Brief Notes

U.S. Envoy Says Regime in Iran 'Last Obstacle to New Middle East': U.S. Special Envoy for Syria Tom Barrack said that the Islamic Republic in Iran remains "the last obstacle to a new Middle East," urging Syria's reintegration and Lebanon's separation from Tehran-backed Hezbollah to enable what he called "a generation of cooperation." In a detailed statement, he argued that "all that stands in the way of progress is a hostile and treacherous Iranian IRGC leadership," and that regional realignment is already underway toward "the expulsion of Iran's terrorist proxies." He concluded, "Iran stands terminally weakened," and that Saudi Arabia's expected entry into the Abraham Accords could accelerate a shift "drawn not by pressure, but by prosperity."

Another Alleged Israeli 'Spy' Executed: The Islamic Republic has executed another man accused of "spying" for Israel's Mossad. The execution took place on October 18 in Qom after the Supreme Court upheld his death sentence. Kazem Mousavi, head of the Qom Judiciary, said the man was convicted of "corruption on earth" and "moharebeh" (enmity against Allah) for transferring sensitive information to what he called "the child-killing and fake Zionist regime." Mousavi claimed the individual began cooperating with Israeli intelligence in September 2023, met with a Mossad officer, and shared classified data online before being arrested in February 2024. This execution brings the total number of Iranians executed for allegedly cooperating with Israel to twelve since the 12-Day War in June.

E3 May Refer Tehran's Nuclear File to UNSC by November: At a press conference in Tehran today, Supreme National Security Council Secretary Ali Larijani addressed the Islamic Republic's cooperation with the IAEA, saying, "(Foreign Minister) Araghchi announced after the Cairo agreement that if they activate snapback, the agreement will be null and void, and that's what happened. Well, they should have refrained from triggering the mechanism. If the IAEA has a proposal for cooperation, it should request it to be reviewed by a committee in the Supreme National Security Council." Following these remarks, some reports indicate that if cooperation between Tehran and the IAEA does not resume, the E3 may refer the Islamic Republic's nuclear file to the UN Security Council as early as November.

Khamenei Boasts About Missile Capabilities

Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei delivered a speech at his compound in Tehran today.

Highlighting the Islamic Republic's missile capabilities he said, "These Iranian missiles penetrated deep into some of the Zionist regime's key sites and destroyed them…They are built by Iranian youth. We didn't buy or hire them from anywhere."

Khamenei continued, "Our armed forces and military industries had these missiles readily available and used them. They have more, and will use them again if necessary."

Khamenei also dismissed President Trump's recent statements on his trip to Israel as "empty bluster," asserting that "the U.S. president's [speech] was meant to boost the other side's morale. They (Israel) have lost their nerve."

Leaked Video of Official at Daughter's Wedding Makes Waves

A leaked video showing the wedding of Ali Shamkhani's daughter has gone viral on social media, sparking outrage over female guests' attire, deemed "immodest" under the Islamic Republic's dress code.

Ali Shamkhani is a member of the Expediency Council, the former Supreme National Security Council Secretary, and a senior advisor to the Supreme Leader. Shamkhani is also the Supreme Leader's representative to the newly-established Defense Council.

Shamkhani had already faced criticism earlier this year due to reports of his daughter's lavish wedding, although no footage had been leaked until now.

The leak, coming amid renewed enforcement of hijab norms and rising factional tensions, is widely seen as politically motivated.

Some analysts linked it to Shamkhani's recent remarks implicating former President Hassan Rouhani (2013--2021) and ex-Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif in covering up the 2020 Ukrainian plane downing, suggesting the video's release was a retaliatory move.

Tehran Dismisses E3 Willingness to Negotiate

Foreign Ministry Spokesman Esmaeil Baghaei criticized the E3 for lacking the will and capacity to act as credible partners in international negotiations, despite their recent calls to re-engage in nuclear talks with Tehran and Washington.

