

Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) Ali Larijani Has Announced That He Is Traveling to the "Friendly and Brotherly Country" of Pakistan

IRAN NEWS

Iran Successfully Contained Wildfires in Its Northern Forests Along the Caspian Sea, With Authorities Deploying Aerial Firefighting Support From Neighboring Turkey to Bring the Blaze Under Control

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Iran Demands Accountability for Israeli Crimes After Fatal Airstrike in Beirut



TEHRAN (Dispatches) - The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran has condemned the Sunday airstrike carried out by the Israeli regime on a densely populated area in the capital city of Lebanon, Beirut, and called for accountability for Israeli crimes.

Israel launched "a treacherous attack" on residential apartments in the southern Beirut suburb of Dahiyeh on Sunday that killed at least five people, including senior Hezbollah commander Haytham Ali Tabatabai and four resistance fighters. It also wounded 28 others, including women and children.

In a statement on Sunday night, the Iranian Foreign Ministry called the strike a "gross violation" of the November 2024 ceasefire agreement and a "brutal attack" on Lebanon's sovereignty.

The ministry emphasized the necessity of holding criminal Israeli leaders accountable for "terrorist acts" and war crimes.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry expressed condolences to the families of the victims and paid tribute to Commander Tabatabai, praising his lifelong dedication to defending Lebanon against Israeli aggression.

The ministry also criticized the United States for its support of Israel, suggesting that this backing is causing the repeated violations of the ceasefire by the Zionist regime.

The ministry also urged the United Nations and the international community to take decisive action against Israeli crimes, and called these military incursions threats to regional and global peace.

Israel's Cowardly Attacks Will Fail to Deter Resilient Lebanese People



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran's embassy in Beirut says Israel's "cowardly" attacks will fail to overcome the determination of the righteous Lebanese people.

The embassy made the announcement in a post on its X account on Sunday after the Israeli regime carried out a new attack on a residential neighborhood, targeting Beirut's southern suburb of Dahiya in a dangerous escalation.

Lebanon's Health Ministry said at least 5 people have been killed and over two dozen others wounded in the airstrike, which comes despite a ceasefire between the Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah and Israel brokered by the United States a year ago.

In its post, the Iranian embassy said the scope of Israel's criminal attacks is expanding to include the southern suburbs of Beirut.

It added that such acts of aggression and crimes bear the clear signature of the terrorist Israeli entity, which does not hesitate to threaten the safety of the Lebanese people.

"However, these cowardly attacks will not diminish the resolve of those who are in the right, nor will they weaken their unwavering will to confront injustice," the embassy stated.

Unknown Martyrs, Though Nameless, Are Symbols of Identity, Steadfastness and Resistance

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - The Commander-in-Chief of Iran's Law Enforcement Force said that the culture of sacrifice and martyrdom has played an unparalleled role in preserving Iran's independence, noting that the unknown martyrs, despite their lack of identity markers, are powerful symbols of identity, endurance, resistance, and the dignity of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Speaking at the funeral ceremony of 100 unknown martyrs held, on the anniversary of the martyrdom of Fatemeh al-Zahra (S), from the University of Tehran to the "Martyrs' Ascension Hall," Brigadier General Ahmadreza Radan emphasized that martyrs are not only military heroes, but also teachers of insight and models of unity, selflessness, and resistance, who paved the way for the nation's honor and pride through their sacrifice.

He added that the martyrs remain eternal guests in the hearts of the people, and their names and memories will continue to live on.

Radan stated: "Their path is endless and unique, and we must make it a model for our lives and efforts." Expressing gratitude and respect to the Iranian people, he said: "I send greetings to the heroic and proud nation of Iran, and to the late Imam and the wise Leader who have always been sources of honor and dignity."

Radan emphasized that the Islamic Republic of Iran, under the shade of the martyrs' sacrifice, the nation's perseverance, and the wise leadership of the Revolution, has become a vessel of salvation in stormy waters, bringing pride to the nation despite hostility and threats from global arrogance and Zionism.

He offered special salutations to the martyrs whose remains returned today from various parts of the country, saying: "These martyrs, with patience and endurance, showed us a path we will continue forever."

According to Radan, the unknown martyrs, though nameless, have become symbols of honor, pride, and strength for Iran and Islam.

He stressed that these martyrs, while remaining anonymous, defended the country's values, independence, and dignity, and bravely gave their lives so the nation could take pride in them. "Though they had no names, they brought honor, dignity, and prestige to our country."

He added that after years of distance and waiting, these martyrs have returned to their homeland, even as their families continue to mourn them with open hearts and strong wills—wills that Radan described as "iron-like," essential to preserving the Islamic Revolution and its values.

The commander concluded that the nation must continue the martyrs' path—a path filled with love, sacrifice, and insight, leading Iran to remarkable victories. He reaffirmed that the culture of



to: Masoud Shahrestani

sacrifice, resistance, and strengthening of hope is the foundation of the Islamic Republic's success, and that society must always remain alongside the martyrs and keep their memory alive.

Meanwhile the Government Information Council issued a statement expressing gratitude to people across the country for their magnificent participation in the funeral ceremonies of unknown martyrs, emphasizing that the burial of 300 unknown martyrs sent a message of unity, cohesion, and attachment of the Iranian people to their homeland to the world.

The Council released the statement on Monday afternoon, December 3, praising the citizens for their massive turnout and, after citing the Quranic verse:

"Among the believers are men who have been true to the covenant they made with Allah; some of them have completed their vow, and some are still waiting; and they have not changed their determination in the least," the statement added:

"Blessings of God be upon those who joined the ranks of the faithful and sincerely fulfilled the covenant they made with their Creator through the sacrifice of their blood."

