

Foreign Ministry Spokesman Called for an End to the “Chronic Impunity” Granted to Israel by Its Supporters and Apologists, Following a New International Court of Justice Opinion That Condemns the Regime’s Violations of International Humanitarian Law

IRAN NEWS

Deputy Foreign Minister for Consular, Parliamentary and Iranian Affairs Vahid Jalalzadeh Has Signed the United Nations Convention Against Cybercrime in Hanoi, Vietnam on Saturday, to Show Iran as a Responsible Member of the International Community

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2 DOMESTIC



ICCIMA, Armenian Embassy to Launch Joint Business Matchmaking Platform

> SEE PAGE 2

3 INTERNATIONAL

Trump Attends Thai-Cambodian Ceasefire Ceremony at Start of Asia Visit in Malaysia

> SEE PAGE 3



Bank Imbalance Among Key Drivers of Inflation



TEHRAN - Government Spokesperson Fatemeh Mohajerani announced that the Central Bank of Iran has initiated the “resolution” process for Ayandeh Bank, describing banking imbalances as one of the main causes of inflation. She expressed hope that this move would help stabilize prices and control inflation.

Speaking during her televised weekly address, Mohajerani praised the Central Bank’s coordination with other institutions regarding Ayandeh Bank, emphasizing that such actions are vital for strengthening the country’s financial system.

She noted that the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance, responding to producers’ concerns about securing working capital, has launched a new financing model called the “Production Enterprises Financing System.” The system allows contractors’ agreements to serve as collateral — a step aimed at supporting industrial growth.

Mohajerani also reassured Ayandeh Bank depositors that their funds are secure, stating that all customer accounts have been transferred to Bank Mellī Iran, and the bank’s excessive withdrawals have been halted.

Addressing environmental concerns, Mohajerani highlighted the government’s determination to eliminate gas flaring in oil-rich regions, which has long caused harm to local communities. She said the 14th administration has made the elimination of flaring a top priority, successfully preventing the burning of 11 million cubic meters of gas so far.

Iran to Continue Its Push for Removal From FATF Blacklist



TEHRAN (Dispatches) - Iran says the FATF has accepted almost all of Iran’s reservations about the Palermo Convention.

Head of Iran’s financial crime agency says the country will continue to push the global money laundering watchdog FATF to remove it from its blacklist despite a recent statement by the body saying it would keep the designation.

Hadi Khani said on Saturday that the reason the Financial Action Task Force had kept Iran on its blacklist was because it had rejected one of Iran’s conditions to fully implement the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, also known as the Palermo Convention.

Khani, who also serves as a deputy finance minister, said the FATF had accepted Iran’s other reservations about the Palermo Convention during its recent meetings in Paris, where Iran was represented for the first time in six years.

In a statement issued on Friday, the FATF welcomed Iran’s re-engagement with the body and its efforts to address issues related to money laundering and terrorism financing.

However, it said that Iran would remain on the FATF High Risk Jurisdictions Subject to a Call for Action blacklist because it had failed to accept the Palermo Convention in its entirety.

Joint Letter by Iran, Russia, China to the UN a Symbol of Strategic Solidarity

TEHRAN – Majlis Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf hailed a joint diplomatic initiative by Iran, Russia, and China as a milestone in international relations and a demonstration of growing multipolar solidarity. He described the joint letter sent by the foreign ministries of the three nations to the UN Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council as a powerful symbol of unity among “three major global powers” in opposing Western unilateralism.

Speaking during an open session of the Iranian Parliament on Sunday, Qalibaf emphasized that the expiration of UN Security Council Resolution 2231 marked the conclusion of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)’s mandate to report on and monitor Iran’s nuclear program.

“Today, we can proudly speak of one of the most significant diplomatic achievements of the Islamic Republic of Iran,” Qalibaf said, noting that this success was the product of “years of resistance and perseverance” by the Iranian people against sanctions and external pressure.

He explained that the joint letter by the three nations clearly rejected attempts by the United Kingdom, France, and Germany to invoke the so-called snapback mechanism—an effort to reinstate previous UN sanctions on Iran. “This action, as the letter stated, lacks any legal validity,” he added.

According to Qalibaf, under Paragraph 8 of Resolution 2231, all restrictions and obligations outlined in the resolution have now expired, all previous resolutions remain nullified, and Iran’s right to enrich uranium has been formally recognized. Consequently, he said, “Iran’s nuclear file has been removed from the Security Council’s agenda.”

Continuing this “intelligent diplomatic course,” Qalibaf noted that the permanent representatives of Iran, Russia, and China also submitted a separate letter to the IAEA Director-General, asserting that the snapback mechanism’s activation is illegal and that the IAEA’s reporting mandate concerning Iran has ended with the expiration of Resolution 2231.

“Accordingly, the Agency must adhere to the December 2015 Board of Governors resolution,” Ghalibaf stressed, “instead of following the unilateral interpretations of Western states.”

He argued that the two joint letters represented not only a legal victory for Iran but also a turning point in global politics: “These letters demonstrate a transformation in the balance of global power. The world order is splitting in two regarding the enforcement of UN resolutions.”

He underscored that China and Russia, as permanent members of the Security Council, have stood firmly by Iran, signaling “the end of the era of U.S. unilateralism.” He noted that alongside 120 Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) countries, the three nations have effectively



“put an end to the misuse of international organizations by a handful of Western states.”

“The emergence of a multipolar order is evident,” he said, adding that this alignment will significantly weaken the impact of Western sanctions on Iran.

