

Russia's RT will continue to work in West: editor

REUTERS, Moscow

Russian state media outlet RT, which the United States has accused of trying to influence its presidential election, will continue to work in the West by going around any limits or sanctions, its editor-in-chief said yesterday.

The United States on Wednesday filed money-laundering charges against two employees of RT for what officials said was a scheme to hire an American company to produce online content to influence the 2024 election.

The United States also announced actions targeting RT, including Editor-in-Chief Margarita Simonyan, calling her "a central figure in Russian government malign influence efforts".

Simonyan said on RT that the West had been cracking down on the network since 2014, when Russia annexed Crimea.



Firefighting personnel monitor the blaze as Highway 330 is engulfed by the Line Fire near Running Springs, California, on Saturday. California Governor Gavin Newsom and San Bernardino County authorities declared a state of emergency yesterday. The Line Fire has burned more than 7,000 acres (2,800 hectares).

PHOTO: AFP

Iran president to visit Iraq on first foreign trip

AFP, Tehran

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian will visit neighbouring Iraq on Wednesday, state media reported Sunday, in what will be his first trip abroad since he took office in July.

Pezeshkian will head a high-ranking Iranian delegation to Baghdad to meet senior Iraqi officials.

The visit comes at the invitation of Iraq's premier, Mohammed Shia al-Sudani, the official IRNA news agency quoted Iran's ambassador to Baghdad Mohammad Kazem Al-Sadegh as saying.

The two countries will sign memoranda of understanding on cooperation and security, Sadegh said, without elaborating.

He said the agreements were to have been signed during a planned visit to Iraq by Iran's late president, Ebrahim Raisi.

But Raisi was killed in May along with the then foreign minister, Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, when their helicopter crashed on a fog shrouded mountainside in northern Iran.

Since taking office, Pezeshkian has vowed to "prioritise" strengthening ties with the Islamic republic's neighbours.

Violence rages in Gaza, West Bank

'Gunman from Jordan' kills 3 Israelis at West Bank crossing

AFP, Palestinian Territories

A truck driver shot dead three Israeli guards at a border crossing between the occupied West Bank and Jordan yesterday before being "eliminated", Israel's military said, as it pounded Gaza with new strikes.

The rare attack at the Allenby Bridge crossing comes amid soaring violence in the West Bank with major Israeli raids and attacks by Palestinians, and against the backdrop of the Israel-Hamas Gaza war, now in its 12th month.

The military said "a terrorist" reached the crossing area, also known as the King Hussein Bridge, in a truck "from Jordan".

The driver "exited the truck and opened fire at Israeli security forces operating at the bridge", a military statement said.

"Three Israeli civilians were pronounced dead as a result of the attack," it said, clarifying to AFP that they were "security guards" and not in the army or police.

The attacker was shot dead, the military added, without providing his identity.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu denounced the assailant as a "despicable terrorist" inspired by "a murderous ideology" which he said was fuelled by Iran.

Hamas praised the attack but did not claim responsibility for it, adding it "affirms the Arab peoples' rejection of the (Israeli) occupation, its crimes, and its ambitions in Palestine and Jordan".

Jordan's interior ministry said authorities were

"investigating the incident".

The crossing, in the Jordan Valley, is the only international gateway for Palestinians from the West Bank that does not require entering Israel, which has occupied the territory since 1967.

Violence in the West Bank has surged alongside the war in Gaza.

Israel's military on August 28 launched simultaneous raids across several cities and refugee camps in the northern West Bank, killing at least 36 Palestinians, according to the Ramallah-based Palestinian health ministry.

Since October 7 last year, Israel's offensive in Gaza has so far killed at least 40,972 people, according to the health ministry in the Hamas-run territory.

The UN human rights office says most of the dead are women and children.

Yesterday, Israel pounded Gaza with air strikes and shelling as prospects remained dim for a ceasefire.

Gaza's civil defence agency said nearly a dozen people were killed in Israeli air strikes yesterday, including five in Jabalia refugee camp.

The Israeli military said it had struck around "25 Hamas targets" across Gaza over the past day.

