

Germany's Flag Carrier Lufthansa Is to Restore Its Flights to Iran Nearly Five Months After It Suspended Operations in the Country Because of Israel's Aggression

IRAN NEWS

The Ambassadors of Iran and Russia in Baghdad Discussed the Latest Developments in Iraq Ahead of the Country's Parliamentary Elections, Emphasizing the Importance of the Vote for Iraq's Stability and Development

2

DOMESTIC



Iran Spent \$6b on Gasoline Imports This Year

> SEE PAGE 2

3

INTERNATIONAL

U.S. Senate Passes Deal to End Record 40-Day Gov't Shutdown



> SEE PAGE 3

Iran to Launch 3 Homegrown Satellites in Early Winter



TEHRAN (Dispatches) - The head of the Iranian Space Agency (ISA), Hassan Salarieh, announced plans to launch three domestically-built satellites into orbit in early winter, as part of efforts to upgrade the country's civilian space program.

"The three satellites—Zafar, Paya, and Kowsar—are scheduled to be launched in early winter," Salarieh told reporters on Monday.

"These satellites are currently undergoing final technical preparations, and their exact launch date will be announced soon."

Zafar, Paya, and Kowsar satellites have been developed by Iranian engineers associated with various knowledge-based companies in collaboration with the ISA.

Zafar is an advanced earth-observation satellite designed to provide high-resolution imaging for critical applications in agriculture, environmental monitoring, and disaster management.

Similarly, Paya is also an earth-observation satellite manufactured for sophisticated imaging and data collection.

Kowsar is designed for high-resolution imaging with a primary focus on precision agriculture. It will provide daily imagery of plant greenery, supporting agricultural monitoring, crop health assessment, and efficient resource management.

Salarieh emphasized that the satellites will provide critical data for crop monitoring, mineral exploration, and dust storm tracking.

He further noted that construction work at Salmas and Chenaran space stations is in its final stage, and both stations will soon be put into operation.



Inflation Reaches 38.9%, Says Central Bank Governor

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - The Governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) stated that the country's current financing model is unsustainable, as "relying on the banking system for 90% of the nation's financing causes inflationary pressures and liquidity growth." He added that the increase in the exchange rate from 450,000 to 700,000 rials per U.S. dollar (IRR 45,000 → 70,000) at Iran's Foreign Exchange and Gold Center in December 2024 triggered a rise in inflation, which now stands at 38.9%, based on official Central Bank statistics.

Presenting a report to Parliament on the Central Bank's role in implementing the Seventh Development Plan, Governor Mohammadreza Farzin said the bank has been directly mentioned in 96 articles of the plan. Of these, 57 have been drafted and approved, 27 are nearing completion, and 12 require coordination with other executive bodies.

Farzin noted that out of 18 directives assigned to the Central Bank, 17 have been finalized. The only remaining item is the establishment of an Asset Management Company (AMC), which is awaiting approval from the Guardian Council.

Farzin emphasized that capital adequacy is the key indicator for banking reform. The banking sector's capital adequacy ratio rose from -3.59% in 2020 to 1.75% by the end of 2024, and now stands at 4.54%. The legal target under the current plan is 8%, which he said "will be achieved soon."

He explained that in 2020, 14 of Iran's 29 banks had negative capital adequacy, while only 8 banks met the 8% standard. Currently, only 5 banks remain below zero, and 13 banks have surpassed the 8% threshold.

Registered capital in the banking system increased from 336 trillion toman in 2021 to 1,035 trillion toman today, with projections to reach 1,460 trillion toman by year-end—a nearly threefold increase in two years, largely from asset revaluation and shareholder contributions.

Farzin announced the classification of Iranian banks into six categories—commercial, specialized, development, Qarz al-Hasan (interest-free), real estate, and comprehensive banks—as approved by the Central Bank's Supreme Council.

On monetary policy, he reported that liquidity growth dropped from 42.8% in 2021 to 24.3% in early 2024, before rising again to 29.1% at year's end to prevent a "liquidity blockage."

Liquidity growth was driven by several factors, including: Government bond issuance under the national budget, Implementation of Article 46 of the "Production Barriers Removal Act," and the release of mandatory bank reserves to facilitate marriage and childbearing loans.

He added that total banking loans grew 32.9% in 2024, rising to 42.3% this year.

Farzin said Iran's inflation had been steadily declining from late 2022 to late 2024, with point-to-point inflation dropping from 62.4% to 33.8% and annual inflation falling from 54% to 36%. However, inflation began rising again in December 2024 after the exchange rate climbed to 70,000 toman per U.S. dollar at the official trading center.

He cited multiple reasons for the renewed inflationary pressure: Economic uncertainty and heightened inflation expectations due to political and security shocks, Fiscal imbalances and government spending pressures, and higher prices for public services.

"The combination of these factors has brought the current annual inflation rate to around 38.9%," Farzin said.

The governor noted a 30% increase in the Central Bank's gold reserves last year and emphasized efforts to deepen the official currency market. When the main exchange hall could no longer meet demand, a second exchange floor was launched for commodities less sensitive to currency rate changes.

Other major steps included: Strengthening the Central Bank's role in the gold market, Regulating cryptocurrency activities, Promoting rial stability, Launching foreign-currency Murabaha bonds, which have already raised over \$400 million, and enhancing foreign currency supply for essential goods despite lower oil revenues.

Farzin concluded by stressing that achieving the Seventh Development Plan's goals is impossible under the current financing structure. "Over 90% of the country's financing depends on the banking system, which inherently drives inflation and liquidity growth," he said.

