



Zarif describes Trump's attempts to normalize Israel-Arabs ties as election propaganda

# IRAN DAILY



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Trump, fans defy coronavirus directive at packed Nevada indoor rally



Persepolis, Sepahan seeking ACL momentum against Saudi opponents



Iran's 'Driving Lessons' shines at Japanese festival

## Iran dismisses 'baseless' report US envoy is target; South Africa unaware of such plan



TASNIM

Iran on Monday denied a report that it has planned to kill the US ambassador to South Africa, and the government in Pretoria said it's unaware of any such plan.

Politico claimed on Sunday that Iran is considering an attempt to murder Lana Marks to avenge America's assassination of Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani earlier this year. The news website cited an unidentified US government official as saying that intelligence about the alleged attempt has become more specific in recent weeks.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry said the "biased and agenda-driven" report published in the American media outlet cited the statements of a seemingly US government official in an effort to make it appear true.

"We advise American officials to stop resorting to hackneyed and outworn methods to create Iranophobic atmosphere on the international arena," spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran, as a responsible member of the international community, has demonstrated its continued adherence to the principles and customs of international diplomacy," Khatibzadeh said.

A spokesman for South Africa's Foreign Ministry said the US official's allegation took Pretoria by surprise.

"We only became aware of this report this morning," Lungu Ngqengelele said. Department of International Relations and Cooperation Minister Naledi Pandor may issue a statement later, he said.

Politico wrote that Marks had likely been chosen due to her closeness to US President Donald Trump.

Khatibzadeh said baseless allegations such as the one published in the Politico are "part of the Trump administration's counter-intelligence campaign against Iran."



US Ambassador to South Africa Lana Marks

"The US regime's resort to anti-Iranian accusations and lies in the run-up to the US presidential election, and at the same time its pressure to abuse UN Security Council mechanisms to increase pressure on the Iranian people, was predictable," the spokesman added. Khatibzadeh noted that "such moves and

news fabrications, probably to continue in the future" but will certainly remain "futile".

"In contrast, it is the United States and the current regime in the White House that, especially in recent years, has shown its disregard for basic diplomatic principles and become a pariah regime in the international arena with numerous actions outside the internationally-accepted methods and norms, including the design and execution of dozens of assassination plans and military and intelligence interventions, withdrawal from numerous international agreements, violation of territorial integrity and the cowardly assassination of General Qassem Soleimani, the glorious commander of the fight against terrorism," he said.

On January 3, the United States assassinated Lieutenant General Soleimani along with Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, the second-in-command of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units and several other companions, outside Baghdad airport.

Iran responded by firing a volley of ballistic missiles at US forces based in Iraq, which left about 110 American troops injured.

Khatibzadeh said that Iran will continue to pursue international legal action in connection with "the criminal and cowardly assassination of Gen. Soleimani at all levels, and will neither forgive nor forget this terrorist act."

Press TV and Bloomberg contributed to this story.



## IAEA chief hopeful of greater mutual trust with Iran

The head of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said on Monday that he is hopeful Iran's decision to let inspectors in to two sites could lead to greater mutual trust.

Rafael Grossi visited Tehran in late August to meet with Iranian officials to end a months-long impasse over the two locations thought to be from the early 2000s. AP reported.

During the visit, Iran agreed to allow the IAEA to inspect the two sites where the agency claimed Iran had stored or used undeclared nuclear material.

"I welcome the agreement between the agency and Iran, which I hope will reinforce cooperation and enhance mutual trust," Grossi told the agency's Board of Governors in Vienna.

He said that inspectors had already visited one site and would visit another later this month.

The IAEA chief added that the agency continues to verify the non-diversion of nuclear material declared by Iran under its Safeguards Agreement. "Evaluations regarding the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities for Iran continue," he told the 35-nation board.

Iran had been permitting IAEA inspectors in to current nuclear sites agreed upon in the landmark 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, but had said the other two sites dated from before the deal so there was no reason to grant access.

The country has also argued that the IAEA's access requests were based on allegations from Iran's arch-enemy Israel and have no legal basis.

The deal has been on life support since US President Donald Trump pulled his country unilaterally out of it in 2018 and reimposed sanctions on Iran.