The Speaker called for unity among all Iranian political factions to safeguard national achievements and present a united front against external pressure. “At this critical juncture,” he said, “we must put national interests above partisan agendas. The dignity and strength of Iran rest on the unity and steadfastness of our people.”

Qalibaf also criticized former President Hassan Rouhani and former Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif for remarks he said undermined Iran’s developing strategic partnership with Russia. “Just as our relations with

Moscow are advancing, such statements cause unnecessary harm,” he asserted. Turning to domestic economic matters, Qalibaf discussed the recent dissolution of Bank Ayandeh, describing it as part of a comprehensive plan to reform Iran’s banking system. He said the Central Bank’s decision to dissolve the institution was based on its severe financial imbalance, which “posed a serious risk to the country’s economy.”

“This move,” Qalibaf explained, “is designed to restore discipline and public confidence in the banking network.”

The Speaker emphasized that the decision was made under the supervision of the Central Bank’s High Supervisory Board and with the approval of the heads of Iran’s three branches of power. The process, known as “resolution,” aims to protect depositors and public funds while ensuring financial stability.

Qalibaf noted that under the newly approved Central Bank Law—passed by the 11th Parliament in coordination with the late President Ebrahim Raisi’s administration—the government now has stronger tools to prevent future banking crises. He praised the cooperation of current President Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian’s administration in ensuring a smooth and transparent implementation.

“This was a major success for Iran’s decision-making system,” Qalibaf said. “It proves that with unity among the three branches of government, difficult but necessary reforms can be carried out without social or economic disruption.”

He concluded by emphasizing that genuine national consensus does not mean concealing mistakes but rather working collectively toward decisions that serve the public good. “The true outcome of coordination among the branches,” he said, “is when major national decisions are made calmly, responsibly, and without rivalry—so that the national interest prevails.”

Persian Gulf Countries Ready to Hold Joint Drills With Iran



TEHRAN (PressTV) - The commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy says the Persian Gulf’s littoral states have expressed their readiness to hold joint naval exercises with Iran.

“We firmly believe that the regional countries themselves are fully capable of maintaining the security of this strategic waterway, and there is no need for the presence of foreign powers,” Rear Admiral Alireza Tangsiri said during a ceremony in the southern Iranian port city of Bushehr on Saturday.

Despite this, he added, adversaries have resorted to “fabricating threats and tensions” in order to try to justify their illegitimate presence in the region and promote their arms sales.

As a case in point concerning regional countries’ sufficient capability to guard the region, Tangsiri cited the Iranian Armed Forces, including both the Corps’ Navy and the naval forces enlisted with the Islamic Republic’s Army’s having established “full security” across the waterway.

The commander credited the servicemen with securing the entire region, especially the strategic Strait of Hormuz, “with utmost authority.”

“The world owes the continued openness of this vital strait to the blood of the [Iranian] martyrs, who sacrificed their lives to keep it secure.”

In January, the commander announced that advanced domestically-built drones operated by the IRGC Navy had successfully deployed AI-enabled precision missiles during a major naval exercise in the Persian Gulf.

Back then, he explained that IRGC specialists had upgraded Mohajer-6 multirole ISTAR and Ababil-5 combat drones with new variants of the Qaem and Almas guided missiles, enhanced with artificial-intelligence features for pinpoint target engagement.

Gov’t Needs Consensus and Unity to Address Social Challenges



TEHRAN - First Vice President Mohammad Reza Arif emphasized the need for greater cooperation and consensus between universities and the government to address the country’s social and economic challenges. Speaking at a meeting with members of the Union of Social Science Associations, Arif called on academic institutions and researchers to provide “practical, actionable solutions” for national crises.

Arif said that President Masoud Pezeshkian and the 14th administration have consistently stressed the importance of academic input in policymaking. “The President and government expect universities and scholars to offer solutions to the country’s problems. Meetings like this are valuable because they create opportunities for constructive dialogue,” he stated.

He added that the current administration “thinks academically” and believes universities can play a decisive role in solving the nation’s issues. For this to happen, Arif said, the relationship between academia, the government, and the broader governance system must be “mutual, transparent, and sincere.” A one-way relationship, he argued, “will not lead to results.”

Arif underscored that the government expects the social sciences and humanities not only to address current issues but also to develop theories for medium- and long-term challenges. This, he said, would prevent future crises.

Iran Ready for Diplomatic Engagement With U.S. on Equal Footing, Mutual Respect

TEHRAN - Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi says Tehran is ready to engage in diplomacy with the United States to reach “a wise solution” to the nuclear issue based on equal footing and mutual respect.

“Iran has repeatedly announced that it has never abandoned and will never reject diplomacy,” Araqchi said in an interview with an online channel published on Saturday.

He added that Iran is now ready for diplomatic engagement with the US “if the Americans are willing to negotiate seriously and genuinely for a mutually beneficial agreement, not a one-sided one, and based on mutual respect and from an equal footing.”

“We will not compromise on the rights of the Iranian people and will not tolerate domination and bullying over the Iranian people; however, we are ready for any wise solution,” Araqchi emphasized.

He reiterated that Iran does not need nuclear weapons, saying the country’s “ability to say no to the powers” was its “atomic bomb,” which he said has been the case since the victory of the Islamic Revolution in 1979.

“The problem between Iran and the US is the hegemonic nature of the other side, but we can manage the relations,” the top Iranian diplomat emphasized.

He said Tehran had been engaged in talks with Washington about its nuclear energy program to build confidence and give assurances that there was no deviation in it when Iran came under attack in June.

He added that the two sides had held five rounds of negotiations and were planning to hold the sixth round on June 15, but the Israeli regime started its war of aggression suddenly two nights before that.

