

TEHRAN -- People in Tehran and other major cities in Iran rallied Saturday in big numbers to honor Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah and condemn the Israeli act of terrorism in assassinating him in southern Beirut.

In Tehran, protesters gathered on Palestine Square to express their solidarity with the resistance and the Lebanese and Palestinian people in confronting the occupying regime of Israel.

TEHRAN -- A senior general in the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps was martyred in an Israeli airstrike in Lebanon alongside Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah.

General Abbas Nilforoushan, deputy commander of IRGC operations, "was martyred in Israel's attack on Lebanon that assassinated the Hezbollah chief," said the official IRNA news agency, giving no further details.

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Viewpoint

Nasrallah Achieves Immortality as Israel Signs Own Death Warrant

Hong Kong Festival Fuses Persian Music With Carpet Weaving



U-20 Footballers Edge India in AFC Cup



Israel Bans Gatherings of Over 1,000 People Amid Reprisal Fears



Nasrallah Achieves 'Victory of God'

Ayatollah Khamenei Declares 5 Days of National Mourning

Leader: Nasrallah's Blood Will Strengthen Resistance



This combination of pictures shows a sketch of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah as well as Lebanese youths mourning the Hezbollah chief and a man holding his picture over the rubble of buildings targeted in Israeli bombings in Beirut's Zahiye.

TEHRAN -- Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said Saturday the resistance front will deal more crushing blows on the "dilapidated and decaying body" of the Zionist regime.

In a message of condolence over the martyrdom of Hezbollah chief Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, the Leader declared five days of national mourning in Iran, Iraq, Lebanon and Syria each declared three days of national mourning.

The Leader said the foundation that Nasrallah established in Lebanon and provided direction to other centers of power will not disappear with his loss, but will rather be strengthened by blood of the Hezbollah chief and other martyrs of the Beirut attack.

Ayatollah Khamenei described Nasrallah as a great fighter, the bearer of the resistance in the region, a religious scholar

and a wise political leader.

The Leader said Nasrallah was martyred as he was planning to defend the defenseless people living in the Dahiyeh neighborhood of Beirut and their destroyed homes.

Nasrallah fought for decades to defend the oppressed Palestinian people, their occupied cities and villages, destroyed homes, and their slaughtered loved ones, Ayatollah Khamenei added.

"The blessing of martyrdom was his undeniable right after all these efforts," the Leader said. "The Muslim world lost a great personality, the resistance front lost a prominent flag-bearer, and Lebanon's Hezbollah lost a unique leader."

The blessings of decades of Nasrallah's prudence and jihad, however, will never be lost, Ayatollah Khamenei said.

The Leader stressed that the evil Zion-

ist regime has failed to achieve victory through the terrorist act.

The Hezbollah chief, Ayatollah Khamenei said, "was not just a person, but rather he was a path and a school of thought and this path will continue."

Earlier, the Leader said the Zionist criminals are too small to cause significant damage to the strong construction of Hezbollah in Lebanon.

In a statement on Israel's barbaric bombing of residential buildings in Beirut's Zahiye neighborhood, the Leader said resistance forces are the ones to decide the fate of the region despite the criminal Israeli massacres.

"The killing of defenseless people in Lebanon once again revealed to everyone the ferocity of the Zionist rabid dog, and proved the short-sightedness and stupid

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if its interests in the region were attacked. Blinken's remarks came shortly after Abu Alaa al-Walaei, a senior commander from Iraq's Sayyid al-Shuhada Brigades, warned that if an all-out war broke out, his group would target U.S. and Israeli interests in the region.

"Even the [United Arab] Emirates, which we consider the advanced site of the usurping entity, will be the first line of targeting," Walaei said, according to the Hezbollah-affiliated Al Mayadeen website.

Born in 1960 to a Shia family from east Beirut's Karantina, Nasrallah became head of Hezbollah's executive council in 1985 as well as a member of its Shura Council.

In 1992, Hezbollah's then-leader, Abbas al-Musawi, was assassinated in an Israeli airstrike along with his wife and child. Speaking at his funeral, Nasrallah said: "We will continue this path... even if we are martyred, all of us and our houses demolished over our heads, we will not abandon the choice of the Islamic resistance."

Nasrallah then took the reins of Hezbollah and soon after, the group began acquiring more sophisticated weaponry, including long-range rockets capable of reaching deeper into Israeli occupied territory.

Under Nasrallah, whose surname translates to "victory through God", Hezbollah grew from a local armed movement to the largest political party in Lebanon's recent history.

In October 2021, Nasrallah said that Hezbollah had 100,000 fighters, making it also among the most powerful non-state armed organizations in the world.

He also maintained Hezbollah's reputation throughout the Arab world as the only armed force to have successfully driven Israel to retreat from an Arab country.

The Hezbollah leader's speeches would often attract the attention of the Middle East and beyond.

During his time as Hezbollah's number one, Nasrallah also saw the further

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Messages Pour in After Nasrallah's Martyrdom

TEHRAN -- Messages of condemnation and condolences poured in over the assassination of Hezbollah chief Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian saying the international community will not forget that the order for the terrorist act was issued from New York.

Pezeshkian said the United States cannot absolve itself of complicity with the Zionists. He said the martyrdom of prominent figures of the resistance movement, particularly Nasrallah, will further strengthen the "tree of resistance."

The Iranian president called Nasrallah the pride of Muslims and the symbol of resistance who finally achieved his long-standing dream of martyrdom. Pezeshkian said words cannot

describe his bravery and continuous efforts to fight the enemies and that Hezbollah will further shine after Nasrallah's assassination.

Iraqi Prime Minister Muhammad Shia al-Sudani said in a statement that the Zionist entity had crossed all red lines with "this heinous act of aggression."

"The criminal act that targeted Dahiyeh neighborhood yesterday exposes Israel's reckless desire to expand the conflict at the expense of regional nations' security and stability," the statement added.

He emphasized that international organizations, five permanent members of the UN Security Council and all key regional powers have a responsibility to take decisive action to halt the aggression and prevent the ethnic

cleansing of Palestinians, which the usurping Tel Aviv regime has been committing for decades.

"This aggression has ramped up in the aftermath of the bloody onslaught against Gaza in early October last year, and has recently extended to Lebanon, where indiscriminate killings have claimed the lives of hundreds of innocent people in a matter of few days. Whose interests are served by the expansion of this brutal ferocity?" Sudani pointed out.

He reaffirmed Iraq's principled stance in standing with Palestinian and Lebanese nations and announced three days of national mourning over the assassination of Nasrallah.

Iraq's prominent cleric Grand

(Continued on Page 7)

Israeli Occupied North Under Heavy Hezbollah Fire

BEIRUT (Dispatches) -- Hezbollah on Saturday fired several waves of rockets towards Israel's military positions and settlements in the north of the occupied territories in response to the regime's bombing of residential buildings in southern Beirut.

