

The Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Said on Saturday That It Had Earmarked Some \$32.134b Worth of Subsidized Currency to Imports in Less Than Seven Months to October 18

IRAN NEWS

Foreign Ministry Spokesman Condemned the Repeated Violations of the Ceasefire in the Gaza Strip by the Israeli Regime, Including the Recent Attack on a Vehicle Carrying a Displaced Palestinian Family

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President Emphasizes Public Satisfaction as Key Measure of Gov’t Performance



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - President Masoud Pezeshkian has underscored that public satisfaction should be the foremost benchmark for evaluating the performance of government agencies, stressing that the foundation of administration must be built on clear responsibilities, delegated authority, and accountability of officials.

Speaking at a meeting of the Deputy Ministers Council of the Ministry of Interior, Pezeshkian addressed reports and proposals submitted by the minister and senior officials, outlining the government’s expectations for the ministry’s operations.

During the session, officials including the Minister of Interior, Deputy for Security and Law Enforcement, Political and Urban Development Deputies, and heads of key organizations such as Crisis Management, Civil Registration, and IT Development presented updates on their respective departments.

Responding to reports on infrastructure and transportation development, Pezeshkian emphasized the importance of learning from successful global models to manage urban and intercity traffic. He highlighted the need for integrated, intelligent transport systems connecting road and rail passenger and freight networks to optimize existing infrastructure, particularly intercity rail routes, facilitating smooth mobility for residents and regional communities.

Interior Ministry Pursues Expansion of Provincial Trade With 15 Neighboring States



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - The Ministry of Interior is implementing a comprehensive plan to strengthen economic and trade relations between Iranian provinces and 15 neighboring countries — as well as 10 adjacent nations including Afghanistan and China — with the goal of boosting exports, correcting trade imbalances, and expanding agricultural and industrial capacities across the country, a senior official announced.

Speaking at the Iran-Afghanistan Joint Cooperation Summit, Mehdi Doosti, Deputy Minister of Interior for Economic Affairs and Regional Development, said the ministry is fully mobilized to accelerate the economic growth of provinces by leveraging domestic resources and enhancing cross-border cooperation.

“One of our key strategic steps is the development of trade relations with 15 neighboring countries, which play a critical role in balancing Iran’s foreign trade,” Doosti said.

He explained that the initiative comes at a time when Iran annually imports more than 27 million tons of agricultural products. Increasing the participation of provincial producers and the private sector in nearby markets, particularly Afghanistan, he added, is essential to strengthening Iran’s regional trade presence.

Gharibabadi Stresses Illegitimacy of Any Claims to Reinstate UNSC Sanctions

TEHRAN - In a statement reported by Tasnim, Kazem Gharibabadi, Iran’s Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs, rejected the recent move by three European governments to invoke the so-called “snapback” mechanism, calling it illegal and invalid.

Gharibabadi said that as part of Iran’s active diplomacy and growing alignment among independent nations in defense of the rule of law, four key documents have been released over the past three days. These documents, he noted, clearly and convincingly demonstrate the illegitimacy of the European trio’s attempt to restore UN sanctions previously lifted under Security Council Resolution 2231.

At the 19th Ministerial Meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), held on October 15–16, 2025, in Kampala, Uganda, the 121 member states reaffirmed the importance of upholding cooperation and multilateralism as set out in Resolution 2231. The final communiqué stated that “all provisions of this resolution shall terminate on October 18, 2025, in accordance with paragraph 8.” NAM members underscored the need for full respect for the commitments and timeline established by the resolution.

The “Group of Friends in Defense of the Charter of the United Nations,” composed of 18 member states, issued a statement fully supporting Iran and condemning the European countries’ move to trigger the snapback mechanism. The group described the attempt as “without legal or procedural basis,” noting that it ignores the root cause—namely, the U.S. withdrawal from the nuclear deal, its imposition of unilateral sanctions, and Europe’s failure to meet its obligations. The statement reaffirmed all states’ inalienable right under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to the peaceful use of nuclear energy and the principle of non-discrimination. The group also recognized October 18, 2025, as the official end date of Resolution 2231 in line with its own provisions.

A joint letter from the permanent representatives of Iran, Russia, and China to the United Nations outlined the shared stance of the three governments. The letter emphasized that the so-called “snapback declaration” has no legal or procedural effect, and that the European



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

countries, having failed to honor their commitments and bypassed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)’s dispute resolution mechanism, lack any standing to invoke it. The letter confirmed the official closure of the Iranian nuclear issue at the UN Security Council on October 18, 2025, in accordance with Resolution 2231.

In a separate letter addressed to the UN Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council, Iran’s Foreign Minister reviewed the implementation process of the JCPOA and the repeated violations by the United States and the three European countries. The letter reaffirmed that, under paragraph 8 of Resolution 2231, all provisions of the resolution and previous related resolutions will expire and terminate on

October 18, 2025, and that any effort to “revive” or “re-apply” them is legally baseless. The letter also stressed that the UN Secretariat has no legal authority to interpret or announce such decisions.

Additionally, Russia’s Foreign Minister sent a letter to the UN Secretary-General declaring any UN Secretariat action to enforce expired Security Council resolutions illegal, and warning against any move to form a sanctions expert panel on Iran following the resolution’s expiration.

Taken together, these five documents reflect a broad consensus among Iran, non-Western powers, and many independent nations in support of diplomacy and multilateralism, rejecting the European trio’s illegal actions, affirming the expiration of Resolution 2231, and dismissing as unfounded any attempt to reimpose UN sanctions on Iran.

In the face of political pressure and disregard for international law by certain states, these statements convey a single clear message:

“Resolution 2231 has definitively expired on October 18, 2025. Any claim to reinstate Security Council sanctions is invalid, and all must respect the UN Charter and the rule of law.”

Iran Blasts Revival of Terminated UN Resolutions as Void, Lacking Legal Basis



IRAN NEWS National Desk – Tehran

TEHRAN (Dispatches) - Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi has decried as “devoid of legal basis” attempts by the three European signatories to the 2015 Iran nuclear deal — known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) — to revive and reinstate the previously terminated UN sanctions resolutions against the Islamic Republic.