He also pointed to structural challenges such as: Government budget deficits, Weak trade regulations, Uncoordinated import and export procedures, and unresolved state bank debts and capital shortages.

"These issues," Farzin said, "must be addressed if we are to achieve sustainable financial stability."

Over 58,000 Deaths Annually in Iran Attributed to Air Pollution



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Deputy Minister of Health for Public Health, Alireza Raisi, highlighted the growing health threat posed by air pollution, noting that recent estimates show that in 2024, approximately 58,975 deaths in Iran were linked to exposure to fine particulate matter (PM2.5). This equates to 161 deaths per day or roughly seven deaths per hour.

Raisi explained that under Article 22 of the Technical Regulation of the Clean Air Law, the Ministry of Health annually estimates the direct health costs of air pollution, including mortality and disease burden, broken down by major pollutants and priority cities.

The Environmental and Occupational Health Center of the Ministry prepares these reports. This year's report includes several new analyses compared to previous years: Assessment of air quality monitoring stations nationwide, Analysis of six major air pollutants (PM2.5, PM10, O₃, CO, NO₂, SO₂), Population-weighted concentration calculations, Estimation of population exposure levels, and Modeling pollutant concentrations in areas without monitoring stations.

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi has stated that Western countries will ultimately have no choice but to recognize Iran as a scientific hub for the peaceful nuclear industry.

During a visit to the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) on Monday, Araqchi highlighted Iran's significant efforts to advance its nuclear industry, emphasizing that the country will never relinquish its rights in this sector.

He praised Iran's remarkable progress in nuclear technology, which has grown into a substantial industry advancing rapidly across various fields.

Araqchi pointed out that Iran's nuclear capabilities extend beyond uranium enrichment to include diverse applications in medicine, health, environmental protection, agriculture, and industrial sectors.

He stated that the West's main concern lies not in the potential for Iran to develop nuclear weapons, but rather in the country's advancements in nuclear science.

He explained that Iran has excelled in a "very complex and sensitive" scientific domain that the West seeks to monopolize.

The top Iranian diplomat explained that this is why Western powers have used nuclear weapons as a pretext for their actions.

Araqchi remarked that for over 20 years, Iran has engaged in negotiations and dialogue with the West, highlighting that if the intention to develop nuclear weapons had existed, it would have been realized by now, given the country's capabilities.



He reaffirmed the peaceful nature of Iran's peaceful nuclear program, adding, "Wherever necessary, we have built trust and cooperated with international organizations and the International Atomic Energy Agency, but it is crystal clear that they [the West] are seeking pretexts."

The IAEA has carried out about a dozen inspections in Iran since the Israeli-US war in mid-June. However, the UN nuclear watchdog announced last week it had not been given access to nuclear facilities such as Fordow, Natanz, and Isfahan, which the United States bombed on June 22 in a clear violation of international law and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

On Monday, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei said the IAEA inspectors visited Iranian nuclear sites last week.

"As long as we are a member of the NPT and committed to the Safeguard Agreement, we are fully aware of our commitments, and just last week, IAEA inspectors visited several nuclear facilities, including the Tehran Research Reactor," Baghaei added.

During a meeting with senior managers at the AEOI earlier this month, President Masoud Pezeshkian emphasized that the country's expansion of its peaceful nuclear industry is aimed at enhancing the nation's welfare, not acquiring weapons.

"However, the nuclear industry is a vast collection of scientific and industrial capacities and only a tiny fraction of its disproportionate and inhumane consequences relates to bomb-making," he added.

Artificial Intelligence: An Unknown Continent

By: Hamid Reza Naghashian



21st-century humans are faced with a tool that compels them to journey with it into the unknown reaches of the world. Neither the path nor the destination is known, but traveling in this digital vessel is exciting.

Artificial intelligence is like an engine with unprecedented power, yet we still do not know the exact roadmap, the final destination, or all the complexities of the journey. This is because AI grows very quickly and nonlinearly. Imagine you plant a seed expecting it to become an apple tree. But this seed grows so rapidly that every day it takes on a stranger shape. Today it looks like a tree, tomorrow like a building, and a week later something you have never seen before.

Progress in artificial intelligence is not linear (i.e., 1, 2, 3, 4...) but "exponential" (i.e., 2, 4, 8, 16...). The human mind has difficulty understanding the speed of exponential growth.

We Do Not Fully Understand "Intelligence"

We still do not correctly understand how human intelligence works. So how can we measure the path of an artificial "intelligence" that may have expectations and desires completely different from ours?

When an artificial intelligence surpasses human-level intelligence (this is referred to as the domain of Artificial General Intelligence, or AGI), it may begin to make changes and improvements on its own, beyond our comprehension and control. This point is called the technological singularity, and after it, all predictions become meaningless.

It should be noted that the path of artificial intelligence does not end with technology alone; it also depends on human decisions: ethics, economy, culture, and even traditions all take shape in a new context of integrated global data.

Think of it as if we have just discovered a new, unknown continent, knowing that it contains gold, diamonds, and miraculous medicines, but is also full of predatory animals and unknown diseases.

We cannot simply say, "Where does the journey to this new continent lead?" because the answer depends on who travels there, what rules are set, and how its dangers are confronted. Artificial intelligence is exactly the same—a digital, unknown continent. The future it brings is a combination of accumulated information from digital reserves, shaped by technology, and sometimes by human wisdom. Our task is to guide it as much as possible toward a defined future.

Iran Joins Vienna and Strasbourg Agreements on Intellectual Property



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Iran has officially joined all major international agreements related to the classification of intellectual property, marking a significant step in the country's efforts to strengthen its IP framework.