In retaliation, a year after the US withdrawal, Iran rolled back part of its commitments to the deal that was meant to give it relief from sanctions in exchange for curbs on its nuclear program.

## Putin condemns 'unsubstantiated' Navalny claims in call with Macron



Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday condemned "unsubstantiated" accusations over opposition leader Alexei Navalny's alleged poisoning with a nerve agent during a call with his French counterpart Emmanuel Macron.

Putin stressed it was inappropriate to make "unsubstantiated accusations based on nothing against the Russian side," according to a Kremlin readout of the call, AFP reported.

Putin said that Russia wanted Germany to hand over medical test results taken from Navalny in order to clarify the real circumstances of the incident.

French and Swedish laboratories earlier confirmed German findings that Navalny was poisoned with a Novichok nerve agent. Macron urged Putin to urgently shed light on the incident, the French presidency said in a statement.

Macron told Putin that it is "imperative that all light be shed, without delay, on the circumstances of this attempted murder and who is responsible," the Elysee said.

He also informed Putin that France's own analysis had confirmed Germany's conclusion that Navalny was poisoned by a Novichok nerve agent "in contravention of international norms on using chemical weapons."

Germany has accused Russia of trying to poison Navalny and demanded an explanation from Moscow for what it said was the banned Soviet-era nerve agent Novichok found in his body by German doctors, according to Reuters.

Navalny was flown to Germany last month after falling violently ill while traveling in Siberia. Moscow has insisted it has seen no evidence he was poisoned and earlier on Friday said it would ask to send investigators to Berlin in response to the German demands.

According to the Elysee, Macron on Monday "expressed his full solidarity with Germany over the steps to be taken and the consequences to be drawn from the situation."

"Clarification is required from Russia as part of a credible and transparent investigation," he added.

Top US officials in West Coast states where record-breaking fires have killed 35 people accused President Donald Trump on Sunday of being in denial about climate change.

"This is climate change, and this is an administration that's put its head in the sand," said Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, according to AFP.

History-making infernos have burned through nearly five million acres (two million hectares), an area roughly the size of the state of New Jersey and an annual record - with nearly four months of the fire season still to come.

Officials warned of further fatalities with swathes of land in California, Oregon and Washington still cut off by flames fueled by tinder-dry conditions of the kind climate change causes.

Of the at least 35 people killed by the blazes since the beginning of

summer, 25 died this week alone. Dozens were still missing on Sunday. Trump has made little comment about the blazes in recent weeks, but at a Nevada campaign event on Saturday he acknowledged the scope of the disaster.

"They never had anything like this," said Trump, who systematically downplays global warming. "Please remember the words, very simple, forest management."

Garcetti hit back, saying that "anybody that lives in California is insulted by that."

"Talk to a firefighter if you think that climate change isn't real," he said.

"We need real action. We need to reduce the carbon emissions that we have. And we need to make sure we can manage this water. This isn't about forest management or raking."

Democratic presidential candidate



REUTERS

Joe Biden said Saturday it was "undeniable" that "climate change poses an imminent, existential threat to our way of life."

His running mate, California Senator Kamala Harris, backed him up Sunday on Twitter, saying Trump "denies the evidence."

Worsening the sense of doom, five of the world's 10 most air-polluted cities Sunday were on the West Coast, according to IQAir, with dense smog and ash coating the atmosphere from Los Angeles up to Vancouver in Canada.

"It's apocalyptic," Washington

state Governor Jay Inslee told ABC's "This Week."

"It's maddening right now we have this cosmic challenge to our communities, the entire West Coast of the United States on fire, to have a president to deny that these are not just wildfires, these are climate fires," he said.

More than 20,000 firefighters are battling the blazes, with officials warning that cooler weather could end Monday as warmer, drier conditions return.

Most of the fatalities have occurred in California and Oregon.

Near the Beachie Creek Fire, east of Oregon state capital Salem, police had set up multiple road blockades on Sunday. Long lines of cars stretched in front of them, waiting in the thick fog to pass through.

Many were farmers trying to go home and feed their livestock.

## Trump has head 'in the sand' as fires rage: LA mayor