

Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi Left Here for Kampala, Uganda, on Wednesday to Take Part in the 19th Ministerial Meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)

IRAN NEWS

Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Esmaeil Baghaei Has Warned Against the Continuation of the Israeli Regime's Crimes Despite the Ceasefire Announcement

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IMF Forecasts 0.6% Economic Growth for Iran in 2025



TEHRAN - The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has raised its forecast for global economic growth in 2025 from 3.0% to 3.2%, while keeping its projection for 2026 steady at 3.1%.

According to ISNA, the IMF's latest report notes that despite the upward revision compared to its previous outlook, global economic growth is expected to decline slightly — from 3.3% in 2024 to 3.2% in 2025, and 3.1% in 2026 — amid shifting policies and complex economic factors.

In April, the United States disrupted global trade norms by announcing broad tariff measures. Given the complexity and fluidity of the current situation, the IMF's April report presented a wide range of possible impacts on growth, from moderate to significant, depending on the severity of the trade shock.

The IMF stated that trade policy uncertainty remains high due to the lack of clear, transparent, and stable agreements among trade partners. It also noted a shift in focus from tariff levels themselves to their effects on prices, investment, and consumption.

The organization added that, so far, the impact of protectionist trade measures on economic activity and prices has been limited, and that growth remained resilient through the first half of 2025.

However, the report warned that there are growing signs of the negative effects of protectionist policies becoming more apparent, with trade policy uncertainty expected to remain elevated through 2025 and 2026.

The IMF revised up its forecast for U.S. economic growth in 2025 from 1.9% to 2.0%, and for 2026 from 2.0% to 2.1%.

Iranian Strike Hit Secret Israeli-U.S. Military Bunker Beneath Tel Aviv Tower



TEHRAN (PressTV) - An investigation by The Grayzone has revealed that Iran's June 13 missile strike on Tel Aviv directly hit a secret underground military command center jointly operated by Israel and the United States, buried beneath a luxury apartment complex in the heart of the city.

According to geolocation analysis, leaked emails, and public records, the bunker, known as "Site 81", is located underneath the Da Vinci Towers, a high-end residential and office complex built over what was once a ministry compound.

The facility reportedly serves as a command and control node for Israeli military intelligence, with US Army engineers having overseen its construction over a decade ago.

When Iranian missiles struck multiple locations across north Tel Aviv in June, Israeli authorities immediately sealed off the impact zone and prevented journalists from filming.

Fox News correspondent Trey Yingst was among those forced away by police near the HaKirya compound and the Azrieli Center.

Hours later, Iranian state media announced that military and intelligence targets had been precisely hit in retaliation for earlier Israeli strikes on Iranian soil.

Implementing Justice Requires Cooperation, Empathy, Faith, and Conviction

TEHRAN - President Masoud Pezeshkian emphasized the importance of adhering to religious principles, stating that the implementation of justice depends on cooperation, empathy, belief, and conviction, and warned that individuals must not allow personal desires or egos to divert them from the path of righteousness and fairness.

Speaking at the conference titled "On the Path to Justice: Occupational Justice and Regional Balance" held at the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor, and Social Welfare, President Pezeshkian expressed appreciation for the participants' efforts and findings on justice, calling them highly valuable.

"I believe justice is the foundation of all religious teachings and social action," he said. "Prophets were sent to establish justice, yet today, genuine justice has not been fully realized in our society."

Highlighting examples of inequality in the healthcare system, Pezeshkian noted that medical services are distributed unevenly across the country: "While advanced healthcare is readily available in

Tehran and major cities, smaller and remote towns suffer from limited resources and high costs. Education faces similar challenges—developing and equipping schools, improving standards, and addressing deficiencies remain slow and difficult processes."

The president criticized the gap between words and actions regarding justice: "Despite our beautiful speeches about fairness, many of our actions are unjust. God commands us to uphold justice, and we are obligated to act fairly in all our judgments and interactions—whether with supporters or opponents. Personal ego, group loyalty, and social status must never obstruct justice; denying this truth is like denying the light of day."

Pezeshkian stressed that justice must be tangibly reflected in all areas—urban development, education, management, and social life. "Justice must manifest in our actions," he said. "If we mispronounce a phrase in prayer, it is said our prayer is flawed—but if we act unjustly, the entire prayer is invalid. Fairness and avoidance of oppression are essential not only in words and behavior but also in maintaining the moral integrity of our religious practices."



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Quoting from the Quran and the teachings of Imam Ali (as) in Nahj al-Balagha, Pezeshkian underscored the need for self-control and adherence to scripture and tradition to prevent injustice and moral deviation. "Even the smallest act of injustice leads us astray and nullifies our righteous deeds," he warned.

The president further emphasized that fairness toward all members of society—both allies and critics—is the foundation of justice. "In most cases, the root cause of people's problems lies with decision-makers," he said. "Ignoring principles of justice breeds public dissatisfaction and erodes trust. Upholding justice is the light of both rulers and citizens—it nurtures freedom, communication, brotherhood, and fairness."

Pezeshkian also addressed fairness in compensation systems, arguing that payments should be based on performance, not mere equality. "One of our country's main challenges

is giving equal pay to both those who work diligently and those who do not. This is an injustice that discourages the competent and rewards indifference," he said.

Citing the nation's limited resources, the president called for responsible management of water, electricity, gas, and natural resources, stressing that "development without environmental and social justice leads to serious consequences. Inequitable exploitation of natural resources harms both the land and the people. Humanity must act fairly toward nature to safeguard the future of the nation and coming generations."

Concluding his remarks, Pezeshkian reiterated that justice is a core cultural and moral principle, rooted in the teachings of the prophets and imams. "Through cooperation, empathy, and unity, we can overcome crises and bring justice into practice," he said. "Those who have the knowledge and ability must take action—our success in overcoming challenges depends on how faithfully we uphold justice."

VP Says: We Must Be Fully Prepared Against the Enemy

TEHRAN - First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref underscored the importance of close and constructive cooperation between the government and public institutions in serving the Iranian people, stating that there has never been a sense of division between the two sides. "We are not sitting on opposite sides of the table — we have a common goal and a shared path," he said. "This approach proved especially effective during the recent 12-day war."