The foreign minister emphasized that Iran’s resistance during the 12 days of the Israeli-American war was a “turning point” in history.

“It was an important principle for us that this war should not set a precedent for dealing with Iran. The whole world must understand that Iranians do not remain silent in the face of oppression, pressure, and war, but rather resist,” Araqchi pointed out.



During the 12-day war, he said, Iranians proved that they would never give up their rights and flee from war but would stand firm and resist.

He stressed the importance of maintaining the country’s preparedness, adding that this “does not mean a new war is likely.”

“Preparedness is the most important factor in preventing war. I am confident that this experience will not be repeated, and if they make a mistake, they will face a similar response,” the foreign minister said.

Elsewhere in the interview, Araqchi reaffirmed Iran’s “completely peaceful and legal” nuclear energy program, saying Tehran has no intention to build bombs or nuclear weapons.

“We want enrichment because it is our right, while others say we should not have it. Our security doctrine

does not include nuclear weapons at all for different reasons,” he added. He noted that the Iranian nation is ready to pay a heavy price but will not allow its dignity, honor, and independence to be disrupted.

The foreign minister criticized the US for setting preconditions for sitting down to talks with Iran, saying, “This method is a dictate and we will never accept it. This is the characteristic of the Iranian nation which have always stood for their independence and dignity.”

He added that a major part of Iran’s “serious” disagreements with the US stems from the US hegemony.

“If the US sets aside its hegemonic nature toward Iran, we can interact... The Iranian nation does not respond to the language of bullying, pressure, and sanctions but will respond to the language of respect.”

“If you speak and act with dignity toward the Iranian nation, you will receive a similar response,” Araqchi told the US.

He said Iran had no positive experience with the US and does not trust it, “but even without trust, we can interact cautiously.”

“We did this, but we did not receive a positive response. This is the nature of the Americans. Now, there is no positive ground for interaction,” he concluded.

IRAN NEWS



Russia to Provide \$1.6b Loan for Rasht–Astara Railway Project

TEHRAN (ILNA) - Iran's Deputy Minister of Roads and Urban Development announced that Russia will grant Iran a \$1.6 billion low-interest loan, with a 3% interest rate, to finance the construction of the Rasht–Astara railway.

Houshang Bazvand, Deputy Minister of Roads and Urban Development, told reporters that the total value of the Rasht–Astara railway construction project is \$1.6 billion. He added that an Iranian delegation will travel to Moscow within the next 10 to 15 days to finalize and sign the contract.

Bazvand, who also serves as the CEO of the Construction and Development of Transportation Infrastructure Company, explained that the agreement represents a low-interest financing model under which Russia will extend \$1.6 billion in credit at a 3% interest rate to support the strategic rail project.

Africa: The Hidden Treasure of the Global Economy and a Major Opportunity for Iran



TEHRAN - During a specialized panel on Africa hosted by the Yazd Chamber of Commerce, experts highlighted the continent's vast economic potential and strategic importance for Iran's international trade expansion.

Masoud Barhaman, President of the Iran–Africa Joint Chamber of Commerce, described Africa as “the hidden treasure of the global economy,” emphasizing that despite being home to 30% of the world's mineral resources, 65% of its diamonds, and 60% of its gold, much of the continent remains untapped due to weak infrastructure.

Barhaman noted that Africa's annual economic transactions exceed \$1.5 trillion, with most African exports consisting of raw materials and a limited range of goods such as tea, coffee, cotton, and oilseeds.

He pointed to significant opportunities for Iran, particularly in mining and engineering services, stating:

“There are more than \$1 trillion worth of projects underway in Africa in sectors such as dam construction, renewable energy, and general contracting. African countries welcome Iranian experts and companies in mining projects and have even issued invitations for participation in gold mining initiatives.”

While acknowledging Africa's underdeveloped infrastructure, Barhaman emphasized that the continent's economic growth rate surpasses the global average, making it a strategic market for Iran to expand its trade presence and engage with emerging economies.

Barhaman also highlighted barter trade as a practical mechanism for cooperation:

“Through barter arrangements, Iran can export goods in exchange for raw materials needed by its industries. This approach can serve as an effective model for deepening economic relations with Africa.”

He cited the example of cotton imports, noting that Iran needs about 1,250 tons of cotton annually, but domestic production covers only a portion of that.

“By partnering with African cotton-producing countries, we can directly meet part of this demand through trade cooperation,” he said.

Barhaman pointed to Iran's strong medical and health tourism potential, noting that an Iranian medical center in Dubai treats over 17,000 African patients annually, a testament to African trust in Iranian healthcare services.

“By establishing Iranian medical clinics in African countries and attracting patients to Iran for treatment, we can expand medical tourism,” he explained.

He added that Yazd Province is well-positioned for this, given its advanced healthcare infrastructure and proven capacity to host international patients.

Iran's Cultural Heritage Ministry Shifts Toward Modern, Experience-Based Tourism



TEHRAN - Maryam Jalali, Deputy Minister of Handicrafts at the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, announced that the ministry's policy direction is shifting toward modern and experience-oriented tourism, emphasizing the global promotion of Iranian cuisine and culture.

Speaking at the Iranian Table Contest during the International Festival of Traditional and Local Foods in Urmia, Jalali said:

“The Iranian table is a meeting place for families — a source of unity, love, and prosperity. We are striving to share the story of Iranian food with the world.”

She stressed that food, clothing, and drink are vital elements of culture, deeply rooted in ancient Persian literature and preserved for generations by Iranian mothers.

“Our mothers not only cooked but also acted as storytellers, passing down Iran's rich cultural heritage to the younger generation,” she added.