The statement noted that, coinciding with the anniversary of the martyrdom of Fatemeh al-Zahra (S), all across Iran, the presence of these martyrs—though they were honored as unknown—was a fragrant reminder of their devotion, with their names preserved and beloved by God.

The Council emphasized that the fact that the noble people of Iran, four decades after the eight-year imposed war, and despite the heavy propaganda and media campaigns of the enemies, came out in such numbers to honor the nation's sons, once again demonstrates how God has blessed the martyrs and how luminous and influential their path remains.

The statement also expressed gratitude to all state institutions, particularly the General Staff of the Armed Forces, for organizing the ceremony, and thanked the Iranian people who turned the farewell into a historic event for the nation's sons and defenders. It concluded: "Today, the sacred remains of 300 unknown martyrs conveyed the message of the people's unity, cohesion, and attachment to Iran to the world more powerfully than any media outlet could."

The ceremony included speeches by Ahmadreza Radan, Commander-in-Chief of Law Enforcement, and the presence of officials such as Mohammad Sadegh Motamedian, Governor of Tehran; Brigadier General Hassan Hassanzadeh, Commander of Mohammad Rasul Allah Corps; Hossein Khosh-Aghal, Tehran Governor; and Brigadier General Abbasali Mohammadian, Commander of Tehran Police, along with other officials and public figures.

Additionally, in most cities across the Islamic Republic of Iran, funeral ceremonies for 200 unknown martyrs were held with enthusiastic participation from citizens.

UN Envoy Calls for Iran's Support in Advancing Yemen Peace Efforts



TEHRAN (Dispatches) - The United Nations' special envoy for Yemen has called on Iran to keep supporting the world body in its efforts towards advancing a peace process in Yemen.

Hans Grundberg made the remarks during a meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi in the Omani capital of Muscat on Monday.

Grundberg briefed Araqchi on Yemen's latest developments and called for the continuation of Tehran's support for the UN efforts aimed at improving conditions and pushing forward the peace process in the conflict-ridden country.

Araqchi, for his part, condemned Israel's acts of aggression against regional countries, along with the ongoing blockade and sanctions against Yemen.

He also warned that the Zionist regime's violations could lead to more insecurity and instability in the region.

For more than a decade, Yemen has been gripped by conflict involving the popular Ansarullah resistance movement, as well as militants supported separately by Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

Saudi Arabia waged a devastating war on Yemen in March 2015, but it failed to reinstall a Riyadh-friendly regime there. In 2022, the kingdom agreed to a ceasefire with Ansarullah, which has been running state affairs in the absence of a functional government in Sana'a.

Iran, Oman Discuss Ties, Regional Issues in Muscat



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

TEHRAN - The top Iranian and Omani diplomats have discussed mutual relations and the latest developments in the West Asia region.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi, who arrived in Muscat on Sunday leading a diplomatic delegation, met with his Omani counterpart, Badr bin Hamad bin Hamoud Al Busaidi.

They exchanged views about ways to promote Tehran-Muscat relations in all fields of common interest, particularly in the economic and commercial sectors.

Regional developments, especially the Israeli regime's ongoing genocide in Gaza and the continuation of its warmongering and crimes against Lebanon and other countries in the region, were also discussed by the two foreign ministers.

Araqchi praised Oman's efforts and initiatives during indirect negotiations between Iran and the United States about Tehran's peaceful nuclear energy program and clarified the latest developments in this regard.

Araqchi is also planned to participate in the Muscat Forum and outline Iran's positions and views on regional issues.

During his stay, the Iranian foreign minister will hold consultations with senior Omani officials.

Economic Conditions Unacceptable for Government and People

IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - The President stated that the country's economic conditions are unacceptable for both the government and the people, stressing the need for transparency about the measures required to address economic challenges.

The Market Regulation Headquarters meeting was held on Sunday afternoon, with the participation of Masoud Pezeshkian.

During the meeting, which was attended by the First Vice President and other permanent members of the Market Regulation Headquarters, the President emphasized the importance of identifying practical solutions to counter rising inflation and price hikes, noting: "Various measures to control inflation have been implemented worldwide, so we need comparative and scientific studies to determine which approaches have been most effective."

Pezeshkian stressed that "the economy cannot be run by decree," and added that the current policies should be adjusted through appropriate solutions. He noted that these solutions must not create social pressure or shocks, but should instead aim for calm and steady reform of economic processes.

The President also underlined the need to compensate for the rising prices of essential goods through rationing, saying: "The government must focus on livelihoods, housing, security, healthcare, and education. It cannot subsidize non-essential goods while failing to provide subsidies for medicine, as the welfare and health of the people are the government's responsibility."

The meeting also included a report on the latest market prices of various goods.

Meanwhile on Sunday, the Vice President for Rural Development and Deprived Areas announced the development of a unified model for allocating credits to underprivileged regions, stating that with a dedicated budgetary annex for rural development and poverty alleviation, the coming year will see greater coherence and accountability in fund distribution.

Abdolkarim Hosseinzadeh outlined the government's policies for next year's budgeting cycle and highlighted the administration's emphasis on budgetary justice and reforming the distribution structure. He said: "President Pezeshkian's primary focus is improving the livelihoods of lower-income groups and developing underprivileged areas and villages. In previous years, poverty-alleviation budgets were scattered across multiple, dispersed lines, involving many agencies without sufficient oversight. The government's approach is to consolidate all related resources into a



cohesive budget annex for next year, so that programs and objectives align under a single framework."