Speaking on Monday during a meeting with the Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), Ali Bahraini emphasized the importance of intellectual property in advancing national development goals, highlighting Iran's legislative, enforcement, and protection achievements in the field.

The WIPO Director General praised the ongoing cooperation between WIPO and Iran and expressed a commitment to further expanding these collaborative efforts.

The Strasbourg Agreement, adopted in 1971, established an international system for the classification of patents. It organizes inventions into eight main sections and 80,000 subdivisions, providing a standardized structure for patent classification. This system is crucial for patent examination, document retrieval, and prior-art searches. It also serves the needs of national and regional patent offices, inventors, and R&D sectors involved in patent registration.

IRAN NEWS

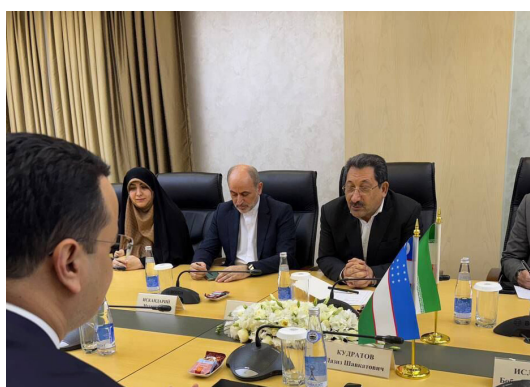


Iran's Capital Market Bubble Estimated at Only 5%

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - The Secretary of Iran's Supreme Council of Free Trade Zones announced that while the "Transformation Plan for Free Zones" is underway, government policy is shifting decisively toward the digital economy. Speaking at the opening ceremony of the Kish Inox Exhibition, Reza Masroor highlighted global debt trends, noting that since 2005, total global debt—including public, corporate, and household debt—has grown by more than 100 percent and now exceeds 200 percent of global GDP. He emphasized that beyond attracting foreign investment, controlling capital outflow is even more critical for economic stability.

Iran, Uzbekistan Reach Agreement on Investment in Mining Industries



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade and Uzbekistan's Ministers of Mining and Geology, as well as Investment, Industry and Trade, have reached agreements to expand bilateral cooperation in trade and investment, particularly in the mining sector.

According to the Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade, during his visit to Uzbekistan, Seyed Mohammad Atabak emphasized that the agreements reached during these meetings mark a significant step forward in boosting trade and commercial exchanges between the two nations.

He stated that although the cooperation between Iran and Uzbekistan has been progressing steadily, both sides—guided by the strong commitment of their presidents—aim to achieve the ambitious goals set for bilateral relations.

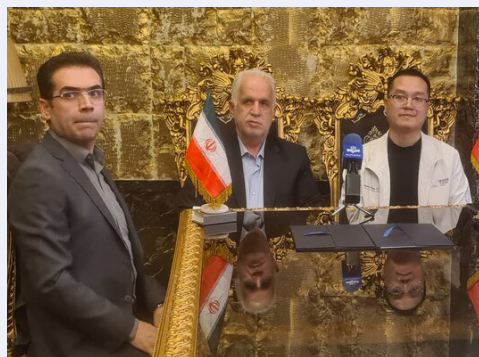
Atabak, who traveled to Tashkent on November 8, led a delegation of senior officials from Iran's industrial and mining sectors. On the first day of the visit, he met with Mohammad Ali Eskandari, Iran's ambassador to Uzbekistan, along with Iranian business leaders and entrepreneurs active in the country.

The talks focused on facilitating trade and customs processes and enhancing cooperation in mining and mineral industries, leveraging the capabilities and resources of both Iran and Uzbekistan.

Meanwhile the head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) emphasized the growing commercial ties between Iran and Uzbekistan, stressing that to fully realize the trade potential between Tehran and Tashkent, existing barriers must be removed and a preferential trade agreement should be signed as soon as possible.

According to a Monday report from the Trade Promotion Organization of Iran, Mohammad Ali Dehghan Dehnavi, in a meeting with Iranian traders and businesspeople residing in Uzbekistan, said that creating new tariff agreements, removing customs barriers, and facilitating commercial exchanges are among the key goals of his visit to the country.

Iran, China Sign Agreement to Jointly Produce Renewable Energy Inverters



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Iran and China have signed a cooperation agreement to jointly produce inverters—a key component in renewable energy systems—and to transfer technical knowledge for local manufacturing in Iran.

The memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed on Monday evening, November 10, between an Iranian knowledge-based company and a Chinese industrial firm. The agreement was facilitated through collaboration among Iran's Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Economic Affairs, and Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade (MIMT).

This marks the first time Iran will host the transfer and local production of such advanced technology for the renewable energy industry. Under the agreement, the Chinese company will invest \$150 million in Iran to establish production and research facilities.

Ali Mahmoudian, CEO of Behin Energy Industrial Group, said the agreement represents a major step toward expanding the use of modern technologies in Iran.

"The use of renewable energy technologies is growing rapidly around the world—and in Iran, this usage doubles every year," Mahmoudian said. "This trend makes investment in renewables increasingly attractive."

He noted that under Iran's Seventh Development Plan, the government is focusing on addressing the country's electricity imbalance by expanding renewable power generation. More than \$15 billion in investment is projected for renewable energy development in the coming years.

Iran Spent \$6b on Gasoline Imports This Year



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Iran's top budget official has warned that the country's growing dependence on gasoline imports is diverting crucial funds away from key sectors such as defense, welfare, and healthcare.

