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Brief Notes

U.S. Adversaries Fuel Charlie Kirk Murder Conspiracies: The Islamic Republic, along with China and Russia, has referenced Charlie Kirk's murder more than 6,000 times over the past week. Numerous regime-affiliated news agencies, including state-run IRNA, and pro-regime social media accounts have been spreading disinformation regarding Kirk's death, including a conspiracy theory accusing Israel of orchestrating the killing in retaliation for Kirk's opposition to U.S. and Israeli strikes on the Islamic Republic in June.

Tehran Defers IAEA Resolution: State media reported that some allies of the Islamic Republic, namely Russia and China, have claimed the United States pressured them not to support the resolution sponsored by Tehran at the IAEA to ban attacks on nuclear sites. As a result, at today's IAEA annual General Conference, the Islamic Republic's representative formally deferred consideration of the resolution until next year.

$1.5 Billion in Islamic Republic Crypto Blocked: IRGC-affiliated Fars News Agency reported that more than 187 cryptocurrency wallets "belonging to Iranian accounts, valued at over $1.5 billion, have been blocked," attributing the move to "political decisions and U.S. pressure." The wallets appear to be the same ones identified by Israel and blockchain analytics firm Elliptic as linked to the IRGC three days ago.

Macron: Snapback is a Done Deal

In an interview today, when asked if the implementation of snapback sanctions were a "done deal," French President Emmanuel Macron said, "Yes, I think so. Because the latest news we have from the Iranians are not serious." He added, "The Foreign Minister (Abbas Araghchi) tried to make a reasonable offer, but was probably not followed by other members of the structure." However, he emphasized, "France, on Iran issues, has always been a consistent and clear actor."

In response, Araghchi later posted on his X account, "I am glad that President Macron acknowledges that the proposal I presented is reasonable. But he, and the world, should also know that I have the full support of the entirety of the Islamic Republic of Iran, including my country's Supreme National Security Council."

He added, "It is therefore now high time for the UN Security Council to intervene and choose diplomacy over confrontation. The stakes could not be higher. Iran has already done its part."

Tehran and Riyadh Play Power Games

Reports indicate Tehran-backed Iraqi militias are blocking Saudi investment in Iraqi border areas worth up to $100 billion. The investment projects, primarily in vast desert areas along the Iraqi border with Saudi Arabia, are opposed by pro-Tehran militias due to fears they could pave the way for a "Sunni region" in Western Iraq. This opposition also furthers Tehran's goal of limiting Saudi Arabia's political and economic influence in Iraq.

The dispute has reached the Iraqi parliament, where Tehran-aligned lawmakers have demanded the withdrawal of a draft bill on the investments, forcing the suspension of two legislative sessions. Sources told the media that "Iran continues to veto Saudi economic or even political influence in Iraq."

Despite these tensions, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi held a phone call with his Saudi counterpart, Prince Faisal bin Farhan, regarding the newly signed Pakistan–Saudi Arabia defense pact, which the two countries said was intended to "strengthen their joint deterrence against any aggression." During the call, Araghchi emphasized the importance of bilateral ties between the Islamic Republic and Saudi Arabia.

On the other hand, today, the Saudi Ministry of Defense announced that the kingdom's armed forces and U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) had "concluded the joint exercise 'Red Sands,' aimed at enhancing combat readiness and developing joint operations."

Yesterday, CENTCOM described the operation as "the Middle East's largest live-fire counter-unmanned aerial system exercise focused on improving the detection, tracking, and elimination of modern drone threats."

On the Radar

- Footage of a recent fire engulfing an apartment building in Sabzevar, Razavi Khorasan Province, has gone viral across social media and news outlets. According to IRNA, at least 51 people have been injured. The cause of the blaze has not yet been disclosed.
- Yesterday, President Masoud Pezeshkian met Russian Energy Minister Sergei Tsivilyov in Tehran to advance cooperation in transportation, energy, and power plant projects under a 20-year strategic partnership signed with President Vladimir Putin earlier this year. Tsivilyov also held talks with Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad and Gazprom head Alexei Miller on gas transfer plans via Azerbaijan, while Tehran's Armed Forces Chief of Staff Abdolrahim Mousavi praised Moscow's support for the regime at UN forums following the 12-Day War, stressing the Islamic Republic's readiness for diplomacy, but also its "crushing response" to U.S. and Israeli attacks. Despite such assurances, skepticism persists in Tehran over Moscow's limited military backing during the conflict.
- Today, ISNA reported that the police commander of Sib and Suran County in Iran's Sistan and Baluchestan Province died from injuries sustained during a September 16 clash with the Sunni militant group Jaish

al-Adl. The group claimed responsibility yesterday, declaring that "the regime's military forces…are legitimate targets in the defensive jihad."

- The Islamic Republic and the Taliban have agreed to expand cooperation on trade, transit, mining, and infrastructure following Industry Minister Seyyed Mohammad Atabak's September 15–17 visit to Kabul and Herat. Atabak met Taliban Deputy Prime Minister Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar and other officials. Both sides pledged to raise annual trade from $3bn to $10bn, address port and transit issues, and revive the long-stalled Joint Economic Committee in Kabul this November.
- The Islamic Republic will begin a second round of deportations of Afghan migrants, Tehran's General Governor Mohammad Sadeq Motamedian said on September 16. He claimed the move would ease pressure on schools, reduce crime, and cut food shortages. Afghan private channel Ariana News reported that about two million Afghans have already been deported from Iran and Pakistan this year, with returns averaging 10,000 people a day, possibly reaching three million in total by year's end. Returnees described abuse and disappearances in detention, while civil activists warned of inadequate jobs and housing in Afghanistan.
- The IRGC's deputy political chief, Yadollah Javani, said Iran is still engaged in a "hybrid war" against the U.S. and Israel following the 12-Day War in June. Javani said this hybrid war is "years old," and that despite the fact that physical fighting has ceased, the war is still being fought across media, cyber, and political domains, and that the Islamic Republic is responding with "hybrid jihad."

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