Aref made these remarks during a meeting with senior executives from major socio-economic institutions. The session was attended by the Deputy for Oversight and Auditing of the Office of the Supreme Leader, the Minister of Industry, Mining and Trade, and the heads of the Foundation of the Oppressed (Bonyad Mostazafan), Imam Khomeini Relief Committee, Execution of Imam Khomeini's Decree Headquarters, Foundation of Martyrs and Veterans Affairs, Housing Foundation of the Islamic Revolution, and other senior government officials.

Aref highlighted the resilience of Iran's economic sector despite ongoing challenges such as "cruel and harsh sanctions," noting that the system has demonstrated its capacity under pressure. He explained that the enemies of Iran had miscalculated: "They believed the Iranian nation would waver by the second day of the 12-day war, but instead, our people responded with unity and determination, bringing their plots to an end."

The Vice President referred to reports showing that during the war and throughout the country's economic difficulties, no sector — public or private — acted opportunistically. "No one tried to hoard goods or manipulate markets for personal gain," he said.

He added that despite the war coinciding with the summer holidays and the mourning months of Muharram and Safar, sales in stores only increased by 20 percent on the first day and actually fell below average on the second day. "Overall, the fluctuation in the first week's sales was just 1.6 percent — a great source of pride for our nation," he noted.

Aref praised the Iranian people's resilience: "Even during the war, people did not rush to stockpile goods for a week ahead. We are honored to serve such a nation."

He stressed that within the governing system, titles and positions must not overshadow the mission of serving the people and preserving social calm.

Pointing to the necessity of remaining vigilant even during ceasefires, Aref said: "We must keep our hands full and be fully prepared against the enemy." He highlighted the economic and administrative plans prepared by the 14th government, explaining that during the 12-day



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war, the government delegated significant authority to ministers and governors, ensuring swift coordination in decision-making with both the president and the first vice president.

Aref emphasized that all governing institutions, from the government to public foundations, draw their resources from national wealth (anfal), which must be dedicated to public service and national development. He reaffirmed the government's strategy of maintaining public calm despite the wartime atmosphere. "From the first day in office, we faced war conditions, but since September last year, our policy has been not to transfer this sense of crisis to the people. This has been key to preserving stability and confidence in society," he said.

The Vice President reiterated that improving living standards and protecting vulnerable groups remain the government's top priorities.

"Every economic reform and price adjustment plan must include a livelihood component to ensure that the underprivileged are not harmed," he asserted.

Aref also expressed gratitude to public institutions for their collaboration with the government — particularly during the 12-day conflict — and for their role in developing national infrastructure projects, including highways, school construction campaigns, and social empowerment initiatives.

He called on these institutions to assist the government in supplying, producing, and distributing essential goods, especially under extraordinary circumstances, and stressed the need to accelerate reconstruction efforts in areas damaged during the war.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Aref instructed that a follow-up session be held with the participation of the Deputy for Economic and Infrastructure Coordination, relevant government officials, and heads of public institutions to strengthen inter-agency cooperation and resolve existing challenges.

In turn, representatives from the participating organizations thanked the government for its collaboration and presented reports on their activities, including their contributions to GDP, investment projects, poverty alleviation, food security, livestock and poultry production, energy supply, job creation, healthcare services in deprived regions, talent development programs, financial assistance to knowledge-based companies, and reconstruction and housing support for families affected by the 12-day war.

Of Course, We Shouldn't Have Gone

Iran's invitation to the Sharm el-Sheikh summit can be analyzed from several perspectives, and it does not seem that this invitation was anything more than a symbolic gesture.

Some Western-leaning individuals, in their own imagination, considered this invitation an opportunity — without realizing that apart from the American delegation, all the others present there were merely Arab and European representatives attending for appearance's sake, just to fill the space.

As for Iran — of course, the regional role of the Islamic Republic of Iran in being invited to Sharm el-Sheikh was, at the very least, an acknowledgment by Trump and his team of the validity of their own assumptions. He knows that Iran is a major and influential player in the Middle East. No stable or comprehensive solution to the region's crises, including the Palestinian issue, has ever been — or will ever be — possible without considering Iran's role and stance.

Indeed, the Palestinian issue is one of the fundamental and key principles of the Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign policy. But — at what cost should we attend? Would bearing witness to the strategy of "destroying Palestine through negotiation" not be a disgrace? The very act of Egypt inviting Iran could never have taken place without a green light and behind-the-scenes arrangements from the United States.

Although Iran-Egypt relations have been at a very low level for decades, and this invitation could have been interpreted as a "soft step" toward gradually reducing tensions and testing the waters of bilateral relations, this summit itself sacrificed Egypt's own strategy in dealing with Gaza and its defenseless people.

We understand that Iran's proposed solution to the current crisis (such as forming a "unified state" across all of historical Palestine) contradicts the two-state solution favored by most Arab and international actors. Therefore, Iran's role in this summit was more one of alignment with others rather than collaboration in finding a practical joint solution.

Although Egypt has stated that neither it nor the Arab League can ignore Iran in regional equations, the final decision at Sharm el-Sheikh was in Trump's hands — without granting anyone else a role. He simply put a paper on the table, which a few countries signed — those that would have a role in investing in Gaza's reconstruction in the future — and the behind-the-scenes arrangements for dividing benefits had already been defined.

Now, where could we possibly have fit into that story? Those who recommended our participation had already auctioned off their wisdom — their statements are nothing more than the product of a mind already sold.

Iran Allows Foreigners to Import Gold for Investment Purposes



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran has allowed foreigners to import gold into the country for the purpose of investment in economic projects.

A Tuesday report by the Fars news agency said that foreign investors plan to auction nearly 700 kilograms of gold bars in Iran's Center for Exchange of Currency & Gold (ICE) in the near future.

The report cited a statement from the ICE, which is a subsidiary of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), showing that the two foreign investors seeking to invest in Iran's steel industry had sold some \$4 million worth of imported gold in the center in recent weeks.