Speaking at Tuesday's open session of the Iranian Parliament (Majlis), Hamid Pourmohammadi, Head of the Plan and Budget Organization, said that while Iran exported \$6 billion worth of gasoline in 2019, it has now spent \$6 billion on imports in the current year.

"Every dollar we spend on importing gasoline means fewer resources for national defense, livelihoods, and medicine," Pourmohammadi said.

Pourmohammadi was addressing lawmakers during a session reviewing the implementation of the first year of Iran's Seventh Five-Year Development Plan. He praised Parliament and the Planning Commission for their oversight, noting that the Plan and Budget Organization had played a central role as the secretariat of the National Steering Council for Development.

He said the organization had submitted 28 executive by-laws to the government during the first year of the plan and prepared nine performance reports for Parliament, covering financial supervision, budget alignment, and implementation challenges.

Pourmohammadi outlined several key performance indicators, including the allocation of 250 trillion tomans in bread subsidies, but noted significant inefficiencies.

"According to data, 23% of all bread purchases were made using just 2% of bank cards, and 13% of all purchases came from 1% of cards. We need to

examine whether our subsidy distribution system is functioning properly," he said.

He added that while last year's development budget reached 430 trillion tomans, completing all infrastructure and transport projects at the current funding pace would take over 100 years, and finishing water and wastewater projects alone would require 35 years — without accounting for new projects being added annually.

Pourmohammadi lamented the reversal of Iran's energy position, stating:

"In 2019, we were gasoline exporters worth six billion dollars. Today, we are importers spending the same amount. Despite investments in CNG projects, various obstacles prevented us from meeting our targets."

Addressing lawmakers, he urged both the government and Parliament to adopt a joint, evidence-based approach to solving the country's financial challenges.

"We must face the realities together. This is a matter of national interest—of survival. If we can agree on just five key reforms—covering subsidies, fuel distribution, development projects, and budget structure—we can change the course," he said.

Pourmohammadi stressed that Iran must rethink how it allocates limited resources to achieve the targeted 8% economic growth rate, suggesting that development projects capable of boosting international trade should take priority.

He concluded by saying: "We, as the policymakers of this generation, will be remembered in history. Let us ensure that we have set the country's path on the right track."

Iran Serves as a Barrier Preventing Narcotics from Entering Europe

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - The Deputy for Prevention and Treatment at Iran's Drug Control Headquarters stated that the country annually sacrifices lives in its battle against narcotics, preventing drugs from reaching Europe and fighting traffickers across land, sea, and difficult terrains.

According to ILNA, quoting the Public Relations Department of Iran's Drug Control Headquarters, a high-level delegation from the World Health Organization (WHO) headquarters in Geneva and its regional office in Cairo met this morning with the Deputy for Prevention and Treatment, as well as senior managers from the Drug Control Headquarters, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, and the Welfare Organization.

Amirhossein Yavari, Deputy for Prevention and Treatment, welcomed the WHO delegation and highlighted Iran's extensive efforts in combating narcotics.

He noted that almost all global models for addiction treatment are implemented in Iran, including outpatient treatment centers, mobile centers, night shelters, residential treatment facilities, harm reduction centers, mobile teams, and drop-in centers.

Yavari said most addiction treatments in Iran involve the use of opium tincture, methadone, or buprenorphine.

He added that there are currently 10,250 addiction treatment centers operating nationwide, serving over 2.2 million patients under treatment.

He reported that 128,000 individuals were admitted to Article 16 treatment centers last year, emphasizing that Iran's therapeutic efforts over the past decade have proven successful.

Rates of HIV and hepatitis among drug users have significantly declined, and free healthcare services are being provided to patients recovering from addiction.

Yavari highlighted the valuable role of public participation, charitable donors, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in addiction prevention, noting that many operate at local, national, and international levels.

He added that the government supports these organizations through empowerment and assistance programs.

To encourage the employment of rehabilitated addicts, Yavari said the Drug Control Headquarters covers the insurance contribution that would normally be paid by employers.

This, he explained, incentivizes companies to hire individuals who have recovered from addiction.



He further announced the establishment of a new Support Fund for Recovered Addicts, focusing on two key post-treatment issues: employment and housing.

The initiative relies heavily on charitable contributions to help recovered individuals reintegrate into society.

Yavari stressed the importance of early prevention in kindergartens and primary schools, saying, "The more we invest in prevention, the more success we will achieve in the future."

He added that prevention programs target education, families, workplaces, and local communities, and called for joint research with international organizations to exchange updated information on addiction treatment.

Yavari proposed establishing a joint technical working group between Iran and the WHO to coordinate preventive actions and projects.

He also suggested developing a three- to five-year roadmap for cooperation with measurable objectives.

Yavari noted that Iran spends between 60 to 70 trillion tomans annually on counter-narcotics operations and emphasized:

"We sacrifice martyrs and veterans each year in this battle. We prevent narcotics from reaching Europe and fight traffickers on land, at sea, and in remote areas. We are on the frontlines, neighboring the world's largest narcotics producers."

He invited the WHO delegation to visit Iran's border areas in their next trip to witness the country's anti-drug operations firsthand.

Expressing dissatisfaction with the current level of cooperation, Yavari said:

"We expect WHO to have a permanent expert based in Iran, providing ongoing documentation and consultation. Our communication with WHO must become more structured and continuous."

Yavari concluded by emphasizing that Iran's counter-narcotics and addiction prevention programs are unparalleled globally, adding:

"Each year, over 100 to 150 books are published, and billions of tomans are spent on research in this field. These achievements could form the basis for sharing our expertise and data with other countries."

