is one of the most important tennis and life mentors I've ever had. My time spent in his academy has greatly impacted my game and career," Djokovic wrote.

The Croatian Tennis Association said in a statement that Pilic died on Monday and was one of the greatest players and coaches that the country has ever had.

"He was a very successful player and even more successful coach," Djokovic wrote about Pilic.

Isak Opens Liverpool Account, Ekitike Scores Winner

LIVERPOOL (Dispatches) - Alexander Isak scored his first goal for Liverpool while Hugo Ekitike was sent off after bagging a late winner as the hosts beat second tier Southampton 2-1 at Anfield to reach the fourth round of the League Cup.

The Swede, a record 125 million pounds (\$169.04 million) signing from Newcastle United, found the net in the 43rd minute of a scrappy match -- 38 seconds after Southampton's Adam Armstrong had hit the crossbar.

Federico Chiesa provided the assist, as he did for Ekitike, cutting the ball back for Isak to slot coolly home.

Southampton hit back through Shea Charles in the 76th after a glaring error by midfielder Wataru Endo but Ekitike, who replaced Isak at halftime, maintained Liverpool's 100% start to the season with a winner five minutes from time.

He was then sent off for a second yellow after removing his shirt in celebration.

"I'd be very surprised if he does it again," Andy Robertson, captain of a completely-changed side from last weekend, told Sky Sports television. "It's two silly bookings to pick up and obviously we miss him for Saturday.

"It's silly from his part but he's only young and he'll learn from it."

Isak missed a golden opportunity in the first minute of only his second start and recognised he needed playing time after a



protracted transfer saga.

"It's still early, a new club and new teammates, but I feel good," he said. "I think with all the games I get I'm only going to get better."

Club World Cup champions Chelsea suffered an early scare at third tier Lincoln City but came back from a goal down at halftime to win 2-1 with teenager Tyrique George equalising in the 48th and providing the assist for Facundo Buonanotte's 50th-minute winner.

League One (third tier) Cardiff City provided the upset of the eight games on the programme by beating top flight Burnley 2-1

at Turf Moor.

Premier League bottom side Wolverhampton Wanderers won their top flight clash 2-0 against Everton, who had James Garner hit the bar with a second-half free kick and Jack Grealish coming off the bench.

Paraguyan midfielder Diego Gomez scored four, including a 24-minute first-half hat-trick, as Premier League Brighton & Hove Albion thumped third tier Barnsley 6-0 at Oakwell to reach the fourth round for the fifth time in six seasons.

Second tier Wrexham gave their Hollywood owners another home night to savour by beating Reading 2-0, with Nathan Broadhead scoring both -- his first for the Welsh side who go through to the fourth round for the first time since 1977.

Premier League Fulham beat fourth tier visitors Cambridge United 1-0 at Craven Cottage with Emile Smith Rowe scoring the 66th-minute winner.

Championship side Swansea City and fourth tier giantkillers Grimsby Town are already through to the fourth round along with Premier League Brentford and Crystal Palace.

Holders Newcastle United host Bradford City on Wednesday, when top flight rivals Arsenal, Tottenham Hotspur and Manchester City are also in action.

Mbappe, Vinicius Shine as Real Madrid Dispatch Levante 4-1



VALENCIA (Dispatches) - Real Madrid maintained their flawless start to the season with a swashbuckling 4-1 victory over Levante, as Vinicius Jr orchestrated the first-half demolition before Kylian Mbappe's second-half brace sealed a comprehensive win.

The result keeps Real Madrid comfortably atop the standings on 18 points after six matches, stretching their lead to five points over reigning champions Barcelona, who have a game in hand ahead of Thursday's clash at Real Oviedo. Levante languish in 16th place on four points.

It was a particularly satisfying night for Vinicius Jr, who was under scrutiny after a mixed start under new manager Xabi Alonso.

Before Tuesday, he was yet to complete a full 90 minutes for Real Madrid at the start of the season and started on the bench on two occasions.

But he produced an excellent performance against Levante and was rewarded by playing the full game and finished the match wearing the captain's armband.

Vinicius Jr set the tone with a moment of brilliance in the 28th minute, unleashing a strike from the right side of the box using the outside of his right boot that went in just inside the far post.

Red Bull in No Rush on Drivers After Strong Weekend in Baku



LONDON (Dispatches) - Liam Lawson and Yuki Tsunoda celebrated personal bests in Baku last weekend but both will have to wait for news on their Formula One futures.

Sunday's Azerbaijan Grand Prix was the first race since Russia in 2020 where the energy drink brand's two teams -- Red Bull Racing and Racing Bulls -- had all their drivers score points.

Four-times world champion Max Verstappen won for Red Bull, with Racing Bulls' Lawson finishing a career high fifth after starting third, the highest F1 grid position by a New Zealander since Chris Amon in 1976.

That was one place ahead of Tsunoda, whose finish was his best since he moved up from Racing Bulls to Red Bull this season and also his highest placing since his rookie 2021 campaign with AlphaTauri.

Racing Bulls' Isack Hadjar, a strong candidate for rookie of the year, was 10th.

Only Verstappen can be completely sure of who he will be racing for next year and Red Bull are in no rush to decide his teammate after a record of failure with previous moves.

While drivers are contracted to Red Bull, the energy drink brand can place them at whichever team they see fit or drop them entirely.

"Our drivers are under contract with us, we have all the cards," Red Bull team boss Laurent Mekies, who knows all four drivers well after being promoted from Racing Bulls in July to replace Christian Horner, said at the weekend.

"We have more time. We will not wait until (the final round in) Abu Dhabi but we have a few more races for sure."

Tsunoda's place alongside Verstappen at Red Bull Racing has looked tenuous, with Hadjar considered favourite to take his place after a season that already includes a first podium with third place in the Netherlands.

Whether Hadjar, who is still only 20, is ready for one of the toughest jobs in the sport as Verstappen's teammate is a decision Red Bull must take.

Pakistan Down Sri Lanka to Stay in Hunt for Asia Cup Final

DUBAI (Dispatches) - Hussain Talat and Mohammad Nawaz helped Pakistan pull off a nervy chase against Sri Lanka en route to a five-wicket victory that kept alive their hopes of reaching the final of the Asia Cup.

Beaten by arch-rivals India in their previous Super Fours contest, Pakistan made heavy weather of a victory target of 134.

Talat (32) and Nawaz (38) forged an unbeaten 58-run stand for the sixth wicket to secure their victory with two overs to spare.

Put in to bat, Sri Lanka earlier posted a modest 133-8 riding Kamindu Mendis's gutsy 50 after a top-order meltdown.

Pakistan reduced Sri Lanka to 80-6 inside the 13th over vindicating skipper Salman Agha's decision to field after winning the toss.

Pace spearhead Shaheen Afridi (3-28) gave them a dream



start dismissing Sri Lanka openers Kusal Mendis and Pathum Nissanka in successive overs.

Sri Lanka captain Charith Asalanka (20) and Kusal Perera (15) staged a brief recovery but Pakistan kept chipping away with regular wickets.

Kamindu had to curb his aggression as he brought up his fifty before falling lbw to Afridi.

Pakistan raced to 45 for no loss before Sri Lanka struck through their spinners.

Maheesh Theekshana dragged Sri Lanka back into the contest dismissing both openers -- Sahibzada Farhan and Fakhar Zaman -- in the sixth over.

Saim Ayub made two, avoiding a fourth duck in five innings, before losing his off-stump to Wanindu Hasaranga, who removed rival captain Salman in his next over to reduce Pakistan to 57-4.