

Headlines:

- **Attack at Iran Military Parade**
- **Saudi Arabia to Invest in China-Backed Initiative**
- **Diplomat Floats the Idea of a Treaty with Iran**

Details:

Attack at Iran Military Parade

Four gunmen in military uniforms aligned with a separatist group attacked a military parade on Saturday 23 September in the Iranian city of Ahvaz. The gunmen opened fire on civilians, and tried to shoot officers on the podium overseeing the event. At least 29 people were killed in the attack, some as young as four years old. Over 60 others were wounded in the attack. Iran reported two of the gunmen were killed and two of them were captured. ISIS claimed credit for the attack, which was followed by a group called the Arab Struggle Movement for the Liberation of Ahvaz claiming they were actually behind it. The ISIS claim is likely false, as they claimed to have tried to assassinate Hassan Rouhani, who was not even there.

An initial statement from the Iranian military blamed the US and the Jewish entity for orchestrating the attack, though subsequent statements focused on the Arab separatist movements, and regional nations who sponsor them.

Iran summoned the ambassadors of Denmark, Britain, and the Netherlands after the attack, complaining that the nations are hosting members of the separatist groups, and pushing for them to list the organization as a terrorist group after the attack.

Saudi Arabia to Invest in China-Backed Initiative

Pakistan's Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry announced Sep 20 that Saudi Arabia has agreed to invest \$10 billion in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), an ambitious, \$62 billion infrastructure and development project supported by Beijing. Pakistani media suggested that the scope of the Saudi-backed work would include a major petroleum complex at the proposed 80,000-acre "oil city" at the port of Gwadar. Pakistan's announcement followed Prime Minister Imran Khan's two-day trip to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Khan, who chose Saudi Arabia as his first destination abroad since becoming prime minister in August, was expected to sign a \$4 billion soft loan from the Saudi-based Islamic Development Bank to help boost Islamabad's dwindling foreign exchange reserves, although nothing was announced in this regard.

Diplomat Floats the Idea of a Treaty with Iran

The US special envoy for Iran, Brian Hook, said ahead of U.N. meetings in New York that the United States is seeking to negotiate a treaty with Iran to include Tehran's ballistic missile program. Talking to an audience at the Hudson Institute think tank. Hook's statement opens the possibility that the US may be willing to alter its stance on what it demands from Iran. A narrow agreement over ballistic missiles and the nuclear program would mark a shift from the 12 conditions that the US set out for Iran before removing the crippling economic sanctions that Washington reinstated after withdrawing from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), in May.