Araqchi made the statement in a letter on Saturday to Antonio Guterres, the United Nations secretary general, and Vassily Nebenzia, the rotating president of the Security Council, on the same day that Security Council Resolution 2231, which endorsed the JCPOA, expires.

In the letter, the foreign minister reaffirmed Tehran’s position that Resolution 2231 has “definitively expired and terminated” in accordance with its own provisions.

“As detailed in the joint letter of the Foreign Ministers of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the People’s Republic of China, and the Russian Federation dated 28 August 2025 (A/79/1004-S/2025/546), the European parties’ attempt to invoke the so-called ‘notification’ is procedurally defective and substantively void,” he wrote.

“No measure taken in disregard of resolution 2231 can generate legal obligations for Member States. The Security Council’s voting record and the clear positions expressed by its members confirm that the so-called ‘notification’ has no legal validity. Accordingly, any claim of ‘reviving’ or ‘reinstating’ terminated resolutions is void an initio, lacking legal foundation and incapable of producing a binding effect.”

Araqchi emphasized that the procedure pursued by the three European states — France, Germany, and the United Kingdom — constitutes a clear abuse of process, contrary to both the letter and spirit of resolution 2231 and the JCPOA.

The top Iranian diplomat said the JCPOA entered into force with the endorsement of resolution 2231 a decade ago, reflecting the collective conviction that diplomacy and multilateral engagement remain the most effective means of addressing disputes.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, consistent with its unwavering commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes, accepted and fully implemented the JCPOA in good faith and in strict conformity with its commitments, he added.

“Despite Iran’s full and verified compliance, the United States—acting in manifest violation of its obligations—first failed to perform its commitments and subsequently, on 8 May 2018, unilaterally withdrew from the agreement, reimposing and expanding its unlawful unilateral and extraterritorial sanctions. These coercive measures constituted a grave breach of international law and the UN Charter, and severely obstructed the implementation of the JCPOA,” Araqchi said.

“The European participants, namely, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom, while initially pledging to preserve the agreement and counterbalance the U.S. withdrawal, not only failed to honor their own commitments but imposed additional unlawful sanctions on Iranian nationals and entities, thereby committing further material violations of the JCPOA.”

The Iranian foreign minister stressed that in the face of such breaches, the Islamic Republic exercised maximum restraint and undertook extensive diplomatic efforts to restore balance and preserve the agreement.

“Iran’s record of constructive engagement, including numerous rounds of consultations with the European participants and even negotiations with the US side, demonstrates its consistent commitment to diplomacy,” Araqchi said.

“Yet, these good-faith efforts were met with acts of sabotage and aggression against Iran’s safeguarded peaceful nuclear facilities. In recent months, rather than fulfilling their obligations, the three European States have embarked upon a campaign of political manipulation and legal distortion, seeking to weaponize the very mechanism of the so-called snapback against Iran.”

Araqchi underlined that the three European States participants — without any legitimate, legal, and procedural basis, or political justification — initiated a unilateral and arbitrary attempt to invoke the so-called “snapback” mechanism on August 28, bypassing the dispute-resolution process established by the JCPOA and directly appealing to the Security Council.

“The two Security Council votes held on 19 and 26 September 2025 demonstrated unequivocally the absence of consensus among Council members regarding the validity of this purported notification,” he said.

“Just as in 2020, when the Council confirmed that the United States lacked standing to invoke the mechanism after its withdrawal, the European notification is similarly devoid of legal basis and effect. It cannot serve as a ground for any action or determination concerning the status of resolution 2231 or the previously terminated sanctions resolutions.”

Araqchi emphasized that the procedure pursued by the three European States constitutes a clear abuse of process, contrary to both the letter and spirit of resolution 2231 and the JCPOA.

“Resolution 2231 (2015) has remained in effect until 18 October 2025, at which point—pursuant to operative paragraph 8—all its provisions, and those of the preceding terminated sanctions resolutions, are terminated and have no continuing legal effect,” he wrote.

“No previously terminated measures may be reinstated or enforced from that date forward. Any attempt to do so shall be regarded as unlawful and null and void.”

Araqchi also demanded that Saturday’s letter be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly and of the Security Council.

Merit Is Not in the Degree

Excessive reliance on academic degrees as the main criterion of competence has become one of the most prominent features of the educational culture, labor market, and even the infiltration of unqualified individuals into governing structures in many Third World countries.

This phenomenon, beyond being an educational challenge, has turned into a factor that weakens the process of national development and deepens the gap with advanced countries.

When confronted with certain individuals labeled as “Doctor,” “Engineer,” or “Professor,” one often notices the existence of degrees but the absence of productivity or true merit — leading to suspicion:

Is this person a foreign agent, or is the degree itself fake?

Here, drawing upon the well-known characteristics of Third World societies, we analyze the roots and consequences of credentialism and offer observations for a better understanding of this situation.

The origin of this issue lies in the colonial legacy, the deep scientific-technological gap, and the cultural identity crisis of these nations — all of which have resulted in the formation of unauthentic, imitative, and quantitatively oriented educational systems.

To truly understand the problem of degree-centrism, we must analyze it within the broader context of the structural traits of Third World countries.

As social studies on the Third World demonstrate, in such societies, various institutions — from the economy and politics to culture — have not developed harmoniously or proportionately.

This deep structural disharmony is the greatest obstacle to both sectoral and sustainable development. Educational systems in these nations often attempt to copy foreign models in an artificial leap, lacking the necessary cultural and intellectual foundations.

The shared characteristics of Third World countries show that they commonly suffer from problems such as: An unbalanced economy; Low per capita income; Unplanned population density; Weak governments, and on the international stage, ethnic and religious conflicts.

In such a context, the educational system ceases to be the engine of development and instead becomes a tool for issuing diplomas and filling statistical reports.

Third World countries face a greater cultural lag compared to industrial nations. They import technology and modern institutions as complete, ready-made packages, but they absorb the accompanying culture, education, and behavioral models slowly and belatedly.

This leads to a vast gap between the form of modernity (such as a university diploma) and its content—the real skills and knowledge it represents.

The influence of colonialism and the incomplete transfer of culture have themselves been among the most effective means of infiltration by sellout agents. In Iran, for example, the expansion of the Islamic Azad University was established by such infiltrating forces as a tool of colonial influence.