Iran, Uzbekistan Launch New Chapter in Cultural and Tourism Cooperation



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - On the sidelines of the 26th UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) General Assembly in Riyadh, Iran and Uzbekistan agreed to expand cooperation in tourism and cultural heritage, emphasizing their deep civilizational and historical ties.

The meeting took place between Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri, Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, and Umid Shadiev, Chairman of Uzbekistan's State Committee for Tourism. The two officials signed agreements to establish a joint technical committee, increase direct flight routes, and develop joint tourism and heritage projects.

Minister Salehi-Amiri described his meeting with Shadiev as "highly significant," noting that relations with Uzbekistan hold a special place in Iran's regional diplomacy.

"Our peoples have no reason for distance and every reason for broad cooperation," he said. "Our cultures and histories are so intertwined that it feels as though we live within a shared cultural geography."

Salehi-Amiri recalled his previous visit to Uzbekistan and underscored the importance of viewing bilateral relations through a cultural and civilizational lens, rather than a purely economic one.

The Iranian minister proposed forming a joint technical committee on tourism to identify and address obstacles to collaboration, suggesting that meetings be held quarterly to ensure steady progress in tourism, education, and cultural exchanges.

Iranian Expats Can Receive Military Service Exemption by Investing in the Country



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - The Iranian government is considering a new plan that would allow Iranians living abroad to receive military service completion certificates in exchange for investing inside the country, according to a senior economic official.

Mehdi Heidari, Deputy Minister of Economy and Head of the Organization for Investment, Economic, and Technical Assistance of Iran, announced that under the proposed scheme, "any Iranian residing abroad who makes an investment in the country will be eligible to receive a military service exemption or completion document."

Speaking to ILNA, Heidari explained that the ministry has identified and introduced a list of "highly profitable and attractive projects with foreign currency returns," assuring expatriate investors that the proposed ventures are "financially sound, with clear mechanisms for repatriating profits."

"Iranians living abroad can participate in these projects and withdraw their principal and interest whenever they wish," he added.

While emphasizing that no government anywhere in the world can guarantee against investment losses, Heidari said the ministry is striving to present only "high-yield projects" to Iranian investors living overseas.

"There are many wealthy Iranians residing abroad," he noted. "We are employing targeted methods to encourage and facilitate their participation in domestic investment opportunities."

Heidari also said that investment committees are held regularly each month, during which "between 60 and 70 investment cases are reviewed and discussed with potential investors."

He identified the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, China, and India as the main countries where Iranian investors currently reside.

"The goal," Heidari reiterated, "is to create a system where investment by Iranians abroad not only benefits the national economy but can also serve as a substitute for fulfilling military service obligations."

Taiwan Evacuates 3,000 as It Awaits Typhoon Fung-wong

TAIPEI (Dispatches) - Taiwan issued a land warning on Tuesday and evacuated more than 3,000 people ahead of the arrival of Typhoon Fung-wong which, while weakening, is expected to dump large amounts of rain on the island's mountainous east coast. Fung-wong is forecast to make landfall on Taiwan's southwestern coast around the major port city of Kaohsiung on Wednesday, after powering through the Philippines as a much stronger system and killing 18 people.

It is then expected to cross the bottom part of Taiwan and enter the Pacific Ocean along the coast of the sparsely populated eastern counties of Taitung and Hualien.

Taiwan President Lai Ching-te, writing on his Facebook page, said people should not head into the mountains or go to the coast or other potentially dangerous areas.



Lula Calls for Global Unity Against Climate Deniers



BELEM (Dispatches) - The United Nations climate conference opened yesterday in the Brazilian Amazon with pleas for the world to keep up the fight against global warming, even as the United States turns its back.

Feeble progress toward weaning off fossil fuels and cutting planet-warming emissions have opened fault lines between countries in Belem, the hot and sticky city on the edge of the rainforest hosting the two-week COP30 summit.

"It's time to inflict a new defeat on the deniers," Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva thundered in his opening address, which followed a traditional performance from Indigenous people in feathered headpieces.

He pointedly slammed those who "spread fear, attack institutions, science, and universities."

Weighing on the talks is the absence of the United States, the world's top oil producer and second-largest polluter.

But American state and local leaders, including California Governor Gavin Newsom, are set to take the stage today to show the country isn't entirely missing in action, highlighting their own climate policies and solidarity with global efforts.

"Make no mistake, humanity is still in this fight," said UN climate chief Simon Stiell. "We have some tough opponents, no doubt, but we also have some heavyweights on our side."

Lukoil Declares Force Majeure in Iraq Over U.S. Sanctions



BAGHDAD (Dispatches) - Lukoil declared force majeure at its Iraqi oil field, sources told Reuters on Monday, and Bulgaria was poised to seize its Burgas refinery, as the Russian company's international operations buckled under the strain of U.S. sanctions.

The force majeure at the West Qurna-2 field in Iraq marks the biggest fallout yet from the sanctions imposed on Russian oil majors Lukoil and Rosneft last month as part of U.S. President Donald Trump's push to end the war in Ukraine.

Four sources with knowledge of the matter told Reuters that Lukoil sent a letter to Iraq's oil ministry last Tuesday saying force majeure conditions prevented it from continuing normal operations at West Qurna-2.

Lukoil did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment on Monday.

Lukoil is the Russian company with the most exposure to international markets. Its attempt to sell its foreign assets to Swiss commodity trader Gunvor failed last week after the U.S. Treasury signalled Washington opposed the deal.

Located 65 kilometres (40 miles) northwest of the port of Basra, West Qurna-2 is one of the world's largest oilfields and Lukoil's most prized foreign asset.