The Lebanese resistance movement said it fired a barrage of Fadi-3 missiles at the Ramat David base, one of the three main Israeli airfields, about 20 km southeast of Haifa on Saturday morning.

The operation, it said, came "in support of steadfast Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and their valiant and honorable resistance front, in defense of Lebanon and its nation, and in response to the barbaric Israeli violations against

Lebanese cities, villages, and civilians."

Israel's Ynet website said Hezbollah sent its reconnaissance drones over David Ramat, taking pictures of all the sensitive positions ranging from the residences of soldiers and officers to the routes of airplanes and even the military command office before targeting them.

Ynet touched on the strategic importance of Ramat David where three squadrons of the most advanced F16 fighters are based, saying all those stationed in the airfield are aware of the danger that threatens them and the areas around the base.

Israeli website Walla, which specializes in security affairs, said the town of Metula has been

completely destroyed with the ongoing escalation in the north and the expansion of Hezbollah's missile operations, adding what remains standing is a school.

The website cited a settler as saying that rockets raining down on the settlement has become a rule of the day, but what happened on Friday was phenomenal when the landing of heavy warhead Barkan rockets destroyed a large area.

Last week, Walla said, eight Falaq 2 missiles hit Metula, destroying at least 30 houses.

The Israeli military has imposed a heavy news blackout on the war situation in the northern front, blocking any reports about casualties and damage.

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In the Name of the Most High Viewpoint

Nasrallah Achieves Immortality as Israel Signs Own Death Warrant

By: Kayhan International

Some two thousand years ago, Israelites who had deviated from the path of Prophet Moses betrayed Prophet Jesus to their pagan Roman overlords and exulted wildly at what they thought the brutal crucifixion of their victim – assuming the end of the message of the Lord Most High to reform them of their evil.

It is another matter the Virgin-born Messiah was not crucified and lifted by the Almighty Creator to the heavens, and unknown to the Roman soldiers they had instead nailed to the cross the turncoat Judas Iscariot.

To the horror of the Godless Israelites, however, their murderous plot backfired so badly that the messianic message of their victim soon spread all over the region and into the heart of the Roman Empire, turning the various Gentile races of Europe into Christians.

Unwittingly, the plotters had brought upon themselves an existential crisis, as the majority of the Semitic Jews abandoned Israelite evil to become followers of Jesus, thereby reducing Judaism to an obscure creed, which ceased to exist in Palestine when six centuries later most of the barely surviving Jewish minority embraced the truth of Islam.

Of course, it was but natural for the Christian world to subject to frequent pogroms for over a thousand years as enemies of God, Jesus, and humanity, the Jews who had infiltrated Europe and continued their satanic scandalizing of the Messiah and his Virgin Mother.

Orthodox Judaism may have discontinued this insulting of the basic beliefs of the Christians, but the Zionists, as the non-Semitic self-styled converts from Eastern Europe, illegally planted in Palestine by the irreligious West to carry out the murderously neo-colonialist agenda, continue to do it.

Actually, the US, Britain, and other West European regimes (long removed from the teachings of Jesus), reward sacrilegious Israel with billions of dollars in cash and the most lethal armaments to commit genocide in Gaza, unleash terrorism in Syria, attack Yemen, threaten Iraq, vilify Iran, hold Jordan hostage, scare Egypt, terrify Turkiye, and subject Lebanon to a new holocaust.

If Jesus was the first victim of the progenitors of Zionism, Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah and his equally Moses-like colleagues are the latest victims of the modern day Zionist crimes against humanity.

Martyrdom, whether attempted or actual, badly boomerangs on its ignorant perpetrators. If the Romans slaughtered more than a million of the ancient Israelite enemies of Jesus during the years 36 to 70 AD and expelled the survivors to make Palestine almost empty of Jews, the Crusaders massacred the remnants of the Messiah's rejecters in the 1099 capture of Jerusalem (Bayt al-Moqaddas) from Muslims.

These were indeed Divine punishments throughout history afflicting the plotters of the plight of Jesus and his blasphemers for their abortive attempt to crucify him.

Fast forward to modern times and the spree of actual martyrdoms of the innocent by the present day blasphemers of Jesus, in Palestine, in Syria, in Iran, and in Lebanon, climaxing in Friday's cowardly killing of Secretary of the legendary anti-terrorist movement – an ardent believer in the return of the Son of Mary, along with Imam Mahdi to end oppression.

Usurper Israel, in its death throes since 7th October 2023 as a result of the heroic Operation Al-Aqsa Storm from besieged Gaza, in a vain attempt to prolong its illegitimate existence, has signed its own death warrant by unleashing terrorism in its most dastardly form on Lebanon.

Hezbollah (literally 'Party of God'), with its well-organized structure and the firm faith of its members in God Almighty and his Messengers (e.g. Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Prophet Muhammad [SAWA]), is too strong to succumb to Zionist barbarism.

As the official statement from Beirut reads: "His Eminence, the Master of Resistance, the Righteous Servant (of God), has joined his Lord as a Great Martyr – an outstanding, courageous, wise, and insightful leader – joining the ranks of the radiant Martyrs of Karbala in the Divine journey of faith, following in the footsteps of the Prophets and Martyr Imams."

His legacy, however, lives on, and as Nasrallah watches with delight from the gardens of Paradise, in the company of the other martyrs, and, of course, the Prophets of God, the cobweb called Israel will soon be a thing of the past – no matter what more money and weapons (even soldiers) its terrorist godfather, US the anti-Christ, would pour.

Iran: Monster of Zionism Threatens Whole World



Pro-Palestinian activists rally in New York City, May 15, 2021.

TEHRAN -- Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman on Saturday described Zionism as a grave threat to the entire international community, warning that inaction in the face of Israeli atrocities will soon plague the whole world.

"The monster of Zionism is a threat to the whole world," Nasser Kan'ani wrote in a post on his X account.

He said the apathy shown towards the crimes of the Zionist regime will soon backfire on the whole world.

On Friday, Kan'ani said the U.S. is complicit in the Israel aggression through its provision of arms and ammunition.

"Besides amounting to egregious

violations of the rules and regulations of the international law and Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity, the savage attacks serve as an open and undeniable war crime," he said of the barbaric Israeli bombings of Beirut.

The atrocity, he said, has been committed with "the bombs gifted to the wayward and obstinate regime by the U.S."

"Therefore, the American regime is undoubtedly an accomplice beside the Zionist regime and should be accountable," he added.

Kan'ani said the attacks by "the child-killing Zionists against Beirut indicates the depth of the grudge held by the criminal Zionist gang toward the Lebanese resist-

ance.

