

President Masoud Pezeshkian Has Stressed That Iran's Path Has Chosen Steadfastness, Relying on Its People's Capabilities, and Moving With Dignity Towards a Bright Future

IRAN NEWS

Spokesperson for the Iranian Armed Forces Says the Islamic Republic Is Not Waiting for the Permission of Any Country With Regard to Building Advanced Defensive Equipment to Defend Its National Security and Sovereignty

VOL. XXIX, No. 8374 TEHRAN Price 50,000 Rials

www.irannewsdaily.com

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 30, 2025 MEHR 08, 1404

2 DOMESTIC

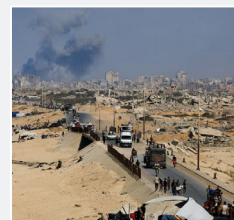


Iran's Private Sector Calls for New Approach to International Engagement

> SEE PAGE 2

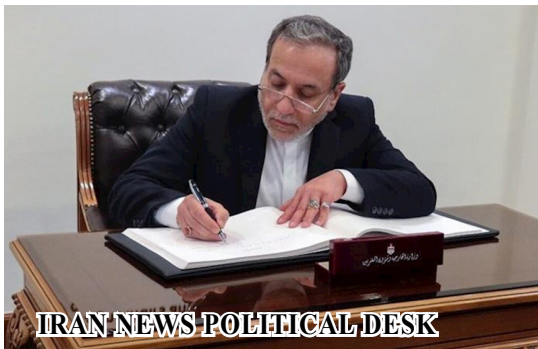
3 INTERNATIONAL

Hamas Says It Lost Contact With Two Hostages in Gaza City



> SEE PAGE 3

Iran Rejects U.S.-E3 Snapback Claims, Warns UN Members Against Misuse of UN Authority



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iran's foreign minister has written to his counterparts around the world, rejecting claims by the United States and the E3 that previously terminated UN Security Council sanctions on Iran have been restored through the so-called snapback mechanism.

Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi stated that recent assertions by the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Germany that terminated Security Council resolutions had been "restored" were "entirely unfounded, unlawful, and invalid."

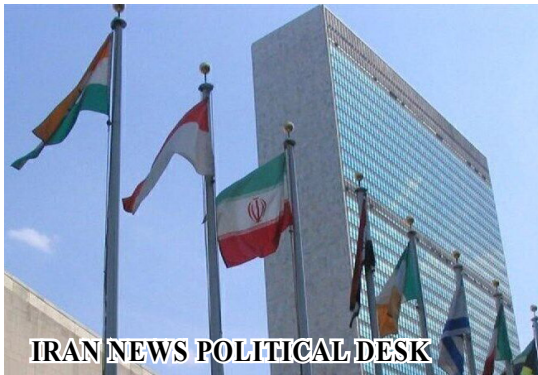
In his letter, Araqchi emphasized that "no valid legal act has taken place that could restore the terminated resolutions. To claim otherwise is an attempt to mislead the international community and to impose unilateral political agendas under the guise of United Nations authority."

He warned that such assertions undermine the integrity of the Security Council and pose a serious threat to multilateral diplomacy. The minister underscored that Resolution 2231, which endorsed the 2015 nuclear deal, terminated previous sanctions and set a clear timetable for their permanent expiration on 18 October 2025.

He argued that no state has the unilateral authority to reinterpret or extend its provisions.

According to the letter, the United States, having withdrawn from the JCPOA in 2018, and the E3, being in "substantial non-performance" of their commitments, are "absolutely devoid of eligibility" to invoke the resolution.

Iran Protests UN Secretariat's Notification on Reimposed Anti-Iran Resolutions



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iran's ambassador and permanent representative to the United Nations, Amir Saeed Irvani, has lodged a strong protest with the UN over the Secretariat's decision to notify member states about the alleged "re-imposition" of previously terminated Security Council resolutions against Iran.

In a letter sent on Sunday local time (September 28 / Mehr 6) to UN Secretary-General António Guterres and the president of the Security Council, Irvani rejected what he described as an unlawful and politically motivated step by the UN Secretariat.

"Following the letter of September 27 from the Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, I hereby express, in the strongest terms, my country's categorical objection to today's action by the Secretariat in 'informing member states' about the so-called 're-application of terminated resolutions related to the Islamic Republic of Iran,'" Irvani wrote.

The Iranian envoy stressed that Security Council Resolution 2231, which endorsed the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), grants no authority to the Secretary-General or the Secretariat to determine, announce, or notify member states about the alleged re-imposition of such resolutions.

He argued that Resolution 2231 established specific mechanisms in its operative paragraphs 11 and 12, placing the issue strictly within the jurisdiction of the Security Council itself.

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK



President Signals Willingness to Negotiate With U.S. If Sanctions Are Lifted

TEHRAN - Speaking to U.S. television network NBC on the sidelines of the 80th UN General Assembly in New York, Iran's president emphasized that dialogue and negotiations with the United States would be possible if existing sanctions were removed.

According to reports from the presidential website, the president addressed Iran's nuclear program, snapback sanctions, ongoing regional conflicts, and broader international developments. He stressed that Iran had been prepared to cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) under international law and the NPT but accused the United States and certain European states of failing to honor their commitments.

The president explained that Iran had agreements with the IAEA and had planned coordinated steps with Europe's troika, allowing inspectors to visit nuclear sites while parallel negotiations with the United States took place. "We were ready to act within the framework of the agreement," he said, adding that Washington had "torn up" the 2015 nuclear deal and showed no interest in pursuing a peaceful path.

Addressing questions about permitting U.N. inspectors access to all damaged nuclear sites, he reiterated that such access had been offered during prior negotiations. He placed blame on the United States for rejecting talks and attempting to activate the snapback mechanism, which obstructed the process.

Responding to claims of a new clandestine nuclear facility, including reports in the Washington Post, the president said Iran had invited the IAEA for on-site verification. "If they are truthful, the IAEA — which we have an agreement with — can come and see," he stated, emphasizing Iran's commitment to verification and denying any pursuit of nuclear weapons, citing religious and legal prohibitions by the country's supreme leader.