U.S. Senate Passes Deal to End Record 40-Day Gov't Shutdown



WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - The U.S. Senate yesterday approved a compromise that would end the longest government shutdown in U.S. history, breaking a weeks-long stalemate that has disrupted food benefits for millions, left hundreds of thousands of federal workers unpaid and snarled air traffic.

The 60-40 vote passed with the support of nearly all of the chamber's Republicans and eight Democrats, who unsuccessfully sought to tie government funding to health subsidies that are due to expire at the end of the year. While the agreement sets up a December vote on those subsidies, which benefit 24 million Americans, it does not guarantee they will continue.

The deal would restore funding for federal agencies that lawmakers allowed to expire on October 1 and would stall President Donald Trump's campaign to downsize the federal workforce, preventing any layoffs until January 30.

It next heads to the Republican-controlled House of Representatives, where Speaker Mike Johnson has said he would like to pass it as soon as Wednesday and send it on to Trump to sign into law. Trump has called the deal to reopen the government "very good."

The deal would extend funding through January 30, leaving the federal government for now on a path to keep adding about US\$1.8 trillion a year to its US\$38 trillion in debt.

Coming a week after Democrats won high-profile elections in New Jersey, Virginia and elected a democratic socialist

as the next mayor of New York City, the deal has provoked anger among many Democrats who note there is no guarantee that the Republican-controlled Senate or House would agree to extend the health insurance subsidies.

"We wish we could do more," said Senator Dick Durbin of Illinois, the chamber's No. 2 Democrat. "The government shutting down seemed to be an opportunity to lead us to better policy. It didn't work."

A late October Reuters/Ipsos poll found that 50 per cent of Americans blamed Republicans for the shutdown, while 43 per cent blamed Democrats.

US stocks rose yesterday, buoyed by news of progress on a deal to reopen the government.

Trump has unilaterally cancelled billions of dollars in spending and trimmed federal payrolls by hundreds of thousands of workers, intruding on Congress's constitutional authority over fiscal matters. Those actions have violated past spending laws passed by Congress, and some Democrats have questioned why they would vote for any such spending deals going forward.

The deal does not appear to include any specific guardrails to prevent Trump from enacting further spending cuts.

However, the deal would fund the SNAP food-subsidy program through September 30 of next year, heading off any possible disruptions if Congress were to shut down the government again during that time.

Iraq Votes in Pivotal Election Watched Closely by the World

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) — Iraqis elected a new parliament on Tuesday a vote that comes at a pivotal time for the country and the wider region, and which both Iran and the United States will be closely watching.

Iraq has been unusually stable in recent years, as the nation tries to move past decades of war and repression under slain dictator Saddam Hussein and since the US-led invasion that toppled him.

But even now, the country of 46 million people suffers from poor infrastructure, failing public services and endemic corruption.

Many have lost hope that elections can bring meaningful change to their daily lives and see the vote as a sham that only benefits political elites and regional powers.

Polling stations opened at 7am local time (0400 GMT) and closed at 6pm (1500 GMT).

Despite the scepticism, more than 7,740 candidates, nearly a third of them women, are running for the 329-seat parliament.

Only 75 independents are running under an electoral law that many believe favours larger parties.

More than 21 million people are eligible to vote, but there are fears turnout could drop below the 41 per cent registered in 2021 — the lowest since voting began.

"Every four years, the same thing happens. We don't see young faces or new energies" capable of "making a change," said university student



Al-Hassan Yassin.

Over the years since US-led forces ousted Saddam Hussein, a Sunni, Iraq's long-oppressed Shiite majority still dominates, with most parties retaining ties to neighbouring Iran.

By convention in post-invasion Iraq, a Shiite Muslim holds the powerful post of prime minister and a Sunni that of parliament speaker, while the largely ceremonial presidency goes to a Kurd.

No new names have recently emerged, with the same Shiite, Sunni and

Kurdish politicians remaining at the forefront.

Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani, who hopes for a second term after serving under the banner of stability and reconstruction, is likely to score a significant win.

Sudani rose to power in 2022 by the Coordination Framework, a ruling alliance of Shiite parties and factions all linked to Iran.

He has highlighted his success in keeping Iraq relatively unscathed by the turmoil engulfing the Middle East.

But securing a big bloc does not guarantee him a second term: the next prime minister will be voted in by whichever coalition can secure enough allies to become the largest bloc.

Although they run separately, Shiite parties within the Coordination Framework are expected to reunite after elections and pick the next premier.

The ballot is marked by the absence of influential Shiite cleric Moqtada Sadr, who urged his followers to boycott what he called a "flawed election".

In 2021, Sadr secured the largest bloc before withdrawing from parliament following a dispute with Shiite parties that did not support his bid to form a government, and instead came together to form a larger alliance.

The rift culminated in deadly fighting in the capital, Baghdad.

Sunni parties are running separately with the former speaker Mohammed al-Halbussi expected to do well.

Trump Praises Syria's Sharaa as Tough Guy During Landmark White House Meeting

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - U.S. President Donald Trump hailed his Syrian counterpart Ahmed al-Sharaa after unprecedented talks at the White House, saying Sharaa's "rough" past as a jihadist would help him rebuild the war-torn country.

Sharaa, whose rebel forces ousted longtime ruler Bashar al-Assad late last year, was the first Syrian leader to visit the White House since the Middle Eastern country's independence in 1946.

But the 43-year-old's landmark visit to the Oval Office came just days after Washington removed him from its terrorism list. Sharaa's group, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), was formerly affiliated with Al-Qaeda.