The continuation of the Israeli crimes, he said, is a clear sign that the U.S. and other Western countries' invitation towards ceasefire is nothing but "open deceit" aimed at buying time for the regime to press ahead with its plans.

Kan'ani expressed confidence that the Lebanese people and the resistance will eventually prevail. "The Zionists will not be able to achieve their sinister and illegitimate goals by intensifying their crimes."

The official reiterated the Islamic Republic's support for the Lebanese people, government, and resistance in confronting the Zionist enemy.

FM Araghchi: U.S. Complicit in Israeli Crime

NEW YORK (Dispatches) -- Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has used the UN Security Council platform to remind that the world should not disregard U.S. complicity in Israel's crime in Beirut's Dahiyeh neighborhood.

Araghchi said several 5,000-pound bunker busters used by the Zionist regime had been gifted by the United States to hit residential areas in Beirut.

"One cannot disregard the U.S.'s complicity in the crime,"

he said.

Araghchi said the failure by the Security Council and the international community to stop the ongoing genocide has emboldened Israel to "harbor the dream of repeating Gaza massacres in Lebanon and drag the entire into a full-scale war."

"The criminal Israeli mafia is rather being rewarded as a result of the international inaction and its crimes being normalized before our eyes," he added.

"Israel's warmongering relies on U.S. military support and political backing Therefore, the United States is implicated in every aspect of Israel's atrocity."

Separately, Araghchi said the whole world must "stand up and stop this bloodthirsty monster that is no less a devil than Hitler".

The minister the United States and some other Western states have no regard for the lives of people and their peace and stability in the Middle East.

Senior Diplomat Calls for Emergency OIC Meeting

NEW YORK (Dispatches) -- A senior Iranian diplomat has called for an emergency summit of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to address the Zionist regime's crimes against Lebanon and Palestine.

In remarks at the UN General Assembly, Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs Kazem Gharibabadi underscored the importance of unity and solidarity among Islamic states to support Palestinian rights at the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's annual foreign ministerial meeting.

He referred to challenges facing the Muslim world, saying "The Islamic world is at a critical juncture and is facing a series of serious challenges, especially the Palestinian issue, which continues to be our main priority."

Gharibabadi said Iran, as one of the founding members of the OIC, has always backed efforts by Islamic nations to deal with the main challenges and to pay special attention to the Pales-

tinian issue.

"Iran once again announces its unconditional support for the Palestinian cause and the restoration of the indisputable rights of the Palestinian people through the formation of an independent Palestinian state in the entire occupied territories with the holy Al-Quds as its capital and its full membership at the United Nations," he added.

The Iranian diplomat said the Zionist regime's illegal and illegitimate existence is based on the assassination and killing of innocent people.

"The terrorist activities of the regime are not confined to Palestine and Lebanon. The regime recently carried out terrorist attacks on Iran's diplomatic missions and killed the leader of Hamas in Iran in a terrorist move. This regime is a threat to regional and international peace and security. Its brutality and crimes should be halted," he added.

Gharibabadi also said the Security Council should impose "ef-

fective" sanctions against Israel and all countries must cut trade with the regime.

He said the UN Security Council has failed to stop the carnage in Palestine due to the United States' "unyielding" support for the Zionist regime.

Israel, he said, is aided and abetted by Washington in its atrocious crimes, emphasizing that both the United States and Israel shall "bear full responsibility for all their internationally wrongful acts and for each and every single life that is taken by the regime."

"The UN Security Council should impose effective sanctions against the Israeli regime under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations.

"It is also incumbent upon all states to desist and refrain from any form of aid and assistance or economic dealings with the regime so as to stop its genocidal attacks and end its occupation."

Gharibabadi pointed to Iran's "utmost restraint" against Israel's
(Continued on Page 7)



PRAYER TIMINGS

Noon (Zohr)	11:55
Evening (Maghreb)	18:09
Dawn (Fajr) "Tomorrow"	05:51
Sunrise "Tomorrow"	04:34

Ex-IRGC Chief: Iraq, Syria, Iran Should Act Quickly

TEHRAN -- Former IRGC commander Major General Mohsen Rezaei said Saturday the resistance front should promptly act to stop the Zionist regime's atrocities.

"If the freedom-seekers of the world do not stand up and stop him, history will witness one of its most poignant times," he wrote on X.

"Netanyahu's criminal and racist gang will not stop with condemnations, and after Lebanon, they will attack Damascus and then Baghdad, and if the taste of bloodshed intoxicates them, they may even attack Iran.

Therefore, the governments of Iraq, Syria and Iran should make a decision as soon as possible," he added.

President Masoud Pezeshkian the Islamic Republic stands with the Lebanese people and the Axis of Resistance.

The Zionist regime, he said, is "the biggest threat to the regional and international peace and security, urging all countries, especially Muslim states, to decisively condemn the aggression.

Iran's embassy in Lebanon said Israel's aggression is a serious game-changing escalation.

"Once again, the Israeli regime is committing a bloody massacre, targeting densely populated residential neighborhoods and making false justifications in an attempt to cover up its brutal crime," it wrote in a post on its X account.

"There is no doubt that this reprehensible crime and reckless behavior represent a serious escalation that changes the rules of the game, and that its perpetrator will be appropriately punished and disciplined."

Astana Exhibition Introduces Iran's Tourist Attractions



TEHRAN – Some books and handicrafts that introduce Iranian tourist attractions have been put on display in Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan.

The showcase was presented at the National Academic Library of Kazakhstan on the occasion of World Tourism Day on September 27, the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran reported.

In its pavilion, Iran introduced its tourist attractions through various books and handicrafts.

Speaking about the event, Iran's cultural attaché in Kazakhstan Ali

Akbar Talebi-Matin stressed the importance of paying more attention to the tourism industry.

The official called for the cancellation of visa requirements between Iran and Kazakhstan, describing it as a proper opportunity for nationals of both countries to plan for their tourist destinations.

The tourism exhibition, with the participation of Iran, Turkmenistan, India, Belarus, Uzbekistan, Serbia, Kyrgyzstan and Portugal, was held in the Kazakh capital on the occasion of World Tourism Day.

Hong Kong Festival Fuses Persian Music With Carpet Weaving

HONG KONG (Dispatches) -- The Asia+ Festival, presented by Hong Kong's Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau and organized by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, is introducing the "Middle Eastern Series" this year with "The Woven Sounds" concert on October 19 as its first offering.

Persian carpet-making is a world-famous craft. Iranian ethnomusicologist and musician Mehdi Aminian will lead his ensemble to perform traditional Persian instruments rarely seen in Hong Kong and revive a folk custom of carpet weavers. Fusing Persian music with carpet-making, the program features the folklore and cultural traditions of Iran.