Expansion of International Train Services From Iran to CIS States, Azerbaijan Planned

TEHRAN (IRNA) - The Director General of Planning and Supervision for Passenger Services at the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (RAI) announced that plans are underway to expand international train routes from Iran to new destinations in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Republic of Azerbaijan. Seyed Mohsen Tabatabaei stated that Iran Railways is pursuing the establishment of international train services with neighboring countries, including CIS member states, the city of Mary in Turkmenistan, and Nakhchivan in the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Shared Cultural Heritage Between Iran and China Plays a Key Role in Deepening Bilateral Relations

TEHRAN - Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts emphasized that cultural diplomacy is a key strategy for achieving cultural, economic, and political progress among nations. He stated that the shared cultural heritage of Iran and China plays an effective role in strengthening relations between the two countries and should be regarded as a bridge connecting the hearts of both peoples.

Minister Seyed Reza Salehi Amiri conveyed his message on Tuesday, October 13, during the opening ceremony of the exhibition "Gift of Silk: A Review of Iran-China Relations."

He noted: "Cultural diplomacy is an important strategy for achieving cultural, economic, and political advancement and can serve as one of the most effective tools for fostering cultural connections among nations. Iran and China—two great civilizations of East and West Asia—have shared deep cultural and commercial ties since ancient times. In Iran's cultural diplomacy, this shared heritage plays a distinctive role in expanding relations between the two countries."

Salehi Amiri added that this shared heritage reflects the mutual cultural influences rooted in the religious traditions of the Iranian world. He noted that Zoroastrian and Manichaean customs historically contributed to shaping and consolidating economic and political relations. The exchange of ambassadors and trade caravans in the past, he said, symbolizes this longstanding civilizational connection.

"In today's cultural policies," he continued, "this convergence must be pursued in such a way that Iran-China relations are not confined merely to economic dimensions, but evolve into a profound bond between the hearts and cultural identities of both nations—a bond rooted in a brilliant past that continues to illuminate present-day interactions."

The minister stressed the need for a scientific and precise understanding of the shared cultural roots of the two nations, explaining that such knowledge provides a clearer picture of their ancient and interconnected identities in art and culture. This understanding, he said, fosters a shared sense of civilizational heritage that can serve as an inspiring beacon for future cultural cooperation.

Salehi Amiri also pointed out that while religious exchanges—through Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, and Islam—represent spiritual dimensions of this interaction, the Silk Road and the Royal Road stand as enduring symbols of trade and exchange across land and sea routes. The influence of literature, art, pottery, and metalwork seen along the trade stations between the two countries remains evident in their archaeological heritage and could form the basis for joint research among



Iranian and Chinese scholars and academic institutions.

Highlighting the role of cultural diplomacy in strengthening official ties, Salehi Amiri described cultural heritage as a civilizational gateway for expanding multifaceted relations between Iran and China. He cited exhibitions such as "Gift of Silk"—organized by the Research Institute of Cultural Heritage and Tourism—as examples of purposeful cultural diplomacy in action.

The minister further announced that the ministry's next initiative will focus on the maritime heritage of both nations. He expressed hope that this collaboration, centered on understanding maritime culture and technology, will showcase the ancient creativity of the Iranian and Chinese peoples.

Finally, Salehi Amiri voiced optimism that these cultural exchanges will pave the way for greater numbers of Chinese tourists to visit the ancient land of Iran.

Meanwhile earlier Salehi Amiri had emphasized the need for a well-defined model of tourism governance that can shape the country's development trajectory in this sector for at least the next 20 years.

During his visit to the Tourism Deputy Office and in a meeting with its deputy, directors, and experts, Salehi Amiri stated:

"We need a desirable model of tourism governance that will determine the direction of this industry's development for the next two decades."

He announced that the ministry plans to strengthen its ongoing presence and engagement in the tourism sector, adding:

"Construction of a new Tourism Deputy building at the ministry's central complex will begin soon. This project aims to enhance administrative infrastructure and increase focus on specialized planning."

Highlighting the valuable experience of Mohseni Bandpey, the newly appointed Deputy for Tourism, Salehi Amiri described him as:

"A capable manager, well-versed in the country's administrative system, and with a record of successful management. I am confident that under his leadership, the future of the Tourism Deputy Office will be brighter and more promising."

The minister underscored the importance of presenting a realistic and safe image of Iran to the international community, stating:

"Iran is one of the safest countries in the world, yet some foreign media occasionally portray a distorted picture. We must continually highlight the phrase 'Safe Iran' to ensure that the true reality of our country is accurately reflected."

Iran Showcases Global Competitiveness in Machine-Made Carpet Industry

TEHRAN - The 17th International Exhibition of Flooring, Carpet, Machine-Made Carpet, and Related Industries is currently underway at the Tehran International Permanent Fairground, bringing together 120 domestic and foreign companies from Iran, Turkey, China, and Taiwan. The exhibition, which runs until October 15, highlights the latest innovations and manufacturing capabilities in the carpet and flooring industry, underscoring Iran's growing competitiveness in global markets.

According to the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran, the event provides a platform for industry leaders to showcase cutting-edge products, including stain-resistant, anti-microbial, and 100% acrylic antibacterial carpets, as well as extra-wide machine-made carpets. These innovations reflect the sector's efforts to meet international standards and respond to evolving consumer preferences.

The exhibition serves not only as a venue for displaying products but also as an important meeting point for producers, buyers, and industry professionals. By bringing together manufacturers and traders under one roof, the event promotes B2B marketing opportunities and helps expand domestic and international markets for Iranian carpet producers.

Recognized as one of the largest industry gatherings in its field, the exhibition aims to enhance coordination and cooperation among manufacturers from across Iran's provinces, particularly those active in Isfahan, Kashan, Aran and Bidgol, Mazandaran, and the Central Province—key hubs for Iran's machine-made carpet production.

Mahmoud Tavalee, head of the exhibition's policy council, said that this year's event features a wide range of side programs, including carpet design workshops, seminars on carpet and flooring recycling, and sessions on yarn production and raw materials. The event also includes joint meetings of industry unions and plans for the participation of two foreign trade delegations.

Tavalee noted that the exhibition's main objectives include increasing production efficiency, developing the industry, exploring new export markets, boosting exports, and introducing the latest global technologies in carpet, flooring, and textile machinery. "The exhibition contributes to job creation and enhances public and technical knowledge about this key sector," he added.

The event is open to the public daily from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. through October 15 at the Tehran International Fairground.

In a message to mark the opening of the exhibition, Mohammad Ali Dehghan Dehnavi, Deputy Minister of Industry and Head of the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran, emphasized the country's



strong position in producing and exporting carpets, rugs, and floor coverings.