Jalali noted that Iranians have a saying — ‘bread, onion, and a welcoming brow’ — which reflects the tradition of turning simple, accessible ingredients into something healing, sustainable, and health-conscious.

“We Iranians are like the interwoven knots of a Persian carpet,” she said. “Together we form a unified design — one that embodies wisdom, culture, and health. What better way to share that culture with the world than through the Iranian table?”

ICCIMA, Armenian Embassy to Launch Joint Business Matchmaking Platform

TEHRAN - The Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) and the Embassy of Armenia in Tehran have agreed to establish a joint digital platform to facilitate direct connections between business communities of the two countries.

During a meeting between Seyed Hamed Asgari, ICCIMA's Deputy for International Affairs, and Hayk Nazaryan, Commercial Attaché of the Embassy of the Republic of Armenia, both sides emphasized the need to deepen and expand bilateral trade and economic relations through digital collaboration tools.



countries to identify potential trade partners and enhance bilateral connectivity.

The two sides agreed on several practical measures, including: Strengthening connections between chambers of commerce and companies to encourage direct, targeted interactions.

Identifying and matching Iranian companies interested in the Armenian market with suitable counterparts.

Establishing a four-party joint committee (including customs and chamber representatives from both sides) to resolve issues related to certificates of origin and border procedures.

Organizing visits by Armenia's State Revenue Committee to explore Iran's economic and fiscal infrastructure.

Facilitating a working visit to Tehran by representatives of the Armenian Chamber of Commerce and Industry for specialized meetings and site visits.

The meeting concluded with several major decisions aimed at facilitating trade: Launch of a Joint Business Matchmaking Platform: A digital B2B platform will be designed and implemented jointly by both chambers to enable direct business interactions. The system will be fully integrated and synchronized for both sides.

Harmonization of Certificate of Origin Protocols: Both chambers will develop aligned procedures to prevent fraud and ensure authenticity.

Technical Meetings with Customs Authorities: Expert sessions will be held to standardize documentation formats and enhance security measures.

Raising Awareness on EAEU Free Trade Opportunities: A joint conference will be organized by ICCIMA and the Armenian Embassy to inform businesses about trade opportunities within the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).

Systematic Exchange of Business Requests: The Armenian Embassy will regularly transmit trade inquiries and offers to ICCIMA for coordinated follow-up.

Hosting Armenian Business Delegations in Iran: Specialized meetings with Armenian entrepreneurs will be organized in cooperation with ICCIMA and the embassy.

The initiative marks a significant step toward fostering digital trade connectivity and promoting sustainable economic relations between Iran and Armenia.

South Khorasan Plays Key Role in Expanding Iran-Afghanistan Economic Relations

TEHRAN - The Iran–Afghanistan Joint Cooperation Development Summit was held in Birjand with the participation of Mohammad Reza Bahraman, Vice President of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA); Din Mohammad Ne'mati, President of the Chamber of Commerce and Investment of Farah Province, Afghanistan; and Alireza Khomehzar, President of the Birjand Chamber of Commerce.



According to the Birjand Chamber of Commerce, Khomehzar emphasized the importance of South Khorasan as a border province in strengthening regional economic ties, noting that the province “plays a vital role in expanding Iran's economic relations with Afghanistan.”

Khomehzar stated that South Khorasan, due to its geographical proximity and shared cultural, linguistic, and religious heritage with Afghanistan, can serve as a “gateway for sustainable economic cooperation” between the two nations.

He described the current environment as a golden opportunity for expanding trade and investment, pointing to Afghanistan's renewed focus on economic growth and cross-border partnerships.

Highlighting South Khorasan's export potential—including agricultural products, construction materials, engineering services, and knowledge-based goods—Khomehzar said Iran's exports to Afghanistan have exceeded \$3 billion in recent years, with South Khorasan accounting for a significant share.

“Nearly 50 percent of the province's exports are destined for Afghanistan,” he noted, adding that sustained trade requires improved border, customs, and commercial infrastructure.

Khomehzar stressed the critical role of the private sector as the driving force of economic development. “The Birjand Chamber of Commerce, in cooperation with ICCIMA, stands ready to provide the necessary foundation for expanding trade, scientific, and technical cooperation,” he said.

He expressed gratitude to national and provincial institutions—including the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health, Planning and Budget Organization, local governors, Members of Parliament, and private sector leaders—for their contributions to organizing the summit.

Khomehzar emphasized that Iran-Afghanistan cooperation should not remain limited to the exchange of goods. “We must adopt a

scientific, technological, and sustainable approach to economic relations,” he said.

He highlighted the importance of academic partnerships, training skilled human resources, establishing research and development units, and transferring technical expertise as key pathways for the future.

The active participation of Iranian universities, Afghan academic delegations, and higher education officials at the summit was seen as a promising step toward joint educational and research collaborations.

Khomehzar also called for the development of border markets, specialized customs centers, and special economic zones along the South Khorasan–Afghanistan frontier

to facilitate trade and strengthen regional security.

“These measures,” he said, “will not only streamline border commerce but also enhance the economic stability of the entire region.”

Describing the joint summit and exhibition as the result of synergy among public, academic, and private institutions, Khomehzar expressed hope that the event would lead to the signing of new trade agreements and the launch of joint projects between Iran and Afghanistan.

“With a strategic outlook and national support,” he added, “South Khorasan can become an economic hub in eastern Iran and a gateway for sustainable trade with neighboring countries—especially Afghanistan.”

