Brief Notes

Islamic Republic Claims Preparedness for War: Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi today said, "at present, as an international relations expert, I do not see war as imminent." Speaking in a live interview on state-run IRIB TV1 while attending Arbaeen ceremonies in Karbala, Iraq, Araghchi noted, "preparedness for war is the most important factor in preventing it." Araghchi added, "No one should be negligent about the risk (of war)," but "we must also avoid creating a war atmosphere or allowing public opinion to be manipulated."

Araghchi Claims E3 Lacks Authority to Trigger Snapback: Araghchi, referring to the E3's offer to delay the triggering of snapback measures if Tehran makes progress in nuclear negotiations, said: "There is no doubt that something must be done to stop the snapback mechanism, and we will spare no effort until the very last moment." He added, "from our perspective, due to [the E3's] positions, including their insistence on zero enrichment, even though the JCPOA recognizes Iran's right to enrichment, they have no authority to speak about or invoke any part of the JCPOA, including the snapback mechanism."

Larijani's Lebanon Visit

Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council Ali Larijani arrived in Lebanon yesterday. Larijani visited the grave of former Hezbollah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah amid tensions over Beirut's plan to disarm the IRGC-backed Hezbollah by the end of 2025.

Larijani said Hezbollah members might face hostility "because of the impact of their movement" and pledged, "We are always by your side and will support you." He rejected claims of Islamic Republic interference in Lebanon's internal affairs, but added that the regime will "always support Resistance movements," a term the regime uses for its proxy militias across the region.

Lebanon's state media reported that Prime Minister Nawaf Salam told Larijani, "Neither I nor any Lebanese official allow ourselves to interfere in Iran's internal affairs, such as supporting one party over another, or opposing sovereign Iranian decisions. Accordingly, Lebanon will not accept, in any form, interference in its internal affairs, and looks forward to the Iranian side's clear and explicit commitment to these rules."

The anti-Hezbollah MTV outlet viewed Larijani's visit as an attempt to "prevent the implementation" of the U.S.-proposed disarmament. Pro-Hezbollah outlet Al-Akhbar reported that "it was very clear that the instructions that the prime minister received from the American and Saudi capitals were to deal harshly with his visitor, so he

deliberately appeared sullen and cold." It added that Salam "adhered to the instructions, including not smiling at photographers while receiving the Iranian official."

On the Radar

- At least seven protests have taken place across Iran today. In Kangan, Bushehr Province, Petropars security staff gathered outside a local governorate office demanding permanent employment at the refinery and an end to their suspended job status. In Jam, Bushehr Province, oil industry workers and their families protested wage caps, unpaid salaries, and retirement issues. In Tehran, shareholders of the Tehran Stock Exchange rallied outside the Ministry of Economic Affairs, blaming regime policies for the market crash and calling for urgent action. In Chabahar, residents protested against a 24-hour regime-imposed blackout. In Rasht, Gilan Province, villagers protested against a recently-granted stone mining permit they say will destroy their local environment. In Sanandaj, Kurdistan Province, residents of the Vahdat neighbourhood called for paved roads and improved waste collection services.
- In response to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's recent video message to the people of Iran, Foreign Minister Araghchi said today, "When someone claims he can turn wastewater into drinking water and so on, it only makes people laugh," calling Netanyahu's message "threadbare and foolish."
- Armenian Deputy Foreign Minister Vahan Kostanyan visited Iran from August 12–13, meeting with Foreign Minister Araghchi and senior advisers to Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei. Talks focused on regional peace and the Armenia-Azerbaijan normalization process, with Kostanyan stressing that regional infrastructure projects will respect borders. Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan told Fox News that Baku-Yerevan deals offered "quite tangible benefits" for Russia and the Islamic Republic, such as railway access from the Persian Gulf to the Black Sea and Russia.
- Over the past 100 days, the Islamic Republic has deported more than one million Afghans, including about 450,000 from Tehran alone, sharply reducing the number of Afghan children in local schools. This mass expulsion has drawn warnings from the International Organization for Migration and UNICEF, which warn humanitarian systems are nearing collapse.

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