He stated that the organization is committed to facilitating non-oil exports by supporting both domestic and international trade fairs and establishing international pavilions to promote Iranian products.

"Strengthening the participation of foreign companies in domestic exhibitions, as well as Iran's active presence in specialized exhibitions abroad, serves as a vital pathway for showcasing the export capabilities of Iranian-made goods," Dehghan Dehnavi said.

He underlined the vital role of the exhibition industry in driving economic growth and non-oil exports, noting that trade fairs help enhance industrial value chains, create jobs, and contribute to national development. "The experience of advanced economies shows a direct correlation between the growth of the exhibition sector and broader industrial and economic progress," he added.

Dehghan Dehnavi's message highlighted the rapid advancement of Iran's machine-made carpet industry, which has become one of the most dynamic sectors within the national textile industry over recent decades.

"The industry has achieved remarkable progress in technology, creativity, and design, leading to consistent growth in both sales and exports," he said.

Iran's major production centers—particularly in Isfahan, Kashan, Aran and Bidgol, Mazandaran, and the Central Province—now host numerous factories that not only meet domestic demand but also export to markets in Iraq, Turkey, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, and several African countries.

According to Dehghan Dehnavi, the machine-made carpet and flooring sector holds strong potential for generating foreign currency revenues as part of Iran's broader strategy to expand non-oil exports. He also emphasized that the industry plays a key role in employment generation across various provinces.

The deputy minister expressed optimism about the future, noting that Iran's potential membership in international trade organizations and the signing of preferential and free trade agreements could create new opportunities for the carpet and flooring sector.

With the participation of both domestic and international exhibitors, the 17th International Exhibition highlights not only Iran's technical expertise and production capacity, but also its readiness to strengthen trade partnerships and expand its footprint in the global carpet and flooring market.

Food Security: A National and Strategic Necessity



TEHRAN - Minister of Agriculture Gholamreza Nouri Ghezleji emphasized the vital importance of achieving self-sufficiency in the production of essential commodities, calling food security a non-negotiable national and strategic need. His remarks came during the National Conference on "The Role of Sustainable Financing in Food Security", where he highlighted the need to maximize the use of science, technology, and sustainable investment to secure the country's food future.

Opening his speech with a tribute to the martyrs and appreciation for the conference organizers, Minister Nouri Ghezleji stated that food security has emerged as one of the world's most pressing challenges in recent years.

"Since the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, new concepts of food security have emerged, and older theories based on the assumption of global food abundance no longer hold true," he said.

He warned that food security has now become a political instrument and even a dangerous weapon, citing recent examples of starvation being used as a weapon against civilians in Gaza.

Emphasizing the directives of Iran's Constitution and the guidance of the Supreme Leader on agricultural self-sufficiency, Nouri Ghezleji declared that food security is not something that can be suspended or delayed.

"There was a time when some considered the inclusion of self-sufficiency principles in the Constitution to be excessive," he said. "Today, it is clear how far-sighted and strategic that vision truly was."

The minister noted that Iran's water and soil resources are limited, requiring a shift from conventional practices to innovative, science-driven methods.

"The only path forward is to rely on science, technology, and improved efficiency," he said. "We must produce more with our limited resources."

Iran Showcases Innovation at GITEX 2025



TEHRAN - The National Pavilion of Iran has officially opened at GITEX Global 2025, featuring the active participation of Iranian technology firms and startups. Ten companies are exhibiting within the national pavilion, two others are participating independently in GITEX Global, and fifteen innovative startups are showcasing their projects at North Star Dubai, the startup-focused section of the exhibition.

The event, which runs through October 17, is being held with the official authorization of the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran and organized by the Iran Federation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), with support from several industry associations.

Located in Hall 14, Iranian teams are presenting their latest achievements across diverse fields including artificial intelligence, fintech, cybersecurity, blockchain, and digital health. Their participation reflects Iran's growing technological capabilities and the vibrancy of its innovation ecosystem.

During the first two days of GITEX 2025, several prominent Iranian economic figures visited the pavilion, including Mohammadreza Taleai, Afshin Kolahi, Ali Masoudi, and Saeed Rasoulaf (members of the ICT Federation Board), Farzin Ferdin (Vice President of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce), and Mehdi Karbasian, former Deputy Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade.

Iran's Exports to Russia Near \$1b Mark

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TEHRAN - Iran's exports to Russia are approaching the \$1 billion threshold, signaling a significant expansion in trade relations between the two countries. According to Mohammad Ali Dehghan Dehnavi, Deputy Minister of Industry, Mine, and Trade and Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), trade between Tehran and Moscow has grown by more than 30 percent in the first five months of the current Iranian year.

In an interview with ILNA, Dehnavi highlighted the "remarkable potential" for further export growth, emphasizing that Iran's trade portfolio with Russia is no longer limited to agricultural and food products. "In previous years, most of our exports to Russia were concentrated in agricultural goods and foodstuffs," he said. "Fortunately, we have now expanded into industrial sectors, and soon, nearly half of our trade with Russia will consist of industrial and manufactured products."

Dehnavi pointed to several key areas of industrial cooperation that have recently gained momentum. "Currently, we are active in the steel sector and have achieved good export performance in containers, automotive parts, pipes, and profiles," he explained. He noted that this diversification marks a major step toward strengthening Iran's industrial presence in the Russian market.

The deputy minister also underscored Russia's vast import capacity, which he estimated at around \$300 billion annually. "A significant portion of Russia's import demand can be supplied by Iran," he said, noting that the two nations have complementary economies capable of fostering deeper trade integration.

Dehnavi cited the fisheries and aquaculture industries as examples of sectors where Iran's exports to Russia have seen substantial growth in recent years. He stressed that Iran's increasing engagement with its northern neighbor reflects a broader strategy of developing sustainable trade ties within the region.

"Russia, as a global economic and military power with strong political and economic relations with Iran, offers a valuable opportunity for the expansion of our exports," he remarked. Dehnavi added that the geopolitical stability of Iran's neighboring countries, coupled with strengthening bilateral relations, provides a secure foundation for continued trade growth.

