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Brief Notes

President Trump Says U.S. Waiting on Tehran for Talks: Responding to a question about willingness to diplomatically engage with the Islamic Republic, President Donald Trump today said, "We're in no rush, but if they want to negotiate, we're here."

Yemeni Pro-Government Forces Seize Regime Weapon Shipment: Yemen's National Resistance Forces intercepted an Islamic Republic weapons shipment bound for the Houthis, seizing over 750 tons of munitions and hardware, including missiles, drones, and other equipment, making it the largest regime weapons shipment to be intercepted by pro-government Yemeni forces to date. CENTCOM praised the operation, calling it a vital step toward regional security and freedom of navigation.

Notorious Senior IRGC Commander Dies: IRGC-affiliated outlet Tasnim reported that an IRGC senior officer, Gholamhossein Gheybparvar, has died from the long-term effects of chemical weapons exposure during the Iran-Iraq War (1980–1988). Gheybparvar led the Basij from 2016 to 2019 and subsequently commanded the Imam Ali Central Security Headquarters, tasked with suppressing protests, until his death. The Basij, under his command, responded with deadly force to the 2017 and 2019 uprisings, and Gheybparvar was later sanctioned by the U.S. and the EU for human rights abuses. Social media is rife with speculation about the cause of his death, with some describing it as an Israeli targeted killing with the state covering it up to not harm morale.

Khamenei Threatens Dissent and Urges 'Unity'

In a speech today, Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei escalated rhetoric against dissidents, warned against "unfounded" criticism, called for national unity, and boasted about Tehran's military capabilities while signaling openness to diplomatic engagement with the West.

Khamenei characterized the Islamic Republic's recent confrontation with Israel and the United States as a "national triumph" while accusing foreign powers of orchestrating a plan to destabilize the regime. "Here's the calculation of those who instigated the attacks: 'When we attack Iran, strike the sensitive facilities, eliminate key figures… the establishment will be weakened. Then the sleeper cells of MEK, monarchists, mercenaries, and hooligans will be activated… to agitate people and instigate street [protests] and finish the work'… This is the dream they had dreamed. What happened in reality? The exact opposite happened." He chuckled as he delivered the line.

He praised the military forces for their "spirit and readiness to confront powers like America and its rabid dog, the Zionist regime."

Khamenei warned against what he called "harmful criticism," urging officials, journalists, and clerics not to amplify political or religious differences. He claimed some protests stem from "ignorance," not legitimate grievances.

In the same speech, Khamenei stressed the Islamic Republic's military capabilities and explicitly endorsed continued diplomatic efforts, repeating the word "diplomacy" four times. He said, "Whether in the diplomatic arena or the military field, we enter with full hands."

While praising the regime's retaliatory attack against U.S. and Israeli targets, he hinted that censorship is hiding the full impact of these strikes: "Once the media blackout is lifted, it will become clear how significant our response was."

Khamenei concluded his speech by instructing the judiciary to pursue retribution for Israel's recent actions through both international and domestic courts.

Islamic Republic, China Discuss Regional Tensions

During an SCO Council of Foreign Ministers meeting in China yesterday, Islamic Republic Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi met with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi. The two sides discussed bilateral cooperation, regional tensions, and international developments.

Araghchi thanked China for condemning U.S. and Israeli strikes on the Islamic Republic and praised Beijing's stances in the UN Security Council.

Wang said that Beijing opposes "bullying, unilateralism and the use of force" while supporting diplomacy to resolve disputes.

Tehran Calls U.S. Detention of Undocumented Iranians 'Racist'

Alireza Hashemi-Raja, the Islamic Republic Director General for Expatriates, condemned what he called the "inhumane" and "mass" detention of Iranian nationals in the U.S. Hashemi-Raja also rhetorically linked the detention of undocumented Iranians in the U.S. to Washington's support for Israel's "military aggression against Iran's sovereignty."

He claimed U.S. authorities, including DHS and ICE, have not offered "any convincing explanation regarding the reasons for these arrests despite initial consular follow-ups." Hashemi-Raja accused the U.S. of "systemic racism."

Domestic Crackdown Continues

Amid a surge in arrests across Iranian provinces with high Kurdish populations, security forces detained two activists and transferred them to undisclosed locations in Sanandaj, Kurdistan Province, and Bukan, West Azerbaijan Province, without charges.

The judiciary also sentenced a labor activist in Sanandaj to prison on charges of "propaganda against the regime."

In Khuzestan, two political prisoners accused of being members of an anti-regime group were each sentenced to two executions, meaning that if one death sentence is pardoned, the other must still be carried out. Two different political prisoners accused of being in the same group received prison terms of 12 and 15 years.

Intelligence Ministry officers abruptly transferred Saeed Masouri, a political prisoner serving a life sentence, to an undisclosed location. His sudden transfer sparked a sit-in and protest by other political prisoners.

Over the past two days, at least nine protests have erupted across Iran, including protests over the housing crisis in Arak, education-related demonstrations in Tehran, and demonstrations over water shortages in Gonabad, located in Razavi Khorasan Province, and Bam, located in Kerman Province.

Mohammad Ahmadi, the producer of the "Dialogue Iran" YouTube program, was arrested and taken to an undisclosed location following a court hearing. Videos from the latest episode, titled "Dialogue as Post-War," which aired a few days ago, have been widely circulated on social media.

On the Radar

- The Islamic Republic Majles (Parliament) elected three jurists, Hadi Tahan-Nazif, Gholamreza Mollabeygi, and Seyyed Behzad Pourseyyed, to the Guardian Council for six-year terms. This came after Khamenei reappointed three of the Council's clerical members earlier this week.
- An Islamic Republic MP claimed no Afghans were among those arrested for espionage after the 12-Day War, contradicting earlier state media reports.
- Islamic Republic media blamed both the Israeli leadership and Syrian President al-Sharaa for the crisis in Syria's Suwayda Governorate, accusing Israel of seeking Syria's partition and portraying Sharaa as weak and complicit. Some outlets likened post-Assad Syria to Libya and Afghanistan, framing the chaos as a result of foreign-orchestrated regime change.
- Pakistan's Religious Affairs Minister revealed that over 40,000 Pakistani pilgrims who traveled to Iran, Iraq, and Syria are allegedly missing, with no information about their whereabouts. In response, the Pakistani government is launching a new computerized system requiring all pilgrims ("zaireen" in Arabic) to travel through registered and security-cleared Zaireen Group Organizers (ZGOs).

- The Islamic Republic has renamed Tehran's Khaled Islamboli Street to Hassan Nasrallah Street, in honor of the slain Hezbollah leader.

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