Hosseinzadeh stressed the importance of avoiding duplication of efforts among agencies, adding: "By integrating budget lines, overlapping activities are prevented, outputs increase, efficiency improves, and at the same time, oversight and transparency are enhanced for the government, parliament, and the public. In my view, achieving true justice in the country hinges on this cohesion in the budgetary structure."

Explaining the government's justice-oriented approach, Hosseinzadeh said: "Among Iran's 31 provinces, some rank lower in development indicators. Through a 'positive discrimination' approach in the 1405 budget, we aim to reduce the gap between these regions and the national average. This is exactly what people expect from a government whose slogan is fairness and justice, and Dr. Pezeshkian personally pursues this issue diligently in government sessions."

He added that if budgetary justice is properly implemented, it will not only reduce regional disparities but also increase public trust in decision-making, allowing the government to respond more effectively and transparently to citizens' needs.

Referring to plans for developing border areas, Hosseinzadeh said: "In the 14th government, and especially this year, we have taken a more serious and systematic approach to border capacities. Projects launched last year will continue this year under a clearer model, including the identification of 120 rural border points and skills development programs for them."

He noted: "In West Azerbaijan Province alone, there are over a thousand kilometers of borders with three countries, and these areas hold untapped potential that has lacked a strategic, internal development focus. Now, with the President's emphasis, ongoing meetings with governors of border regions ensure local and community-based capacities are prioritized."

Hosseinzadeh highlighted a shift from relying solely on government investment: "The private sector and local communities have been missing links in developing border areas. Today, the government seeks people-centered development, leveraging cooperatives, local institutions, and small- and medium-sized investments."

He concluded: "With God's help and the President's guidance, we aim to bring border and underprivileged provinces to a level of genuine development that satisfies the people and is a source of collective pride for the government."



Iran Sees 81% Decline in Rainfall

TEHRAN (IRNA) - Two months into the current water year (starting late September 2025 and ending September 2026), Iran has recorded an 81% decrease in rainfall compared to long-term averages, while nine provinces have experienced no precipitation at all. The country's rainfall situation during the first two months of the water year has become critically low, raising major concerns for water supply across various sectors.

The situation in Tehran is reported to be even more alarming than in most regions. To ensure adequate water supply, authorities have begun pressure management at night in the capital.

The latest statistics from Iran's Water Resources Management Company show a dramatic decline in precipitation nationwide. From the start of the water year until November 21, the country received only 5.6 mm of rainfall.

Opportunities for Joint Production to Access Export Markets



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - A virtual meeting between pharmaceutical industry representatives from Iran and Cuba, hosted by the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, explored potential collaboration in drug manufacturing and biotechnology.

According to the Tehran Chamber of Commerce's public relations office, the webinar was organized by the Chamber's International Affairs and Trade Development Department in cooperation with the Cuban Chamber of Commerce. During the session, pharmaceutical companies from both countries discussed prospects for joint production, investment in drug manufacturing targeting third-country markets, and opportunities for co-exporting to other nations.

Speaking at the event, Mohammad Abdehzadeh, head of the Tehran Chamber's Health Economy Committee, highlighted the longstanding cooperation between Iran and Cuba in pharmaceuticals and medical equipment. He noted that both countries have signed an agreement enabling mutual registration of pharmaceutical products, creating a platform for expanding bilateral drug exchanges.

Also participating was Luisa Martinez, Director of International Relations at the Cuban Chamber of Commerce, who emphasized the Chamber's readiness to facilitate information exchange between companies in both nations. She stressed that Iran and Cuba have made significant strides in the pharmaceutical sector, a competitive advantage that could pave the way for joint production and access to global markets.

Additionally, David Carbelo, Commercial Director of BioCubaFarma, introduced the Cuban pharmaceutical group and its products. He noted that BioCubaFarma exports its medicines to more than 700 markets across 41 countries.

From Iran, Maryam Tajabadi, a member of the Tehran Chamber's board of representatives and CEO of a knowledge-based company producing pharmaceuticals and probiotics, outlined Iran's capabilities in the drug and biotech sectors. She stressed that both countries have strong opportunities for partnership in joint production. Other Iranian pharmaceutical representatives also provided insights into potential avenues for cooperation with Cuba's drug industry.

Iran Strengthens Technological Cooperation with Kenya and Algeria



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Minister of Communications and Information Technology held separate meetings with his Kenyan and Algerian counterparts on the sidelines of the 2025 World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC) in Baku, focusing on regional collaboration and expanding international technology markets.

Minister Seyyed Sattar Hashemi continued efforts to advance Iran's "technology diplomacy," holding extensive talks on cooperation in smart government services, the space industry, the digital economy, and cybersecurity.

In his meeting with Seyyed Ali Zerrouki, Algeria's Minister of Post and Telecommunications, the two sides reviewed opportunities for cooperation in smart government, digital infrastructure, cybersecurity, the space sector, and regional connectivity.

Hashemi outlined Iran's strategic goals in digital transformation, stating that the country aims to raise the share of its digital economy to 10% of GDP. He pointed to the growth of Iran's communications network, noting the activation of more than 2,400 5G sites in major cities and continued 4G rollout in rural regions through universal service programs.

The minister described Iranian space capabilities — including satellite design, ground stations, and space-based services — as reliable foundations for joint projects. He also stressed the need to activate previous agreements between the two countries, highlighting Iran's experience in tackling hybrid threats and communications crises.

Iran Boosts Fuel Production by 9m Liters

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - Iran has increased its daily production of gasoline and diesel by a combined total of 9 million liters since the start of the 14th administration through September this year, equivalent to output from a 100,000-barrel-per-day refinery, a senior oil official announced.