During the colonial era, concepts such as materialism, consumerism, class ostentation, and obsession with academic titles were imposed on the Third World. However, the spirit of precision, productivity awareness, and systematic thinking—essential for industrial development and efficient production—were never transferred. The West exported the spirit of capitalism, but not its rational foundation or the cultural discipline needed for balanced economic activity. Today, according to the Frankfurt School and many thinkers of the Third World, globalization is synonymous with cultural imperialism and the destruction of indigenous identities. In this process, Western values and standards—of which the university diploma is one of the false symbols of identity—are promoted as the only legitimate measure of global competence and worth.

In many Third World countries, due to the absence of transparent and effective institutions, academic degrees—being quantitative and measurable documents—have replaced qualitative and complex criteria such as creativity, practical skill, and innovation. This paves the way for a superficial degree culture; hence, in the Third World, diploma mills mushroom like fungi, transforming authentic identity into mere credentialized status. Under such conditions, the educational system, instead of nurturing creative and entrepreneurial human capital, becomes a mass-production machine turning out graduates who lack the practical skills needed by the job market and industry. This, in turn, leads to widespread unemployment among the educated, the waste of national resources, the distribution of rent-seeking administrative positions, and government incompetence. The obsession with the quantity of degrees and academic papers, without regard for their quality or real impact, causes the decline of higher education standards, the spread of paper fabrication and academic fraud, and the loss of credibility of universities at the international level.

Since obtaining advanced degrees—especially from prestigious universities—requires economic and social capital, credentialism becomes a tool for reinforcing and reproducing class divisions.

In this system, opportunities arising from genuine talent become limited for the underprivileged.

When “degrees” rather than “skills and ideas” become the standard of judgment, motivation for practical work, learning of skills, and risk-taking—the key elements of innovation—diminish. Society shifts toward desk-bound occupations and away from production.

Education and expertise are among the key foundations of every society; yet, in the Third World, this matter remains at a very low level.

Studies show that the capital investment allocated to education and training in industrialized nations is several times greater than that in the Third World.

The reason these countries are industrialized is that they possess genuinely skilled and specialized human resources—enabling them to free themselves from dependency and take control of management and innovation.

By contrast, Third World countries, despite the growing number of graduates, remain technologically dependent. Thus, one of the main causes of their underdevelopment is the crushing debt and severe poverty affecting their lower social strata.

A degree-centered system, by producing human resources misaligned with national economic needs, not only fuels capital outflow for foreign education but also fails to generate added value or reduce dependency.



By: Hamid Reza Naghashian

IRAN NEWS



Iran, Turkey Strengthen Cooperation on Environment, Natural Resource Management

TEHRAN (IRNA) - The heads of Iran's Department of Environment and Turkey's Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry have emphasized expanding bilateral cooperation in environmental protection and natural resource management.

Shina Ansari, Vice President of Iran and head of the organization, met with Ibrahim Yumakli, Turkey's Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, on the sidelines of the "Zero Waste" environmental forum in Istanbul.

During the meeting, Ansari highlighted shared environmental challenges such as waste management, climate change, drought, and forest fires. She proposed the establishment of a joint committee focused on forest management and water resource governance.

Iran Urges Greater Use of Africa's Opportunities for Exporting Engineering, Technical Services



TEHRAN - Iran's Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA) opened a major event on Iran-Africa cooperation in the field of engineering and technical services, emphasizing the vast untapped potential of the African continent for Iranian expertise in infrastructure, water management, and construction.

At the event's opening ceremony, Payam Bagheri, Vice President of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, stressed the importance of seizing Africa's unique opportunities to expand Iran's engineering service exports.

"Iran has extensive experience and advanced capabilities in the water industry," Bagheri said. "There are extraordinary opportunities in Africa in this field — but unfortunately, we have so far taken limited advantage of them."

The specialized session on developing cooperation between Iranian companies and African partners in water-related projects was held on Saturday morning at the Chamber's headquarters in Tehran. The meeting was attended by high-level delegations from Mauritania, Algeria, Nigeria, and Tanzania, marking a new phase in strengthening Iran's engagement with African markets.

Bagheri added that the event aims to serve as a foundation for closer cooperation between Iran and African countries, particularly those with major infrastructure development plans.

Ali Naqavi, head of ICCIMA's Engineering and Technical Services Commission, highlighted Iran's commitment to playing a leading role in the export of technical expertise and engineering services.

"After the successful OPEC Fund event earlier this year, this is the second major international initiative hosted by the Iran Chamber with the goal of expanding engineering service exports," Naqavi said.

He explained that employers and project owners from four African nations are participating in the two-day event, during which Iranian companies will showcase their capabilities in areas such as construction, water infrastructure, and energy systems. The program includes specialized panels, business-to-business (B2B) meetings, and networking opportunities designed to facilitate Iranian participation in Africa's rapidly growing infrastructure markets.

"The key objectives of this program are to identify local partners, introduce real projects to Iranian companies, and create a sustainable platform for the long-term presence of Iranian contractors and consulting engineers in Africa," Naqavi said.

He added that the establishment of the Joint Committee for Exporting Engineering and Technical Services within the Chamber of Commerce marks the beginning of a coordinated strategy to elevate the international standing of Iranian engineering firms.

Azerbaijan's Environment Minister Meets Iranian Vice President



TEHRAN - Azerbaijan's Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources, Mukhtar Babayev, met with Shina Ansari, Vice President of Iran and head of the Department of Environment, in Turkey to discuss strengthening bilateral and regional environmental cooperation and following up on previous agreements.

During the meeting, Babayev recalled his earlier discussions with Ansari on the sidelines of the Nevsky Environmental Congress in St. Petersburg, emphasizing the importance of maintaining dialogue and implementing joint commitments. He reaffirmed Azerbaijan's interest in expanding cooperation with Iran across all areas of environmental protection.

Ansari welcomed Azerbaijan's commitment and underlined the need to convene the seventh meeting of the member states of the Tehran Convention—a regional environmental framework for the Caspian Sea—early next year. She stressed the importance of finalizing the agenda and confirming Tehran as the host city as soon as possible.

Babayev, referring to Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev's recent remarks at the United Nations General Assembly on the declining water levels of the Caspian Sea, proposed that the upcoming COP7 session of the Tehran Convention should prioritize this issue to facilitate quicker regional consensus.