Trump said he wanted Syria to become "very successful" after more than a decade of civil war and added that he believed Sharaa "can do it, I really do."

"He's a very strong leader. He comes from a very tough place, and he's a tough guy," Trump told reporters after the meeting, which was closed to press.

"People said he's had a rough past, we've all had rough pasts...And I think, frankly, if you didn't have a rough past, you wouldn't have a chance."

Trump said Syria was a "big part" of his plan for a wider Middle East peace



plan, which the US president is hoping will prop up the fragile ceasefire between Israel and Hamas in Gaza.

But he would not confirm reports that Sharaa would bring Syria into the international US-led alliance against the Islamic State (IS) group, or that it would sign any non-aggression pact with long-term foe Israel.

The Syrian president's visit capped a remarkable turnaround for a former jihadist who once had a US\$10 million US bounty on his head.

In dramatic scenes as he left his meeting with Trump, he climbed out of his motorcade to greet crowds of supporters outside the White House, surrounded on all sides by bodyguards.

Syria's presidency said on X that Sharaa and Trump discussed the bilateral relationship, "the ways to strengthen and develop it, as well as a number of regional and international issues of common interest."

It published photos of Trump standing and shaking hands with a smiling Sharaa beside the Resolute Desk in the Oval Office.

Other pictures showed the Syrian leader sitting opposite Trump with top US officials including Vice President JD Vance, Pentagon chief Pete Hegseth and top US military officer Dan Caine.



Sinner Starts ATP Title Defense in Style With Straight-Sets Win

TURIN (Dispatches) - Italy's Jannik Sinner got his title defence off to a solid start with a dominant straight sets win over ailing Canadian Felix Auger-Aliassime at the ATP Finals in Turin.

Nine days after their duel in the final of the Paris Masters, Sinner was again the strongest winning 7-5, 6-1.

But fellow Italian Lorenzo Musetti was earlier outclassed 6-3, 6-4 by American Taylor Fritz.

After a tight first set, Sinner swept aside Auger-Aliassime, who had been hampered by a left calf injury by breaking serve to rush to a 3-0 lead.

He broke him a second time to close out the match with an ace after one hour 41 minutes.

"Obviously winning the first match is very important in this competition and this format," said 24-year-old Sinner.

"It was a very tough match until 6-5. I had some chances to break. He served very well, only once I missed a return, but it can happen. He played some very aggressive tennis, so I'm happy to overcome a very tough test today.

"I hope it's nothing too serious," Sinner added of his rival. "I wish him obviously a very speedy recovery and hopefully he is back to 100 per cent physically."

Sinner notched his 27th consecutive victory on his preferred indoor hard courts surface and took the lead in the Bjorn Borg Group, which will also see the world number two face Germany's Alexander Zverev and American Ben Shelton.

The native of South Tyrol, the German-speaking region of northeastern Italy, won the 2024 edition

of the tournament which brings together the eight best players of the year, by stringing together five wins without dropping a single set.

The 2025 edition could allow him to finish the season as world number one, currently held by his great Spanish rival Carlos Alcaraz, who has beaten him four times this year.

Earlier Fritz got his bid for a first ATP Finals crown off to the best possible start with a comprehensive win over Musetti.

The 28-year-old American, who lost to Sinner in last year's final, was out of the blocks quickly in the Jimmy Connors group match, taking an early break and holding on to pocket the first set.

The crowd did their best to lift a visibly fatigued Musetti who was a late addition to the line-up.

He only qualified for the Finals on Saturday after Novak Djokovic pulled out with injury, shortly after beating the Italian in the final of the Athens event.

Winning 84 per cent of his first serves and giving away just four break point chances, none of which were taken, Fritz continued to control the match.

The American broke to go 3-1 up and served cleanly all the way to the line.

"I am really happy. I thought I did a lot of things really well," Fritz said.

"I did a great job early on in the match to serve my way out of trouble and save some break points. The whole second set I played well and had a lot of chances to break that I didn't get.

"I am really happy I was able to serve it out there and it didn't come back to ruin it."

Ferrari Chief Tells Hamilton and Leclerc to Talk Less, Drive More



ROME (Dispatches) - Ferrari president John Elkann issued a plea to the misfiring team's two drivers, Lewis Hamilton and Charles Leclerc, calling on them to focus on driving, not talking.

Elkann's intervention follows a disastrous weekend for the Formula One giants when both cars failed to finish the Sao Paulo Grand Prix.

The wretched double DNF prompted seven-time world champion Hamilton to reflect on "a nightmare" first season at the Scuderia.

Hamilton was retired by the team after battling for 40 laps in a damaged car following several incidents in the opening laps and a penalty, while Leclerc's race ended on lap six following a collision in which he was an innocent victim.

"It's a nightmare," said Hamilton at Interlagos.

"I've been living it now for a while and the flip between living the dream of driving for this amazing team and then the nightmare of the results that we've had," added the former Mercedes driver.

Elkann said he wanted Hamilton and Leclerc to concentrate on the three race weekends remaining of an underwhelming 2025 season.

"It is certainly important that our drivers focus on their driving and talk less," Elkann said.

"There are still important races left, and it is not impossible to achieve second place (in the constructors' standings)," he added in comments reported by the AGI Agency at a sponsorship event for the 2026 Milan-Cortina Winter Olympics.

He pointed to Ferrari's success in claiming the world endurance championship crown, saying "it is the demonstration that when Ferrari is a team, we win".

"We need drivers who do not think about themselves, but who think about Ferrari," he added pointedly.

Ferrari left Brazil after slipping from second to fourth in the constructors' title race, and will be looking for a change of luck in the next race in Las Vegas.