In the long history of Persian culture, carpets are a unique symbol and their making has been recognized by UNESCO as an intangible cultural heritage item. The weavers would turn the patterns of the rugs into lyrics, sing them aloud to let other weavers know the patterns while slipping in casual conversations. This long tradition of pattern singing, called "naqshe-khani", has been passed down through generations.

Aminian, after years of research, has recreated this fading custom on stage. His ensemble will perform traditional Persian instruments rarely featured in Hong Kong, including the ney (flute), setar (stringed instrument) and kamancheh (bowed string instrument).

Along with ensemble performances, each instrument will be showcased separately in



an improvisation session.

The concert's repertoire also has a distinct flavor. For instance, the piece "Silence" is depicted with audible music which exudes an ethereal quality. As a female weaver sings soulfully while working on stage, video footage of other carpet weavers filmed in Iran will also be shown, offering audiences a glimpse into the social landscape of the country.

"The Woven Sounds" concert will be held at 8pm on October 19 at the Sheung Wan Civic Centre Theatre. Tickets priced at \$240, \$300 and \$380 are now available at URB TIX (www.urbtix.hk). For telephone bookings, please call 3166 1288, or use the mobile ticketing app "URBTIX".

The program is performed in Persian and Qashqai. A free meet-the-artist session will

be held after the performance on October 19. In addition, a weaving workshop and a documentary screening and sharing session will be held on October 17 and 18 respectively at The Mills, formerly known as Nan Fung Cotton Mills. For details, please refer to asiaplus.gov.hk/2024/en/the-woven-sounds.

The second Asia+ Festival is running from September to November, highlighting the arts and culture of nearly 30 countries from Asia, the Middle East and Belt and Road regions. Apart from stage programs, there are also thematic exhibitions, an outdoor carnival, film screenings, outreach activities and more, numbering over 100 in total. For program enquiries and concessionary schemes, please call 2370 1044 or visit asiaplus.gov.hk/2024/en/.

Campaign Launched to Register Caspian Horse on UNESCO



TEHRAN – The Caspian Conservation Society has launched a campaign to inscribe Caspian horse on the World Heritage List.

By launching the campaign, the society urged all lovers of the ancient heritage to cooperate and support the global registration of the Caspian horse for Iran.

The public welcome shown toward the campaign paves the ground for further efforts to reg-

ister it in UNESCO.

Members of the Caspian Conservation Society believe that polo was registered in the name of Iran in UNESCO, but attempts were made by some countries to register polo in their name.

The Caspian is a horse, not a pony, and therefore should be viewed in the same manner as when judging a well-bred horse, that is, the limbs, body and head should all be in proportion to each other.

Iranian Inventor Ranked First at Silicon Valley Festival

TEHRAN – Iranian inventor Mostafa Shamaluie has been ranked first at the Silicon Valley International Invention Festival (SVIFF) 2024 for producing an antibody to treat lung cancer.

Shamaluie, from the western city of Hamedan, told IRNA that he led an 11-member team to the festival, which is the largest innovation exposition in the U.S., after a uni-



versity in California approved his initial plan to produce the antibody.

He said he was ranked the first from among 1,200 people taking part in the festival from 40 countries.

Shamaluie explained that his invented treatment uses hypochlorous acid (HOCl) in a sustainable and controlled way to reduce side effects.

High-Pressure Hydrocompressor Built by Iranian Specialists

TEHRAN -- Specialists of a knowledge-based company in Iran have produced reciprocating compressors for compressing a wide range of gases in the capacities and pressures required by customers.

"Previously, the first high-pressure reciprocating hydro compressor was made in our company and it was unveiled for the first time in Iran. We have succeeded in making the first high-pressure mechanical reciprocating compressors that are fully indigenous with all the standards of the world after about 10 months," said Muhammad Afkanpour, the manag-

ing director of the knowledge-based company.

Noting that the compressor can be used to compress various gases like hydrogen, natural gas, oxygen, carbon dioxide, flare gas, etc., he said, "One of the unique features of the manufactured compressor is much less vibration (about half) compared to its foreign models."

"By acquiring the know-how and technology of making this compressor, the company is able to manufacture all types of mechanical reciprocating compressors (linear, W and V-shaped) as well as hydro compressors for dif-

ferent types of gases up to an output pressure of 750 bar and a flow rate of 1000 cubic meters per hour," Afkanpour said.

A reciprocating compressor is a positive displacement machine in that a volume of gas is drawn into a compressor cylinder's compression chamber where it is trapped, compressed, and pushed out.

In a reciprocating hydrogen compressor, a piston or plunger compresses the hydrogen gas. As the piston or plunger moves back and forth, it increases the pressure of the hydrogen gas by reducing its volume.



The Old Bridge of Dezful, connecting the western and eastern part of the city goes back to the Sassanid dynasty some 1700 years ago. However, its original foundation was built during the Elamite era.

Photo by ISNA

Russia, Iran Energy Ministers Discuss Enhancing Cooperation



Iranian Minister of Energy Abbas Aliabadi attended the Russian 'Energy Week international forum' in Moscow.

TEHRAN – Iranian Minister of Energy Abbas Aliabadi has suggested the connection of Russia's power grid to Arab countries via Iran.

Speaking in the inaugural ceremony of the meeting of Energy Ministers of BRICS Member States in Moscow on the sidelines of the Russian Energy Week international forum, Iran's energy minister described the entry of Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Egypt and Ethiopia into the BRICS group of emerging economies as strategically important.

Considering the huge energy resources and the significant transit role of these countries in the political geography of the world, their entry can turn BRICS into a unique economic and political power, he

emphasized.

Aliabadi pointed to the unique geo-economic situation of Iran, and said that the Russian power grid can be connected to the power grid of Arab countries through Iran, which will help to preserve the environment and increase energy security.

Russia's minister of energy, who presided over the meeting, referred to developing cooperation between the member countries in the field of energy, deepening collaborations in technology and investment, and boosting the role of BRICS in the international energy system as the three priorities of BRICS during the Russian presidency.

Aliabadi also met and held talks with South Africa's Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy

Gwede Mantashe discussed bilateral ties and issues of mutual interest.

The two sides exchanged views on strengthening bilateral cooperation in the field of energy, IRIB reported.

Iran's energy minister pointed to the high capabilities and potential of Iran in the field of energy and said the country is ready to share its technical and specialized capacities with the member states of the BRICS group of emerging economies, including South Africa.

In this meeting, which was also attended by Iranian Ambassador to Moscow Kazem Jalali, the South African energy minister emphasized taking advantage of the technical know-how and specialty of the Iranian engineers in the electricity industry of South Africa.

The two sides also discussed cooperation in smarting the electricity production and consumption chain, exchange of experiences in the field of using renewable and sustainable energy including solar and wind energy production, and the use of new technologies.

