Brief Notes

Security Chief Calls Gaza Peace Summit a 'Joke': Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council Ali Larijani dismissed the Sharm el-Sheikh peace summit on Gaza as "a joke," accusing participants of hypocrisy for "posing as peacemakers" after "two years of an oppressive war against the Palestinian people." He said the Islamic Republic refused to attend because "it was a low-level meeting, unworthy of revolutionary Iran." Larijani also rejected Western demands to limit the Islamic Republic's missile range below 500 kilometers (~300 miles), saying it "essentially means surrender" and that "national security and the interests of all depend upon this missile capability." He added that Tehran had negotiated extensively to prevent the UNSCR 2231 snapback sanctions, but has been left with "no choice but to resist."

Commander Confirms 26 Air Defense Troops Killed in 12-Day War: Alireza Sabahifard, commander of the Khatam al-Anbiya Joint Air Defense Base, confirmed that 26 air defense personnel, 16 officers and 10 conscripts, were killed during the 12-Day War. He warned Israel, saying, "Let the enemies know that the skies over Islamic Iran are not only secure, but any threat will be met with a harsh, regret-inducing response." Sabahifard added, "During the 12-Day War, it was inevitable for the enemy to damage some of our equipment, but what matters is that we managed, in the shortest possible time, to both restore the damaged systems and deploy fresh forces to replace our dear martyrs."

41 Foreign Nationals Detained on Iran's Border: Islamic Republic border guards arrested 41 individuals from Afghanistan, Syria, Bangladesh, and Pakistan in Marivan, Iranian Kurdistan Province, near the western border with Iraq. Faraj Rostami, chief of Iranian Kurdistan Province's Border Guard Command, noted that the detainees would be transferred to the proper authorities after their cases are processed, but provided no additional details.

Isfahan Nearing Water Bankruptcy: Mohammad Noursalehi, the head of Isfahan's city council, warned that the Zayandehrud Dam, central Iran's main water source, is nearing critically low levels, saying, "If the current trend continues, even drinking water for citizens will be at risk within the next 45 days." Noursalehi said that the dam releases far more water than it receives, much of which is lost to industrial diversion or illegal extraction, threatening over five million people across Isfahan, Yazd, Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari, and Qom provinces. "This is no longer just an agricultural or industrial problem. People's drinking water is in danger," he said, urging a halt to non-essential water use and calling for the rapid completion of long-delayed water transfer projects such as Kouhrang-3 and the southern Isfahan pipeline.

Tehran Eyes Trade With Neighbors for Sanctions Evasion

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, speaking in Mashhad, declared that the Islamic Republic is advancing a foreign policy strategy called "provincial diplomacy," which allows Iran's border provinces to build direct economic and cultural ties with neighboring countries as a way to counter the impact of international sanctions.

Araghchi referred to Iran's border regions as the Islamic Republic's "lifeline under sanctions" and described the initiative as a "paradigm shift" in foreign engagement.

Speaking to reporters following his speech, Araghchi warned the IAEA that "repeating a failed experience will only result in another failure." Araghchi's remarks come in response to IAEA Director Rafael Grossi's recent comments: "For now, Tehran is only allowing inspectors in dribs and drabs. It's imposing limits out of security concerns, which I understand. But if diplomacy fails, I fear a renewed resort to force."

On the Radar

- Defense Minister Aziz Nasirzadeh met with the Chairman of the Belarusian Military-Industrial Committee, Dzmitryy Pantus, to discuss the expansion of defense industrial cooperation. Nasirzadeh said the Islamic Republic values stronger ties with "friendly and independent" nations and highlighted Belarus's special place in that effort, while Pantus praised Tehran's technological capabilities and called for deeper collaboration in research, production, and industrial exchange. Both sides agreed to develop a roadmap for future cooperation, speed up joint defense projects, and coordinate through regional bodies like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). This follows President Masoud Pezeshkian's August visit to Minsk, where he signed 12 agreements with President Alexander Lukashenko and proposed a sanctions-bypassing partnership model similar to Tehran's deal with Moscow.
- The Central Bank of Iran has dissolved Ayandeh Bank, once one of Iran's largest private banks, at the behest of the Islamic Republic and ordered its merger into the state-owned Bank Melli. The move followed a statement yesterday from the head of the judiciary, Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei, saying that Central Bank officials must act quickly to stabilize weak banks or face legal consequences. Central Bank Governor Mohammad Reza Farzin said customer accounts will remain secure, employees will be retained, and Ayandeh's financial imbalances will not be transferred.
- Dushanbe and Tehran have agreed to deepen cooperation in energy and water resource management during a meeting between the two nations' energy ministers on the sidelines of the OIC Water Conference in Jeddah. The two sides highlighted the Sangtuda-2 Hydroelectric Power Plant, a key joint project that supplies about 5% of Tajikistan's electricity, as a model of successful collaboration and announced plans to hold their next bilateral energy commission meeting in Tajikistan. The two sides also finalized an agreement extending Tehran's operation of Sangtuda-2, located in Tajikistan, until the end of 2032.

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