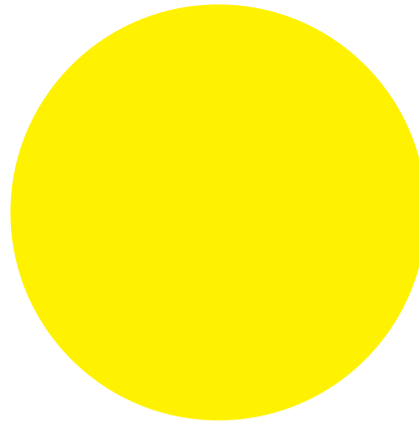




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Ramadan tradition of saharhani on the wane



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Iranians, Muslim nations mark Quds Day to support Palestine



People from all walks of life rally in a street in Tehran, Iran on April 14, 2023 to mark the international Quds Day. **ABOLFAZL NESAEI/IRAN DAILY**

International Desk
Millions of Iranians, along with people in other Muslim countries, took to the streets nationwide on Friday to mark Quds Day in solidarity with the oppressed people of Palestine. Senior Iranian officials attended the rally, including President Ebrahim Raeisi, Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf and top military brass. The annual occasion, which has been observed since Iran's Islamic Revolution in 1979, takes place on the final Friday of the holy month of Ramadan. "The liberation of Al-Quds is very close, closer than

expected," Raeisi said referring to a holy city that Israel captured its east parts during the 1967 war and annexed. The Palestinians seek East Al-Quds as a future capital. Furthermore, Raeisi said that the demonstrations serve as a "symbol of solidarity and unity of the Muslim world" and show that the Palestinian resistance groups engaged in fighting against Israel "are not alone." The president also condemned the normalization of relations between Israel and some Persian Gulf Arab states in recent years, affirming that it would not bring security to the region.

During his speech to the demonstrators in Tehran, Qalibaf denounced Israel as the "primary" source of turmoil in the region and stated that Palestinian fighters are thwarting Israel's ploys. "From Gaza to the heart of Tel Aviv, the Palestinians are actively confronting Israeli aggression," he affirmed amid a surge in violence in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict since the start of the year. In recent weeks, there have been fatal assaults and clashes in Israel, annexed East Al-Quds, and the occupied West Bank, as well as exchanges of fire between Israeli troops and resistance fighters in the Gaza Strip, Lebanon, and Syria. "Yesterday, the Palestinians were battling with stones, and now they are striking Israel with rockets," Qalibaf added. Demonstrators in Tehran marched on Friday from 10 different directions to Tehran University's campus, where the ceremony ended in time for Friday noon prayers. Rallies were also held other cities and towns across the country including Tabriz in the northwest, Hamedan in the west, Yazd in the center, Bandar Abbas in the south and Abadan in the southwest. Many demonstrators carried Palestinian flags and the banner of the Lebanese

resistance group Hezbollah. Demonstrators in some places set fire to American and Israeli flags, as well as effigies of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Some banners raised by demonstrators read "the destruction of Israel is near" and "Palestine is the axis of unity of the Muslim world". The International Quds Day stands as a testament to the enduring legacy of the late founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ayatollah Rouhollah Khomeini.

Israel at irreversible point of decline

The demonstrators, in their final communiqué in Tehran, expounded upon the importance of unity and solidarity within the Muslim world, asserting that such cohesion holds the key to overcoming the arrogant powers of the globe and their conspiracies. The communiqué stated that the "child-killing regime", is currently undergoing a gradual process of deterioration, political instability, and severe bipolarity. "The unfolding developments across the Israeli-occupied territories and the reverse migration of Israeli settlers further illustrate that the fabricated Zionist regime has reached an irreversible point of decline and is teetering closer toward ultimate collapse."

The marchers stated unequivocally that resistance is the sole and feasible resolution to the Palestinian issue, which remains the preeminent concern of the Muslim world.