Activation of the "Snapback Mechanism" Has Made Economic Forecasting Difficult



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TEHRAN - According to the Public Relations Office of the Yazd Chamber of Commerce, the Secretary-General of the Chamber, Mohammad Sepehr, said at a meeting of the Provincial Economic Think Tank that one of the main topics under discussion was the impact of the activation of the "snapback mechanism" and the resulting pressures on Iran's economy. He emphasized that it was crucial to examine this issue thoroughly with the participation of both business leaders and economists from the province.

Sepehr noted: "Predicting the trajectory of the national economy has become extremely difficult. We are in a situation that is neither war nor peace, neither negotiation nor a clear, stable condition on which to base our planning. This uncertainty has unfortunately complicated decision-making for economic actors, though we hope developments will move in a positive direction."

He added that several chambers of commerce in the country had conducted research on the issue, and the Yazd Chamber was also preparing a report. The insights gathered at this meeting would be compiled into a final report for submission to government and parliament to help guide national-level decision-making.

Sepehr stressed that sanctions create a chain reaction: "When sanctions occur, it sets off a domino effect. This begins with a decline in government foreign-currency revenues — which we are already experiencing and which will likely intensify. As foreign-currency income shrinks, the value of the rial weakens, fueling inflation. Inflation in turn erodes private-sector confidence, halts investment, and ultimately exacerbates social and livelihood pressures. These are deeply concerning developments that need urgent attention."

Bangladesh Garment Factory Fire Kills 16, Toll May Rise

DHAKA (Dispatches) - A fire on Tuesday at a garment factory in Bangladesh and an adjacent chemical warehouse killed at least 16 people and injured others, and the death toll could rise, an official said.

The cause of the blaze wasn't immediately known, fire service director Tajul Islam Chowdhury said. "Sixteen bodies have been recovered from the second and third floors of the garment factory," he said, adding that the number of deaths could rise as recovery operations were continuing.

The fire broke out at around midday on the third floor of the four-storey factory in the Mirpur area of the capital Dhaka, before spreading to a chemical warehouse storing bleaching powder, plastic and hydrogen peroxide, Talha Bin Jashim, a fire department official said, citing witnesses.



French PM to Suspend Macron's Flagship Pension Reform



PARIS (Dispatches) - French Prime Minister Sebastian Lecomu promised on Tuesday to suspend a landmark pension reform until after the 2027 election, sacrificing one of President Emmanuel Macron's legacy achievements to ensure the government's survival.

By bowing to pressure from leftist lawmakers who revile the 2023 reform, Lecomu has managed to stave off a stark escalation in France's months-long political crisis.

The Socialists welcomed his concession, saying they would not vote to topple him in no-confidence votes on Thursday, meaning Lecomu will almost certainly live to fight another day.

Lecomu's proposal to mothball the pension overhaul threatens to kill off one of Macron's main economic legacies at a time when France's public finances are in a perilous state, leaving him with little in the way of domestic achievements after eight years in office.

France has been mired in its worst political crisis in decades as a succession of minority governments have sought to push deficit-reducing budgets through a fractious legislature split into three distinct ideological blocs.

Lecomu, Macron's sixth prime minister in less than two years, announced the suspension in parliament as part of a last-ditch attempt to pass a slimmed-down 2026 budget.

"I will propose to parliament, starting this autumn, that we suspend the 2023 pension reform until the presidential election," Lecomu told lawmakers. "No increase in the retirement age will take place from now until January 2028."

Lecomu said the suspension would cost 400 million euros (\$463 million) in 2026 and 1.8 billion euros (\$2.1 billion) in 2027.

U.S. Strike on Alleged Drug Boat Off Venezuela Kills Six



WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - A U.S. strike on a boat off the coast of Venezuela on Tuesday killed six suspected drug traffickers, President Donald Trump said, the latest such operation in recent weeks as the U.S. builds up military forces in the region.

The strike is the most recent example of Trump's efforts to use U.S. military power in new, and often legally contentious, ways, from deploying active-duty U.S. troops in Los Angeles to carrying out counter-terrorism strikes against drug trafficking suspects.

In a post on Truth Social, Trump said the strike had been carried out against a designated terrorist organization, but he did not provide any details on which group.

"Intelligence confirmed the vessel was trafficking narcotics, was associated with illicit narcoterrorist networks," Trump said, without providing evidence.

A roughly 30-second video, which Trump posted, appeared to show a stationary vessel in a body of water being hit with a projectile before exploding.

The Pentagon recently disclosed to Congress that Trump has determined the United States is engaged in "a non-international armed conflict" with drug cartels.

Some former military lawyers say the legal explanations given by the Trump administration for killing suspected drug traffickers at sea instead of apprehending them fail to satisfy requirements under the law of war.



CAIRO (Dispatches) - Hamas handed over more bodies of deceased hostages to Israel on Tuesday, one sign of progress after a number of apparent setbacks in the day since U.S. President Donald Trump touted his plan to end the Gaza war.

The bodies were returned after Israel announced it would cut in half the number of humanitarian aid trucks allowed into Gaza in a move to punish Hamas for what Israel called the militant group's violation of its agreement to transfer remains under the ceasefire deal reached last week.

Meanwhile, re-emergent Hamas fighters demonstrated they were reasserting control in Gaza by deploying hundreds of security forces in the streets and executing several people they accused of collaborating with Israel.

The outlook for Trump's peace plan darkened further when the president threatened Hamas with military strikes unless the militant group disarmed.

"If they don't disarm, we will disarm them. And it will happen quickly and perhaps violently," Trump said at the White House, one day after he spoke before the Knesset in Jerusalem.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has maintained the war cannot end until Hamas surrenders its weapons and cedes control of Gaza, a demand the fighters have rejected.

On Monday, Trump proclaimed the "historic dawn of a new Middle East" to Israel's parliament, as Israel and Hamas were exchanging the last 20 living Israeli hostages in Gaza for nearly 2,000 Palestinian detainees and prisoners.

But the return of 28 dead hostages has remained one of the final details to be worked out in the deal to end more than two years of hostilities that began with Hamas attacks on Israel on October 7, 2023. Hamas has now handed over eight coffins of dead hostages, leaving at least 19 presumed dead and one unaccounted for still in the Gaza Strip.