Addressing the summit, Mohammad Reza Bahrami, Director-General for South Asia at Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said South Khorasan and Afghanistan's Farah Province—like Khorasan Razavi and Herat—can establish joint provincial commissions to expand local economic cooperation.

Bahrami emphasized the need for coordination between political and economic policies to strengthen bilateral ties:

“For sustainable development, political and economic strategies must advance in tandem. Economic relations should ensure mutual benefit and long-term stability for both nations,” he said.

The summit reaffirmed South Khorasan's pivotal role as a strategic bridge in Iran-Afghanistan relations, fostering both economic growth and regional stability.

Legal Employment of 400,000 Foreign Nationals in Iran



TEHRAN - The Director General of Foreign Nationals at Iran's Ministry of Cooperatives, Labour, and Social Welfare announced that, according to current statistics, around 400,000 foreign nationals are legally employed in the country, while the remainder are considered unauthorized workers.

On Sunday, Ali Bagheri told IRNA that employment programs for foreign nationals in Iran are not limited to Afghan migrants, but include individuals from various nationalities. However, he noted that Afghan citizens currently make up the largest share of the foreign workforce in Iran.

Bagheri stated that Iranian employers seeking to hire foreign workers may apply for permits within the framework of existing laws.

Regarding foreign nationals who have left Iran this year, he explained: “Those who were registered in the census and re-census programs can return to Iran if their Iranian employer requests their services again. They can re-enter the country after obtaining a passport and work visa from their country of origin.”

According to Bagheri, such workers are allowed to work in Iran for nine months, after which they must return home for three months. If employment continues to be needed, a new work visa may be issued through the Foreign Nationals System.

The Director General added that Iran continues to implement programs for refugee registration, family passport issuance, and refugee support plans, under which family members also receive annual residence and work permits.

Bagheri emphasized the legal obligation of employers to provide social security insurance for foreign workers, stating:

“All foreign nationals employed in Iran are subject to social security coverage. Employers must sign a notary commitment to assume responsibility for the worker's employment, workplace safety, and legal status, and to respond to relevant authorities if necessary.”

Iran Investing in Satellite Internet Technology



TEHRAN - Iran's Minister of Communications and Information Technology announced that in the near future, people will be able to access the internet directly via satellites. He added that countries such as Iran are investing in this emerging field.

During a friendly meeting with top mathematics students from the 2024 and 2025 national university entrance exams, held at the Research Institute for ICT, Minister Seyyed Sattar Hashemi emphasized the importance of bridging theory with real-world application.

“You must not only focus on theoretical foundations,” Hashemi told the students, “but also establish strong connections with the job market and research centers.” He encouraged them to engage deeply in network-based work, noting that persistent effort would open new paths for innovation.

Hashemi highlighted that real-world challenges often differ from theoretical expectations, urging students to adopt a multidimensional perspective to make well-rounded decisions.

The minister also pointed out a generational gap between parents and youth, explaining that “perhaps they struggle to fully understand each other.”

Addressing questions about internet quality and filtering policies, Hashemi said:

“Recently, we heard Elon Musk claim that within the next two years, people will meet their communication needs through satellites. This is a question we're often asked as well.”

New Japan PM Tells Trump That U.S. Alliance Is Paramount

TOKYO (Dispatches) - Japan's new prime minister, Sanae Takaichi, told U.S. President Donald Trump that strengthening their countries' alliance is her government's "top priority", in their first phone call on Saturday.

Takaichi also told Trump that Japan is "an indispensable partner" in terms of the U.S.'s strategies towards China and the Indo-Pacific, according to comments posted on the Japanese premier's official website.

"I conveyed to him that strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance is the top priority for my administration's foreign and security policy," she said, according to the post.

"We confirmed our shared commitment to further elevating the Alliance to new heights."



Israel Launches Air Strike in Gaza Allegedly Targeting Islamic Jihad Militant



TEL AVIV (Dispatches) - Israel's military on Saturday said it had launched an air strike in the Gaza Strip despite the ongoing U.S.-brokered ceasefire, saying it was targeting a "terrorist" allegedly belonging to the Palestinian Islamic Jihad militant group.

For the past two weeks there has been a fragile truce between Hamas, an ally of Islamic Jihad, and Israel - although the latter reserves the right to defend itself and its forces from militant attacks.

"A short while ago, the IDF conducted a precise strike in the Nuseirat area in the central Gaza Strip targeting a terrorist from the Islamic Jihad terrorist organisation who planned to carry out an imminent terrorist attack against IDF troops," the military said.

Inside the Hamas-run territory, the Al-Awda hospital confirmed it had received wounded for treatment after a strike in Nuseirat.

"The hospital has received four injured people following the Israeli occupation's targeting of a civilian car in the Al-Ahli Club area in Nuseirat Camp in central Gaza," the hospital said.

The military said it would continue operations in Gaza "to remove any immediate threat" to its troops.

Meanwhile U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Saturday he did not envision a permanent division of Gaza, despite Israeli troops remaining in an area prioritised for reconstruction.

Trump Meets Qatar Leaders, Credits Them for Key Role in Gaza Ceasefire Deal



WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - U.S. President Donald Trump thanked Qatar's emir and prime minister for being a "big factor" in helping secure a Gaza ceasefire deal, during a refuelling stop on his way to Asia.

The Qatari leaders boarded Air Force One when it landed at Al Udeid Air Base, which hosts the regional headquarters for the US military and thousands of American troops.

Trump said the duo had played a crucial role in the Middle East peace process, adding that Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani had been his "friend to the world."

"What we've done is incredible peace to the Middle East, and they were a very big factor in it," Trump said.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, fresh off a trip to Israel as part of an all-out diplomatic push by Washington to keep the Gaza truce on track, was present for the meeting with Qatar's leaders.