According to Iran's National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company (NIORDC), Mohammad Ali Dadvar, deputy head of the company, reported that gasoline production rose by 4.3 million liters per day and diesel output increased by 4.7 million liters per day between September 2023 and September 2024.

He explained that gasoline production stood at 98 million liters per day in the year leading up to September 2023, and has now reached 102.3 million liters per day. Diesel production also increased from 111 million liters per day to 115.7 million liters per day over the same period.

Dadvar emphasized that this growth was achieved without the addition of any new refineries, yet the increase in output is equivalent to that of a new 100,000-barrel-per-day facility.

Comparing the first six months of the current year to the same period last year, Dadvar said gasoline production increased from 98 million liters per day to 98.5

million liters per day, despite full maintenance and reconstruction of the RFCC unit at Arak's Shazand refinery, which has not produced gasoline since early August 2024.

During this period, however, gasoline consumption rose sharply, climbing from 124.5 million liters per day to 133 million liters per day, an increase of 8 million liters per day.

Diesel production also rose from 112 million liters per day in the first half of last year to 115 million liters per day in the first half of this year.

Dadvar also pointed to an increase in refinery feedstock, noting that crude processed by refineries grew from 2.287 million barrels per day to 2.359 million barrels per day from September 2023 to September 2024. In the first six months of this year, feedstock rose from 2.302 million to 2.321 million barrels per day.

He detailed the comprehensive overhaul of the RFCC unit at the Imam Khomeini (RA) Shazand refinery in Arak. The unit had undergone only emergency repairs over the past 13 years, causing a significant decline in its gasoline and diesel output.

Despite high demand pressures from increased travel during the New Year and summer holidays, as well as disruptions linked to the recent 12-day conflict, the entire RFCC unit—including both domestic and international components of its reactors—was fully rebuilt to prevent permanent shutdown.

250% Surge in Consumer Demand During 12-Day War

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - The head of Iran's Chamber of Guilds stated that while prices have increased, the country has experienced no shortage of essential goods, noting that consumer demand rose by as much as 250% during the 12-day war.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony of the Specialized Basij Unit for the National Chain Stores Union on Sunday, November 23, 2025, Qasem Nodeh Farahani emphasized that the launch of the specialized Basij coinciding with the anniversary of the martyrdom of Hazrat Fatemeh was seen as a positive sign.

Nodeh Farahani explained that most guild unions across Iran host Basij branches whose members are drawn from the business community. He added that establishing a Basij unit for chain stores will strengthen coordination between retailers and guilds.

Referring to the resilience of retailers during the 12-day conflict, he revealed that "consumer purchases increased by 200% to 250% during the war." He stressed that one of the enemies' goals was to empty store shelves, since warehouses and supply centers can be monitored, but household stockpiling cannot be controlled.

He stated that ensuring fully stocked store shelves is the only way to prevent panic buying. "Fortunately, thanks to the efforts of guilds, chain stores, and retailers across the country, this did not happen," he said.

Nodeh Farahani also addressed concerns regarding access to flour and bread in northern provinces during the conflict. He reported that, as travel to northern regions increased a few days after the outbreak of war, flour distribution to bakeries in Gilan, Mazandaran, and other cities was expanded through coordination



between the Shahid Salami Command Center and the Ministry of Interior, preventing shortages. He described this as a sign of "unity, cooperation, and coordination."

He concluded by acknowledging inflation but emphasized that commodity supply has remained stable: "Yes, there is inflation in the country, and we cannot deny that. But we are grateful that we have no shortages—that in itself is a blessing."

At the same event, Mohammad Ali Khorasani, the newly appointed head of

the National Chain Stores Union, emphasized that the main goal of chain store retailers during the 12-day war was to ensure public calm through solidarity and service continuity.

He stressed that Basij is not merely an organization but "a mindset and a management approach rooted in responsibility, expertise, commitment, and service." In the retail sector, he added, Basij can act as a driving force for progress.

Khorasani noted that chain stores account for 15% of the national retail market and therefore have major influence both in supplying goods and stabilizing distribution. He stated that full shelves in these stores have provided reassurance for the public.

He also highlighted the sector's resilience, explaining that chain stores can maintain stock for one to three months for certain goods. For this reason, he said, stores were ordered to remain open throughout the conflict.

"On the very first day of the war, June 13, we issued a directive to all members prohibiting any closures," Khorasani said, adding that stores were also instructed not to cancel sales discounts offered before the conflict. Essential items were prioritized, and this policy was successfully carried out.

Textile Industry Must Reach Sustainable Stability



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - The First Vice President announced the government's support for the textile industry and expressed opposition to excessive imports in this sector, stating that the government is determined to address the challenges facing the industry. He emphasized that Iran must achieve a sustainable state in textile production.

Mohammad Reza Aref said on Sunday, during a meeting on evaluating and revitalizing the textile sector, that textiles are a native and traditional industry of Iran. He noted that many countries once recognized Iran through its textile sector, but negligence in recent years has led to setbacks, though efforts to correct past shortcomings have now begun.

Highlighting the importance of current supportive measures, Aref stated: "A promising path has started and weaknesses in the textile industry are being resolved. The quality of domestically produced clothing is very good, but we must maintain this course. Once domestic products gain a proper place in national and regional markets, we must ensure that quality does not decline."

He also described the regional market as a strong opportunity for Iranian textile exports that must not be overlooked.