Irradiation Reduces Agricultural Waste

TEHRAN - The head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) said that if irradiation technology can reduce agricultural waste by just 30 percent, it would mark a major achievement, emphasizing that the continued use of such technologies plays a crucial role in the national economy, public health, food security, and household livelihoods. He added that irradiation also significantly improves the shelf life of agricultural products.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony of the Northwest Agricultural Product Irradiation Center in Ardabil, Mohammad Eslami stated that one of the most effective methods for preserving and extending the durability of agricultural produce is irradiation — an initiative that the AEOI has been actively pursuing.

Eslami explained that, in line with the guidance and emphasis of the Supreme Leader on the peaceful use of nuclear energy, the organization aims to ensure that Iran's nuclear science capabilities are directed toward converting scientific ideas into practical and useful products for the public.

"Research and study alone are not enough to solve the country's problems," Eslami noted. "Ideas must be transformed into efficient, usable products. The use of irradiation in agriculture is, in fact, a concrete example of turning an idea into a product that benefits society."

He called for greater public and private sector participation in the development of this technology, adding:

"The Atomic Energy Organization, through its knowledge-based approach, has been able to design and implement the entire radiation generation system and its related requirements. We invite people and private investors to participate so that by promoting the culture of using irradiation technology in agriculture, we can enhance efficiency in this sector."



Eslami further highlighted that irradiation technology also removes pesticide residues and pests from agricultural goods, contributing to public health and facilitating export by eliminating barriers related to contamination and quality standards.

He noted that improving productivity in agriculture is particularly vital in times of water scarcity. As an example, he cited new rice varieties produced through irradiation, which demonstrate up to three times higher yields per hectare compared to traditional strains.

"Today, efficiency is a pressing need for our economy," he said. "We must make greater use of turning scientific knowledge into practical solutions."

According to IRNA, although Ardabil Province covers less than one percent of Iran's total area, it accounts for about four percent of the nation's agricultural output, producing roughly 4.5 million tons of crops annually.

The province produces more than 400,000 tons of wheat, 750,000 tons of potatoes, and 450,000 tons of fruit, making it a key contributor to the country's agricultural supply.

Currently, 750,000 hectares of land in Ardabil are under cultivation, with 270,000 hectares irrigated and 480,000 hectares rain-fed. This year, wheat was planted on 275,000 hectares of these lands, representing the largest share of cultivated area in the province.

Wheat production in Ardabil had previously reached 600,000 tons, but due to drought, unfavorable weather, and irregular rainfall patterns, the yield has dropped by more than 50 percent over the past two years.

Ardabil Province, with 12 counties, is located in northwestern Iran.

Nuclear Science Strengthens Iran's Food Security

TEHRAN - Minister of Agriculture, Gholamreza Nouri Qazeljeh, announced that nuclear science has become a vital tool in strengthening the nation's food security, describing it as one of the most prominent examples of the peaceful use of indigenous scientific knowledge and technology. He emphasized that the benefits of nuclear applications extend throughout the agricultural supply chain — from farm to table.

Speaking on Saturday at the inauguration ceremony of the Agricultural Product Irradiation Center in Ardabil, Nouri Qazeljeh stated that the economic viability of agricultural production depends on ensuring that farmers can sell their products at fair market prices. He noted that sustainable agricultural production is crucial to achieving national food security and supporting the livelihoods of hardworking farmers.

"Products and produce from Iranian farmers must be sold at real, fair prices," he said. "Only then can we ensure that agricultural production remains economically feasible and that our producers can continue their vital role in securing the nation's food supply."

The minister reaffirmed the government's commitment to food security as a national and constitutional priority, echoing the guidance of the late Imam Khomeini and repeated emphasis by the Supreme Leader on ensuring a secure food system.

"The 14th government and the Ministry of Agriculture are determined to elevate the country's food security to its highest possible level," he said. "In this mission, our top priority is to support production and the producers themselves."

Nouri Qazeljeh stressed that the Ministry of Agriculture has focused its efforts over the past year on supporting small-scale, rural, and village-based agriculture, while paying attention to the entire production chain. He added that every policy, regulation, and pricing strategy implemented during this period has been designed with the goal of empowering producers and sustaining domestic production.

"In the past year, it's rare to find a major agricultural product that has faced a severe market crisis," he noted. "That's because we believe that both production and producers must remain strong to maintain national food security."

The minister also outlined several key challenges affecting agricultural productivity in Iran, including climate change, water scarcity, limited natural resources, and soil erosion. He expressed the government's determination to confront these obstacles through the application of modern science and technology — including nuclear innovations.

"We are committed to increasing production despite limited resources, drought, and climatic challenges," he said. "This can only



be achieved through the application of advanced science and technology, and through the use of nuclear knowledge."

According to Nouri Qazeljeh, nuclear science contributes to agriculture in many areas — from genetic and crop improvement, to pest and disease control, food irradiation, and post-harvest storage and preservation.

"This technology can play a crucial role at every stage — from breeding improved plant varieties to reducing spoilage and losses after harvest," he said. "It is a clear example of how peaceful nuclear technology directly benefits our farmers and our food supply."

He expressed gratitude toward the scientists and specialists of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization, acknowledging their valuable contributions to agricultural advancement.

"We in the Ministry of Agriculture, along with farmers' cooperatives and agricultural associations, warmly welcome and deeply appreciate the valuable work of our nuclear scientists," Nouri Qazeljeh said. "We hope that by expanding the use of nuclear technology in agriculture, we can achieve full self-sufficiency in food production and ensure 100 percent national food security."

Highlighting Ardabil's agricultural potential, the minister praised the province's annual production of more than 700,000 tons of potatoes, noting that it not only meets domestic demand but also serves as a key export hub for the crop.

"The irradiation initiative led by the Atomic Energy Organization in Ardabil's potato sector is highly valuable," he said. "It improves storage, reduces contamination, and paves the way for expanded exports — a major boost for the province's farmers and economy."

According to IRNA, although Ardabil Province accounts for less than one percent of Iran's total land area, it produces about four percent of the nation's agricultural output — nearly 4.5 million tons annually. The province grows more than 400,000 tons of wheat, 750,000 tons of potatoes, and 450,000 tons of fruit each year.