On the topic of Iran's enriched uranium stockpile, including reports that enrichment had reached 60 percent, he blamed the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA, which led European companies to pull out and sever financial links. Tehran subsequently exceeded some of the

deal's restrictions but insisted this did not constitute weapons development.

The president also criticized Israel's regional actions, accusing it of bombing multiple countries and causing a humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza. He denounced the international community's failure to respond adequately and condemned countries that reward Israel while re-imposing sanctions on Iran despite Tehran's claims of being attacked. "This is the law of the jungle," he said.

Asked about the possibility of further conflict, he said Iran would not initiate war but would strengthen its defensive capabilities to deter aggression. He condemned the assassination of Iranian scientists and commanders during recent hostilities, describing the acts as brutal and inadequately addressed by the international community.

On reports of mass arrests in Iran following the bombings, the president declined to confirm figures cited in foreign media, noting that judicial authorities were still investigating. Regarding stalled U.S.-Iran talks, he said attempts failed because Washington demanded preconditions. Tehran was willing to negotiate and proposed resolving issues step by step but insisted that U.S. commitments be implemented first. "If sanctions are lifted, there is room for dialogue and negotiation," he said, adding that Iran would welcome U.S. investment once restrictions were removed.

He reaffirmed Iran's humanitarian aid efforts, rejecting claims that such support equates to backing militant groups. On Hamas and Gaza, he described armed groups as symptomatic of longstanding regional injustices, asserting that addressing root causes would gradually reduce their influence.

Concluding the interview, the president urged international inspection and verification over public allegations, reiterated Iran's willingness to cooperate with the IAEA, and called for a negotiated path forward — contingent on sanctions being lifted and clear U.S. commitment to uphold agreements.

Americans Have Never Been Honest

TEHRAN — Majlis Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf said that Supreme Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei personally directed the recent 12-day conflict, comparing his role to his wartime presence during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq War. Qalibaf added that the United States "has never been honest," criticizing Washington's conduct in past negotiations.

Speaking at the closing ceremony of the Second National Congress Honoring 3,000 Martyrs of Semnan Province, Qalibaf praised the sacrifices of fallen soldiers and their families. He called the event a reminder of the martyrs' path and the nation's debt to them.

"The Leader, just as he was present in the war room during the Sacred Defense, has at this age and stage in life again stood firm and resolute in commanding the 12-day war," Qalibaf said.

Qalibaf described the martyrs as "not just part of our historical memory but the living conscience of our society," emphasizing that their legacy was not merely military victory but the creation of a culture of self-sacrifice and resilience.

He noted that people from across Iran, including remote villages and poor communities, became national heroes through faith and devotion. "They offered their lives for the revolution, for Iran, for Islam, and for the peace and welfare of all of us," he said.

Referring to renewed international sanctions and the so-called "snap-back" measures, Qalibaf said that Iranians have endured pressure without compromising their dignity.

He recounted his remarks at a memorial for the martyrs of the recent 12-day conflict, praising the courage of a new generation of fighters:

"In that war, young combatants born in the 1980s and 1990s fought more bravely and



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

steadfastly at the missile batteries than the combat engineers of the Sacred Defense era. Under heavy fire and with an 80 percent risk of death or injury, they held their ground and stopped the enemy."

Qalibaf credited the Supreme Leader's direct guidance for the outcome of the conflict:

"As during the Iran-Iraq War, the Leader was present in the command center and led the 12-day war with firmness and resolve. This is a lasting honor for Iran, the Revolution, and Islam."

He also paid tribute to the late Hezbollah leader Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah, marking his first death anniversary, and praised the broader "Axis of Resistance" for standing up to Israel. Qalibaf cited student protests in U.S. universities as evidence of the martyrs' enduring influence.

Turning to domestic issues, Qalibaf stressed that the same spirit of faith and sacrifice should guide economic policy. He urged the government to accelerate implementation of the electronic voucher (ration card) program and expand housing projects, highlighting Supreme Leader Khamenei's recent directives on improving people's livelihoods.

"We should not lose even a week in pursuing these programs. The parliament will fully support the government to address these two pressing concerns," he said.

Qalibaf called on business leaders and entrepreneurs to join in national efforts, describing them as "the true warriors of today's economic front."

Qalibaf concluded by emphasizing the importance of national unity, describing it as "the divine blessing and fruit of the martyrs' sacrifice," and urged officials and citizens alike to protect this cohesion in the face of ongoing challenges.

When Netanyahu Came, Everyone Left

Amid the peak of tensions between Palestine and the Zionist regime, a scene unfolded at the United Nations General Assembly that astonished the world. The massive emptying of the General Assembly hall during Benjamin Netanyahu's speech this year was symbolic and highly conspicuous.

This scene captured a vivid image of the growing isolation of the Zionist regime on the international stage, especially in the wake of operations described as genocide in Gaza.

One of the most powerful images in international diplomacy is that of "empty seats." This image does not speak through shouting, but with the eloquence of absent presence and resounding silence.

As Benjamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister of Israel, began his speech, the main hall of the General Assembly emptied dramatically in less than a minute. Reports and photos indicated that representatives of more than a hundred countries present at the session left the hall. This action, a "symbolic collective boycott," sent a clear and unprecedented message about the regime's status in international institutions.

The emptying of the UN hall by the overwhelming majority of countries was not a mere simple protest. This move should be interpreted as a clear sign of the "diplomatic isolation" of the Zionist mentality.

When representatives of dozens of countries, including many Arab, Islamic, African, Asian, and even some Latin American nations, refuse to listen to the leader of Israel, it reflects the depth of global dissatisfaction with the policies of this illegitimate regime. This event shows that the Palestinian issue is no longer a marginal topic but has become a central concern in the international community, creating a broad consensus against Israel's actions.

This action was a form of "indirect yet very powerful condemnation." By leaving the hall, countries openly declared their position without needing to issue strong statements or engage in debates and disputes. They demonstrated that they not only oppose the content of Netanyahu's speech but also question the political legitimacy of the speech itself, delivered by the representative of an illegitimate regime under scrutiny for repeated violations of international law and UN resolutions.

This boycott in silence, in a situation where no practical measures are being taken to stop these crimes, spoke louder this year than any words or actions could.

