

Army's drones destroy ...

"Only one or two countries have the ability to carry out this very complex and advanced operation, which of course they have not displayed yet.

The Ababil-5 drone performed a surveillance operation and the Karrar carried out interception and destruction tasks on the first day of the drill, Sheikh added. Additionally, he said, the exercise featured the unveiling of Kaman-19 drone with air-based electronic warfare capability. Last month, Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Baqeri said the scope of foreign demand for sophisticated unmanned aerial vehicles developed and manufactured indigenously by the country's military specialists is much larger than its production capacity.

ISA to launch ...

Furthermore, he said that this project will enable Iran to possess observation radar satellites.

Salarieh noted that satellites such as Pars-1 and Tolo-3 are optical observation satellites, and their performance is affected by cloudy weather and dusty conditions. However, radar satellites can collect data even in cloudy weather, he said. According to the head of the Iranian Space Agency, with the completion of the Sareer launcher's construction and initial tests, the first step toward reaching a 36,000-kilometer orbit has been taken. "A consortium, comprised of private sector entities and the Iran Electronics Industries, has been formed to establish international space launch infrastructure. This facility, capable of launching at various orbital inclinations, initiated its first phase last year," Salarieh stressed. He predicted that the southern port city of Chabahar would be critical in assisting Iran in achieving a Sun-synchronous orbit for its satellite systems.

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Iran's approach in Caucasus could help resolve crisis



By **Mohsen Pakayeen**
Iran's former ambassador to the Republic of Azerbaijan

OPINION EXCLUSIVE

In the past few days, senior officials from Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan traveled to Iran and held talks with Iranian officials. Armen Grigorian, the secretary of the Supreme National Security Council

of Armenia, and Khalaf Khalafov, the special envoy of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, were in Tehran, where they held meetings and discussions with Iranian officials. This indicates the trust of both Baku and Yerevan in Tehran and acceptance of its constructive role in establishing peace in the Caucasus region.

In the 44-day war between Armenia and Azerbaijan in 2020, the Islamic Republic of Iran adopted rational positions. In a speech on

November 3 of that year, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei stated the fundamental positions of the country, emphasizing five specific points: Firstly, the need to end the bitter war as soon as possible; secondly, the liberation of Azerbaijani territories occupied by Armenia; thirdly, the insistence on maintaining international borders; fourthly, Iran's emphasis on protecting the rights of Armenians living in Azerbaijani territory; and

fifthly, the demand that terrorists stay away from Iran's borders.

Iran, in the execution of its principled positions, defended the territorial integrity of both sides, and the result was the return of Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijan. Iran also requested Baku to abandon its historical claims on the Syunik Province of Armenia, as pursuing such claims could lead to changes in international borders and provoke a strong Iranian response.

Iran continues to follow the issue of protecting the rights of Armenians in Azerbaijani territory. During Khalafov's visit to Tehran, Iran reminded Baku of this request. Tehran has also emphasized to Armenian officials that it opposes the entry of extra-regional countries into the Caucasus region and that regional peace should be achieved through regional dialogues.

Therefore, following Iran's policy, Nagorno-Karabakh was returned to Azerbaijan, and Armenia was protected from Azerbaijan's possible aggression. Now, the recent visits by officials from both countries to Tehran indicate their trust in Tehran and its constructive role in establishing peace.

However, there is concern among experts that in the future, after the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh

issue, Azerbaijan may once again raise its claims on the Syunik Province and the creation of the Zangezur Corridor, which Iran strongly opposes. Still, there is no concrete evidence to suggest that Baku is considering such actions. At the Prague meeting in May, Yerevan and Baku explicitly accepted each other's territorial integrity, and this agreement prevented Armenia from entering a war in defense of the Armenians of the Karabakh region.