Currently, about 750,000 hectares of Ardabil's farmland are under cultivation, including 270,000 hectares of irrigated land and 480,000 hectares of rain-fed farmland. This year, wheat was planted across 275,000 hectares, making it the province's largest crop.

In past years, Ardabil's wheat production reached up to 600,000 tons, but prolonged drought, irregular rainfall, and adverse weather conditions have reduced yields by more than 50 percent over the last two years.

Ardabil Province, with 12 counties, is located in northwestern Iran, and remains one of the country's most important agricultural centers — a key player in Iran's ongoing effort to achieve food independence.

Iran, Azerbaijan Sign Updated Frequency Coordination Protocol



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - The Director General of the Office for International Specialized Organizations at Iran's Communications Regulatory Authority (CRA) announced that Iran and the Republic of Azerbaijan have signed an updated frequency coordination protocol to manage mobile network frequencies in their border regions.

According to the Ministry of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), Alireza Darvishi said that the protocol was signed following a bilateral meeting between the two countries. The agreement updates previous arrangements to address frequency interference and signal spillover along the Iran-Azerbaijan border.

Darvishi explained that, after reviewing the results of drive tests conducted in the border areas, both countries committed to taking corrective action within three months to eliminate signal interference and cross-border frequency overlaps.

He added that one of the main provisions of the new protocol involves developing technical criteria for assessing frequency interference and signal spillover in the newly allocated frequency bands. These standards were established with the participation of mobile network operators from both Iran and Azerbaijan, allowing both sides to minimize disruptions and ensure better coordination.

Describing the new criteria, Darvishi noted: "In some technologies, frequency coordination is based on frequency division, while in others it depends on signal strength thresholds at border points. By measuring these indicators in border regions, both sides can verify compliance with the agreed technical standards."

Darvishi pointed out that the previous frequency coordination protocol dated back to 2016, and that with the evolution of communication technologies — particularly the rollout of 5G mobile networks — it became necessary to revise and modernize the agreement.

35% Increase in Iran's Agricultural Exports



TEHRAN - The head of Iran's Central Organization for Rural Cooperatives announced a 35% increase in agricultural exports, highlighting the growing potential of the country's farming sector.

Mohammadreza Talaei, speaking at a meeting with cooperative managers and heads of rural cooperative departments in East Azerbaijan Province, said exports of products such as kiwi to India and the Philippines and pistachios to Europe reflect the establishment of favorable conditions for agricultural exports.

"The Minister of Agriculture's approach is centered on cooperatives, and continuous efforts are being made to strengthen these organizations and improve regulatory frameworks," Talaei stated.

Referring to the country's challenging economic situation, Talaei noted that the government has acted decisively to achieve economic growth and ensure national food security. "Through the precise management of the Ministry of Agriculture, potential disruptions in the food supply chain were effectively neutralized," he said.

According to Talaei, financial discipline and efficient management within the ministry have resulted in foreign currency savings exceeding one billion dollars.

He also announced the establishment of the Agricultural Chamber of Guilds after a six-year delay caused by administrative issues. The chamber was formally established in February and finalized in March, a move he described as "a major step toward transforming the agricultural sector."

Mongolian Parliament Removes PM and Speaker

BEIJING (Dispatches) - Mongolian lawmakers voted to remove the prime minister and parliament speaker, throwing the resource-rich nation into renewed political turmoil.

Zandanshatar Gombojav stepped down as prime minister after losing the confidence vote just four months after taking office, the official Montsame news agency reported.

One reason cited by lawmakers was that Zandanshatar, a former foreign minister and parliamentary speaker, had recently tried to circumvent parliament and appoint a new minister of justice and home affairs without consulting them.

The 55-year-old had been confirmed as the country's 32nd prime minister in June after his predecessor, L. Oyun-Erdene, quit, also after losing parliamentary backing, due to corruption allegations and street protests.



U.S. Returning Caribbean Strike Survivors to Colombia and Ecuador



WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - The United States is sending the two survivors of a Thursday strike in the Caribbean to their home countries of Colombia and Ecuador to be detained and prosecuted, U.S. President Donald Trump said on Saturday.

The move, which was first reported by Reuters, means that the U.S. military will not have to grapple with thorny legal issues surrounding military detention for suspected drug traffickers, whose alleged crimes do not fall neatly under the laws of war, legal experts say.

"The two surviving terrorists are being returned to their Countries of origin, Ecuador and Colombia, for detention and prosecution," Trump said on Truth Social.

Both men have arrived home, according to authorities from the two South American countries.

"We have received the Colombian detained on the narco submarine, we are happy he is alive and he will be processed according to the law," Colombian President Gustavo Petro said on X on Saturday afternoon, providing no further information.

An Ecuadorean survivor arrived back in his country at around 11 a.m. local time, a government source who was not authorized to speak publicly said, and will later be legally processed.

Ecuador's communications office and foreign ministry did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

The U.S. military staged a helicopter rescue for the survivors on Thursday after the strike on their semi-submersible vessel, suspected of trafficking illegal narcotics. The strike killed the other two crew members on board.

Bosnia's Serb Republic Appoints Interim President



SARAJEVO (Dispatches) - The parliament of Bosnia's Serb Republic appointed Ana Trisic Babic as an interim president on Saturday, acknowledging officially for the first time that former President Milorad Dodik is stepping aside after a state court banned him from politics.

Trisic Babic, Dodik's close ally, will hold the position for one month until new presidential elections are held in the Serb Republic on November 23.

The parliament also annulled a series of separatist laws that were passed over the past year after Dodik had been indicted for defying decisions of the international envoy and the constitutional court.

Dodik, a pro-Russian nationalist who wants the Serb Republic to secede and join Serbia, had so far refused to step down and continued to perform duties and travel abroad in the capacity of president. He is appealing the state court's verdict at the constitutional court.

Dodik said that despite the parliament vote on Saturday, the Serb Republic will not change its policies, with secession remaining his ultimate goal. But he had to make the move in coordination with foreign partners, Dodik said.

The U.S. State Department welcomed Saturday's move, saying it was the result of U.S.-led efforts "to defuse the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina."