On Tuesday, the Israeli military said it received four coffins from the Red Cross at a meeting point in northern Gaza Strip. Those coffins, escorted by Israeli forces, crossed the border into Israel shortly before midnight (2100 GMT) and were being taken for forensic identification, the Israeli military said.

Hamas also confirmed the transfer was under way. "At this moment, the men are continuing to oversee the implementation of what was agreed upon regarding the handover of bodies as part of the agreement to end the war in Gaza," Hamas spokesperson in Gaza Hazem Qassem on Facebook.

It was not immediately clear if the handing over of bodies was sufficient for Israel to restore a full complement of aid deliveries. Israeli officials said they had decided to restrict aid, allowing only half the agreed number of aid trucks into Gaza

starting Wednesday, and to delay plans to open the southern border crossing to Egypt because Hamas had violated the ceasefire deal by failing to turn over bodies of hostages.

Israel's two-year assault has left much of the enclave in ruins and Gaza City and surrounding areas are suffering from a famine that has afflicted more than half a million Palestinians, creating great need for an expected 600 aid trucks to enter Gaza daily during the ceasefire.

Plans have yet to be implemented to open the crossing to Egypt to let some Gazans out, initially to evacuate the wounded for medical treatment.

Hamas, which seized Gaza in a brief 2007 civil war, has swiftly reclaimed the streets of Gaza's urban areas following the partial withdrawal of Israeli troops last week. Gaza residents said Hamas fighters were increasingly visible on Tuesday, deploying along routes needed for aid deliveries.

In a video circulated late on Monday, Hamas fighters dragged seven men with hands tied behind their backs into a Gaza City square, forced them to their knees and shot them from behind, as dozens of onlookers watched from nearby storefronts.

A Hamas source confirmed that the video was taken on Monday and that Hamas fighters participated in the executions. Reuters was able to confirm the location by visible geographic features.

Trump has previously given his blessing to Hamas to reassert some control of Gaza, at least temporarily. Israeli officials have so far refrained from commenting publicly on the re-emergence of the group's fighters.

Palestinian security officials said dozens of people had been killed in clashes between Hamas fighters and rivals in recent days.

In addition Israel, using aerial drones, killed five Palestinians as they went to check on houses in a suburb east of Gaza City, and an Israeli airstrike killed one person and injured another near Khan Younis, Gaza health authorities said.

Hamas accused Israel of violating the ceasefire. The Israeli military said it had fired on people who crossed truce lines and approached its forces after ignoring calls to turn back.

Hamas sources told Reuters on Tuesday the group would tolerate no more violations of order in Gaza and would target collaborators, armed looters and drug dealers.

The ceasefire has stopped two years of devastating warfare in Gaza triggered by the October 7, 2023 attack in which Hamas-led gunmen killed around 1,200 people and took 251 hostages back to Gaza, according to Israeli tallies.

Madagascar's Military Takes Power, Fleeing President Impeached

ANTANANARIVO (Dispatches) - An army commander who led a mutiny in Madagascar said on Tuesday the military had taken power after President Andry Rajoelina was impeached by lawmakers and forced to flee the country following weeks of youth-led protests.

Rajoelina had refused to step down despite escalating Gen Z demonstrations demanding his resignation and widespread defections in the army.

"We have taken the power," Colonel Michael Randrianirina declared on national radio and said that the military was dissolving all institutions except the lower house of parliament or National Assembly.

Randrianirina later told reporters a committee led by the military would rule the country for a period of up to two years alongside a transitional government before organising new elections.

"The following institutions are suspended: the Senate, the High Constitutional Court, the Independent National Electoral Commission, the High Court of Justice, and the High Council for the Defense of Human Rights and the Rule of Law," a statement from the country's military leaders said.

In a day of turmoil for the nation off southern Africa's coast, the 51-year-old leader, whose whereabouts are unknown, earlier sought to dissolve the lower house by decree.

But lawmakers went ahead with a vote to impeach him, leaving the country in a constitutional deadlock which the military seized upon to declare they were taking charge.

Rajoelina, who himself came to power in a coup in 2009, condemned the power grab by the military in a statement.

Randrianirina, a commander in the elite CAPSAT army unit that played a key



role in Rajoelina's 2009 coup, broke ranks with him last week.

In a defiant address to the nation on Monday night, Rajoelina said that he had been forced to move to a safe place because of threats to his life. An opposition official, a military source and a foreign diplomat told Reuters he had fled the country on Sunday aboard a French military plane.

His isolation increased further on Tuesday when even lawmakers from his ruling coalition, which holds a parliamentary majority, voted to impeach him on

charges of engaging in activities deemed incompatible with presidential duties.

Rajoelina had repeatedly warned in recent days that an attempted coup was underway in the Indian Ocean island nation.

Demonstrations first erupted in the country on September 25 over water and power shortages and quickly escalated into an uprising over broader grievances, including corruption, bad governance and a lack of basic services.

The anger mirrored recent protests against ruling elites elsewhere, including Nepal and Morocco.

Earlier on Tuesday, at Antananarivo's 13 May Square, along the main drag lined with palm trees and French colonial buildings, thousands of protesters danced, marched, sang and waved banners denouncing Rajoelina as a French stooge because of his dual citizenship and support from Madagascar's former coloniser.

Many were waving Malagasy flags and the signature Gen Z protest banner of a skull and crossbones from the Japanese "One Piece" anime series.

At one point, Randrianirina took the stage and asked: "Are you ready to accept a military takeover?", drawing cheers of approval from the crowd.

Later, as news of the military takeover filtered through to protesters, many were jubilant.

"We're so happy Andry Rajoelina is finally gone ... We will start again," high-school student Fih Nomensanahary said, with four of her friends cheering alongside her.

Others were more cautious. "They need to hand over to a civilian administration quickly and have an election," said Rezafo Lova, a 68-year-old IT consultant.

Trump Warns U.S. Aid to Argentina Will End If Ally Milei Loses Key Elections

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - U.S. President Donald Trump has warned his embattled ally Javier Milei that the United States' \$20 billion lifeline to Argentina could be cut if he fails to win in upcoming midterm elections, telling reporters: "If (Milei) wins we are staying with him, and if he doesn't win we are gone."

Trump warned Tuesday he could sever struggling Argentina's financial lifeline if his libertarian ally Milei loses crucial legislative elections later this month.

