Brief Notes

Fire Near Isfahan Nuclear Facility: Mansour Shisheforoush, Director General of Crisis Management in the Isfahan Governorate's Office, said smoke seen near Isfahan nuclear facilities today came from an unrelated fire caused by hot weather at a nearby waste facility. The incident sparked speculation on social media, with some users alleging that authorities deliberately set fire to nuclear waste at the Isfahan site. Check out NUFDI's joint research with FDD, which maps fires and explosions in Iran following the 12-Day War and explains how such incidents are perceived by people in Iran.

Australian Ambassador Leaves Iran: Spokesperson for the Foreign Ministry Esmaeil Baghaei confirmed that Australia's diplomatic presence in Iran has been downgraded and that the Australian ambassador has left the country. This move follows Canberra's expulsion of the Islamic Republic's ambassador on August 26, accusing Tehran of directing antisemitic attacks in Sydney and Melbourne, which the regime denied. Baghaei also said, "Despite the restrictions placed on the embassy, we are trying to continue providing necessary consular services to Iranians living in Australia."

Regime Seeks Release of Jailed Iranian Facing Terror Charges in France: Esmaeil Baghaei said efforts are underway to transfer Mahdieh Esfandiari, an Iranian woman detained in France on terrorism charges, to a location outside a detention facility. Esfandiari was originally arrested in Lyon during February of this year. Baghaei criticized the "prolonged" administration of her case and questioned the basis for her detention, adding that "supporting the rights of the Palestinian people against the occupying and racist Zionist regime is a completely legitimate action based on international law." French media identified Esfandiari, 35, as an eight-year resident of Lyon. The Paris prosecutor's office said on April 12 that Esfandiari was remanded in custody for "praising terrorist actions online, insults based on origin or religion, and refusal to provide codes to unlock access to social media channels."

New Defense Council Framed as Response to Global Militarization: Nour News, affiliated with Ali Shamkhani, a top political advisor to the Supreme Leader, posted on X, "When we accept that weapons have once again become the primary language of global politics, the flight of Trump's bombers welcoming Putin, the Chinese army's parade, and U.S. and Israeli attacks on Iran all take on a clearer meaning. In such a world, the creation of a 'Defense Council' is a strategic response to this 'weapons-based order' provided that priorities are translated into an actionable program."

New Commander Says Armed Forces Ready for War

Major General Ali Abdollahi was today named the new chief of the Khatam ol-Anbiya Central Headquarters, the Islamic Republic's joint military command. Abdollahi succeeded Ali Shadmani, who, like his predecessor, Gholam Ali Rashid, was killed during the 12-Day War.

In a statement made to mark the beginning of "National Unity Week," Abdollahi declared that the Islamic Republic's armed forces are now "more prepared and possess greater achievements than before the recent imposed war," stressing their readiness to defend "sovereignty, security, and the Islamic Revolution's gains."

He also warned that the "enemies," presumably the U.S. and Israel, were seeking to incite unrest through "psychological and media operations."

Abdollahi's public statement, highlighted by multiple state media outlets, was effectively framed as his formal introduction as commander. Earlier, the Supreme Leader-affiliated Keyhan daily had suggested the new chief's identity might be kept secret due to "special security considerations."

Also today, IRGC-linked Fars News reported that IRGC spokesperson Mohammad Naini said "Although we know the enemy cannot start a new war, it seeks to keep the country in a wartime atmosphere filled with anxiety and tension, and uses psychological operations to maintain this state." He added that the Islamic Republic "does not seek conflict" but is ready to respond if war erupts, stressing the priority should be "economic recovery and improving living standards."

Tehran Scrambles to Prevent Snapback

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi yesterday told state TV that Tehran, with support from China and Russia, is working to block the reimposition of UN sanctions under UNSCR 2231. He said, "In addition to the joint letter by Iran, China, and Russia, Iran's missions in New York remain in contact with the representatives of Russia and China, and other initiatives are also underway."

Araghchi denounced the E3's move to trigger the JCPOA snapback mechanism as "illegal and illegitimate," warning that the Islamic Republic "will take whatever action is necessary… and has no fear of negotiations or war."

Araghchi described President Masoud Pezeshkian's trip to China for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit as "one of the most important in the history" of the Islamic Republic.

Dismissing "rumors" that the Islamic Republic's SCO membership could be revoked if sanctions return, Araghchi stressed that "there was no such clause," adding that SCO members had indeed expressed support for the Islamic Republic. He also explained Pezeshkian's absence from a summit banquet photo, citing the Islamic Republic's "protocols based on laws, culture, and Islamic values."

On the Radar

- A group of taxi drivers in Zahedan, Sistan and Baluchestan Province, held a protest after their fuel cards suddenly stopped working. Drivers parked their cars on Qalambar Street to block traffic, saying no prior warning had been given to them regarding their cards and that authorities had yet to provide any clear explanation.
- UAE-based outlets speculate that the U.S. may launch strikes against Shia militias in Iraq following the exposure of networks to smuggle Iranian oil. Sources cited in the reports said a "second strike" would target militias backing Tehran. The speculation follows new U.S. sanctions announced on September 2.
- Regime authorities have seized a large cache of weapons and ammunition, including 30 handguns and 10,000 rounds, in Lorestan Province. The shipment was hidden in a pickup truck en route to the south of Iran from the western area of the country. One suspect was arrested and handed over to the judicial authorities. The provincial police commander said the seizure was part of a wider disarmament campaign that has led to the confiscation of 120 firearms and the arrest of 11 suspects in recent weeks.

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