Brief Notes

New U.S. Sanctions on Islamic Republic Oil Network: The U.S. State Department announced new sanctions today targeting a network accused of smuggling Islamic Republic oil through Iraq. The State Department's announcement names Waleed al-Samarra'i, a dual citizen of Iraq and Saint Kitts and Nevis, for disguising the Islamic Republic's oil as Iraqi-origin crude. The statement stressed, "We will not hesitate to utilize all available tools at our disposal to counter those who enable Iran's illicit oil trade."

Iraq Withdraws PMF Bill After Khamenei Intervenes: Iraq's cabinet withdrew a bill on the service and retirement of the Tehran-backed Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) after Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei sent a letter, through cleric Mohsen Araki, urging Shia leaders to avoid steps that could raise tensions. The letter was delivered to the National Wisdom Movement's head, Ammar al-Hakim, who then relayed it to Coordination Framework leaders, resulting in an agreement with Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shiaa al-Sudani to withdraw the bill. Washington reportedly welcomed the move. The Iraqi president, parliament speaker, and judiciary chief also backed the withdrawal of the bill "for stability," while parliamentary leaders instructed MPs not to support it over fears of U.S. sanctions. Deputy Speaker Shakhawan Abdullah confirmed that the law "will not be endorsed or approved," while officials stressed that the PMF itself would not be dismantled.

Tehran Rejects GCC Claims to Persian Gulf Islands: The Islamic Republic rejected the Gulf Cooperation Council's (GCC) September 1 statement, which included a condemnation of the Islamic Republic's "occupation" of the Abu Musa, Greater Tunb, and Lesser Tunb islands, as "legally baseless." The Islamic Republic Foreign Ministry's response stressed Iran's "indisputable sovereignty" over the islands and said that "repeating unfounded claims… will not change the geographical, historical, and legal facts." It also dismissed Kuwait's claims over the Arash gas field as "legally invalid," and reaffirmed Tehran's "legitimate and lawful right" to peaceful nuclear energy. It warned of the "real and imminent danger" posed by Israel's weapons of mass destruction and urged regional states to cut ties with Israel to stop its "crimes against Palestinians."

Bushehr Plant Operating Normally: Russia's nuclear agency, Rosatom, chief Alexey Likhachov said the 12-Day War has not affected the Bushehr nuclear plant, telling RIA Novosti, "No, it did not have an effect… It is operating in normal mode."

Tehran Feigns Openness to Talks, Lacks Meaningful Concessions

Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council Ali Larijani today feigned openness to talks with the U.S. while rejecting restrictions on missile technologies, writing on X, "The path for negotiations with the U.S. is not closed; yet these are the Americans who only pay lip service to talks and do not come to the table; and they wrongfully blame Iran for it. WE INDEED PURSUE RATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS. By raising unrealizable issues such as missile restrictions, they set a path which negates any talks."

Spokesperson for the Foreign Ministry Esmaeil Baghaei today said, "The U.S. has disrupted diplomatic processes at least two or three times in the past 10 years," during his weekly briefing.

His remarks came after U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio's August 28 statement that Washington is still seeking direct talks with Tehran following the E3's triggering of the UN snapback mechanism.

However, President Masoud Pezeshkian yesterday said that Tehran is "ready for talks with America based on the recognition of the nuclear rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran and achieving a win-win solution." He warned that if the E3 is successful in activating the snapback mechanism, "all bilateral talks and interactions will be disrupted."

Attending the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit, Pezeshkian also told UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres that "Iran seeks to resolve existing issues, including the nuclear issue, through engagement and diplomatic means," while criticizing the IAEA for failing to condemn Israeli attacks. Guterres replied: "I believe that your intention and goal is not to build nuclear weapons and that having a peaceful nuclear program is your right."

Also yesterday, Vice-President of the European Commission, Kaja Kallas, wrote on X, "It is crucial for Iran to ensure transparency and fully cooperate with [the IAEA]. The window of diplomacy is still open to solve the Iranian nuclear issue and the EU is ready to do its part in this. Today, I met [IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi] and reaffirmed my full support for his work."

Pezeshkian at the SCO

President Masoud Pezeshkian and Russian President Vladimir Putin met on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in Tianjin. Putin noted that the bilateral relationship between Moscow and Tehran has significantly grown in the last two years. He also highlighted rising student exchanges, cultural events, and tourism, adding, "We maintain constant contact on major international issues, including matters concerning the Iranian nuclear program."

