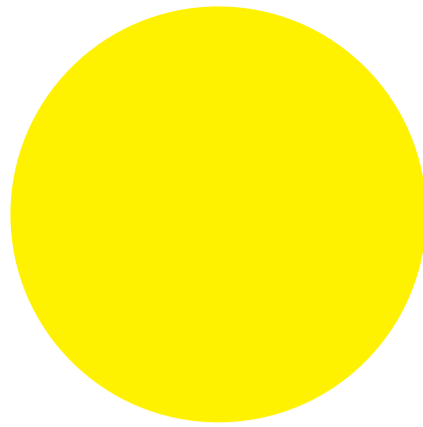




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# Iran Daily

## Iran seizes foreign tanker for breaking maritime law

2 >



## Iran, Syria hail stable ties during region's tough times

Both countries sign 15 cooperation documents

International Desk

Iranian and Syrian presidents praised their countries' long-standing relations which remained stable even in the Middle East region's difficult times. Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi held talks with his Syrian counterpart Bashar al-Assad in Damascus on Wednesday during the first visit by an Iranian president to Syria since a foreign-backed war broke out in the Arab country, in which Tehran has been a major ally. Iran provided economic, political and military support to Syria, helping the country defeat the terrorists and retain lost territory that fell in the hands of the Daesh terrorist group and rebels supported by some regional countries. During his meeting, Raeisi said Syria has managed to overcome difficulties and emerge victorious in spite of all the threats and sanctions targeting the Arab country. "The Syrian government and nation have moved past major difficulties and problems. Today we can say that you ... were able to win [the war] despite the threats and sanctions that were imposed against you," Raeisi said at a meeting with his Syrian counterpart Bashar al-Assad in Damascus on Wednesday, according to Press TV. Syria has been a target of U.S. sanctions since 1979. The U.S. and its Western allies imposed more such bans on Damascus after 2011, when the country found itself in the grip of rampant foreign-backed militancy and terrorism. The sanctions intensified even further

with Washington's passing of the Caesar Act in 2019, which targeted any individual and business that participated either directly or indirectly in Syria's reconstruction efforts. President Raeisi also hailed Iran-Syria relations as "rich, fruitful, and full of experiences," adding that the ties remained stable even in difficult periods amid severe political and security turbulence in the Middle East. "Today, the legitimacy of the position of Iran and Syria ... has been fully proven. Those who had doubts about Iran's political position are convinced that it was the right and fair stance." Raeisi also stressed that the Islamic Republic will stand by Syria in the post-war era of reconstruction and development as it was the case during the fight against terrorism. The Syrian president, for his part, hailed Iran's support for Syria throughout the Arab country's conflict, and said the Syrian nation won't forget Iran's assistance in hard times. "Syria-Iran relations are rich and full of experiences, as this relationship has been stable even during tough times when there were heavy political and security storms in the Middle East," he said. President Assad called for Iran to play a bigger role in establishing sustainable peace in the country and reconstructing war-torn parts of Syria. Also on Wednesday, both countries also signed 15 cooperation documents, including a comprehensive plan of strategic and long-term cooperation.

Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi (1) walks along with his Syrian counterpart Bashar al-Assad (2) in the Syrian Presidential Palace before a press conference in Damascus, Syria, on May 3, 2023. president.ir

## Erdogan stands higher chance of reelection

By Rahman Qahramanpour  
Strategic affairs expert

EXCLUSIVE

There are only 10 days to go to the Turkish presidential elections. In general, the incumbent, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, is favored to win due to the inherent advantages enjoyed by sitting presidents such as having greater access to financial resources and media exposure as well as a more established public profile. However, sitting presidents may suffer defeat if they ever commit a grave mistake that is deemed unforgivable by the electorate, as evidenced by Donald Trump's and Jair

Bolsonaro's mismanagement of the COVID-19 pandemic that led to their downfall. Another potential reason for losing the presidency is having an unpersuasive election campaign or promoting new policies that fail to resonate with voters. For Erdogan, the first possibility is not a concern as no egregious mistake has been made. Despite Türkiye's ongoing economic crisis, Erdogan does not blame himself for it and instead attributes it to external factors such as the war in Ukraine. Thus, the quality of his election campaign and the voters' response to it will be of more consequence. Page 3 >

## MP: Border security tied to development, foreign relations

By Sadeq Dehqan  
Staff writer

EXCLUSIVE

Fostering sustainable development in border zones and improving relations with neighbors are effective tools for tightening security at the borders, said a member of the Iranian Parliament. In an exclusive interview with Iran Daily, Moineddin Saeedi, who represents the port city of Chabahar, believes borders provide an ample opportunity for expanding "our political and economic ties and neighborly cooperation should we know how to use them to our advantage". The lawmaker stressed that insecurity of any

kind in the neighboring countries directly undermines the security of the country. "We would have liked to be neighbors with safe and developed countries instead of those that are grappling with various security and non-security issues, but the reality is that many of our neighbors in the region are of the second type," he maintained. Of course, Saeedi added, geography and the strategic position of the Middle East have compounded the problems of Iran's neighbors, depriving them of a moment of peace more often than not. Nevertheless, he emphasizes accepting the existing realities and coming to terms with them. Page 2 >

**Visit the remains of old Tehran in Sangelaj neighborhood**

EXCLUSIVE 4 >

**Iran names 30-man squad for Volleyball Nations League**

5 >

**Once lush regions turning grey in Golestan Province**

7 >

## Russia blames Ukraine for foiled drone attack aimed at Putin

Russia said Wednesday it had shot down two drones aimed at President Vladimir Putin's Kremlin residence in what it called a Ukrainian "terrorist" assassination attempt. Russia announced the incident after a series of extraordinary sabotage attacks in the run-up to celebrations for the nation's most important holiday on May 9, marking the Soviet victory over the Nazis, AFP reported. "Today at night, the Kyiv regime attempted to strike the Kremlin residence of the President of the Russian Federation with unmanned aerial vehicles," the Kremlin said. "Two unmanned vehicles were

aimed at the Kremlin... the devices were put out of action," a Kremlin statement said. The operation was described as "a planned terrorist act and an attempt on the life of the President of the Russian Federation." Moscow said Putin was not hurt and there were no casualties. "Ukraine has nothing to do with drone attacks on the Kremlin," presidential spokesman Mikhailo Podolyak said. "Such staged reports by Russia should be considered solely as an attempt to prepare an information background for a large-scale terrorist attack on Ukraine," Podolyak said.

## Iran's aircraft building strategy: A solution to sanctions

Economy Desk

Iran's aviation sector has been struggling to cope with the impact of sanctions imposed by the West, mainly the United States, which has vowed to hinder the purchase of even the most trivial components of passenger planes, making it difficult for Iran to acquire the necessary spare parts to maintain its fleet of aircraft. To overcome this challenge, Mohammad Mohammadi-Bakhsh, the head of Iran's Civil Aviation Organization, believes that Iran needs to contemplate a long-term strategy of aircraft construction, espe-



cially given the country's current requirements of 550 operational aircraft. With only 180 operational aircraft, Iran is making concurrent efforts to construct both civilian and military aircraft. Page 2 >