

Pakistan Purchases Russian Oil with US Approval

Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced on June 11 that the first discounted Russian crude oil shipment had arrived in Karachi. While the exact price that Pakistan paid for the oil remains unclear, Reuters reported that Pakistan paid for the shipment using Chinese yuan. The shipment probably will bring some relief to Pakistan amid dire economic conditions and a balance of payments crisis, as a majority of the country's external payments are for energy imports. Whilst in the surface this agreement may appear to go against Pakistan's relations with the US, Masood Khan, the Pakistani ambassador confirmed in a conference in Washington organized by the Wilson Center's South Asia Institute on the future of relations between the two countries. *"We have placed the first order for Russian oil, and this has been done in consultation with the United States government. There's no misunderstanding between Washington and Islamabad on this count. They have suggested that you are free to buy anything below or up to the price cap, and we have abided by that agreement. I think Washington is fine with that."* Talks about a deal for discounted Russian crude reportedly began in February 2022, when then-Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan visited Russia in the opening days of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Efforts to secure an agreement continued for months, ultimately culminating in a reported purchase in April 2023 for two shipments totalling 100,000 tons of oil, arriving this week.

Zionists Create New Military Intelligence Unit to Prepare for War with Iran

'Israel's' military has created a new intelligence unit to prepare for war with Iran amid simmering tensions between the two nations. The Jewish entity has been conducting a covert war against Iran for some time, but in recent years, 'Israeli' officials have been speaking more openly about the fact that they're preparing for an overt military conflict with the Islamic Republic. The Ynet report said the intelligence branch of the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) created the new unit to specifically prepare for a fight with Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). The head of research for the new intelligence unit, known as Branch 54, told Ynet that the preparations for a conflict with Iran are much different than the wars 'Israel' has waged in Lebanon and Gaza. *"This is a significant mindset change that the IDF is required to make. It is not similar to a war against Hezbollah or an operation in Gaza against Hamas or Islamic Jihad,"* said the officer, who went by the name Lt. Col. T. The news of 'Israel's' new preparations for war with Iran comes amid reports that the US and Iran have been engaged in new negotiations related to Iran's civilian nuclear program, although both sides have dismissed the idea that an agreement is close. In light of these reports, 'Israeli' Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told Secretary of State Antony Blinken that no deal between the US and Iran would prevent 'Israel' from attacking the Islamic Republic.

Iran Confirms Holding Indirect Talks with the US

The Iranian Foreign Ministry confirmed on Monday 12th June said that Iranian officials held indirect talks with the US in Oman last month but dismissed the idea that an interim nuclear deal was on the table. Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani appeared to confirm a report from Axios that said the talks took place in Oman on May 8, when US President Biden's top Middle East official on the National Security Council, Brett McGurk, was in Muscat. According to the report, the US and Iranian officials did not meet directly, and Omani officials acted as mediators. Sources told Axios that the main message that the US conveyed to Iran was a threat that there would be severe consequences if Iran enriched uranium at 90%, which is required to develop a nuclear bomb. But there's no indication Tehran will take that step. Amid reports of US and Iranian engagement, Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said Sunday that there's "nothing wrong" with Iran reaching an agreement on its nuclear program as long as the infrastructure remains intact. Khamenei also reaffirmed Iran's position that it does not seek a nuclear weapon.