Speaking at his weekly press conference today, Baghaei said "the European countries have failed to demonstrate reliability," citing their activation of the UNSCR 2231 snapback mechanism, a move Tehran claims is illegal.

He further referenced German Chancellor Friedrich Merz's recent remarks regarding Europe's limited influence and military capacity, calling them an admission of weakness.

Later, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi praised Russia's position at the UN Security Council against the "misuse" of the snapback mechanism during a meeting with the Russian Special Representative to Syria, Alexander Lavrentiev. According to the Foreign Ministry report, Araghchi "expressed appreciation for Russia's firm and principled stance at the Security Council in opposing the misuse of the JCPOA dispute resolution mechanism to reimpose previously lifted resolutions on Iran's nuclear program."

On the Radar

- Israeli Foreign Ministry staff received an internal warning that diplomats are being added, without consent, to WhatsApp groups created and run from phone numbers in Iran, Pakistan, and some other territories, amid a broader pattern of intimidation and recruitment attempts targeting Israelis on social media. The memo urges implementing stricter settings wherein only contacts can add you to groups, and overall heightened vigilance. Over the past two years, the Islamic Republic's operatives have recruited ordinary Israelis via Telegram, starting with paid, "innocent" tasks that escalate to intelligence gathering and, in some cases, assassination plotting.

- Armed Forces Chief Abdolrahim Mousavi warned that any renewed "reckless move by enemies would be met with a powerful response." Speaking at a graduation ceremony for military cadets in Tehran, Mousavi said, "We are not seeking war, but we are prepared. We are aware of the rules for halting a conflict and, for now, have no intention of taking action, but our response this time will be completely different." Mousavi described the 12-Day War as a failed Israeli attempt to recover from "disgrace and internal disintegration," claiming it was decisively defeated under the leadership of the Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei. He accused Israel and the U.S. of launching "cognitive warfare to distort public perception after military losses" and urged the Islamic Republic's armed forces to stay vigilant against psychological operations "designed to weaken national unity."

- Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Esmaeil Baghaei announced that Russian Presidential Special Envoy for Syria Alexander Lavrentyev is visiting Tehran for "regular consultations" with officials from the Foreign Ministry and other state institutions.

- A prominent Baluch cleric, Mullah Kamal Salahizehi, was shot dead on October 19 in Iranshahr, Sistan and Baluchestan Province, triggering conflicting claims from the Islamic Republic and the U.S.-designated Sunni terror group Jaish al-Adl. State media such as the IRGC-linked Tasnim News Agency described Salahizehi as a loyal supporter of the Islamic Republic and mediator among Baluch tribes, blaming "mercenary groups tied to Israel" for the killing and vowing retaliation. In contrast, Jaish al-Adl mourned him as a long-time ally of its movement, accusing Tehran of orchestrating the assassination to suppress potential uprisings amid growing discontent. The group warned other Baluch figures to increase security amid what it called "a campaign of targeted assassinations by the regime." The assassination

underscores the tense security situation in Iran's Sistan and Baluchestan Province, where Sunni militant attacks and government crackdowns continue.

- Today, Supreme National Security Council Secretary Larijani met with Iraqi National Security Adviser Qasim al-Araji in Tehran to discuss enhancing security intelligence cooperation, counterterrorism efforts, and expanding economic and strategic ties. The two sides also reviewed regional developments and border issues. The meeting follows Larijani's visit to Baghdad in August, during which the two countries signed a bilateral security agreement to strengthen coordination. During the meeting in Tehran, al-Araji reaffirmed to Ali Larijani that "Iraq will not allow any party to use its territory against neighboring states." He emphasized Baghdad's commitment to "fully implement the bilateral security agreement" through a newly formed joint field committee to monitor compliance. The two sides discussed the status of Iranian Kurdish opposition groups, Iraq's obligations to relocate them away from border areas, and efforts to halt their military and political activities. Larijani praised Iraq's "efforts to implement the provisions of the agreement," saying they had "strengthened stability along the shared border."

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