The Iranian minister of energy, who traveled to Moscow to participate in the meeting of energy ministers of the BRICS group, expressed the proposals and views of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the development of cooperation within the framework of this group.

Iran Among World's Top 7 Countries in Gold, Jewelry Industry

TEHRAN – Head of the Association of Producers and Exporters of Gold, Silver, Jewelry and Precious Stones of Tehran Province Esfandiar Seifi said on Saturday that Iran is among the top 7 world countries in the gold and jewelry industry.

Highlighting the launch of the Chamber of Precious Metals at Customs Office at the Imam Khomeini International Airport (IKIA), he said

Iran is among the top 7 countries in the gold and jewelry industry.

With the launch of the chamber at the airport, it is hoped that the country will witness considerable jump in the export of gold, he stated.

The domestically-produced gold and jewelry can compete with those produced by other countries such as Turkey, Italy and South Korea, he said,

adding that quality of some domestically-produced gold products is better than those made in neighboring Turkey.

Once the problems facing the domestic gold producers are resolved, 200 tons of gold could be exported from the country to the target markets annually, Seifi added.

Sanctions have no effect on Iranian gold and jewelry industry, he said.

IRICA: Non-Oil Trade With Islamic States Up 14%

TEHRAN – Iran's non-oil trade with the member states of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (started March 21, 2024) exceeded \$32.2 billion, showing a 14% growth compared to the same period last year.

This is according to the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), which added that \$15.6 billion of non-oil goods were exported from the country from March 21 to September 22, 2024.

More than 48 million tons of non-oil products were exchanged between Iran and the member states of the OIC during the first six months of



the current Iranian calendar year, showing a 4% growth compared to last year's corresponding period.

Out of that, 38.4 million tonnes, valued at \$15.6 billion, were the exports, registering a one and a 10 percent growth in weight and value, respectively compared to the

same period of last year.

In this period, 10.4 million tonnes of non-oil goods, valued at \$16.6 billion, were imported into the country from the member states of the organization, indicating a 16 and an 18 percent growth in weight and value, respectively, IRICA added.

Ankara in Talks With Tehran to Import Natural Gas

TEHRAN – Turkey's state-owned BOTAS Petroleum Pipeline Corporation said it is in negotiation with the National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC) for importing gas from Iran.

The Turkish company in a statement announced that its CEO and Chairman of the Board of Directors Abdulvahit Fidan traveled to Iran at the head of a high-ranking delegation on September 25 and held talks with the officials of the NIGC.

During the meeting with CEO of the NIGC Saeed Tavakkoli, the two sides explored avenues for enhancing bilateral cooperation, especially in the field of long-term supply of Iranian natural gas to Turkey, ISNA reported.

The transfer of gas from Turkmenistan to Turkey via Iran was also discussed at the meeting.



Earlier, the Turkish minister of energy and natural resources had said that Turkey can import up to 2 billion cubic meters of gas from Turkmenistan through Iran's natural gas network annually.

Fidan and Tavakoli emphasized

continuing cooperation between BOTAS and the NIGC within the framework of deep-rooted relations between the two countries.

BOTAS is the state-owned crude oil and natural gas pipeline and trading company in Turkey.

Official: Over 4,800 Tonnes of Tea Exported

TEHRAN – The Executive Manager of Iran's Tea Syndicate Muhammad Sadegh Hassani has said that 4,856 tonnes of tea were exported from the country in the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (started March 21, 2024).

Hassani said Iran's export of tea

to other countries from March 21 to August 22, 2024, registered a 28.8 percent decline compared to the same period last year.

In this period, 20,170 tonnes of tea were imported into the country, showing a 51.45 percent growth compared to last year's corre-

sponding period.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Hassani noted that 22,272 tonnes of coffee were imported into the country between March 21 and August 22, 2024, showing a two percent rise compared to the same period last year.

French Debt Soars Reinforcing Concerns About Budgetary Control

PARIS (Euronews) - France's borrowing of €68.9 billion in the second quarter of 2024 has added to the country's debt pile reinforcing concerns about its budgetary control.

Public debt in France swelled between April and June to 112% of the GDP, according to the latest figures published by the French statistics office INSEE.

"At the end of Q2 2024, Maastricht debt [government debt] reached €3,228.4 billion; it increased by €68.9 billion, after +€58.2 billion in the previous quarter," an INSEE press update said.

The increase in the general government gross debt is mainly due to the State while the public debt of other central government bodies decreased, mainly due to a decrease of €4.5 billion in France's national state-owned railway company SNCF Réseau's debt.

The debt of the social security funds kept increasing and that of local governments remained stable, according to INSEE.



The figures come amid increasing concern about whether the new French government is going to find a way to close a gaping hole in the budget as the public deficit is expected to exceed 6% of GDP this year, as well as present long-term solutions to fix its mounting debt.

In twenty years, the French public debt has jumped by more than 2,000 billion euros.

The current 112% is almost double what the Maastricht Treaty re-

quires (the government debt must not exceed 60% of GDP).

However, France's debt is hair-raising, it is not the highest in the EU, at the end of the first quarter of 2024, Greece recorded 159.8% of its GDP, Italy 137.7%, and France came in third with 110.8%, closely followed by Spain and Belgium.

The lowest debt was recorded in Bulgaria (22.6%), Estonia (23.6%) and Luxembourg (27.2%).

China Leverages Stimulus Measures to Steer Economy

BEIJING (Xinhua) - China's central bank has cut the reserve requirement ratio (RRR) for financial institutions by 0.5 percentage points and lowered the seven-day reverse repo interest rate by 20 basis points, enhancing policy support to solidify economic operations.

From Friday, the weighted average RRR for lenders will be approximately 6.6 percent, but those that have already implemented a 5 percent RRR will not be involved, according to a statement from the People's Bank of China.

The move followed an RRR cut of 0.5 percentage points in February. The 1-percentage-point RRR reduction so far this year is expected to provide about 2 trillion yuan (about \$285.3 billion) in long-term liquidity for the financial market.

The seven-day reverse repo interest rate, a key short-term policy rate, was lowered from 1.7 percent to 1.5 percent on Friday, according to the central bank. The decrease was the largest in nearly four years.

The move aims to intensify the counter-cyclical adjust-

ment of monetary policy and support the country's stable economic growth, according to the central bank.

The seven-day reverse repo interest rate has fallen by a cumulative 30 basis points so far this year.

The simultaneous cuts to the RRR and policy rate reflect the central bank's determination to adhere to a supportive monetary policy with strengthened intensity and more targeted regulation, as well as its concrete efforts to help the country meet major annual economic and social development targets, experts have said.

China seeks to expand its economy by approximately 5 percent year on year in 2024. The country's GDP expanded by 5 percent in the first half of the year.