The First Vice President stressed the need to remove barriers in the textile sector, saying that the entire supply chain, from start to finish, must be addressed. He noted that the textile industry generates high employment and the government will support it.

Aref also emphasized the necessity of acquiring modern equipment for the textile sector and the importance of banning imports of textile products and fabrics that are sufficiently produced domestically. He stated that the government is sensitive to the challenges of this industry and aims to bring it to a stable condition, supporting domestic production while opposing uncontrolled imports.

Estimated Export Capacity of Iran's Zinc Industry Reaches \$2b



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

TEHRAN - The secretary of Iran's Lead and Zinc Industries Association announced that the country's zinc sector, once struggling to sell its concentrate, has now developed to a point where its export capacity is estimated at nearly \$2 billion.

Seyed Moein Jafari stated that, in the past, producers of zinc concentrate faced significant challenges. "Previously, manufacturing a 50% grade concentrate required great effort, yet there were no buyers," he said.

According to Jafari, gradual progress driven by private-sector investment and the work of industry experts has transformed the sector. Today, around 15,000 people are directly employed in the zinc and lead industry, while indirect jobs multiply this figure several times, highlighting its economic and social importance.

Jafari explained that, under current policies, 20% of zinc production is supplied domestically and 80% must be exported. He noted that producers even offer more than the minimum required volume on the Iran Mercantile Exchange, ensuring full supply to domestic industries such as pharmaceuticals, agriculture, and galvanization.

He emphasized that downstream products, including zinc sulfate used in agriculture and zinc oxide used in pharmaceuticals, are fully produced domestically, eliminating the need for imports. However, Jafari noted that due to the technical nature of these compounds, they cannot be exported on a large commercial scale.

Suicide Bombers Kill 3 at Pakistan Paramilitary HQ

PESHAWAR (Dispatches) - Three suicide bombers targeted the headquarters of a Pakistani paramilitary force on Monday, killing three personnel and wounding at least five, authorities said.

The attackers opened fire as they forced themselves into the headquarters of the frontier constabulary in Peshawar city before blowing themselves up inside the complex, police said.

Three paramilitary personnel were killed, said Javed Iqbal, the deputy commandant of the force.

"The first suicide bomber carried out an attack on the main entrance of the constabulary and the others entered the compound," a senior official told Reuters on condition of anonymity as he is not authorised to speak to the media.



Trump Seizes Control of Republicans' 2026 Election Strategy



WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - President Donald Trump isn't on the ballot in next November's midterm elections, but he's plunging into them with his own presidency at stake. He's calling candidates, making early endorsements, shaping strategy and pushing economic messaging to try to keep Congress in Republican hands, according to nine Republicans involved in election strategy.

As early as this summer, 18 months before Election Day 2026, Trump was urging Republican congressmen exploring Senate or gubernatorial runs to stand for reelection instead to avoid party primary fights, according to a White House official, a senior Trump adviser and a party operative.

Such an early, hands-on involvement in midterm elections is unprecedented for a president in modern times.

"Presidents usually are wheeled into action later in the campaign season," said Bill Galston, who was a senior adviser in former Democratic President Bill Clinton's White House. "This is extremely unusual."

Trump's urgency spiked after state and local elections on November 4 when exit polling showed voters punished Republicans over the rising cost of living.

In multiple meetings immediately after the vote, Trump angrily told aides that Republicans should own the affordability message, the White House official told Reuters on condition of anonymity to discuss Trump's reaction.

China Criticizes Japan's Plan to Deploy Missiles on Island Near Taiwan



BEIJING (Dispatches) - China called Japan's plan to deploy missiles on an island near Taiwan a deliberate attempt to "create regional tension and provoke military confrontation" on Monday, as a diplomatic dispute simmers between the two nations.

The remarks come amid their worst diplomatic crisis in years, after Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi said this month a hypothetical Chinese attack on democratically governed Taiwan could trigger a military response from Tokyo.

"Right-wing forces in Japan are... leading Japan and the region towards disaster," Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told a regular press briefing. Beijing "is determined and capable of safeguarding its national territorial sovereignty," she added.

Japan's Defence Minister Shinjiro Koizumi said on Sunday that plans were "steadily moving forward" to deploy a medium-range surface-to-air missile unit at a military base on Yonaguni, an island about 110 km (68 miles) off Taiwan's east coast.

"The move is extremely dangerous and should raise serious concerns among nearby countries and the international community," especially in the context of Takaichi's earlier remarks, Mao said on Monday.

China had responded to her comments with vitriol in state media commentaries, bans on Japanese seafood, a halt in Japanese movie releases, and a warning to citizens not to visit Japan.

Beijing views Taiwan as its own territory, and has not ruled out the use of force to take control of it, though the island's government rejects Beijing's claim and says only Taiwan's people can decide their future.

U.S., Ukraine Work on Refined Peace Plan to End War With Russia

KYIV (Dispatches) - The United States and Ukraine sought on Monday to narrow the gaps in a peace plan to end the war with Russia after agreeing to modify a U.S. proposal that Kyiv and its European allies saw as a Kremlin wish list.

Washington and Kyiv said in a joint statement they had drafted a "refined peace framework" after talks in Geneva on Sunday. Though there were no specifics, the dialogue received a cautious welcome from some of Ukraine's allies.

The U.S. blindsided Kyiv and European countries with a 28-point peace plan last week, giving Ukraine until Thursday to agree to a framework to end Europe's deadliest war since World War Two.

The sudden push raises the pressure on Ukraine and President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who is now at his most vulnerable since the start of the war after a corruption scandal saw two of his ministers dismissed and as Russia makes battlefield gains. He could struggle to get Ukrainians to swallow a deal viewed as selling out their interests.