Trump is traveling to Asia for the first time since retaking office in January, with two regional summits and face-to-face meetings with China's Xi Jinping and other leaders on the agenda.

Qatar has played a key mediating role in indirect talks between Israel and Hamas since the outbreak of the war, and is among the guarantors of the fragile peace deal, along with Egypt, the United States and Turkey.

Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani hosted Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan this week to discuss the highly sensitive next steps in the deal, including the establishment of a security force in Gaza and the fate of Hamas.

Trump Attends Thai-Cambodian Ceasefire Ceremony at Start of Asia Visit in Malaysia



KUALA LUMPUR (Dispatches) - Thailand and Cambodia signed an expanded ceasefire agreement on Sunday during a ceremony attended by US President Donald Trump, whose threats of economic pressure prodded the two nations to halt skirmishes along their disputed border earlier this year.

Thailand will release Cambodian prisoners and Cambodia will begin withdrawing heavy artillery as part of the first phase of the deal. Regional observers will monitor the situation to ensure fighting doesn't restart.

"We did something that a lot of people said couldn't be done," Trump said. Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet called it a "historic day," and Thai Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul said the agreement creates "the building blocks for a lasting peace."

The ceremony was Trump's first event after arriving at the annual summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, hosted in Kuala Lumpur. The trip, which will continue with visits to Japan and South Korea and a potential meeting with Chinese leader Xi Jinping, is an opportunity for Trump to burnish his reputation as an international dealmaker at a time when his tariffs have scrambled the international economy and he's feuding with Democrats over a government shutdown back home.

Trump touched down in the Malaysian capital shortly before 0200 GMT, where he performed his trademark campaign trail dance with local performers and waved an American flag in one hand and a Malaysian flag in the other.

He's expected to sign agreements with Malaysia involving trade and critical minerals later in the day. The US has been working to expand its supply chains to rely less on China, which has limited exports of key components in technology manufacturing.

The president attended this summit only once during his first term, and Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth seemed unfamiliar with ASEAN during his confirmation hearing in January.

But this year's event offered a fresh opportunity for Trump to play global peacemaker.

Thailand and Cambodia fought for five days in July, killing dozens and displacing hundreds of thousands of people,

some of the worst modern fighting between the two countries. The two countries have competing territorial claims, and violence periodically flares along their border.

Trump threatened, at the time, to withhold trade agreements unless the fighting stopped in a display of economic leverage credited with spurring negotiations. A shaky truce has persisted since then.

After the expanded ceasefire agreement was signed on Sunday, Trump inked separate economic deals with Cambodia and Thailand.

"The fact that Trump was holding the tariff card was actually very, very significant," said Ou Virak, president of Phnom Penh's Future Forum think tank. "That's probably the main reason, if not the only reason, but definitely the main reason why the two sides agreed immediately to the ceasefire."

Now, he said, "there's a ceremony for Trump to be in front of cameras" so he can be "seen as the champion that brings an end to wars and conflicts," giving him "more ammunition for his bid for Nobel Peace Prize."

Trump has explicitly campaigned for the honor, continuously adding to a list of conflicts that he either helped resolve or claims to have ended.

Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim praised the agreement between Thailand and Cambodia during opening remarks at the summit, saying, "it reminds us that reconciliation is not concession, but an act of courage."

Thai foreign ministry spokesperson Nikorndej Balankura described the deal on Saturday as a "joint declaration" that will show Thailand and Cambodia "are committed to renewing their relations."

"It's not an end in itself," Nikorndej said. "Work has just begun."

One leader who will be absent from the summit in Kuala Lumpur is Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Although he was close with Trump during his first term, the relationship has been more tense lately. Trump caused irritation by boasting that he settled a recent conflict between India and Pakistan, and he has increased tariffs on India for its purchase of Russian oil.

Ireland's Left-Wing Independent Connolly Wins Presidential Election in Landslide

DUBLIN (Dispatches) - Left-wing independent Catherine Connolly is set to become Ireland's new president after winning a landslide victory on Saturday, beating her centrist rival Heather Humphreys with more than 63 percent of the ballots.

Connolly, 68, a lawyer, lawmaker and outspoken critic of both the United States and European Union, won more than 63 percent of the ballots, well ahead of centre-right candidate Heather Humphreys, on 29.5 percent.

"It will be an absolute privilege to serve you," Connolly said in her acceptance speech at the count declaration.

"For those who didn't vote for me and those who spoilt their votes: let me tell you, I will be an inclusive president to listen to all of you."

She vowed to be "a voice for peace, a voice that builds on our policy of neutrality" as well as a "voice that articulates the existential threat posed by climate change".

Humphreys, of the centrist Fine Gael party, congratulated Connolly on "becoming the next president of Ireland" after early counting showed the latter was on course for a landslide victory.

However, the election for the largely ceremonial role has been overshadowed by criticism that it lacked real choice, with tallies so far



showing a record number of spoiled ballots and low turnout.

Nearly 13 percent of the 1.65 million ballots cast were "invalid", a record in a modern Irish elections.

Ireland votes for new president: Left-wing independent Connolly expected to beat challenger

Connolly, a lawmaker since 2016 whose candidacy was supported by

left-wing parties including Sinn Fein, had surged ahead in opinion polls in recent weeks.

The former clinical psychologist and barrister has been a long-time critic of the European Union in overwhelmingly pro-EU Ireland, repeatedly denouncing the EU's plans to boost military spending.

Connolly built momentum throughout the campaign by criticising government policy in areas such as housing, finding wide appeal among younger voters.