"If he loses, we are not going to be generous with Argentina," Trump said as firebrand Milei visited the White House to seek the Republican's political and economic support.

"I'm with this man because his philosophy is correct. And he may win and he may not win - I think he's going to win. And if he wins we are staying with him, and if he doesn't win we are gone."

Trump's administration has already promised \$20 billion to prop up Argentina's struggling economy but his backing has failed to calm the markets - or help Milei's polling ahead of midterms on October 26.

The results of the elections, in which Milei's minority party is hoping to boost its seat tally, will dictate whether Milei can pass tough cost-cutting reforms or will face a



legislative brick wall for the next two years of his term.

Hailing Milei as a "great leader," Trump said he would "fully endorse" his ideological ally in the elections.

"He's MAGA all the way, it's 'Make Argentina Great Again,'" Trump said, referring to his own "Make America Great Again" slogan.

Trump has however faced questions about how a big bailout for Argentina tallies with that same America First policy.

Asked by reporters what the benefit to the United States was, Trump replied: "We are helping a great philosophy take over a great country. We want to see it succeed."

With Argentina struggling to stave off yet another financial crisis and Milei's disapproval ratings rising, the chainsaw-wielding leader has come to right-wing ally Trump for help.

Trump has repeatedly voiced political support for Milei, while backing it up with a promise of huge economic aid, but the markets remain spooked by Argentina.

In recent weeks, highly indebted Argentina has had to spend more than a billion US dollars to defend the peso, a strategy most economists believe is unsustainable.



England Clinch 2026 World Cup Qualification, Portugal Forced to Wait

PARIS (Dispatches) - Harry Kane scored twice as England thrashed Latvia 5-0 yesterday to secure qualification for the 2026 World Cup, while Cristiano Ronaldo's Portugal were forced to wait to clinch their spot at the finals after being held by Hungary.

Elsewhere, pro-Palestinian demonstrations prefaced Italy's vital win over Israel and Spain took another step towards qualification with a big victory against Bulgaria.

Thomas Tuchel's England brushed aside Latvia in Riga to make it six wins from six in Group K and guarantee top spot before their final two fixtures next month—they have 18 points and an unassailable seven-point lead over second-placed Albania.

Anthony Gordon opened the scoring before Kane produced a lethal finish and then netted a penalty to make it 3-0 at half-time—the Bayern Munich striker has 21 goals in 13 games this season for club and country.

Maksims Tonisevs scored an own-goal and Eberechi Eze added the fifth, with England now able to look forward to December's draw for next year's finals.

"It comes rarely that you qualify for a World Cup, so the mood is very, very good," said Tuchel. All 12 group winners in Europe qualify directly for the World Cup, with the runners-up going on to play-offs.

Serbia are a point behind Albania after fighting back to win 3-1 in Andorra. Guillaume Lopez gave Andorra the lead with a stunning strike from inside the centre circle which sailed over Serbia goalkeeper Djordje Petrovic.

Christian Garcia's own-goal brought Serbia level before Dusan Vlahovic headed them in front and Aleksandar Mitrovic netted a penalty.

Portugal were on the brink of punching their ticket as they led Hungary 2-1 in stoppage time in Lisbon, knowing a win would confirm first place in Group F.

Attila Szalai headed Hungary in front only for Ronaldo to turn in Nelson Semedo's driven cross to equalize midway through the first half.

Ronaldo then converted a Nuno Mendes cross to give Portugal the lead in first-half stoppage time, taking the 40-year-old Al Nassr superstar to an all-time international record of 143 goals in 225 appearances for his country.

He now holds the record for the most goals in World Cup qualifying with 41, two more than retired Guatemala international Carlos Ruiz on 39.

However, Hungary snatched a draw when Liverpool's Dominik Szoboszlai finished from close range in injury time.

That means Hungary remain five points behind Portugal with two games left and so could still top Group F, while Ireland theoretically could too after Evan Ferguson's header secured a 1-0 victory against Armenia, who had Tigran Barseghyan sent off.

Italy's meeting with Israel in Udine was prefaced by clashes between some pro-Palestinian demonstrators and police as thousands more peacefully marched through the northern Italian city in anger at the hosting of a match they felt should not have been played.

There have been calls for FIFA to exclude Israel from international competition in response to the country's military offensive in the Gaza Strip which followed a brutal cross-border assault carried out by Hamas on October 7, 2023.

There was a huge security presence around the Bluenergy Stadium hosting the Group I fixture, won 3-0 by Italy.

The Azzurri are desperate to qualify for the World Cup having failed to make it to the last two editions. Mateo Retegui converted a penalty in first-half stoppage time and scored again with a stunning hit on 74 minutes.

Gianluca Mancini headed in a late third to ensure that Italy will finish at least second in the group and are now just three points behind leaders Norway with two games left.

The teams meet next month but Norway's superior goal difference means they remain primed to finish first. Estonia and Moldova drew 1-1 in the same group.

Japan Fight Back to Earn First Ever Win Over Brazil



TOKYO (Dispatches) - Japan staged a remarkable second-half comeback to defeat five-times world champions Brazil 3-2 in a friendly at a sold-out Tokyo Stadium on Tuesday, earning their first-ever win over the South Americans in 14 meetings.

The match was a tale of two halves, with Brazil dominating the opening 45 minutes before collapsing after the break.

Trailing 2-0 at halftime after goals from Paulo Henrique and Gabriel Martinelli, the hosts capitalised on Brazilian defensive errors before Ayase Ueda's late header sealed a famous victory.

Takumi Minamino halved the deficit in the 52nd minute after Fabricio Bruno's misplaced pass allowed the forward to score from just inside the box.

Nine minutes later, Bruno's night worsened as he sliced an attempted clearance into his own net to level the match.

With the home crowd in full voice, Japan pressed for a winner. Two minutes after Ueda's header struck the crossbar, substitute Junya Ito provided the decisive moment, delivering a pinpoint corner in the 71st minute which Ueda met with a powerful header after beating defender Lucas Beraldo to the ball.

"It was a blackout from everyone in our side in the second half. This is the highest level, if you fall to sleep in an entire half it can cost you a World Cup, a Copa America, an Olympic medal," captain Casemiro told Brazilian TV Globo.

"It's just unacceptable and we must learn from it because the World Cup is just a few months ahead of us. We have to take care of the details because they can cost you everything."