After Sunday's talks, no public statement was released on how the revised plan would handle contentious issues such as how to guarantee Ukraine's security against future Russian threats and how to fund the rebuilding of Ukraine. Zelenskyy said negotiations were ongoing, while the Kremlin said nothing had officially been conveyed to Russia.

"We all continue working with partners, especially the United States, to look for compromises that will strengthen but not weaken us," Zelenskyy said via video link from a separate summit of Ukraine's allies in Sweden.

Zelenskyy said Russia must pay for the war in Ukraine and that a decision on using frozen Russian assets was crucial.

U.S. President Donald Trump has kept up the pressure on Ukraine to reach a deal.

"Is it really possible that big progress is being made in Peace Talks between Russia and Ukraine??? Don't believe it until you see it, but something good just may be happening," Trump wrote on Truth Social.

Zelenskyy could travel to the United States as soon as this week to discuss the most sensitive aspects of the plan with Trump, according to sources familiar with the matter.

The initial 28-point proposal put forth by the U.S. last week called on Ukraine to cede more territory, accept limits on its military and abandon its ambitions to join NATO. Russian demands that Ukrainians have long rejected.

"Trump's special plan is, in general, a capitulation for Ukraine," said Anzhelika Yurkevych, a 62-year-old civil servant in Kyiv. "I think the Ukrainian people will not agree. Even if they sign, it needs to be implemented, the Ukrainian people will be the ones to do it. And they do not agree with this."



Underscoring the war's toll, Ukraine's second-largest city Kharkiv was hit by what officials said was a massive drone attack that killed four people on Sunday.

With smoke rising from the rubble, one man was seen crouched and holding the hand of a dead body.

"There was a family, there were children," said Ihor Klymenko, Red Cross Commander of the emergency response team in Kharkiv. "I can't tell you how, but the children are alive, thank God, the man is alive. The woman died, unfortunately."

Across the border, Russian air defences downed Ukrainian drones en route to Moscow, forcing three airports that serve the capital to temporarily restrict flights.

European allies said they were not involved in crafting the original plan. They released a counter-proposal that would ease some of the proposed territorial concessions and include a NATO-style security guarantee from the United States for Ukraine if it is attacked.

"We are, of course, closely monitoring the media reports that have been pouring in from Geneva over the past few days, but we have not yet received anything official," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry

Peskov told reporters.

Some EU leaders met to discuss Ukraine on the sidelines of an EU-African Union summit in Luanda on Monday, with others dialing in via video conference.

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz said Trump had expressed an openness to a jointly developed peace plan for Ukraine.

"And that is precisely what the representatives of Ukraine, the United States of America and the European member states achieved yesterday in Geneva," said Merz in Luanda.

"We welcome the fact that these talks took place in Geneva. We also welcome the interim result. Some issues were clarified, but we also know: Peace in Ukraine won't happen overnight."

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk said any agreement must not weaken Ukraine or Europe.

"This is a delicate matter because no one wants to discourage Americans and President Trump from having the United States on our side in this process," he said.

"There is no agreement that a military weakening, or so-called limits on the number of troops in Ukraine, is a condition for peace," he added.

U.S. to Launch New Phase of Venezuela Operations



WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - The United States is poised to launch a new phase of Venezuela-related operations in the coming days, four U.S. officials told Reuters, as the Trump administration escalates pressure on President Nicolas Maduro's government.

Reuters was not able to establish the exact timing or scope of the new operations, nor whether U.S. President Donald Trump had made a final decision to act. Reports of looming action have proliferated in recent weeks as the U.S. military has deployed forces to the Caribbean amid worsening relations with Venezuela.

Two of the U.S. officials said covert operations would likely be the first part of the new action against Maduro. All four officials quoted in this article spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of impending action by the United States.

The Pentagon referred questions to the White House. The CIA declined to comment.

A senior administration official on Saturday did not rule anything out regarding Venezuela.

"President Trump is prepared to use every element of American power to stop drugs from flooding into our country and to bring those responsible to justice," said the official, speaking on the condition of anonymity.

The Trump administration has been weighing Venezuela-related options to combat what it has portrayed as Maduro's role in supplying illegal drugs

that have killed Americans. He has denied having any links to the illegal drug trade.

Two U.S. officials told Reuters the options under consideration included attempting to overthrow Maduro.

Maduro, in power since 2013, has contended that Trump seeks to oust him and that Venezuelan citizens and the military will resist any such attempt.

The Venezuelan president, who will celebrate his 63rd birthday on Sunday, appeared on Saturday night at Caracas' main theater for the

premiere of a television series based on his life.

A military buildup in the Caribbean has been underway for months, and Trump has authorized covert CIA operations in Venezuela. The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration on Friday warned major airlines of a "potentially hazardous situation" when flying over Venezuela and urged them to exercise caution.

Three international airlines cancelled flights departing from Venezuela on Saturday after the FAA warning.

The United States plans on Monday to designate the Cartel de los Soles a foreign terrorist organization for its alleged role in importing illegal drugs into the United States, officials said. The Trump administration has accused Maduro of leading Cartel de los Soles, which he denies.

U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said last week that the terrorist designation "brings a whole bunch of new options to the United States."

Trump has said the upcoming designation would allow the United States to strike Maduro's assets and infrastructure in Venezuela, but he also has indicated a willingness to potentially pursue talks in hopes of a diplomatic solution.

Two U.S. officials acknowledged conversations between Caracas and Washington. It was unclear whether those conversations could impact the timing or scale of the U.S. operations.