There has been no respite for the 2.4 million Palestinians living in Gaza, almost all of whom have been displaced at least once.

"Moving from one area to another is distressing because there is no safe place in Gaza," said Raaed Hamad, 51, a cancer patient from the southern city of Khan Yunis.



French largely satisfied with Macron's PM choice: poll

AFP, Paris

The French are largely satisfied with the appointment of the centre-right Michel Barnier as prime minister, but believe he will not last long in his new post, a poll said yesterday.

According to the Ifop poll for the Journal du Dimanche, 52 percent of people polled said they were satisfied with the appointment of 73-year-old Barnier, a former foreign minister who acted as the European Union's Brexit negotiator, as head of government.

By comparison, 53 percent of respondents approved the nomination of Barnier's predecessor, Gabriel Attal, when he was appointed PM in early January.

The poll was released after more than 100,000 left-wing demonstrators rallied across France on Saturday to protest against the nomination of Barnier as prime minister.

According to the Ifop poll, a majority of respondents see Barnier, the oldest prime minister in the history of modern France, as competent (62 percent), open to dialogue (61 percent) and likeable (60 percent).

POLITICAL IMPASSE IN FRANCE

Le Pen urges Macron to hold referendum

AFP, Paris

French far-right leader Marine Le Pen yesterday urged President Emmanuel Macron to hold a referendum on key issues such as immigration, suggesting that giving the French a direct vote might help break the political deadlock.

Last week Macron appointed the centre-right Michel Barnier, a 73-year-old former foreign minister who acted as the European Union's Brexit negotiator, as prime minister, seeking to move forward after June-July snap elections that resulted in a hung parliament.

But analysts say the country is set for a period of instability, with Barnier's hold on power seen as fragile and dependent on support from Le Pen's eurosceptic, anti-immigration National Rally (RN) party, which is the largest party in the new National Assembly.

A left-wing coalition, which emerged as France's largest political bloc after the elections, although short of an overall majority, is also piling pressure on Barnier.

More than 100,000 left-wing demonstrators rallied across France on Saturday to protest against his nomination and denounce Macron's "power grab". Yesterday, she urged Macron to conduct a referendum on key issues such as immigration, health care and security to give the people a direct vote.

'Time is now' for peace

Says Germany's Scholz over Ukraine war

AFP, Frankfurt

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz yesterday called for diplomatic efforts to be intensified to achieve peace in Ukraine "more quickly", as the war grinds through its third year.

The call comes as Scholz is under growing pressure at home amid signs of public fatigue with the conflict that started with Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

"I believe that now is the time to discuss how we can get out of this war situation and achieve peace more quickly," Scholz told public broadcaster ZDF, in an annual summer interview.

The far-right AfD and far-left BSW parties -- who both want to end weapons deliveries to Ukraine -- made huge gains in two regional elections in Germany last week, while Scholz's coalition parties received a bruising.

Germany is the second largest contributor of aid to Ukraine after the United States, and Scholz's government has repeatedly pledged to keep up the support for "as long as it takes".

Scholz said Russia should attend the next international peace summit on ending the war, after Moscow was excluded from the first one. "It's important that we make progress," Scholz said.

On the ground, Russia yesterday said its forces had advanced in eastern Ukraine as Kyiv reported deadly air attacks and urged the West to allow it to carry out more retaliatory strikes inside Russia's borders.

Two people were killed yesterday in a Russian air strike on the Ukrainian city of Sumy, the capital of the region from where Ukraine poured troops and tanks across the border into Russia in its shock counter-attack.



সামরিক চিকিৎসা সার্ভিস মহাপরিদপ্তর প্রতিরক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়, ঢাকা সেনানিবাস. জরুরি দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি. ১। সশস্ত্র বাহিনীর জন্য দেশীয় মুদ্রায় ছকে উল্লিখিত ঐক্যসমূহ অকার্যে প্রতিরক্ষা ক্রয় মহাপরিদপ্তরের অধিকারভুক্ত ব্যবসায়ী/প্রকৃতকারী/আমদানীকারক/ইভেপিস প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে সীল মোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাবে।

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