The statement further underscored the unalienable right of Palestinian refugees to return to their native lands from which they were forcibly expelled in 1948, in addition to the inherent right of the Palestinians to conduct a comprehensive and free referendum, allowing them to determine their own political fate.

The demonstrators resoundingly condemned the brazen Israeli raids on the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound and the violent assaults on Palestinian worshippers, denouncing these egregious actions as mere components of Tel Aviv's desperate attempts to evade the multifaceted political and economic turmoil it is presently confronting. The marchers concluded by vehemently condemning the conspicuous silence and inaction of international institutions and human rights organizations in response to the "barbaric" crimes perpetrated by the Israeli regime. They called upon the United Nations to suspend Israel's membership and to subsequently expel the occupying, racist, and child-killing regime from all UN and other international bodies.

Quds Day, a great achievement



Mahmoud Abbaszadeh
Iranian lawmaker

EXCLUSIVE OPINION

This year's commemoration of Quds Day was observed throughout Iran with an immense turnout. The Iranian nation paid tribute to the initiative of the architect of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeini, who designated the final Friday of the holy month of Ramadan as Quds Day, to rally support for the Palestinian people, and resoundingly vocalized their opposition to the Israeli regime, thereby striking a severe blow to its already fragile foundations.

Since the Islamic Revolution's triumph in Iran, Israel has witnessed a steady decline in the face of the Palestinian people and resistance groups. In contrast to its prior victories in numerous confrontations with Arab nations, Israel has not tasted triumph in any major conflict in the wake of Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution.

This year's Quds Day march occurred amidst a period of internal chaos in Israel. Netanyahu's cabinet has been weakened more than ever by internal divisions and demonstrations. The once-established equilibrium in favor of Israel in its confrontation with Palestinian resistance groups has been overturned, and the Palestinians now possess the capacity to respond with formidable deterrent power against Israeli aggression.

In a climate where Israelis harbored the belief that their emphasis on normalization of relations with several Arab nations would render the sensibilities of Muslim nations in support of the liberation of Palestine obsolete, Quds Day represents an excellent opportunity to overtly voice the indignation and animosity of Muslims toward Israeli aggression, to vociferously clamor for the cause of Palestine's liberation, and to demonstrate that the flag of resistance against Israel remains hoisted.

Ergo, Quds Day represents a momentous triumph for Palestine, a constructive countermeasure to Western stratagem, and a formidable bulwark against the waves of Western imperialism aimed at subjugating the Middle East under the tutelage of Israel.

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Arab states gather to discuss Syria reproachment

Arab countries gathered in Jeddah on Friday, evincing a strong inclination toward terminating Syria's protracted tenure of diplomatic estrangement. Ministers and top officials from the six Persian Gulf Cooperation Council countries -- Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates -- plus Egypt, Iraq and Jordan met at Saudi Arabia's request.

Up for discussion in the Red Sea city was Syria's suspension from the Arab League, imposed after protests hit Syria in 2011. President Bashar al-Assad's government launched a bloody crackdown on pro-democracy protests in 2011 which later snowballed into a full-blown foreign backed conflict involving militants and terrorists. The 12-year war has killed more than half-a-million people and

forced about half of Syria's pre-war population from their homes.

On Wednesday, in the latest sign of an easing in tensions, Syria's Foreign Minister Faisal Mekdad arrived in Jeddah, the first such visit since the war began. Mekdad and his Saudi counterpart discussed "the necessary steps" to end Damascus's isolation, according to a Saudi statement on Wednesday.

The Jeddah meeting is one in a flurry of initiatives following Saudi Arabia and Iran's landmark, Chinese-brokered announcement on March 10 that they would resume ties, seven years after an acrimonious split. Earlier on Friday, an exchange of nearly 900 prisoners from Yemen's civil war between the Houthi movement and a Saudi-led coalition got underway when the first flight left the Houthi-controlled capital Sana'a.



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