This event occurred in a specific context: the unprecedented escalation of violence in the Gaza Strip and the high number of civilian casualties, including women and children. Reports by human rights organizations such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, which accused Israel of committing war crimes, had deeply influenced global public opinion. The emptying of the UN hall reflected the anger and disgust of the international community toward these developments. This act amounted to a collective vote of confidence in support of the Palestinian people and against Israel's narrative.

Although the United States and some of Israel's close European allies remained in the hall, the mass departure of other countries demonstrated that the traditional "unconditional support" for Israel is breaking and fragmenting.

Even some of Israel's traditional allies, while staying in the hall, have adopted more critical positions. This scene clearly showed that the foundations of international support for Israel are weakening and that the diplomatic cost of continuing its current policies is increasing dramatically for this corrupt regime. In fact, this action strengthens the legitimacy and diplomatic standing of Palestine in international institutions and shows that their calls for justice have gained global attention. It places Israel under unprecedented psychological and diplomatic pressure and warns its leaders that continuing the status quo will only deepen their isolation.

From another perspective, this event represents a significant shift in global discourse. Criticism of Israel's policies, once considered taboo, has now become a more widely accepted position among the majority of countries in the world.

Overall, the emptying of the UN General Assembly hall during the speech of the prime minister of this regime created a historic and memorable moment. This was not merely a symbolic protest but a tangible manifestation of a geopolitical shift. The decline of the legitimacy of Zionism in the eyes of the majority of the international community, embodied by those empty seats, was a silent yet powerful cry against a regime whose actions and policies are unacceptable to the world.

This move sent a clear message to Israel: that military solutions and disregard for the rights of Palestinians will only increase its isolation and the international condemnations it faces.



By Hamid Reza Naghashian



Chinese Firm Sees Ample Opportunities for Tech Cooperation With Iran

TEHRAN - A representative of a Chinese technology company participating in the 28th International ELECOMP Exhibition in Tehran said that Iran's gradual technological growth and relative stability are creating significant opportunities for cooperation in the tech sector. Speaking to IRNA, Joe Gao Wei emphasized that while Iran's technological development is still not on par with countries such as China, it has been steadily progressing.

Gao, who has been collaborating with Iranian companies for about four to five years, added: "Iran's gradual technological advancement, relative stability, and the welcoming attitude of its people have opened up substantial prospects for collaboration and trade."

Iran Says Trade Will Not Halt Under Snapback Sanctions



TEHRAN - An Iranian trade official has emphasized that the country's foreign trade will not come to a standstill despite the reactivation of the so-called "snapback" sanctions mechanism. He noted that Iran's countermeasures in response to the renewed restrictions will remain confidential to protect the country's trade routes and partners.

Speaking to ILNA, Amir Roshanbaksh Ghanbari, Deputy for International Business Development at Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), said the return of UN-backed sanctions will undoubtedly complicate export and import procedures and increase the cost of commercial services.

"Snapback will make export and import processes more difficult and will certainly raise trade service costs," he stated.

Roshanbaksh noted that Iran has faced similar sanctions in the past and argued that the current snapback is less severe than previous ones due to skepticism among many countries over its implementation.

"We believe this round of snapback sanctions is different from the previous one in terms of intensity and enforcement. Because of doubts about its execution and compliance by other countries, it does not have the same impact as before," he explained.

Highlighting differences in global attitudes toward the sanctions, Roshanbaksh pointed to China and Russia — Iran's key trade partners — as taking a distinct stance.

"China and Russia, as our main partners in trade, even proposed several times to postpone the implementation of the snapback mechanism until the Persian New Year (March 2026), though this proposal was rejected in the UN Security Council," he said.

"It is clear that even during the enforcement of snapback, these countries will stand by us rather than enforce the restrictions."

Roshanbaksh underlined that the Iranian government has already devised measures to mitigate disruptions in foreign trade.

"Various working groups and committees, with the participation of relevant agencies, have prepared solutions to ensure that exports and imports will continue despite the renewed sanctions," he said.

He stressed that the details of these measures would remain classified.

"Our countermeasures must stay confidential because disclosing them could jeopardize some of the trade channels we rely on," he warned.

While acknowledging that exporters and importers may face greater scrutiny and procedural hurdles, Roshanbaksh reassured that the flow of goods and services will not be brought to a halt.

"Snapback will increase the difficulties in trade processes, but it will not stop them," he concluded.

Iran Chamber Research Center Identifies Six Key Opportunities in Uganda



TEHRAN - The Research Center of the Iran Chamber of Commerce has released a report highlighting export opportunities in Uganda, identifying six key sectors for Iranian businesses and outlining four practical recommendations to expand trade with the East African country.

The report, titled "Examining and Identifying Iran's Export Opportunities in Uganda," was prepared to provide a roadmap for Iran's commercial and investment presence in East Africa. It emphasizes Uganda's strategic position in the heart of the region, bordering major markets such as Kenya, Tanzania, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Despite being landlocked, Uganda has access to the ports of Mombasa and Dar es Salaam through northern and central transport corridors. Its membership in regional economic organizations—including the East African Community (EAC), COMESA, and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)—further strengthens its role as a gateway to a market of over 600 million people.

The report notes Uganda's rapid economic expansion in recent years. GDP growth rose from 3% in 2020 to over 6% in 2024, with forecasts projecting growth above 10% once oil production begins in the coming years. Low inflation, relative currency stability, and fiscal reforms have created an attractive environment for investment. Uganda's economy is driven by services (42% of GDP), agriculture (26%), and industry (32%).

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK



Iran's Private Sector Calls for New Approach to International Engagement

TEHRAN - The President of Iran's Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), Samad Hassanzadeh, has called for a shift in the country's economic policy toward a more outward-looking approach, urging a reassessment of the government's view of the private sector's role in international markets.

Speaking at a meeting of the Chamber's board of representatives on Sunday, Hassanzadeh condemned efforts by several European countries and the United States to re-impose United Nations sanctions on Iran through the so-called "snapback mechanism."

He praised Iran's negotiating team for pursuing diplomatic solutions "with good faith," but acknowledged that the reactivation of the mechanism could bring new challenges. "Although new sanctions will impose difficulties and damages, evidence shows that the effects of the snapback are not as severe as advertised. Nevertheless, the impact must be managed through realistic policies and careful planning by the government," he said.