Conservative figures had urged voters to mar their voting paper in protest at the two-horse race.

A conservative Catholic candidate who appeared able to muster double digit support in polling almost made the ballot but fell short of gaining enough parliamentary backing.

That sparked anger about the nomination rules and prompted early calls to "spoil your vote".

Connolly and Humphreys ended up as the only effective choices after another candidate representing the centrist Fianna Fail - the larger party in Ireland's governing coalition with Fine Gael - quit the race.

Like neighbouring Britain, Ireland has seen an increasingly divisive debate over an influx of asylum seekers, sparking sometimes violent protests, including outside facilities used to house them.

U.S. Could Hit Russia With More Sanctions Over Ukraine War

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - U.S. President Donald Trump's administration has prepared additional sanctions it could use to target key areas of Russia's economy if President Vladimir Putin continues to delay ending Moscow's war in Ukraine, according to a U.S. official and another person familiar with the matter.

U.S. officials have also told European counterparts that they support the EU using frozen Russian assets to buy U.S. weapons for Kyiv, and Washington has held nascent internal conversations about leveraging Russian assets held in the U.S. to support Ukraine's war effort, two U.S. officials said.

While it is not clear whether Washington will actually carry out any of those moves in the immediate term, it shows there is a well-developed toolkit within the administration to up the ante further after Trump imposed sanctions on Russia on Wednesday for the first time since returning to office in January.

Trump has positioned himself as a global peacemaker, but has admitted that trying to end Russia's more-than-three-year war in neighboring Ukraine has proven harder than he had anticipated.

His meeting with Putin in Alaska in August failed to make progress. Trump told



reporters in Doha on Saturday that he would not meet with Putin again unless a peace deal appeared likely. "I'm not going to be wasting my time," Trump said.

European allies - buffeted by Trump's swings between accommodation and anger toward Putin - hope he keeps increasing pressure on Moscow.

One senior U.S. official told Reuters that he would like to see European nations make the next big Russia move, which could be additional sanctions or tariffs. A separate source with knowledge of internal administration dynamics said Trump was likely to hit pause for a few weeks and gauge Russia's reaction to Wednesday's sanctions announcement.

Those sanctions took aim at oil companies Lukoil and Rosneft. The moves spiked oil prices by more than \$2 and sent major Chinese and Indian buyers of Russian crude looking for alternatives.

Trump said on Saturday that when he meets with President Xi Jinping on Thursday, China's purchases of Russian oil may be discussed. But China is cutting back "very substantially" on Russian oil and "India is cutting back completely," Trump told reporters.



Liverpool Beaten Again at Brentford, In-Form Man United Go Fourth

LONDON (Dispatches) - Liverpool lost for the fourth consecutive game in the Premier League as Brentford beat the champions 3-2, while Manchester United climbed into the top four with a 4-2 victory over Brighton.

Less than a month since starting the season with five straight wins, Liverpool's title defence has come off the rails as the defensive frailties in Arne Slot's side were brutally exposed by Brentford. "Today was the worst in my opinion from all the four," said Slot. "We didn't do the basics right in the first half and parts of the second."

Dango Ouattara hooked in from a long throw after just five minutes to set the tone and Kevin Schade added a second just before half-time at the end of a slick counter-attack that cut the visitors wide open.

Milos Kerkez halved Liverpool's deficit before Igor Thiago's penalty restored Brentford's two-goal cushion.

Mohamed Salah ended his six-game Liverpool goal drought in spectacular fashion late on, but could not dig the Reds out of trouble.

Liverpool slip to sixth and could be seven points adrift of Arsenal by today should the leaders beat Crystal Palace.

It took nearly a year under Ruben Amorim for United to win back-to-back league games but they have now won three in a row after ending Brighton's run of success at Old Trafford.

The Seagulls had won on their previous three visits amid a run of six wins in seven league games against United.

The Red Devils' £200 million trio (RM1.12 billion) of attacking additions in the transfer window, Matheus Cunha, Bryan Mbeumo and Benjamin Sesko, are beginning to click.

Cunha curled in his first goal for the club from outside the box before Casemiro's deflected effort doubled United's lead before half-time.

Sesko then teed up Mbeumo to fire in at the near post.

Danny Welbeck's brilliant free-kick and Charalampos Kostasoulas' header set up a nervy finale.

But Mbeumo smashed home his second goal to seal the points in the 97th minute.

"The performance was important but it would not be Manchester United without suffering a bit," said Amorim.

United surge ahead of Liverpool, Chelsea and Tottenham into the Champions League places and within three points of leaders Arsenal.

Sunderland's dream return to the top flight after an eight-year absence goes on after a 2-1 win at Chelsea lifted the Black Cats up to second.

Chelsea looked like they would be the side to go second in the table when Alejandro Garnacho drilled in his first goal for the club after just four minutes.

Sunderland levelled midway through the first half when Wilson Isidor bundled in from close range after Chelsea failed to clear a long throw-in.

The visitors comfortably held the Club World Cup winners at bay in the second period before landing the sucker punch on the counter-attack in the 93rd minute when Brian Brobbey teed up Chemsidine Talbi to curl perfectly into the bottom corner.

Defeat leaves Chelsea in seventh with their title challenge fading fast.

"We were not good enough and in the Premier League the consequences can be bad," said Chelsea boss Enzo Maresca.

"If you want to be there (challenging for the title), you need consistency."

Newcastle beat Fulham 2-1 thanks to captain Bruno Guimaraes' 90th minute strike at St. James' Park.

Saka Lukic had cancelled out Jacob Murphy's opener for the Magpies.