Texans Outscore Jags 26-0 in 4th, Surge to Win

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Davis Mills delivered a trio of fourth-quarter touchdowns to help the Houston Texans erase a 19-point deficit and rally for a 36-29 win over the visiting Jacksonville Jaguars.

Mills completed 27 of 45 passes for 292 yards, two touchdowns and an interception in his first start since January 2023 as he took the place of C.J. Stroud (concussion). Mills led the Texans on three straight scoring drives after they fell behind 29-10 with 1:33 left in the third quarter. The game-winning score came on a 14-yard Mills scramble on third-and-goal with 30 seconds left, finishing off an improbable comeback for a win Houston (4-5) badly needed.

The Jaguars' Parker Washington had receiving and punt-return touchdowns in the first half as Trevor Lawrence completed 13 of 23 passes for 158 yards, a touchdown and a pick.

The Texans amassed 196 yards of offense on its final three possessions while Jacksonville (5-4) managed just 11. The Texans outgained the Jaguars 412-213, handing Jacksonville its third loss in the last four games.

Kimani Vidal rushed for 95 yards and a touchdown and Los



Angeles Chargers held Pittsburgh Steelers to 221 total yards while beating the Steelers 25-10 at Inglewood, Calif.

Justin Herbert completed 20 of 33 passes for 220 yards and one touchdown and Cameron Dicker kicked three field goals for the Chargers (7-3). Ladd McConkey had four catches for 107 yards and one score, Khalil Mack recorded a safety and RJ Mickens and Donte Jackson had interceptions for Los Angeles. Keenan Allen had two catches to give him 956 career receptions with the Chargers, breaking the franchise record set by Hall of Famer Antonio Gates (955).

Aaron Rodgers completed 16 of 31 passes for 161 yards, one touchdown and two interceptions for Pittsburgh (5-4). Alex Highsmith registered two sacks for the second straight game for the Steelers.

Jonathan Taylor rushed for 244 yards and three touchdowns, including the game-winning 8-yard score at 3:31 of overtime, as Indianapolis Colts recorded a 31-25 win over Atlanta Falcons in Berlin, Germany.

De Ligt Earns Netherlands Recall



AMSTERDAM (Dispatches) - Defender Matthijs de Ligt is deserving of his recall to the Netherlands squad after several strong performances for Manchester United, said Dutch coach Ronald Koeman.

De Ligt, who scored a late equaliser against Tottenham Hotspur in the Premier League on Saturday, returns to the squad in place of Inter Milan's Stefan de Vrij, who has been dropped for World Cup qualifiers against Poland and Lithuania.

The Dutch have a three-point lead over Poland and a much better goal difference and will qualify if they win in Warsaw on Friday. If not, they are expected to secure their berth at next year's finals when they host Lithuania in Amsterdam yesterday.

"Partly, it is based on playing time, although Nathan Ake isn't playing 50 per cent of the (Manchester City) matches, but he's part of this squad," Koeman explained about the 26-year-old De Ligt at a press conference yesterday.

"You decide separately for each player in the squad. I felt I should select Matthijs based on what he's showing.

"He's been through a difficult period. I've spoken to him and told him he didn't look confident in his actions, but now that's much better. And his position at the club and the club's performance will always be important," the coach added.

As for Ake, Koeman said the fact he was left-footed helped balance the number of right-footed defenders in the squad.

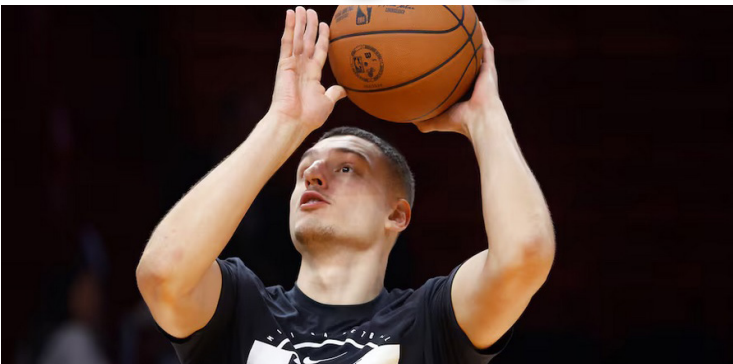
Heat Beat Cavaliers at Buzzer in OT on Andrew Wiggins Alley-Oop

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Andrew Wiggins scored on a lob-pass dunk at the buzzer, leading the host Miami Heat to a 140-138 overtime win over the Cleveland Cavaliers.

Miami's Nikola Jovic inbounded the ball with 0.4 seconds left. Wiggins came off a screen and lost his defender, De'Andre Hunter, for the wide-open slam.

Just prior to that, Cleveland's Donovan Mitchell had seemingly forced double overtime by hitting a 3-pointer with 0.4 seconds left. Mitchell made that shot while fading away, nearly stepping out of bounds, and lofting the ball just over the fingertips of 7-footer Kel'el Ware.

Norman Powell led Miami with a game-high 33 points,



and Ware grabbed a career-high 19 rebounds. Wiggins finished with 23 points, and Jaime Jaquez Jr. added 22 points and 13 rebounds.

The Heat improved to 5-0 at home in a battle between two of the seven highest-scoring offenses in the NBA.

Mitchell led Cleveland with 28 points, 15 rebounds and eight assists. Hunter had 23 points, and Evan Mobley added 21 points and 11 rebounds.

Cleveland had 27 offensive rebounds to just 11 for Miami. But the Cavaliers missed some key free throws, including one by Mobley in overtime.