The policy moves followed a crucial meeting convened by the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee on Thursday, which called for intensified efforts in economic work, including the implementation of substantial interest rate cuts and the promotion of the property market's stabilization.

Millions in U.S. Still Without Power From Helene as Flooding Continues



The remains of a home on Davis Island that burned during Hurricane Helene on Saturday, Sept. 28, 2024, in Tampa, Fla.

PERRY, Fla. (AP) – The cars started lining up before the sun rose on Saturday at a free food distribution site in Perry, near where the storm made landfall. Dozens of vehicles wound through the parking lot and out onto U.S. Highway 27, filled with families who are running out of food in a county where, as of Saturday morning, 99% of customers didn't have power.

The two islands sit just off the city's downtown and are home to about 5,000 people. The neighborhood had never seen storm surge like it had Friday. No one died, but homes, businesses and apartments were flooded. Authorities warned residents to evacuate, and many did, but some stayed behind. "I don't think anybody was expecting it," Faith Pilafas told the Tampa Bay Times. "We've kind of gotten accustomed to lots of talk about big storms, and never actually like feeling the effects of it. So for all the people who didn't leave the island, I feel like they were all just expecting it to be a normal storm, anticlimactic. And wow, were we surprised."

Tens of Thousands of U.S. Dockworkers Set to Strike

NEW YORK (AFP) – Tens of thousands of U.S. dockworkers plan to strike next week if there is no breakthrough on contract talks, just a month before November's closely contested presidential election.



If the International Longshoremen's Association goes on strike, the U.S. economy could be hit for anywhere between \$1 billion and \$5 billion for each day it persists, according to estimates.

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China Hits Out at U.S. for 'Smear' Campaign

NEW YORK (RT) – Washington should stop "smearing" China, especially when it comes to Beijing's stance on the Ukraine conflict, Foreign Minister Wang Yi has told U.S. counterpart Antony Blinken.

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China Stages Naval Drills Near Disputed South China Sea Reef



Independence-class littoral combat ship USS Mobile (LCS 26) (background) conducts a Maritime Cooperative Activity with Philippine Navy's Gregorio del Pilar-class patrol ship, BRP Ramon Alcaraz (PS 16), in the South China Sea, July 31, 2024.

BEIJING (Dispatches) – Chinese naval and air forces have held military drills in a disputed territory in the South China Sea amid tensions with the United States and its regional allies.

Delaware. During a leaders' meeting of the so-called Quad alliance between the U.S., Australia, India, and Japan, Biden said the group is "here to stay".

Beijing claims almost the entire South China Sea, brushing off rival claims of several Southeast Asian countries, the Philippines among them.

Biden added that while Chinese President Xi Jinping was focused on "domestic economic challenges", he was also "looking to buy himself some diplomatic space, in my view, to aggressively pursue China's interest."

'Friends of Peace' FMs Commit to Political Solution to Ukraine War

NEW YORK (Dispatches) – In its first gathering at New York, "Friends of Peace" group called for an immediate end to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war.

Washington should stop "smearing" China, especially when it comes to Beijing's stance on the Ukraine conflict, Foreign Minister Wang Yi has told U.S. counterpart Antony Blinken.

KATHMANDU (Xinhua) – Floods and landslides triggered by incessant rainfalls in Nepal have claimed at least 59 lives and injured 36 others by Saturday afternoon, police said.

JOHANNESBURG (Reuters) – Seventeen people were killed in mass shootings at two homes in a village in South Africa's Eastern Cape province and police said on Saturday they had launched a manhunt for the suspects.

ISLAMABAD (Anadolu) – A chartered helicopter crashed on Saturday in Pakistan's northwest Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, killing six people on board while injuring at least eight others.

WASHINGTON (AFP) – Somalia's prime minister told the UN General Assembly on Friday that his country is facing a serious threat to its territorial integrity from Ethiopia that must not be overlooked by the international community.

LONDON (Reuters) – Former British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has said he ordered military chiefs to plan a raid on a Dutch factory in March 2021 to secure 5 million COVID vaccines that the European Union had threatened to bar from being exported to Britain.

MADRID (Xinhua) – At least 9 people died and 48 went missing after an illegal migrant boat capsized off the island of El Hierro on Friday night, Spain's maritime rescue service confirmed on Saturday.

U-20 Footballers Edge India in AFC Cup



TEHRAN – Iran needed a late strike to earn a hard-fought 1-0 win against India in its AFC U-20 Asian Cup China 2025 Qualifiers Group G

match. Both teams enjoyed opening day wins with India sealing a 4-1 victory over Mongolia, while Iran

scored eight unanswered goals against Laos. India came close in the 25th minute but Manglenthang Kipgen shot

his free-kick over the bar as neither side was able to break the stalemate in the opening 45 minutes at the Lao National Stadium.

The South Asian side wasted another opportunity in the 60th minute after Kelvin Singh Taorem set up Korou Singh Thingujam nicely, only for the forward to pull his effort just wide.

The miss came back to haunt India as Iran struck in the 88th minute through Yousef Mazraeh to seal the three points and take a huge step towards making the Finals.

Iran, with six points, remain at the top of the group.

The top teams of the 10 groups, along with the five best second-place finishers, will qualify for the AFC U-20 Asian Cup 2025 in China

Iran Claim Title at World Men's Bodybuilding Championships



TEHRAN, IRAN – Iranian athletes have been crowned champions at World Men's Fitness & Bodybuilding Championships and Annual Congress at all junior, senior, and master categories.

The 78th edition of the competition went underway on the southern Iranian island of Kish for five days ending on Friday, with the representatives of as many as 65 countries in attendance.

The Iranian bodybuilding and fitness team snatched a total of 153 medals, 51 golds, 52 silvers, and 50 bronzes, by the end of the event.

At the junior category, Iran came first with 122 points followed by Iraq and China, which respectively earned 79 and 53 points.

The Islamic Republic came first in the senior category too with 285 points followed by China (152) and Saudi Arabia (147).

The country likewise took the pride of place at the master category with 160 points. The veteran athletes superseded their Russian and Romanian counterparts, who respectively earned 125 and 82 points.

The competition was held through joint cooperation between the Iranian Federation of Bodybuilding and Fitness and the International Fitness and Bodybuilding Federation (IFBB).

Earlier this year, Iranian bodybuilding champion Hadi Choopan grabbed headlines by winning the Arnold Classic title in the 2024 Arnold Sports Festival.

He had already made history for the country by winning the prestigious title of Mr. Olympia in 2002, and coming second in the event's subsequent edition in 2023.

Choopan is slated to return to the contest in Las Vegas in October 2024.

Saipa Finish 7th in Asian Women Club Volleyball Championship

TEHRAN – Iran's Saipa defeated Hong Kong Kwai Tsing 3-0 (25-20, 25-20, 25-17) to finish 7th in the 2024 Asian Women's Club Volleyball Championship on Saturday at Charchai Hall.