The most important point is that the Azerbaijani authorities have promised and emphasized in bilateral meetings with Iranian officials that they do not seek to occupy Syunik Province of Armenia and change the borders. In addition, influential extra-regional countries, such as the United States and France, have emphasized the need to preserve the territorial integrity of Armenia, and therefore it seems unlikely that Azerbaijan, which has good relations with the West, would want to invade Armenia against their wishes. All these pieces of evidence suggest that an Azerbaijani attack on Syunik Province in southern Armenia is unlikely, especially since Azerbaijan does not want to be perceived globally as a war-seeking country.

House adrift as Republicans fight over next leader

McCarthy ousted in historic vote

International Desk

The US House of Representatives was leaderless on Wednesday, after hard-line Republicans narrowly won a vote to oust Speaker Kevin McCarthy, an historic move that triggered what will be a lengthy and likely messy battle to find a replacement.

It was the first time that the House has removed a speaker – a position that is second in line to the president after the vice president, Reuters reported. Republican lawmakers signaled they would need a week to regroup, planning to meet on Tuesday to discuss possible candidates to replace McCarthy – who said he would not run again – with votes on Oct. 11 at the earliest. The leadership fight is eating into the time lawmakers have to avert a looming partial government shut-

down, which would begin on Nov. 18 if Congress fails to pass legislation proving more funding.

"We're in uncharted waters," Republican Representative Byron Donalds told reporters after supporting McCarthy in a vote the speaker lost 216-210. "I fought for what I believe in," McCarthy said. "I believe I can continue to fight, but maybe in a different manner." Removing the speaker launches the House Republicans into chaos heading into a busy fall when Congress will need to fund the government again or risk a mid-November shutdown.

Replacement nominees

It was not clear who might seek to succeed McCarthy in a job that has proven challenging for Republicans in recent years. The last two Republican speakers,



Paul Ryan and John Boehner, retired from Congress after clashes with their right wing.

The names being mentioned as replacements for McCarthy include House Majority Leader Steve Scalise and Republican Whip Tom Emmer. Representative Patrick McHenry, who was named speaker pro tempore after McCarthy's removal, could also become

a candidate. None have said if they are interested, and other names could emerge in the week ahead. Tuesday's rebellion was led by Representative Matt Gaetz, a far-right Republican from Florida and McCarthy's antagonist who finally turned on the speaker after he on Saturday relied on Democratic votes to help pass a bill to avoid a partial government shutdown.



Former speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy speaks to reporters after he was ousted from the position of Speaker by a vote of the House of Representatives at the US Capitol in Washington.

● JONATHAN ERNST/REUTERS

No democratic support

Democrats said they viewed McCarthy as untrustworthy after he broke a May agreement on spending with President Joe Biden.

"Let them wallow in their pigsty of incompetence," Representative Pramila Jayapal told reporters before the vote. Gaetz was one of more than a dozen Republicans who repeatedly voted against McCarthy's bid for speaker in January. McCarthy ultimately secured the gavel after 15 rounds of voting over four days. To win the job, McCarthy agreed to

rules that made it easier to challenge his leadership.

His supporters have said Gaetz was motivated by a hunger for publicity, a chance to win higher office or resentment over an ongoing ethics probe into possible sexual misconduct and illicit drug use. Gaetz has denied wrongdoing and said he is not motivated by a dislike of McCarthy.

McCarthy supporters

But a long line of McCarthy supporters stood up for him, including Rep. Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, a leader of the conservative Freedom Caucus, who said, "He has kept his word." Rep. Garret Graves, R-La., waved his cellphone, saying it was "disgusting" that hard-right colleagues were fundraising off the move in text messages seeking donations. McCarthy, of California, insisted he would not cut a

deal with Democrats to remain in power – not that he could have relied on their help even if he had asked.

Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries said in a letter to colleagues that he wants to work with Republicans, but he was unwilling to provide the votes needed to save McCarthy. "It is now the responsibility of the GOP members to end the House Republican Civil War," Jeffries said, announcing the Democratic leadership would vote for the motion to oust the speaker. White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said Biden "hopes the House will quickly elect a speaker." "Once that happens, she said, "he looks forward to working together with them."

Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell issued a statement thanking McCarthy for "what is often a thankless role.