Thousands March in Anti-Trump "No Kings" Protests, Republicans Slam Hate America Rallies

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - Thousands of people across several cities in the U.S. are marching against the Trump administration in the "No Kings" demonstrations, which the Republican Party has condemned as "Hate America" rallies. This is the third mass mobilization since Trump's return to the White House and comes against the backdrop of a government shutdown.

Protesting the direction of the country under President Donald Trump, people gathered Saturday in the nation's capital and communities across the US for "No Kings" demonstrations — what the president's Republican Party is calling "Hate America" rallies.

They rallied with signs like "Nothing is more patriotic than protesting" or "Resist Fascism," and in many places it looked more like a street party. There were marching bands, a huge banner with the US Constitution's "We The People," preamble that people could sign, and protesters in frog costumes, which have emerged as a sign of resistance in Portland, Oregon.

This is the third mass mobilization since Trump's return to the White House and comes against the backdrop of a government shutdown that not only has closed federal programs and services, but is testing the core balance of power as an aggressive executive confronts Congress and the courts in ways that organizers warn are a slide toward American authoritarianism.

Demonstrators packed places like New York City's Times Square, the historic Boston Commons, Chicago's Grant Park, Washington, D.C., and hundreds of smaller public spaces.

Many protesters were especially angered by attacks on their motives. In Washington, Brian Reymann said being called a terrorist all week by Republicans was "pathetic."

"This is America. I disagree with their politics — but I don't believe that they don't love this country. I believe they are misguided. I think they are power hungry," Reymann said, carrying a large American flag.

Trump himself is spending the weekend at his Mar-a-Lago home in Florida.

"They say they're referring to me as a king. I'm not a king," Trump said in a Fox News interview airing early Friday, before he departed for a \$1 million-per-plate MAGA Inc. fundraiser at his club. Protests are expected nearby Saturday.

More than 2,600 rallies are planned Saturday in cities large and small, organized by hundreds of coalition partners.



must go now," and waving sometimes-profane signs with slogans insulting the president and condemning his immigration crackdown. Some people carried American flags.

Republicans have sought to portray Saturday's protesters as far outside the mainstream and a prime reason for the government shutdown, now in its 18th day.

From the White House to Capitol Hill, GOP leaders disparaged the rallygoers as "communists" and "Marxists." They say Democratic leaders, including Schumer, are beholden to the far-left flank and willing to keep the government shut down to appease those liberal forces.

"I encourage you to watch — we call it the Hate America rally — that will happen Saturday," said House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La.

Many demonstrators responded to such hyperbole with silliness in part because they say Trump leans heavily on theatrics — like claiming cities he sends troops to are war zones — said Glen Kalbaugh, a Washington protester.

Democrats have refused to vote on legislation that would reopen the government as they demand funding for health care. Republicans say they are willing to discuss the issue later, only after the government reopens.

Pakistan, Afghanistan Agree to Immediate Ceasefire After Peace Talks in Doha



KABUL (Dispatches) - Afghanistan and Pakistan have agreed to an immediate ceasefire during talks hosted by Doha, Qatar's foreign ministry announced early Sunday, after the South Asia neighbors extended a ceasefire following a week of fierce border clashes.

Qatar's foreign ministry said Afghanistan and Pakistan have agreed to the ceasefire during a round of negotiations mediated by Qatar and Turkey.

It said they also agreed to hold follow-up meetings in the coming days "to ensure the sustainability of the ceasefire and verify its implementation in a reliable and sustainable manner".

Earlier, both sides said they were holding peace talks in Doha yesterday as they seek a way forward after the clashes killed dozens and wounded hundreds in the worst violence between the two countries since the Taliban seized power in Kabul in 2021.

"As promised, negotiations with the Pakistani side will take place today in Doha," Afghan government spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid said, adding that the Kabul team led by Defence Minister Mullah Muhammad Yaqoob had arrived in Doha.

Pakistan's foreign office said earlier that Defense Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif would lead discussions with representatives of the Afghan Taliban.

"The talks will focus on immediate measures to end cross-border terrorism against Pakistan emanating from Afghanistan and restore peace and stability along the Pak-Afghan border," it said.

The ground fighting between the one-time allies and Pakistani airstrikes

across their contested 2,600km frontier were triggered after Islamabad demanded that Kabul rein in militants who had stepped up attacks in Pakistan, saying they operated from havens in Afghanistan.

The Taliban denies giving haven to militants to attack Pakistan and accuses the Pakistani military of spreading misinformation about Afghanistan and sheltering Islamic State-linked militants to undermine its stability and sovereignty. Islamabad denies the accusations.

Militants have been waging a war for years against the Pakistani state in a bid to overthrow the government and replace it with their strict brand of Islamic governance system.

On Friday, a suicide attack near the border killed seven Pakistani soldiers and wounded 13, security officials said.

"The Afghan regime must rein in the proxies who have sanctuaries in Afghanistan and are using Afghan soil to perpetrate heinous attacks inside Pakistan," the Pakistan Army chief, Field Marshal Asim Munir, said yesterday, addressing a graduation ceremony of cadets.

The Afghan government spokesperson said Pakistan had conducted airstrikes in Afghanistan hours after the ceasefire, which began on Wednesday, was extended on Friday for as long as the talks continued.

He said the attacks targeted civilians, adding that Kabul reserved the right to respond but that Afghan fighters had been directed to refrain from retaliating to respect the negotiating team.

Afghanistan withdrew from the Twenty20 international tri-series in Pakistan next month following the death of three local cricketers that the Afghanistan Cricket Board said were due to military strikes in Paktika province.

Pakistan's Information Minister Attaullah Tarar said in a post on X yesterday that Pakistan had struck "verified" camps of Islamist militants along the border areas and rejected that the strikes had targeted civilians.

He said militants had attempted to launch multiple attacks inside Pakistan during the ceasefire period.

He said more than 100 militants were killed by Pakistani security forces, the majority of them in strikes against a militant group that he said had carried out Friday's suicide attack on the military camp.

Israel Returns 15 Palestinian Bodies to Gaza

GAZA CITY (Dispatches) - Israel returned the bodies of 15 Palestinians to Gaza on Saturday, bringing the total number handed over to 135, the Gaza health ministry said. Meanwhile, Israel said it had identified the remains of another hostage that Hamas handed over as Eliyahu Margalit, the tenth returned hostage body since the Gaza ceasefire went into effect over a week ago.