Hassanzadeh argued that Iran's business environment has long been tested by external pressures. "Despite the psychological campaign waged by hostile foreign media, we believe the snapback mechanism will not fundamentally change the realities of Iran's business environment. The country has endured years of an unfair economic war and has gained valuable experience in managing tough and complex conditions," he noted.

According to Hassanzadeh, unilateral U.S. sanctions have imposed far greater restrictions on Iran's economy than those expected under the UN mechanism. "Yet private-sector actors have consistently kept production running and continued investing, creating jobs and entrepreneurship despite ups and downs," he said.

He stressed that even under the snapback sanctions, the private sector can again demonstrate its resilience by leveraging Iran's natural and human resources through scientific management and expert-driven approaches. However, he warned that this resilience does not eliminate the need for domestic reforms. "We must address internal weaknesses and improve the country's economic governance," he stated.

Hassanzadeh urged policymakers to remove domestic barriers to economic activity, seize opportunities in regional and friendly countries, and support businesses to strengthen their resilience and protect household livelihoods. He warned that rising production costs have made it difficult for domestic producers to secure raw materials, calling for a dedicated financial package to support suppliers of essential

goods.

The Chamber, he said, stands ready to help identify key sectors and supply chains and to propose tailored financial mechanisms during the snapback period.

Hassanzadeh reiterated the importance of pursuing both domestic strengthening and external opportunities, as outlined in the Supreme Leader's "resistance economy" directives. He called for fundamental reforms in foreign-exchange, trade, and financing policies, urging lawmakers and officials to ease restrictive regulations to reflect the country's current economic conditions.

He highlighted the need for new bilateral and multilateral regional trade agreements and for swift action to remove obstacles such as currency-repatriation requirements. The Chamber has already presented a structured proposal for managing the foreign-exchange market to the Supreme National Security Council and is prepared to cooperate with the Central Bank and other relevant institutions.

"Managing the foreign-exchange market requires avoiding excessive interference," Hassanzadeh said. "Policy-making and regulation must be separated from direct market participation, as past interventions have only fueled volatility. The Central Bank should also refrain from intervening in trade policy."

Calling for a new phase of international engagement, Hassanzadeh said: "We expect the governing institutions to reassess the scope and depth of the private sector's role in international affairs. The private sector has the capacity to manage external economic relations, and the Chamber is ready to take responsibility, provided the government offers support, oversight, and facilitation."

He warned that the main objective of the recent push for the snapback mechanism is to undermine Iran's economy from within. "Our nation's experience during the imposed 12-day war showed that with collective support, we can withstand even the most severe challenges. Once again, we need unity and solidarity among the people, the government, state institutions, and the private sector," he emphasized.

Concluding his remarks, Hassanzadeh affirmed the Chamber's readiness to cooperate with the government, the diplomatic corps, and other institutions to help the country navigate the current juncture with minimal damage. He expressed hope that under the leadership of the Supreme Leader and with national unity and determination, Iran will emerge stronger and achieve significant successes in the future.

Iran Re-Enters Malaysia's Tourism Market



TEHRAN - Iran is set to revive its presence in Malaysia's tourism market, as the country looks to Southeast Asia as a key target for inbound travel. The announcement came two days ago on World Tourism Day, when Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage and Deputy Minister for Tourism highlighted Malaysia as one of Iran's priority destinations for renewed cooperation.

Anoushirvan Mohseni-Bandpei, Iran's Deputy Minister for Tourism, underscored the importance of strengthening Iran-Malaysia relations in the travel sector.

"Tourism is not merely an economic activity; it is a platform for fostering cultural dialogue, regional solidarity, and mutual understanding among nations," he said in an interview with ILNA news agency.

Mohseni-Bandpei emphasized that a tourism industry built on the principles of sustainable development could drive economic growth while also shaping a brighter future for coming generations.

"Iran, with its unparalleled historical, cultural, natural, and health-tourism assets, alongside Malaysia's valuable experience, can open up new horizons for joint cooperation," he added.

The deputy minister noted that Iran's approach goes beyond simply attracting tourists:

"Our vision is to create deeper human and cultural connections and open new pathways for long-term regional engagement."

According to Mohseni-Bandpei, future Iran-Malaysia cooperation will focus on three main areas:

Health Tourism: expanding advanced medical services for regional visitors.

Digital and Smart Tourism: leveraging new technologies to improve travel experiences.

Cultural and Religious Tourism: strengthening the shared heritage of the two Muslim-majority nations and enhancing their standing within the Islamic world.

He stressed that these efforts align with this year's World Tourism Organization theme, "Tourism and Sustainable Transformation," and that sustainable development in tourism requires respect for the

environment, responsible use of natural resources, and empowering local communities.

"Tourism can only endure if it is linked with ethical practices and social responsibility," Mohseni-Bandpei said, calling for the combined efforts of governments, entrepreneurs, startups, and local stakeholders.

"While governments set policies and provide support, it is the private sector that serves as the true engine of innovation and growth in tourism."

Highlighting the complementarity between the two countries, he described Malaysia as "a leading hub of halal tourism in Southeast Asia" and said Iran's rich cultural, historical, and natural assets can make it "a valuable partner in this field."

Proposed steps to strengthen ties include forming joint working groups, enhancing international marketing, organizing specialized tourism exhibitions, and establishing direct flight routes between the two nations.

"Tourism today transcends geographical borders. Through sharing expertise and capacity, Iran and Malaysia can not only attract more visitors but also present a model for successful regional cooperation," he said.

Mohseni-Bandpei added that this collaboration could introduce a "fresh image of Iran as a safe, diverse, and attractive destination" while also enhancing Malaysia's role in the region.

"In a world facing environmental, climate, and socio-economic challenges, tourism can become a common language for cooperation and solidarity," he said.

The deputy minister concluded that investment in green and smart tourism would spur economic development and secure a better future for the next generation.

"The future of Iran's tourism sector is bright, provided we seize regional and international opportunities," he stated.

"Partnerships with countries like Malaysia will not only boost economic growth but also project a renewed image of Iran to the world."