But Marco Silva's men fell to a fourth consecutive defeat that leaves them hovering just above the relegation zone.

Guimaraes swept home the rebound after Bernd Leno had saved William Osula's initial effort to propel Newcastle up to 11th.

Rohit, Kohli Bid Likely Farewell to Australia as Winners



SYDNEY (Dispatches) - Rohit Sharma hit a century and Virat Kohli a bright 74 to drive India to a nine-wicket win in the third one-day international, sending fans home happy after what are likely to be their final appearances in Australia in their country's colours.

Australia secured series honours with victories in the first two matches in Perth and Adelaide but India's bowlers skittled the home side for 236 and the two former skippers got the tourists over the line with a partnership of 168 runs.

"I've always loved coming here ... and a nice way to finish getting that knock and getting that win as well," said Rohit.

"I don't know if we'll be coming back to Australia, but it was fun all these years that we played here. A lot of good memories, bad memories. But all in all, I'll take the cricket that I played here."

Kohli, the second-highest run-scorer in ODIs behind Sachin Tendulkar, came out to join Sharma at the crease to a frenzied ovation from a big crowd that made the Sydney Cricket Ground feel more like it was located in New Delhi than New South Wales.

Rohit had already combined with current skipper Shubman Gill (24) to cut 69 runs out of the chase but this was the "Ro-Ko" partnership the massed ranks of fans in blue shirts waving tricolour flags had come to see.

The two thirtysomethings, who both now only play the 50-over game for India, duly delivered with assured shots and mature decision-making that frustrated then dispirited the Australian bowlers.

Rohit smashed 13 fours and three sixes in his 33rd century in the format, reaching the milestone for the ninth time against Australia with a pushed drive down the ground for a single.

Kohli, who had been dismissed for ducks in the previous two matches, brought up his 75th half-century to a huge roar with a single on one ball and Rohit locked in a 19th ODI century stand between the pair with another solitary run on the next delivery.

Verstappen Needs Others to Retire to Keep F1 Hopes Alive



MEXICO CITY (Dispatches) - Four-time champion Max Verstappen said he'll have to rely on other drivers retiring if he is to keep alive his bid for a fifth Formula One title with a victory in Sunday's Mexico Grand Prix.

After qualifying fifth for Red Bull behind McLaren's pole-sitting title-chasing Lando Norris, both Ferraris and Mercedes' George Russell, he complained of a difficult and frustrating day.

"Every lap that I have done this weekend has not been good," he said. "Short run, long run, it never felt in the window and that is not going to suddenly change for the better tomorrow."

"There is no real recovery drive when you have no pace... I need people to retire in front of me if I am to get ahead."

"If we knew what was wrong we could change it but unfortunately we don't and we have tried so many things. It's just not good."

"And it's not for a lack of trying," Verstappen added. "I knew from the start of Q1 that in my first run it was not going to be it today."

Verstappen has narrowed a gap of 104 points down to just 40 behind series leader Oscar Piastri of McLaren since the end of August, reeling off three wins and two seconds in five races.

But he knows he needs to keep his surge of near-perfect results going if he is to succeed in claiming an unexpected but spectacular fifth title this year.

Meanwhile Lando Norris beamed with pleasure after turbo-charging his bid for the Formula One drivers' world championship by grabbing pole position for the Mexico City Grand Prix while rivals struggled in his wake.

The 25-year-old Briton, who is 14 points behind his McLaren team-mate Oscar Piastri and 26 ahead of third-placed four-time champion Max Verstappen of Red Bull, powered to a stunning fastest lap in one minute and 15.586 seconds.

Jokic's Triple-Double Leads Nuggets in Home Opener

LOS ANGELES (Dispatches) - Jamal Murray had 23 points, Nikola Jokic notched his second straight triple-double to start the season and the Nuggets beat the Phoenix Suns 133-111 night in Denver's home opener.

Christian Braun scored 20 points and Aaron Gordon had 17 points two nights after posting a career-high 50 for Denver, which had seven players score in double figures and shot 51.2% (43 of 84) from the field.

Jokic finished with 14 points, 15 assists and 14 rebounds. He took just eight shots, making five, and didn't attempt a field goal until a goaltending call on Phoenix with 2:26 left in the second quarter. His first shot attempt was a free throw with 4:18 left in the first half.



Devin Booker led the Suns with 31 points, Grayson Allen scored 17 and Dillon Brooks had 15. Phoenix shot just 43.2% (38 of 88) from the field.

Chet Holmgren overcame back soreness that almost kept him out to produce a double-double and help Oklahoma City Thunder remain unbeaten with a 117-100 win in Atlanta Hawks.

Holmgren was listed as questionable on the pregame injury report and spent time rubbing his back during dead-ball situations. But he played through discomfort to score a season-high 31 points and grab 11 rebounds. He was 8-for-12 shooting from the floor (6-for-8 on 3-pointers).

Sinner Sets Up Vienna Final With Zverev

VIENNA (Dispatches) - Top seed Jannik Sinner crushed Alex de Minaur 6-3 6-4 to reach the Vienna Open final for the second time, where he will face second seed Alexander Zverev for the title in a battle between two former champions.

Sinner's dominant victory -- his 50th over a fellow top-10 player -- extended his streak to 20 consecutive wins on indoor hardcourts as he moved into his eighth final of the season.

"(I) came here quite late to the tournament, tried to take every day in the best possible way and I'm happy to be here in the final. It was not easy to (reach) the final here," said Sinner.

"The first set was very physical, so I'm happy that I won in two sets today. He changed a couple of things, which I was ready for today."