Messi Gets Two Assists, Argentina Beat Puerto Rico 6-0



FORT LAUDERDALE (Dispatches) - Lionel Messi had two assists and helped start a play that led to another goal, as reigning World Cup champion Argentina beat Puerto Rico 6-0 in a relocated international friendly on Tuesday night.

The match was originally scheduled to be played Monday in Chicago, before promoters moved the game last week. Officials in Chicago said low ticket sales were to blame; officials with the Argentine soccer federation said the immigration crackdown in Chicago was responsible.

Playing on the field he calls home with Inter Miami in Major League Soccer, Messi flicked a quick lob to set up Gonzalo Montiel's score in the first half and then had a nifty back pass that created Lautaro Martinez's second goal of the night in the 83rd minute.

Alexis Mac Allister had two goals for Argentina, which also benefited from an own goal midway through the second half.

It was a peculiar matchup in so many ways.

There were the circumstances behind the move, sparked at least in part by an immigration crackdown that had seen more than 1,000 arrested since last month in the Chicago area. Tickets were available a couple hours before the game for as low as \$25, which is rare for anything involving Messi. The stadium was about half-filled at kickoff, though it did fill somewhat more as the match went along.

It also pitted the world's No. 3 ranked team, according to global governing body FIFA, in Argentina against the world's No. 155-ranked team in Puerto Rico — which even had some college players in its lineup.

Goalkeeper Sebastian Cutler — who saved a header from Messi early in the second half, then stoned him again on a 15-yard left-footed try in the 74th minute — was 1-1-2 this season at Villanova, and midfielder Noeh Hernández has three goals this season for DePaul.

Puerto Rico nearly scored in the eighth minute when a shot by Leandro Antonetti from beyond the midfield stripe almost got over the head of Argentina goalkeeper Emiliano Martinez, who barely got back in time to make the save.

Qatar, Saudi Arabia Qualify for 2026 World Cup

DOHA (Dispatches) - Qatar and Saudi Arabia became the latest teams to book their spots at the 2026 World Cup, with each finishing top of their respective groups in the fourth round of Asian qualifying.

In Group A, Qatar saw off the United Arab Emirates 2-1 in their must-win clash in Doha, where second-half goals from captain Boualem Khoukhi and Pedro Miguel sealed the 2022 hosts' place at next summer's finals in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

Then, later in Jeddah, the Saudis came through a goalless draw at home to Iraq to book a berth at the 2026 showpiece.

In qualifying on merit for a first World Cup, Qatar went some way to atoning for three years ago, when they entered the history books as the first hosts to lose all three group games.

Against the UAE, the winners of the past two Asian Cups took the lead four minutes into the second half at the Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium where Khoukhi headed home Akram Afif's in-swinging free-kick.

On 74 minutes, the hosts doubled their lead, this time Pedro Miguel making the most of a mistake by UAE goalkeeper Khalid



Essa to nod into the empty net.

Coached by former Spain, Real Madrid and West Ham boss Julen Lopetegui, Qatar had to survive Tarek Salman's sending-off late on for a studs-up tackle, while the UAE were provided a lifeline from substitute Sultan Adil's volley eight minutes into injury-time.

To their credit, though, Qatar held on to take their place at a first World Cup on foreign soil.

In Group B, Saudi Arabia made it through to a third successive finals by avoiding defeat to Iraq at their King Abdullah Sports City.

The 2034 hosts, who recorded a stunning victory against eventual winners Argentina at the 2022 World Cup, needed only a draw to seal a berth at a seventh showpiece event.

Herve Renard's side could have had taken the lead two minutes into the second half, but Lens full-back Saud Abdulhamid sent his effort over the Iraq crossbar with the goal at his mercy.

Moments later, Al Ahli midfielder Saleh Abu Al Shamat forced a fine save from range from Jalal Hassan, while the Iraq goalkeeper soon thwarted both Saudi captain Salem Al Dawsari and namesake Nasser Al Dawsari.

It took a save from goalkeeper Nawaf Al Aqidi deep into injury-time to ignite celebrations among the 60,000-plus crowd in Jeddah, but Saudi had done it.

Iraq, last participants in 1986, remain in the hunt for the World Cup: next month, they contest a two-legged tie against the UAE, with the winner then going into an intercontinental playoff.

Shevchenko Ekes Out Win in Almaty

ALMATY (Dispatches) - Home-country favorite Alexander Shevchenko saved four set points in the second set before closing out a 7-6 (1), 7-6 (12) win over Serbia's Laslo Djere in the first round of the Almaty (Kazakhstan) Open.

Djere had a point to level the match while serving at 5-4 in the second set, but Shevchenko rallied to win the game.

The players' serves dominated the subsequent tiebreaker, with each player winning 11 of his first 12 service points. Djere squandered three more set points and Shevchenko didn't take advantage of his first four match points. Djere finally lost another service point to give Shevchenko a 13-12 lead, and the Kazakhstani player sealed the match on the next point.

In the day's other matches, fifth-seeded Brandon Nakashima defeated Serbia's Hamad Medjedovic 7-6 (5), 6-2, and Australia's Rinky Hijikata got past Kazakhstan's Timofey Skatov 7-6 (3), 2-6, 6-3.

Meanwhile U.S. qualifier Eliot Spizzirri never faced a break



point while rolling to a 6-4, 6-1 win over Pedro Martinez in the first round at Brussels.

Spizzirri, 23, has won Challenger (second-tier) events this year in San Diego and Jinghan, China, helping him reach a career-high ranking of No. 105 last week. This week he is No. 111, while Martinez is No. 89.

Spizzirri won 27 of his 28 first-serve points, and he converted three of his four break-point opportunities.

Fifth-seeded Giovanni Mpetshi Perricard of France edged Emil Ruusuvuori 7-6 (4), 6-7 (5), 6-4, but three other seeded players lost. France's Valentin Royer, a lucky loser from qualifying, topped sixth-seeded Sebastian Baez of Argentina 6-2, 6-3. The Netherlands' Botić Van De Zandschulp beat seventh-seeded Joao Fonseca of Brazil 7-5, 7-6 (2), and Raphael Collignon downed eighth-seeded Zizou Bergs 6-4, 7-5 (5) in an all-Belgian matchup.