The Gaza health ministry said that some of the bodies returned on Saturday bore signs of "abuse, beatings, handcuffing and blindfolding".

The Israeli military has said these claims were "Hamas's false propaganda".

"Furthermore, all the bodies returned so far are from combatants within the Gaza Strip," it told AFP on Friday.

Under a ceasefire deal brokered by US President Donald Trump, Israel was to turn over the bodies of 15 Palestinians for every deceased Israeli returned.

Late on Friday, Hamas handed over the body of another Israeli hostage, who Israel identified as Eliyahu Margalit.

Israel's Prime Minister's Office said Saturday that Margalit's body was identified after testing by the National Center for Forensic Medicine and his family has been notified.



The 76-year-old was abducted on Oct. 7, 2023, when Hamas attacked Israel, from the horse stables where he worked in Kibbutz Nir Oz.

Margalit's body was found after two bulldozers plowed up pits in the earth in the city of Khan Younis.

Margalit is the 10th returned hostage body since the ceasefire went into effect over a week ago. Hamas handed over an 11th body this week, but it wasn't that of a hostage. The effort to find the remains followed a warning from US President Donald Trump that he would green-light Israel to resume the war if Hamas doesn't live up to its end of the deal and return all hostages' bodies, totaling 28.

In a statement Saturday, the hostage forum, which supports the families of those abducted, said Margalit's return brings a measure of solace to his family, but that they won't rest until the remaining 18 hostages come home. The forum says it will continue holding weekly rallies until all remains are returned.

Since the ceasefire began, Hamas has handed over the bodies of nine Israelis and one Nepalese student.



LONDON (Dispatches) - Arsenal remained top of the table as the Premier League resumed thanks to a gritty 1-0 win at Fulham but Ange Postecoglou's Nottingham Forest nightmare ended in the sack after 39 days following a 3-0 home loss to Chelsea.

While Postecoglou's brutal departure made him the shortest-serving permanent Premier League manager to be sacked mid-season, Manchester City's Pep Guardiola marked his 3,397th day in charge with his team briefly reaching the summit.

Erling Haaland took his league tally this season to 11 in eight games with both goals in City's 2-0 home win over Everton — a result that temporarily put City above Arsenal on goals scored.

But Arsenal responded in the late kickoff at Craven Cottage with Leandro Trossard kneeling in from close-range from a corner.

Arsenal, who kept a fifth league clean sheet of the season, have 19 points from eight games with City on 16. Champions Liverpool, who host Manchester United, have 15 points.

Crystal Palace and Bournemouth produced a 3-3 thriller at Selhurst Park with Jean-Philippe Mateta bagging a hat-trick for the hosts who trailed 2-0 and 3-2.

Newcastle United striker Nick Woltemade scored for the fifth game in succession for club and country but it was not enough for his side who went down 2-1 at Brighton and Hove Albion.

Promoted Sunderland's impressive start continued as they beat bottom club Wolverhampton Wanderers 2-0 while Burnley moved out of the bottom three by beating Leeds United 2-0.

Arsenal were not at their best but did enough to beat Fulham with another set-piece routine proving decisive.

Bukayo Saka's corner was flicked on by defender Gabriel in the 58th minute and Trossard bundled the ball into the net.

Postecoglou came out fighting in the build-up to yesterday's lunchtime kickoff at the City Ground,

saying the story always ended with him winning a trophy at his previous clubs.

Nottingham Forest manager Ange Postecoglou reacts during their Premier League match with Chelsea at The City Ground in Nottingham October 18, 2025. — Action Images pic via Reuters/Peter Cziborra

Nottingham Forest manager Ange Postecoglou reacts during their Premier League match with Chelsea at The City Ground in Nottingham October 18, 2025. — Action Images pic via Reuters/Peter Cziborra

But after a second-half capitulation against Chelsea that made him winless in eight games since replacing the popular Nuno Espirito Santo, his fate was sealed.

Nineteen minutes after the final whistle, and before he had even held a post-match news conference, he was sacked.

Forest, who ended the day in the relegation zone, dominated the first half with Morgan Gibbs-White having two big chances.

But when Pedro Neto's cross was headed home by the unmarked 19-year-old defender Josh Acheampong after the break, the clock was ticking down on Postecoglou's reign.

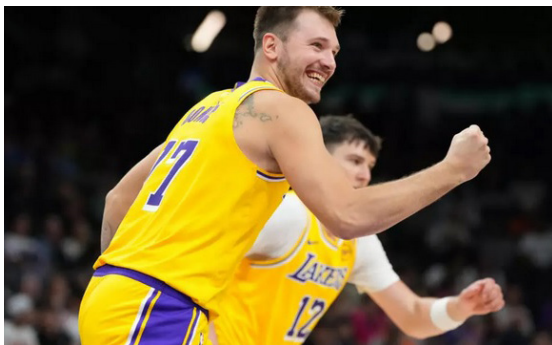
Neto made it 2-0 and Reece James made it 3-0 but by that time Forest owner Evangelos Marinakis had already left his seat.

Chelsea moved sixth in the table with 14 points although they blotted their copybook with Malo Gusto sent off late on, meaning Maresca's side have ended with 10 men in four of their last six games in all competitions.

Man City were labouring against Everton but red-hot Haaland made the difference with two goals in five minutes taking his tally to 23 goals for the season for club and country.

He headed in Nico O'Reilly's cross in the 58th minute and the Norwegian then latched onto Savinho's cross and struck a deflected shot past Jordan Pickford.

Doncic Anchors Lakers' NBA Title Bid in James's Possible Last Stand



LOS ANGELES (Dispatches) - Past and future converge for the Los Angeles Lakers this season as LeBron James and Luka Doncic embark on their first full NBA campaign chasing a title that could cement one legacy and launch another.

James, a four-time NBA champion and the league's all-time leading scorer, heads into an unprecedented 23rd season admitting time is winding down on his glittering career.

It's Doncic who will be key to whether James is contending for a title in what could be his final season.

The 26-year-old Slovenian star was immediately installed as the face of the franchise going forward when the Lakers acquired him in a stunning mid-season trade last February.

Doncic, who signed a three-year contract extension worth \$165 million in August, appears ready for the challenge.

