Brief Notes

Rosatom Deputy CEO Visits Tehran: Yesterday in Tehran, the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, Mohammad Eslami, met with Rosatom Deputy CEO for International Relations Nikolay Spassky. The visit comes after the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the two state-run organizations in Moscow late last month, which included a $25 billion deal for the planned Hormoz nuclear plant. Spassky and his delegation's visit to Tehran aimed to follow up on the agreement and "pave the way for future expansion of (nuclear) cooperation," which falls under Article 23 of the recent 20-year Islamic Republic–Russia strategic partnership. Both sides agreed that Rosatom chief Alexei Likhachev will soon visit the Bushehr nuclear plant.

New Sanctions Target Energy Export Machine: The U.S. Treasury's OFAC has imposed new sanctions designations on over 50 individuals, entities, and vessels that facilitate the Islamic Republic's oil and liquefied petroleum gas sales and shipments. Treasury's press release reads, "These actors have collectively enabled the export of billions of dollars' worth of petroleum and petroleum products, providing critical revenue to the Iranian regime and…terrorist groups that threaten the United States. This action targets a network moving hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of Iranian LPG, along with nearly two dozen shadow fleet vessels, a China-based crude oil terminal, and an independent 'teapot' refinery…." The action marks the fourth round of sanctions against Chinese refineries with ties to the Islamic Republic since July.

Putin Styles Himself a Tehran–Jerusalem Mediator: During Russian President Vladimir Putin's speech at the Central Asia–Russia summit in Tajikistan today, he said, "We continue to maintain trust-based contacts with Israel and receive signals from the Israeli leadership asking us to convey this to our Iranian friends that Israel is also committed to a further settlement and is not interested in any kind of confrontation." He added, "Only through diplomacy and negotiations can the situation surrounding Iran's nuclear programme be resolved. There is no reasonable alternative. We are in close contact with our Iranian partners and sense their commitment to finding mutually acceptable solutions…."

Intel Minister Claims ISIS Deployed by 'Enemy' During 12-Day War: Intelligence Minister Esmaeil Khatib has accused the "enemy," presumably Israel, of deploying Islamic State terrorists in Iran's Sistan and Baluchestan Province to stir unrest during the 12-Day War. Speaking in Hamadan, Khatib said the plot aimed to destabilize the Islamic Republic through "terrorism, sabotage, and other actions," but claimed it failed. He added that weapons

smuggling, online incitement, and efforts to fuel economic protests were also part of broader attempts to weaken the regime.

Tehran Welcomes Hamas–Israel Ceasefire

The Foreign Ministry issued a statement today, expressing support for the newly announced Hamas–Israel ceasefire deal brokered by President Trump. The statement said, "The Islamic Republic of Iran has always supported any action or initiative that entails stopping the genocidal war, the withdrawal of occupying forces, the entry of humanitarian aid, the release of Palestinian prisoners, and the fulfillment of the fundamental rights of Palestinians."

The Foreign Ministry's statement adds, "As a supporter of the Palestinian people's legitimate resistance in their pursuit of the right to self-determination, the Islamic Republic of Iran has, over the past two years, utilized all its diplomatic capacities, particularly at the regional level, within the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and at the United Nations, to pressure the Zionist regime and its backers to halt the genocide and withdraw occupying forces from Gaza."

This comes after reports that U.S. envoy Steve Witkoff communicated to Islamic Republic Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi a desire for Tehran to back President Trump's Gaza peace plan.

On the Radar

- The Islamic Republic has called foreign interference in Afghanistan "one of the joint worries" of regional countries, warning that any foreign military presence, especially by the U.S. at Bagram Airbase, could threaten regional stability. Foreign Ministry Spokesman Esmaeil Baghai said the Islamic Republic, China, Russia, and Pakistan recently held a quadrilateral meeting on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, issuing a statement opposing renewed foreign bases in Afghanistan. The report noted that U.S. President Donald Trump's reported call for American control of Bagram has alarmed China, Russia, and the Islamic Republic, which see it as an attempt to restore U.S. strategic dominance in the region. The Taliban government has firmly rejected any U.S. military presence in Afghanistan.
- Last night on Fox's Hannity, President Donald Trump said that U.S. strikes on the Islamic Republic's nuclear sites were partially responsible for creating an environment in which the Hamas–Israel peace deal was possible. He said, "Iran was about one month, maybe two months, away from having a nuclear weapon, and if I allowed that to happen, this deal would not have been possible."
- Hooman Kiani, a 22-year-old student, was shot dead by Basij militiamen in Isfahan during the 12-Day War with Israel in June. The incident had not previously been reported. The militiamen, without warning,

opened fire on Kiani's vehicle at a security checkpoint. Lacking proper training and given carte blanche during times of crisis, the militia has a history of such killings.

- The IRGC-linked Fars News reported that a retired anti-narcotics officer, Gholamreza Jamshidi, was killed yesterday during a clash with drug smugglers on a desert road between Zahedan and Nehbandan in Sistan and Baluchestan Province. Local police said their patrol came under fire while conducting anti-smuggling operations and that a manhunt is underway for the attackers. The report did not explain why a retired officer was present during the operation.
- The Islamic Republic's ambassador to Pakistan, Reza Amiri Moghadam, has urged "collective, determined, and united" action against terrorism following the deaths of 11 Pakistani soldiers on October 7. On X, he said he was "extremely dejected" over the loss of "brave brothers from the security forces of Pakistan."
- The Katager Zero Point border crossing between Pakistan and Iran reopened yesterday after being closed for four years.
- A court in Iran's West Azerbaijan Province has reportedly sentenced 10 people, including a foreign national, to prison and fined them more than $205 million for involvement in a large-scale gold smuggling scheme. Naser Atabati, head of the provincial judiciary, said the court found the group guilty of smuggling over two tons of gold as part of an organized network operating near Iran's borders with Turkey, Iraq, and Azerbaijan. One defendant was identified as a foreign national, though his nationality was not disclosed. The verdict comes as Iran's northwestern provinces are being developed into potential hubs for mining and jewelry exports.
- A new controversy over the Islamic Republic's mandatory hijab erupted after a senior member of the Expediency Council, Mohammad Reza Bahonar, said the law was no longer enforceable, revealing it had been suspended by the Supreme National Security Council. Many members of the council, including clerics and state media, condemned his remarks as "erroneous" and accused him of promoting immorality and siding with regime opponents. Despite Bahonar's claim, today, the Law Enforcement Command issued a statement saying, "All business units and public places are subject to (hijab) regulations and are required to comply with the rules, standards, and laws currently in force in the country."

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