No Contaminated Meat Imported from Mongolia



TEHRAN - The head of Iran's Veterinary Organization has denied reports of contaminated meat entering the country from Mongolia, stating that no such shipment has been imported.

Speaking on Sunday on the sidelines of the National "World Rabies Day" conference at the Pasteur Institute of Iran, Alireza Rafieipour responded to questions about social media rumors alleging the import of contaminated meat and the re-packaging of expired poultry.

He stressed that "all imported consignments—whether arriving by land, rail, air, or sea—are strictly monitored by veterinary and quarantine officials."

Rafieipour, who also serves as Deputy Minister of Agriculture, explained that the officials issue import permits only after examining the relevant documents and ensuring that labels and standards comply with veterinary and health regulations.

He confirmed that a shipment of meat from Mongolia had been stopped because the documentation did not match the labels. "That consignment has been seized and is awaiting a judicial decision," he said.

"If a shipment has been detained or rejected, it has been done in accordance with existing standards and regulations," Rafieipour added, noting that all import procedures must be approved by the relevant authorities and that legal and administrative measures are currently underway.

Self-Imposed Sanctions Seen as Bigger Threat than International Restrictions



TEHRAN - The head of Iran's Non-Oil Export Development Commission at the Iran Chamber of Commerce has warned that domestic policy missteps and self-imposed restrictions now pose a greater challenge to the country's economy than renewed international sanctions.

Mohammad Lahouti, speaking in an interview with ISNA, said most of the economic impact of foreign sanctions had already been felt in 2018 when the United States withdrew from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and re-imposed sweeping restrictions on Iran.

"Today, it is not so much the foreign sanctions but rather our own self-imposed measures and ambiguous currency and customs policies that are placing the greatest pressure on Iranian businesses," Lahouti said. "If the government revises and clarifies these policies, a significant portion of the consequences of the so-called 'snapback' mechanism can be neutralized."

He recalled that with the U.S. exit from the nuclear deal in 2018, "all sanctions effectively returned, and many countries only continued to trade informally with Iran. Access to the SWIFT international banking network, letters of credit, and banking services was cut off, and all the benefits of the JCPOA were lost."

According to Lahouti, the new activation of the JCPOA's dispute mechanism — known as the "snapback" or mekanisme mashi'e in Persian — may have a psychological impact on domestic markets, potentially leading to short-term price increases. However, he argued that "its actual effect on Iran's existing trade situation will be limited, as the major sanctions were already reinstated years ago."

Lahouti stressed that the government must urgently review past currency policies, including foreign-exchange pledges imposed on exporters, requirements for repatriating export earnings, import regulations, and issues surrounding the release of goods held up at customs. "By re-examining and clarifying these areas, we can address many of the self-imposed restrictions that hamper trade and counter the negative effects of the snapback," he said.

Indonesia Council Calls for Press Freedom

JAKARTA (Dispatches) - Indonesia's main press council called for press freedom and urged President Prabowo Subianto's palace to restore reporting access for a CNN Indonesia journalist who had her credentials revoked after asking him about a troubled free meal programme.

Titin Rosmasari, editor in chief of local outlet CNN Indonesia, which licenses the CNN Brand, told Reuters on Monday that the palace revoked the reporter's access on Saturday night, urging the palace to explain its reasoning.

She told magazine Tempo it was related to her question about thousands of school children who fell sick after consuming food served on the free meal programme.



Denmark Bans Civilian Drone Flights for EU Summit After New Sightings



COPENHAGEN (Dispatches) - Denmark ordered a ban on civilian drone flights in the coming week as a security measure ahead of an EU summit in Copenhagen. The ban came after mysterious drones were observed over Danish military sites overnight for a second straight day, raising concerns in northern Europe amid suspected Russian involvement.

Denmark will ban all civilian drone flights across the country this week to ensure security as Copenhagen hosts an EU summit gathering heads of government, the transport ministry said Sunday.

Mysterious drone sightings across Denmark since September 22 have prompted the closure of several airports, with Denmark hinting at possible Russian involvement, charges Moscow has rejected.

Drones were observed over Danish military sites overnight for the second straight day, Denmark's army said Sunday.

Copenhagen is to host an EU summit on Wednesday and Thursday.

"Denmark will host EU leaders in the coming week, where we will have extra focus on security. Therefore, from Monday to Friday, we will close the Danish airspace to all civilian drone flights," Transport Minister Thomas Danielsen said in a statement.

"In this way, we remove the risk that enemy drones can be confused with legal drones and vice versa," he added.

A violation of the ban can result in a fine or imprisonment for up to two years, the ministry said.

Justice Minister Peter Hummelgaard said in the same statement the purpose of the ban was to simplify the work of police and other authorities.

"The police are on heightened alert, and our authorities must use their forces where necessary to take care of Danes and our guests."

Russia Pounds Kyiv, Other Regions in Mass Drone and Missile Attack



KYIV (Dispatches) - Russia launched hundreds of drones and missiles at Kyiv and other parts of Ukraine early on Sunday, killing at least four people and injuring dozens, in one of the most sustained attacks on the capital since the full-scale war began.

Neighbouring Poland closed its airspace near two southeastern cities and its air force scrambled jets in response until the danger had passed.

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

Ukraine's military said that Russia launched 595 drones and 48 missiles overnight and its air defences shot down 568 drones and 43 missiles. It noted that the main target of the strike was the capital Kyiv.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the attack, which lasted more than 12 hours, killed four people, including a child, with two of the deaths occurring at a Kyiv cardiology clinic.

He said 80 people were injured in the strikes and factories, residential buildings and energy-generating sites were damaged.

Russia's defence ministry said on Sunday it had carried out a "massive" attack on Ukraine using long-range air- and sea-based weapons and drones to target military infrastructure, including airfields.

Moscow has denied targeting civilians in its war against Ukraine, although thousands have been killed and residential areas extensively damaged by its attacks.

Hamas Says It Lost Contact With Two Hostages in Gaza City

CAIRO (Dispatches) - U.S. President Donald Trump hopes to finalize a Gaza peace plan proposal in a meeting on Monday with Israel's Prime Minister, Trump told Reuters on Sunday, as Israeli tanks pushed deeper into Gaza City and the military wing of Hamas said it had lost contact with two hostages held there.