Saipa's Mahtab Rahmani was the top scorer of the match, contributing 18 points in the straight-sets victory.

The Saipa Club had the luxury of a taller lineup, which gave them the advantage in attacks and blocks. Mahtab and Aytak



Salamat ran the wings and connected with good percentage.

Wing Ting To and Wing Man To were Kwai Tsing's main hitters, who posted by the flanks and helped surprise the opponents with some key blocks.

Saipa took their best possible finish of 7th place in 2024. They have recorded their best finish in the competition's history as fourth placer in the 2021 edition, also held in Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand.

Newcastle Come From Behind to Draw With Man City



LONDON (Sky Sports) - Anthony Gordon's second-half penalty earned Newcastle a point as Manchester City were held to a draw at St James' Park.

City defender Josko Gvardiol had put the visitors ahead after 35 minutes when he finished smartly from Jack Grealish's lay-off.

However, while Mateo Kovacic

and Rico Lewis combined well in covering for the influential Rodri, who has been ruled out for the rest of the season with a knee injury, City eventually buckled during Newcastle's best spell of the game just after the break.

When Bruno Guimaraes played an excellent pass through the City defense, Kyle Walker played Gordon onside and the England forward went down under Ederson's challenge. Ederson was booked and Gordon kept his cool to send the Brazilian the wrong way from the spot.

Pep Guardiola's side should have

been further ahead at the break but Ilkay Gundogan fluffed his attempted chip after Newcastle keeper Nick Pope had presented a clearance straight to City when he was a long way out of his goal.

Both sides tried to force a winner, with Newcastle substitute Sean Longstaff going close for the hosts and Bernardo Silva testing Nick Pope deep in stoppage time.

The Magpies remain with only one win in 34 top-flight meetings with City, who have now dropped four points in the space of a week after their 100% start to the campaign.

WADA Appeals to CAS Against Sinner Doping Verdict, Seeks Suspension



Jannik Sinner of Italy hits a return to Nicolas Jarry of Chile during the men's singles first round match at 2024 China Open tennis tournament in Beijing, China, Sept 26, 2024.

PARIS (Reuters) - The World Anti-Doping Agency has appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport against an independent tribunal's decision in August to clear world number one Jannik Sinner of wrongdoing after he failed drug tests, WADA said on Saturday.

WADA said the tribunal's finding of "no fault or negligence" on Sinner's part was incorrect under the applicable rules, and it would seek "a period of ineligibility of between one and two years" for the Australian Open and U.S. Open champion.

The tribunal, organized by the International Tennis Integrity Agency, had accepted Sinner's explanation that the anabolic agent clostebol entered his system from a member of his support team through mas-

sages and sports therapy.

The ITIA said in a statement on Saturday: "The process was run according to World Anti-Doping Code guidelines; however, the ITIA acknowledges and respects WADA's right to appeal the independent tribunal's decision."

Sinner said his physio, Giacomo Naldi, applied an over-the-counter spray containing clostebol to his skin to treat a small finger wound and then administered massages between March 5 and 13 without using gloves, according to the ITIA.

Italy's Sinner has maintained his innocence, saying the amount of clostebol found in his system was less than a billionth of a gram. However, some players criticized the verdict, saying Sinner's explanation "made no sense."

FIFA Suspends Argentina Goalkeeper for 2 Matches in World Cup Qualifying

BUENOS AIRES (AP) — Argentina's soccer association (AFA) said on Friday that FIFA suspended goalkeeper Emiliano Martínez for two matches of South American World Cup qualifying in October.

The decision rules out the 32-year-old from official games in the round-robin competition against Venezuela and Bolivia on Oct. 10 and 15.

AFA said in a statement that FIFA's disciplinary commission sanctioned Martínez due to incidents in two World Cup qualifying matches against

Chile and Colombia earlier this month. The soccer body did not describe which incidents led to the punishment.

Martínez made an obscene gesture after his team's 3-0 win against Chile by holding the Copa America trophy close to his genitals, as he did after the South American team lifted the World Cup title in Qatar in the end of 2022.

Later, he slapped a local cameraman after Argentina's 2-1 defeat against Colombia in Barranquilla.

Argentina's soccer body said it "absolutely disagrees" with



Aston Villa goalkeeper Emiliano Martínez reacts after receiving a yellow card during the British Premier League.

FIFA's decision.

Argentina leads South American World Cup qualify-

ing with 18 points after eight games, followed by Colombia (16) and Uruguay (15).

Israel Bans Gatherings of Over 1,000 People Amid Reprisal Fears

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – The Zionist regime's army has announced a ban on gatherings of over 1,000 people in central parts of the occupied territories, effective from Saturday, amid escalating tensions following Hezbollah leader Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah's assassination.

The army spokesperson, Daniel Hagari, said in a statement that the ban is a precautionary measure to ensure public safety in the light of potential threats.

"We are on alert for both defense and attack, and the public must adhere to the instructions," said Hagari.

He noted that the threat "is not over yet, Hezbollah still possesses capabilities."

Following the tightened directives, the Zionist regime's Premier League's Saturday and Sunday football matches were decided to be held behind closed



Protest held against Zionist prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Tel Aviv.

doors.

This announcement follows a series of airstrikes carried out by the Zionist regime's army targeting Hezbollah positions in Lebanon.

Following Nasrallah's assassi-

nation, the regime's army also threatened to target other senior Hezbollah leaders.

The assassination of Nasrallah marks a significant escalation in the ongoing conflict between the occupying regime and Hezbollah

resistance movement.

Since Monday, the Zionist regime's airstrikes have ravaged Lebanon, killing nearly 800 people and injuring over 2,300, according to the Lebanese Health Ministry. The ministry also reported that since last October, the death toll in Lebanon has reached 1,622, with 98,800 people displaced from the southern and eastern regions of the country.

Hezbollah and the occupying regime have been engaged in warfare since the regime's military onslaught on Gaza on Oct. 7. The Gaza genocide has claimed the lives of nearly 41,600 people, mostly women and children.

The international community has expressed deep concern about the Zionist regime's airstrikes in Lebanon, warning that they could transform the Gaza conflict into a broader regional war.

PLO: Israel Approved Over 80 Illegal Settlement Plans Since 2022



Zionist troops intervene in the protest held by Palestinians against illegal Israeli settlers who set up encampments at Umm Safa village, north of Ramallah, West Bank on September 14, 2024.

RAMALLAH (Dispatches) – The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) has revealed that the Zionist regime has approved more than 80 illegal settlement plans in the occupied West Bank and East Al-Quds since the end of 2022.

These approvals include tens of thousands of settlement units, according to a report released on Saturday by the PLO's National Bureau for the Defense of Land and Resistance of Settlements.