Pezeshkian also met with the Chinese president, Xi Jinping. Xi stressed that Beijing–Tehran ties had "stood the test of changes in the world." Xi supported the Islamic Republic's pledge not to seek nuclear weapons, and said

China would continue to back Iran's "sovereignty, territorial integrity and national dignity." Pezeshkian called China the Islamic Republic's "comprehensive strategic partner," vowed that Tehran would "maintain its friendship with China and deepen cooperation," and praised Xi's Global Governance Initiative as key to building a "more just and equitable international order."

Pezeshkian said that agreements recently ratified by the Islamic Republic's parliament would "contribute to the further growth of trade and expansion of our cooperation across all areas." He also underlined the importance of academic and think tank exchanges, and said all SCO leaders had confirmed readiness "to work actively on implementing our agreements."

Later, Pezeshkian told IRNA that "confronting unilateralism" and strengthening multilateralism were key aims of his meetings with leaders at the SCO.

Tehran also secured the inclusion of a condemnation of Israeli and U.S. strikes and a statement in opposition to snapback in the SCO summit's final statement. During the summit, Tehran also gained Pakistan's opposition to the snapback move. Additionally, the Foreign Ministry, along with the foreign ministries of China and Russia, sent a joint letter to UN Secretary-General Guterres rejecting European powers' decision to trigger snapback.

On the Radar

- Energy Minister Abbas Aliabadi told the Majles (parliament) that widespread power and water shortages stem from the withdrawal of foreign contractors and sabotage of gas infrastructure, saying, "Even the Chinese have left," which has left plants without technical expertise and parts of the grid unusable. He added that "the enemy" had targeted vital gas pipelines but withheld details in the open session. Aliabadi promised household blackouts would soon end despite rising temperatures straining healthcare and manufacturing.
- Dozens of truckers gathered at the Milak border crossing in Hirmand, Sistan and Baluchestan Province, to protest the now two-month seizure of more than 1,200 Iranian trucks inside Afghanistan. The drivers criticized Islamic Republic authorities for inaction despite repeated appeals, warning that the prolonged delay has caused heavy financial losses. They demanded urgent government intervention to secure the release of the stranded vehicles and restore cross-border trade flows.
- Pensioners from Iran's steel industry demonstrated in Isfahan, Kerman, and Qaemshahr, while social security pensioners protested in Tehran, Ahvaz, Shush, and Rasht. They called for full pension equalization, the lifting of income caps, and improved access to healthcare. The protests reflect growing frustration among pensioners whose benefits have failed to keep pace with inflation and a rising cost of living.
- Over the past two days, workers across Iran's oil, gas, and industrial sectors staged protests over pay and employment conditions. Employees of Gachsaran Oil and Gas in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province,

drilling sites in Markazi Province, and the Aghajari Oil and Gas Company demanded the removal of subcontractors, elimination of caps on retirement benefits, and the independence of the oil pension fund. Aluminum workers in Arak, Markazi Province, also rallied, citing excessive workloads, power outages, and safety risks caused by outdated equipment. Farmers in Falavarjan, Isfahan, protested, denouncing the government's failure to deliver water rights and warning of irreversible damage to farmlands and orchards.

- Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi issued condolences over the deaths of Houthi Prime Minister Ahmed Ghaleb al-Rahawi and Foreign Minister Jamal Amer in an Israeli airstrike, calling it a "cruel military operation which took the lives of the Houthi leaders." He said the strike "will not shatter the steel will of the Yemeni people, but will fan the flames of resistance in this country and throughout the region." Armed Forces Chief of Staff, Abdolrahim Mousavi, likewise condemned the killings, describing them as the latest "ignominious deed by Israel."
- Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shiaa al-Sudani will begin an official visit to Oman tomorrow to discuss de-escalation between the Islamic Republic and Israel. Oman's state news agency, ONA, described the visit as an important opportunity to strengthen bilateral trade and economic ties.
- State broadcaster IRIB claimed that security forces have uncovered the identities of Israeli drone operators as well as the details of Israel's drone operations in Iran during the 12-Day War. An IRIB video report said Israeli drone operators have now received messages containing "both warnings and personal information about the recipients," as proof that the regime holds "comprehensive information about airbases and the deployment locations of these drones."
- Rahim Mohammadi, a senior officer of the IRGC, was killed in Saravan County, near the Pakistani border in Sistan and Baluchestan Province. Mohammadi served in the IRGC's Sarallah Corps, based in neighboring Kerman Province. No details were given on the circumstances of his death. The report follows a surge in clashes with militants in the southeast, including an August 27 operation in which one IRGC officer and 13 militants were reportedly killed.

→ For inquiries or more information, please contact ***k.isfahani@nufdiran.org***