The fate of the two hostages, which has strong domestic resonance in Israel, could cast a shadow over a meeting between Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Trump.

The Hamas military wing, Al-Qassam Brigades, called on Israel on Sunday to pull troops back and suspend air strikes on Gaza City for 24 hours so fighters could retrieve the captives.

Trump told Reuters in a phone interview he had received a "very good response" from Israel and Arab leaders to the Gaza peace plan proposal and that "everybody wants to make a deal."

Hamas said the group had not yet received any proposal from Trump nor from mediators.

Israel has launched a massive ground assault on Gaza City, flattening whole districts and ordering hundreds of thousands of Palestinians to flee to tented camps, in what Netanyahu says is a bid to destroy Hamas.

Nevertheless, the past few days have seen increasing talk of a diplomatic resolution to the nearly two-year-old Gaza war.

Trump's 21-point Middle East peace plan to end the Gaza war calls for the return of all Israeli hostages, living and dead, no further Israeli attacks on Qatar and a new dialogue between Israel and Palestinians for "peaceful coexistence."

Netanyahu has repeatedly said Hamas must lay down its arms or be defeated. He told Fox News earlier on Sunday it is possible to have amnesty for Hamas leaders under a ceasefire agreement that would include them being escorted out of Gaza.

Hamas has so far said it will never give up its weapons as long as Palestinians are struggling for a state. It refuses any expulsion of its leaders from Gaza.

Al-Qassam Brigades called on the Israeli military to pull troops back from the Sabra and Tel Al-Hawa districts southeast of Gaza City's centre, and suspend flights over the area for 24 hours from 1500 GMT so it could reach the two trapped hostages.

The Israeli military did not directly comment on the request but made clear it had no plans to halt its advances, issuing



a statement ordering all residents of parts of Gaza City including the Sabra district to leave. It said it was about to attack Hamas targets and raze buildings in the area.

Gaza residents and medics said Israeli tanks pushed deeper into Sabra, Tel Al-Hawa and nearby Sheikh Radwan and Al-Naser neighbourhoods, closing in on the heart of the city and western areas where hundreds of thousands of people are sheltering.

The Gaza health ministry said in a statement that at least 77 people had been killed by Israeli fire in the past 24 hours.

Local health authorities said they had been unable to respond to dozens of desperate calls from trapped residents.

Gaza's Civil Emergency Service said late on Saturday that Israel had denied 73 requests, sent via international organisations, to let it rescue injured Palestinians in Gaza City. The Israeli military had no immediate comment.

The families of the two hostages identified by Hamas have requested that their names not be published by the media.

The war began after Hamas-led militants attacked Israeli territory in October 2023, killing around 1,200 people and capturing 251 hostages, according to Israeli tallies. Forty-eight hostages are still in Gaza, 20 of whom Netanyahu says are still alive.

Israel's assault has killed more than 66,000 Palestinians, according to medical authorities in the territory. Most homes have been damaged or destroyed and 2.3 million residents are living under a severe humanitarian crisis.

The Israeli military says Hamas, which ruled Gaza for nearly two decades, no longer has governing capacity and that its military force has been reduced to a guerrilla movement.

The military launched its long-threatened ground offensive on Gaza City on September 16 after weeks of intensifying strikes on the urban centre.

Over the past 24 hours, the air force had struck 140 military targets across Gaza, including militants and what it described as military infrastructure, the military said.

The World Food Programme estimates that between 350,000 and 400,000 Palestinians have fled Gaza City since last month, although hundreds of thousands remain. The Israeli military estimates that around a million Palestinians were in Gaza City in August.

Moldova's Pro-EU Party Wins Pivotal Election



PARIS (Dispatches) - Moldova's ruling PAS party pulled comfortably ahead of its Russian-leaning rivals in a high-stakes parliamentary election as final results trickled in on Monday, leaving the EU candidate country that borders Ukraine on a path towards European integration. The tense vote was marked by a string of incidents and overshadowed by accusations of Russian interference.

Moldova's ruling pro-EU party on Sunday topped parliamentary elections, according to almost complete results for a vote overshadowed by accusations of Russian interference in the ex-Soviet country.

The small European Union candidate nation, which borders Ukraine and has a pro-Russia breakaway region, has long been divided over whether to move closer with Brussels or maintain Soviet-era relations with Moscow.

Sunday's elections were seen as crucial for the country to maintain its push towards EU integration, launched after Moscow's 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

With 95 percent of the votes counted early Monday, the Party of Action and Solidarity (PAS), in power since 2021, stood at 48.3 percent, well ahead of the runner-up pro-Russian Patriotic Bloc at 25.5 percent.

PAS - whose leaders did not address waiting reporters late Sunday - gained 52.8 percent in 2021.

"Statistically speaking PAS has guaranteed a fragile majority," analyst Andrei Curararu of the Chisinau-based think tank WatchDog.md told AFP.

But he warned that "the danger is not surpassed, as a functional government is difficult to form."

Curararu added: "The Kremlin has bankrolled too big of an operation to stand down and could resort to protests, bribing PAS MPs and other tactics

to disrupt forming a stable pro-European government."

The ballot was overshadowed by fears of vote buying and unrest, as well as "an unprecedented campaign of disinformation" from Russia, according to the EU.

Moscow has denied the allegations.

Igor Dodon, a former president and one of the leaders of the Patriotic Bloc, called on people to "peacefully protest" on Monday, accusing PAS of stealing the vote.

"If during the night there are falsifications, tomorrow we won't recognise (the result of) the parliamentary elections... and we will ask for elections to

be repeated," he said late Sunday outside the electoral commission, where he went with some supporters.

Earlier Sunday, voter Natalia Sandu said the election was critical because the nation was "at a crossroads".

"Our hope, and our expectation, is that we will stay on the European path," the 34-year-old homemaker told AFP.

"The alternative is unthinkable, I refuse to even imagine sliding back into the past," she added.

Turnout stood at around 52 percent, similar to that of the last parliamentary elections in 2021.

Voters in the country of 2.4 million - one of Europe's poorest - have expressed frustration over economic hardship, as well as scepticism over the drive to join the EU.