The report highlights a rapid and unprecedented expansion of Israeli settlements on Palestinian land, facilitated by the regime's decisions and military orders. The Israeli army has reportedly created "buffer zones" around many of these settlements, encroaching on neighboring Palestinian villages under the guise of providing security for settlers.

The Zionist regime's estimates indicate that more than 720,000 settlers now live in illegal settlement outposts in the occupied West Bank, including East Al-Quds. Settlement construction

has accelerated significantly since the regime's right-wing cabinet, led by prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, came to power in December 2022.

The international community, including the UN, considers these settlements illegal under international law. The UN has repeatedly warned that continued settlement expansion threatens the viability of a solution, a framework seen as key to resolving the Zionist-Palestinian conflict.

In a significant legal development in July, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued a ruling that declared the Zionist regime's decades-long occupation of Palestinian territories "illegal." The court called for the immediate evacuation of all existing settlements in the West Bank and East Al-Quds.

Despite global condemnation and calls for a halt to settlement activity, the occupying regime continues its expansion efforts, deepening tensions in the region.

For Second Time in 2024

Moody's to Lower Zionist Regime's Credit Rating

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – Moody's Investors Service is preparing to lower the Zionist regime's credit rating for the second time this year, citing growing political instability and economic uncertainty.

The downgrade follows concerns over the regime's contentious judicial reforms and their impact on the Zionist regime's institutional framework and economic performance.

In its latest review, Moody's highlighted the regime's ongoing efforts to overhaul the judiciary, which has sparked widespread protests and increased tensions within the occupied territories.

These developments have raised red flags for investors and financial markets, potentially undermining the stability that has traditionally supported the regime's strong credit standing.

The global credit rating agency previously downgraded the occupying regime's outlook earlier in the year, warning that the proposed judicial changes could harm Israel's economy by reducing investor confidence and weakening checks and balances that ensure long-term political and economic stability. The so-called reforms, led by prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu's coalition, have faced fierce oppo-

sition from civil society, business leaders and international observers.

A second downgrade would put further pressure on the Zionist regime's economy, increasing borrowing costs and potentially leading to a reduction in foreign investments. It could also have a ripple effect on the regime's tech sector, which has been a key driver of its economic success in recent decades.

Economists warn that political uncertainty, combined with the potential rating downgrade, could slow Israel's GDP growth, strain public finances and widen the fiscal deficit, especially in

light of ongoing security challenges in the region.

The Zionist regime's finance ministry has pushed back against the criticism, claiming that the economy remains resilient and that the judicial overhaul is necessary to ensure long-term stability. However, Moody's upcoming decision suggests that global financial institutions remain skeptical of the regime's ability to maintain both economic and political balance amid the growing internal divisions.

The final decision on the regime's credit rating is expected to be confirmed in the coming weeks.

Report: MBS Told Blinken Saudi People Care About Palestine

RIYADH (Dispatches) – Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman told U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken that he does not personally care about what he referred to as the "Palestinian issue", according to a report in The Atlantic.

The report gave a picture of 11 months of Washington's negotiation efforts in the region after the outbreak of war in Gaza, citing "two dozen participants at the highest levels of government in America and across the Middle East".

It stated that during a visit to Saudi Arabia in January, Blinken and the crown prince met in the Saudi city of al-Ula to discuss the prospect of the Persian Gulf kingdom normalizing relations with the occupying regime amid the ongoing Israeli aggression on Gaza. Months earlier, Riyadh had appeared to be making prog-

ress in forming ties with the Zionist regime during U.S.-led discussions, which were later derailed by the outbreak of war on October 7.

If a normalization deal were to occur, the crown prince expressed to Blinken a desire for calm in Gaza.

According to The Atlantic, Blinken enquired whether the Saudis could tolerate the Zionist regime periodically re-entering the territory to strike the besieged Gaza Strip.

"They can come back in six months, a year, but not on the back end of my signing something like this," Mohammed bin Salman responded.

"Seventy percent of my population is younger than me," the crown prince explained to Blinken.

"For most of them, they never really knew much about the Palestinian issue. And so they're being introduced to it

for the first time through this conflict. It's a huge problem. Do I care personally about the Palestinian issue? I don't, but my people do, so I need to make sure this is meaningful."

A Saudi official described this account of the conversation to The Atlantic as "incorrect".

In public, Mohammed bin Salman has stated that Saudi Arabia will not normalize relations with the Zionist regime without the establishment of a Palestinian state with East Al-Quds as its capital.

"The Kingdom will not cease its diligent efforts to establish an independent Palestinian state with East Al-Quds as its capital," he said at a recent annual address before the Shura Council in Riyadh.

"We confirm that Saudi Arabia will not establish diplomatic relations with Israel until that goal is achieved."

U.S. Outlines Plans for Withdrawal From Iraq

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) – The United States will conclude the American-led international military occupation of Iraq over the next twelve months, as announced in a joint statement from Baghdad and Washington.

After intensive discussions between the Iraqi Higher Military Commission, the U.S., and the international coalition, the American military occupation will come to an end, according to the joint statement published by the U.S. State Department on Friday.

This phaseout will occur over the next twelve months, concluding no later than September 2025.

However, the coalition forces' occupation of the oil-rich areas of neighboring Syria will continue until at least September 2026 allegedly to "prevent the return of Daesh terrorist threat", the statement added.

A commission will work on

the mechanisms needed to facilitate the transition and "ensure the physical protection of coalition advisors present in Iraq", it stated.

The Pentagon emphasized that while the U.S. mission is changing, it does not constitute a full withdrawal.

"Our footprint is going to be changing within the country," Pentagon spokesperson Sabrina Singh told reporters during a press briefing on Friday.

Baghdad has been in formal negotiations toward the withdrawal of U.S. troops for at least nine months, with similar calls from Iraqi officials ongoing for years.

Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani told Bloomberg TV in an interview last week that Iraq no longer needs U.S. troops on its territory.

"Iraq in 2024 is not the same as Iraq in 2014," he said, adding, "We have moved on from wars to stability."

The U.S. invaded Iraq in 2003 without UN sanction, claiming the state possessed weapons of mass destruction – a claim later found to be false. The U.S. "shock and awe" bombing campaign devastated large swathes of Iraq and toppled Saddam Hussein's government, leaving the country in chaos and creating a fertile ground for extremists such as Daesh.

Following the spread of the terrorist group across parts of Syria and Iraq in 2014, U.S. troops returned to the country. Coalition military operations wrapped up in 2021, leaving approximately 2,500 American occupation forces as an enduring presence in Iraq.

In recent months, U.S. troops have been wounded by missile attacks on American military sites in Iraq and Syria amid heightened tensions related to the Zionist regime's genocidal campaign in Gaza.