The player often criticized for poor physical conditioning arrived at training camp in the best shape of his life.

Even as he ramped up slowly in training camp in the wake of his off-season EuroBasket exertions, the Lakers praised his evolution as a leader.

The Lakers have moved to plug some holes with the addition of center Deandre Ayton and former Defensive Player of the Year Marcus Smart.

But second-year coach JJ Redick's early season plans took a hit with the news that James will miss the start of the season after a flare up of sciatica, which prevented him from full participation in training camp.

Afghanistan Pull Out of T20 Tri-Series in Pakistan Amid Conflict



KABUL (Dispatches) - Afghanistan have withdrawn from their Twenty20 international tri-series in Pakistan next month following the death of three local cricketers that the Afghanistan Cricket Board said were due to military strikes in Paktika province.

Afghanistan, Pakistan and Sri Lanka were due to meet in the tournament scheduled to take place in Rawalpindi and Lahore from November 17-29.

The ACB said in a statement that the three players travelled to Sharana, the capital of Paktika province, to play in a friendly match and later died during the strikes after returning home to the Urgun district.

"The ACB considers this a great loss for Afghanistan's sports community, its athletes, and the cricketing family," the ACB said in a statement, mourning the deaths of the players and several others.

"In response to this tragic incident and as a gesture of respect to the victims, the ACB has decided to withdraw from participating in the upcoming tri-nation T20I series involving Pakistan, scheduled to be played in November."

The International Cricket Council condemned the attack, saying it stands in solidarity with the ACB and echoes their grief.

"The ICC is deeply saddened and appalled by the tragic deaths of three young and promising Afghan cricketers, Kabeer Agha, Sibghatullah, and Haroon, who lost their lives in a recent airstrike in Afghanistan's Paktika province," the global governing body for cricket said in a statement.

"The ICC strongly condemns this act of violence that has robbed families, communities, and the cricketing world of three bright talents whose only ambition was to play the sport they loved."

Pakistan and Afghanistan on Friday extended a 48-hour truce amid peace talks in Doha, sources said, as they seek to resolve clashes that have killed dozens in the worst violence between the nations since the Taliban seized power in Kabul in 2021.

The fierce fighting between the one-time allies and Pakistani airstrikes across their contested 2,600-km (1,600-mile) frontier were triggered after Islamabad demanded Kabul rein in militants who stepped up attacks in Pakistan, saying they operated from havens in Afghanistan.

Rune Forced to Retire From Stockholm Semi

STOCKHOLM (Dispatches) - October 18 - An emotional top-seeded Holger Rune of Denmark was forced to retire from his semifinal match of the Nordic Open in Stockholm due to a leg injury when he was up a set on French No. 4 seed Ugo Humbert.

After winning the first set 6-4 and level at 2 in the second set, Rune pulled up after experiencing a sharp pain in his lower leg. After receiving treatment, he was unable to continue. Humbert, who had 12 winners to seven unforced errors, is through to his 10th ATP final.

He'll face Norway's No. 2 seed Casper Ruud, who advanced past third-seeded Canadian Denis Shapovalov 6-3, 6-4. Ruud won a dominant 83% of his first-service points, avenging a loss to Shapovalov in the finals of the Dallas Open in February.

No. 2 seed Daniil Medvedev of Russia rallied past Australia's James Duckworth for a 6-7 (10), 6-3, 6-2 victory to advance to the championship match in Kazakhstan.

Medvedev, a former World No. 1 and the 2021 U.S. Open champion, is looking for his first tour-level title since 2023, losing his last six finals. He overcame eight double faults, six of



which were in the first set, with 39 winners to 15 unforced errors.

He'll face No. 8 seed Corentin Moutet, who will be competing for his first career tour-level title after beating sixth-seeded Alex Michelsen 7-5, 6-4.

No. 2 seed Felix Auger-Aliassime of Canada ended native wild-card entrant Raphael Collignon's run in Brussels with a 7-6 (2), 6-4 win to advance to the championship match.

Auger-Aliassime was nearly untouchable when serving, winning 74% of his service points and facing no break points in the straight-sets victory, his 40th tour-level win of the season to advance to his fourth ATP final.

Jiri Lehecka, the No. 3 seed from the Czech Republic, will face Auger-Aliassime in the final. He also advanced in straight sets with a 7-6 (3), 7-6 (7) win over No. 5 seed Giovanni Mpetshi Perricard of France.

Meanwhile Kazakh third seed Elena Rybakina powered past Italy's Jasmine Paolini with a clinical 6-3 6-2 victory to secure her place in the Ningbo Open final, keeping her hopes of qualifying for next month's WTA Finals on track.

The 2022 Wimbledon champion will face Ekaterina Alexandrova in the final on Sunday, after the Russian fourth seed beat compatriot Diana Shnaider 6-3 6-4 in the second semi-final.

Despite the loss, the WTA later confirmed Paolini's run to the semi-final had earned her a spot in the WTA Finals alongside Aryna Sabalenka, Iga Swiatek, Coco Gauff, Amanda Anisimova, Jessica Pegula and Madison Keys.

Verstappen Beats Norris to U.S. Grand Prix Pole After Sprint Win

AUSTIN (Dispatches) - Max Verstappen seized pole position for the U.S. Grand Prix while Formula One leader Oscar Piastri qualified sixth after a costly sprint race collision with his McLaren teammate Lando Norris.

Norris, polesitter at Austin's Circuit of the Americas last year, will start alongside Red Bull's reigning champion on the front row with both hoping to take a big bite out of the Australian's advantage.

Piastri is 22 points clear of Norris and 55 ahead of Verstappen, who won the sprint from pole while both the McLaren drivers retired.

Ferrari's Charles Leclerc, last year's winner in Austin, qualified third fastest and will share the second row with



Mercedes' George Russell, winner of the previous round in Singapore.

Verstappen needed only one flying lap in the final phase to secure his seventh non-sprint pole of the season and 47th of his career.

The Dutch driver failed to make it around in time for a second attempt but was still nearly three-tenths faster than Norris.

"Unfortunately, I couldn't do my final run. It was a bit messy with the out-laps, but luckily, we didn't need it," said the four-time world champion, who was fastest in all three phases.

Norris said he could not have done better.