"I want higher wages and pensions.... I want things to continue as they were during the Russian times," Vasile, a 51-year-old locksmith and welder, who only gave his first name, told AFP at a polling station in Chisinau.

Some 20 political parties and independent candidates were running for the 101 parliamentary seats.

After casting her vote, pro-EU President Maia Sandu of PAS warned of a "massive interference of Russia".

Moldova's cybersecurity service said Sunday it had detected several attempted attacks on the electoral infrastructure, which were "neutralised in real time... without affecting the availability or integrity of electoral services".

Election day was marked by a string of incidents, ranging from bomb threats at multiple polling stations abroad to voters photographing their ballots and some being illegally transported to polling stations. Police also detained three people suspected of plotting to cause unrest after the vote

Four Dead in Michigan Church Attack

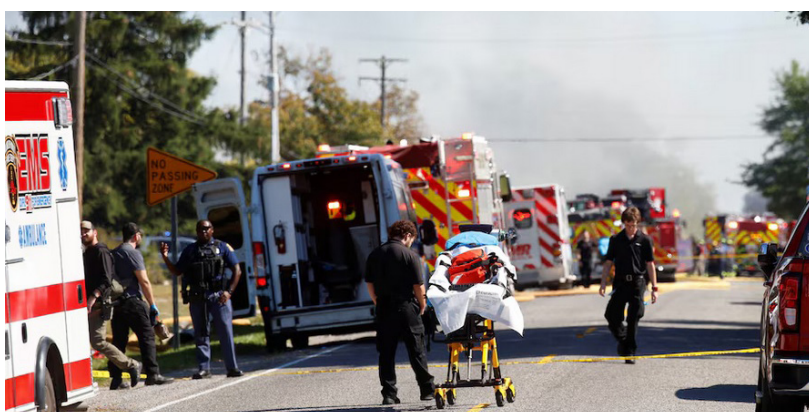
GRAND BLANC (Dispatches) - At least four people were killed and several others wounded after a shooter targeted a Mormon church in Michigan, authorities said, in the latest deadly tragedy that US President Donald Trump called part of a national "epidemic of violence."

Police in the northern U.S. state said the shooter first rammed the church with his vehicle before opening fire with an assault rifle, and then set the building aflame.

The attacker was killed by police in the parking lot eight minutes after the first emergency call came in, Grand Blanc Police Chief William Renye told a press conference.

Renye said that in addition to two deceased victims announced earlier in the day, two more bodies had been recovered among debris at the burned-down church, with search efforts ongoing.

Earlier, he said eight people had also been wounded in the attack, one of whom was in critical condition.



AFP journalists in the adjacent town of Burton witnessed a large police presence outside the home of the suspected shooter, whom Renye identified as Thomas Jacob Sanford, 40.

Renye and other officials did not provide any further details on Sanford. U.S. media reports said he had grown up in the area and was a military veteran.

Images of the aftermath at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Grand Blanc, a suburb of the city of Flint, showed most of the building reduced to ashes.

Photos also showed the truck apparently driven by the attacker into the side of the building, with two U.S. flags on poles in the vehicle's rear.

FBI Special Agent Reuben Coleman told the press conference that the FBI was now leading the investigation, and was looking at the attack "as an act of targeted violence."



Winners India Refuse Asia Cup Trophy From ACC Chief

DUBAI (Dispatches) - India beat Pakistan to defend their Asia Cup title but refused to accept the trophy from Pakistan's interior minister Mohsin Naqvi in a bizarre end to a politically-charged tournament on Sunday.

Emotions ran high around the match between the nuclear-armed neighbors, who engaged in a brief military conflict in May, that nearly escalated into full-scale war.

The teams clashed three times in the eight-team tournament in the United Arab Emirates with India prevailing on all three occasions.

After India beat Pakistan by five wickets in Sunday's final at the Dubai International Stadium, speculations swirled as the presentation ceremony got delayed by more than an hour and was subsequently cut short just before the winner's trophy was to be handed out.

"I have been informed by the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) that the Indian cricket team will not be collecting their awards tonight," Simon Doull, who conducted the post-match presentation, said.

Indian cricket board (BCCI) secretary Devajit Saikia confirmed their players had refused to accept the winner's trophy from ACC President Naqvi, who is also the chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board.

"We have decided not to take the trophy from the ACC chairman, who happens to be one of the main leaders of Pakistan," Saikia told news agency ANI.

The BCCI would lodge a protest against Naqvi in the next meeting of the governing International Cricket Council (ICC), Saikia added.

India players Tilak Varma (player-of-the-match), Abhishek Sharma (player-of-the-tournament) and

Kuldeep Yadav (MVP), however, turned up to accept their individual awards although they did not acknowledge Naqvi and the Pakistan official was also the only person on stage who did not applaud the Indian trio.

Indian players have refused to shake hands with their Pakistan counterparts either at the toss or after the match throughout the tournament.

India captain Suryakumar Yadav referred to the May clashes and dedicated his team's victory against Pakistan in the September 14 to the armed forces back home.

India president Droupadi Murmu took to X on Sunday to congratulate the cricket team for winning the Asia Cup.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi invoked the name given to India's series of strikes on sites in Pakistan in his message on the same platform.

Since their independence in 1947, India and Pakistan have fought two of their three wars over the Kashmir region and there have been several other more limited flare-ups.

Sunday's prize distribution controversy overshadowed the actual match where Varma anchored India's nervy chase with an unbeaten 69 in reply to Pakistan's 146 all out.

Put into bat, Pakistan could not capitalise on an 84-run opening stand between Sahibzada Farhan (57) and Fakhar Zaman (46) and were bundled out for 146 with five deliveries still left in their innings.

Pakistan lost their last nine wickets for 33 runs in a spectacular meltdown with India's left-arm spinner Kuldeep Yadav (4-30) being the wrecker-in-chief.

Arsenal Fight Back to Defeat Newcastle



NEWCASTLE (Dispatches) - Arsenal defender Gabriel headed a stoppage-time winner from a corner to secure his side a 2-1 Premier League victory over Newcastle United at St James' Park, closing the gap on leaders Liverpool to two points with a stunning late show.

Arsenal climbed to second place in the table with 13 points from six matches, while Newcastle are in 15th with six points from the same number of games.