Gaza Truce Progress Slow as Israeli-Hamas Violence Persists

CAIRO (Dispatches) - Israeli forces killed three Palestinians in Gaza near the line demarcating areas of Israeli control on Monday, underlining the struggle to broaden a fragile ceasefire deal approved over six weeks ago to global acclaim.

Palestinian medics said Monday's incidents involved an Israeli drone firing a missile at a group of people east of Khan Younis, killing two and wounding another, and a tank shell killing a person on the eastern side of Gaza City.

Israel's military said it had fired after identifying what it called "terrorists" crossing the so-called yellow line and approaching its troops, posing an immediate threat to them.

Palestinian militant group Hamas and Israel signed a truce on October 9 halting two years of devastating warfare but the agreement left the most intractable disputes for further talks, freezing the conflict without resolving it.

Both sides have since accused each other of deadly breaches of existing



commitments in the agreement and of pushing back against later steps required by U.S. President Donald Trump's 20-point peace plan for Gaza.

The Gaza Health Ministry said on Monday that at least 342 Palestinians had been killed by Israeli fire since the start of the truce. Israel says three of its soldiers have been killed by militant gunfire in the same period.

Last week, the United Nations Security Council gave formal backing to Trump's plan, which calls for an interim technocratic Palestinian government in Gaza, overseen by an international "board of peace" and backed by an international security force.

Trump's plan also requires reform of the Palestinian Authority, based in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, who helped the U.S. develop the plan and who Trump has said may join the board of peace, met the PA's deputy leader Hussein al-Sheikh in the West Bank on Sunday.



Verstappen Triumphs in Las Vegas

LAS VEGAS (Dispatches) - Red Bull's Max Verstappen won the Las Vegas Grand Prix but McLaren's Lando Norris had one hand on the Formula One title after finishing second and stretching his lead over teammate Oscar Piastri to 30 points.

Piastri finished fourth after Mercedes' Kimi Antonelli, who was ahead of the Australian at the chequered flag, had five seconds added for jumping the start.

George Russell, last year's winner of the floodlit race and like Norris making his 150th start, completed the podium for Mercedes.

With two grands prix and a sprint to come, worth a maximum 58 points, Norris has 408 points to Piastri's 378 with four-times world champion Verstappen still mathematically in contention on 366.

Norris finished 20.741 seconds behind but can now secure his first title in Qatar next weekend, with McLaren having already clinched the constructors' crown for the second year in a row.

"The car was working pretty well, much more to my liking," said Verstappen, ferried to the podium with Norris and Russell in a LEGO pink Cadillac convertible driven by actor Terry Crews as fireworks lit up the sky over the Strip.

"It was at the end quite a decent gap."

It was the 69th win of Verstappen's career and his sixth of the season, as well as his 125th podium and eighth in a row in the 150th grand prix of Red Bull's partnership with Honda.

Norris lost the lead to Verstappen at the start, dropping to third when he ran wide at the first corner and opened the door for the Dutch driver and Russell.

He retook second from Russell on the 34th of 50 laps but then had to manage fuel to the finish. "I let Max have a win," he joked. "I let him go, let him have a nice race. No, I just braked too late," he added, with an expletive on the live television feed that could land the Briton in trouble with the governing FIA.

"It was not my best performance out there but when the guy wins by 20 seconds it's because he has just done a better job and they're a bit quicker."

Antonelli finished fifth with Ferrari's Charles Leclerc sixth and Williams' Carlos Sainz seventh. Isack Hadjar was eighth for Racing Bulls and Sauber's Nico Hulkenberg and Ferrari's Lewis Hamilton completed the top 10.

Piastri dropped from fifth to seventh on the opening lap after contact with Racing Bulls' Liam Lawson, who plunged to last with a badly damaged car.

Verstappen was 20 seconds clear of the field by lap 23 and pitted at the halfway point, rejoining in the lead after Russell and Norris had switched already to the hard tyre.

Aston Martin's Lance Stroll was taken out by Sauber's Gabriel Bortoleto as the Brazilian rookie dived aggressively into the first corner and ran out of road, with both retiring immediately.

Alpine's Pierre Gasly was also a spinner at the start and the virtual safety car was triggered on the second lap for marshals to retrieve debris between turns one and four.

The VSC was deployed again on lap 16 for more debris on track after Williams' Alex Albon and Hamilton collided, with the latter racing from 19th and last on the grid to 13th on the opening lap.

Shai Scores 37 as NBA-Best Thunder Avenge Lone Loss

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - Reigning NBA Most Valuable Player Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 37 points and the defending champion Oklahoma City Thunder avenged their only loss of the season by beating Portland 122-95.

The host Thunder improved to an NBA-best 17-1 and stretched their win streak to nine games by defeating the Trail Blazers, who kept them from a perfect start with a 121-119 upset at Portland on November 5.

Gilgeous-Alexander made 13-of-18 shots from the floor, two-of-three from three-point range, and all nine of his free throws while adding seven assists, five rebounds and two steals.

"He's a killer and we know that," teammate Ajay Mitchell said of Gilgeous-Alexander. "Seeing him in that zone is always a pleasure to watch."

Oklahoma City became only the fifth NBA team in the past 30 years to begin a campaign 17-1, joining Cleveland last season, Golden State in 2015, Dallas in 2002 and Chicago in 1996.

Mitchell had 20 points off the bench on eight-of-eight shooting, two-of-two from three-point range.

"Glad we got the win. Glad I got a good game. Happy



about it," Mitchell said. "(The key was) just being prepared and being ready for 48 minutes.