Newcastle took the lead in the 34th minute when Nick Woltemade rose highest to meet a cross from a short corner and head into the net after Arsenal defender Cristian Mosquera had needlessly given away the set-piece with a miscued back-pass.

The visitors were frustrated as they wasted several opportunities, but netted twice late on as Mikel Merino glanced in a header in the 84th minute before Gabriel found the winner in the 96th.

"Unbelievable, nothing better than a late winner in football. Speechless, I'm so happy," Arsenal captain Bukayo Saka told Sky Sports.

It had been 84 minutes of pure frustration for Arsenal before they ended the game in jubilation, as they were denied by excellent saves from goalkeeper Nick Pope, were wasteful in front of goal and were denied what looked a clear penalty.

The Video Assistant Referee (VAR) has been in the spotlight again this weekend, specifically around penalty decisions, and there was another major talking point with the game at 0-0.

The visitors were awarded a spot-kick by on-field referee Jarrod Gillett when Jacob Murphy's poor back-pass was latched onto by Viktor Gyokeres, who seemed destined to score until Pope's outstretched leg sent him tumbling to the floor.

But a VAR review revealed Pope got the slightest of touches to the ball before the contact and the decision was overturned.

"There are a few things we can speak about, for example the penalty," Saka said. "For me if we have VAR it is for a clear and obvious error and the fact that it took the ref that long to decide shows it is not a clear and obvious error."

Europe Hold Off Furious U.S. Charge to Win Ryder Cup

FARMINGDALE (Dispatches) - What looked certain to be a comfortable Europe win unexpectedly turned into a thrilling Ryder Cup finale on Sunday as they withstood a ferocious challenge from the U.S. to capture golf's biggest team prize in a nail-biting 15-13 victory.

Europe, a close-knit team that had done everything right for two days at Long Island's Bethpage Black, needed two points from the 11 singles matches that were played to retain the Ryder Cup, but the U.S. made them sweat it out until the bitter end.

"It's got to be the most stressful 12 hours of my life," said Europe's Luke Donald, the first captain to win back-to-back editions of the biennial event since Tony Jacklin in the 1980s. "We knew they'd be tough, we didn't think they'd be this tough."

It wasn't until the eighth match of the day that Ireland's Shane Lowry drained a six-foot birdie at the last to tie Russell Henley, getting Europe to 14 points on the week and guaranteeing they would retain the Ryder Cup they won two years ago in Rome.



"I said to my caddie walking down 18, 'I've got an opportunity to do the greatest thing I've ever done today,' and I did it. And I'm very proud of myself," said Lowry.

Then it was Englishman Tyrrell Hatton, in the penultimate match, who secured the outright victory with a half-point from his battle with Collin Morikawa that put Europe at the 14-1/2 points needed to win the Ryder Cup.

"It's been one of the hardest days I've ever experienced on a golf course," Hatton said after the closest Ryder Cup since the "Miracle at Medinah" in 2012 when Europe staged a remarkable final-day comeback.

"It was to be expected, they're amazing players - selfishly I was hoping it wouldn't have to come down to me."

Europe have now won 11 of the last 15 Ryder Cups dating back to 1995 and their latest triumph marks the fifth time they have won on foreign soil.

Marquez Breaks Down After Sealing MotoGP Crown in Japan



MOTEGI (Dispatches) - An emotional Marc Marquez clinched his seventh MotoGP world championship and his first since 2019 today after finishing second at the Japan grand prix, with Francesco Bagnaia winning the race.

The Spanish Ducati rider has been in brilliant form all year and he underlined his dominance by wrapping up the title with five events of the season remaining.

He knew that placing first or second would clinch the title regardless of where his brother and closest championship rival Alex finished.

After crossing the line, Marquez raised both arms aloft before sobbing and yelling as his achievement began to sink in.

It marked a triumphant return from an injury nightmare that began when he broke his right arm in 2020, almost convincing him to hang up his helmet.

"It's impossible even to speak," said the 32-year-old as he choked back tears.

"I just want to enjoy the moment. It's true that it was difficult, super difficult.

"Now I'm impressed with myself how it's part of me."

Marquez clinched the world championship in Japan for the fourth time in his career, following 2014, 2016 and 2018 and now draws level with Italian motorcycle legend Valentino Rossi on seven titles.

Marquez's fellow Ducati rider Bagnaia claimed only his second grand prix win of what has been a frustrating season for the two-time world champion.

The Italian also won the Saturday sprint and looked back to his best all weekend.

Zverev Edges Racket-Smashing Moutet to Set Up Medvedev Clash

BEIJING (Dispatches) - Alexander Zverev beat racket snapper Corentin Moutet to book a quarter-final date with Daniil Medvedev at the China Open, as Coco Gauff kept her title defense hopes alive.

The world number three from Germany kept his calm to edge out the Frenchman 7-5, 3-6, 6-3 and set up a 21st Tour meeting with his Russian rival.

"I'm looking forward to the quarter-finals and playing my good friend Daniil," Zverev said after the match.

Zverev held on in the first set to get the better of an angry Moutet, whose racket met its end against the 26-year-old's leg.

The world number 37 won set two, producing several drop shots to keep Zverev on the run, but it was the German who cleaned up shop in the decider.

"(Moutet is) a good player, so difficult match. He's beaten a lot of great opponents this year," Zverev later told AFP.

"I'm gonna do everything I can," the 28-year-old said of his



upcoming Medvedev meeting. "If it's enough in the end, then great, and if it's not, then it's also OK. I'm looking forward to a tough battle."

Earlier, 29-year-old Medvedev put away Spaniard Alejandro Davidovich Fokina 6-3, 6-3 in an hour and a half without much fuss.

Meanwhile, Lorenzo Musetti apologised on court for an outburst at coughing fans earlier in the tournament.

Fans booed when the 23-year-old Italian entered the court for his match and some were making loud guttural coughing noises.

"I totally understand your point and I... regret what I've said and what I've done, so sorry, thanks for understanding," he said in English after beating France's Adrian Mannarino 6-3, 6-3 to move into the quarter-finals.

The on-court interviewer, however, did not translate his apology into Chinese for the fans, only relaying Musetti's brief comments about the match.