"We started off well and we just kept going. That's what we've got to keep doing every single game."

Isaiah Hartenstein grabbed 15 rebounds for the Thunder, who improved to 7-0 at home.

The Los Angeles Lakers, led by 33 points and 11 rebounds from Luka Doncic, stretched their win streak to four games with a 108-106 victory at Utah.

LeBron James, in his first road game of the season after being sidelined by sciatica, scored 17 points in 34 minutes on eight-of-18 shooting but missed all four three-point attempts. He also had eight assists and six rebounds.

Austin Reaves added 22 points and 10 rebounds for the Lakers, who improved to 12-4.

Keyonte George, who led Utah with 27 points, missed a three-point in the final seconds to seal the Lakers' triumph.

At Phoenix, Dillon Brooks scored 25 points and Devin Booker added 24 to lead the host Suns over San Antonio 111-102.

Jansen Takes Six as South Africa Close on Historic Test Series Win



GUWAHATI (Dispatches) - Towering pace spearhead Marco Jansen took six wickets to put South Africa in sight of a first Test series win in India in 25 years after bundling out the hosts for 201 in the second match on Monday.

Replying to South Africa's 489, India were 288 behind in their first innings but the tourists did not enforce the follow-on and decided to bat again on day three in Guwahati.

After winning the first Test in the two-match series in Kolkata, South Africa are closing on a first series win in India since Hansie Cronje's team triumphed in 2000.

India are under massive pressure once more, having suffered their fourth defeat in six Tests at home in the first match.

A dominant South Africa reached 26-0 at stumps to extend their lead to 314 in the second innings.

Left-handed Ryan Rickelton, on 13, and Aiden Markram, on 12, were batting when bad light ended the day's play in the northeastern city, where the sun sets early.

Jansen, a left-arm quick, claimed his fourth five-wicket Test haul before wrapping up the Indian innings with his sixth strike of the day in the final session to return figures of 6-48.

"Obviously a good day for the chaps and for myself in particular," said Jansen.

"I feel the spinners did a really good job when the ball wasn't moving as much and there was a dead period at some stage. I really feel the spinners did a brilliant job and I'm just lucky to be the one who cashed in."

India slumped to 122-7 despite Yashasvi Jaiswal's 58 as wickets kept tumbling on what still seems like a good pitch to bat on.

Washington Sundar, who made 48, and fellow left-hander Kuldeep Yadav resisted in a partnership of 72 off 208 balls before off-spinner Simon Hamer struck to end Sundar's defiance.

Real Madrid Held by Elche as Atletico Scrape Narrow Win



BARCELONA (Dispatches) - Jude Bellingham struck late on to secure Real Madrid a 2-2 draw at Elche on Sunday, keeping his team top of La Liga by a point from rivals Barcelona.

Xabi Alonso's side struggled against their mid-table opponents in an entertaining battle in which Madrid twice came from behind.

Alexis Febas fired the hosts ahead before Dean Huijsen levelled for the league leaders, with Bellingham stabbing home from close range after Alvaro Rodriguez blasted Elche back in front.

Barca cut Madrid's lead by two points over the weekend after they thrashed Athletic Bilbao 4-0 on Saturday in their first match back at Camp Nou.

Atletico Madrid, fourth, scraped a 1-0 win at Getafe earlier on Sunday to keep the pressure on the teams above them.

Real Madrid have failed to win any of their last three matches across all competitions.

"It's football — after going in a good dynamic we've had some results we don't like, but we know what we want," Alonso told reporters.

"We're not happy because we always want to win."

Alonso gave Trent Alexander-Arnold his first start since August and also benched Vinicius Junior.

The England international missed several weeks injured and is yet to find form following his summer switch from Liverpool.

Alexander-Arnold was partly to blame for Febas's goal, with the midfielder sneaking in behind him to break the deadlock in the second half.

Forest Stun Liverpool at Anfield, Man City Stumble

LONDON (Dispatches) - Liverpool's crumbling defense of their Premier League crown continued with a 3-0 home drubbing at home to Nottingham Forest that left Arne Slot's misfiring side 11th in the table.

Goals by Murillo, Nicolo Savona and Morgan Gibbs-White gave Forest back-to-back league wins at Anfield for the first time in 62 years and condemned Liverpool to a sixth league defeat of the season.

Chelsea won 2-0 at Burnley in the early kickoff to move into second place, three points behind leaders Arsenal who host Tottenham Hotspur on Sunday, while Manchester City missed the chance to close the gap to one point by slumping to a 2-1 defeat at Newcastle United to slip to third.

Crystal Palace moved fourth with a 2-0 win at bottom club Wolverhampton Wanderers who are still searching for their first win after 12 games. Brighton & Hove Albion are fifth after coming from a goal down to beat Brentford 2-1 at home. Sunderland lost for only the third time in the league this



season as Raul Jimenez scored late at Craven Cottage to earn Fulham a 1-0 victory.

Bournemouth trailed West Ham United 2-0 with both the London club's goals coming from former Bournemouth player Callum Wilson, but the south coast club hit back to draw 2-2.

Few people could have imagined that Liverpool's decline would be so steep but this is far more than a blip.

Forest went ahead after 33 minutes when defender Murillo fired powerfully past fit-again Liverpool keeper Alisson.

Forest struck again 47 seconds after the break when former Liverpool defender Neco Williams set up Nicolo Savona and when Gibbs-White scored Forest's third it sparked an exodus of disgruntled Liverpool fans.

"How bad that is difficult to measure but it was very bad," said Slot. "Playing at home, losing 3-0 no matter which team you face is a very, very bad result."