

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran FM to attend meet in South Africa

ISNA – Iran and South Africa are set to hold a joint economic commission meeting on Thursday after a three-year break, said Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian before leaving Tehran for Pretoria, South Africa's administrative capital, on Wednesday. The meeting aims to enhance cooperation between the two countries and explore new avenues for bilateral trade.

Amir-Abdollahian added that a delegation representing more than a dozen Iranian ministries as well as the private sector has already arrived in South Africa on Monday to hold preliminary meetings with South African officials.

The top diplomat said the Iranian delegation is "preparing the prerequisites for the [Iranian] president's upcoming visit to this country".

US after turning Afghanistan into crisis center



IRNA – Iranian President's Special Representative in Afghanistan's Affairs Hassan Kazemi Qomi said the United States is trying to turn Afghanistan into a center of crisis for its neighbors.

The continuation of instability in Afghanistan is of great importance for the United States. This is while, the regional countries want establishment of peace and stability in Afghanistan, he said.

Kazemi Qomi noted that developments in Afghanistan have its effects on the security of the country's neighbors, especially Iran and Pakistan.

UK envoy summoned over 'undiplomatic' remarks

TASNIM – Iran's Foreign Ministry summoned the UK Ambassador in Tehran Simon Shercliff to protest the British diplomat's "meddlesome" remarks on social media on August 8 – the day which Iran marked the National Journalists Day.

The ministry said "irresponsible and undiplomatic" remarks by the British envoy are unacceptable and a clear example of interference in internal affairs of another country.

Saudi Arabia's embassy resumes operation in Tehran: Report

National Desk

The embassy of Saudi Arabia in Tehran has restarted its activities months after the two countries agreed to restore their diplomatic relations which had been severed for years.

Saudi Arabia's Embassy in Tehran has officials restarted its activities since Sunday, IRNA quoted an informed source at the Iranian Foreign Ministry as saying.

This comes two months after Iran also resumed its activities in its embassy in Saudi Arabia.

Iran officially reopened its embassy in Saudi Arabia on June 6 during a ceremony which was held inside the embassy's compound with dozens of diplomats and officials attending the re-opening of the diplomatic mission for the first time in seven years.

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Consular Affairs Alireza Bikdeli, who attended the ceremony, said, "We consider today an important day in the relations between Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia". "The region will move Inshallah (God will-



ing) towards greater cooperation and convergence to achieve stability, prosperity and progress," Bikdeli said in a speech during the ceremony.

In 2016, Riyadh cut its diplomatic relations with Tehran after Iranian protesters, angry at the execution of a Shia cleric in Saudi Arabia, stormed its embassy.

However, a Chinese-brokered agreement reached between the two regional heavyweights in March, ended a seven-year rupture of ties between the two Per-

sian Gulf states. The thaw between Tehran and Riyadh was a major turning point for the region. In has resulted in reestablishment of rela-

Saudi Arabia's Embassy in Tehran
IRNA

tions between many countries in the Middle East region.

BRICS motivations for admitting Iran

By Ja'afar Qannadbashi
International affairs expert

OPINION EXCLUSIVE

Following its admission into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Islamic Republic of Iran is now actively pursuing membership in the league of emerging economic powerhouses commonly known as BRICS. The BRICS consortium, which presently comprises five members – Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa – has attracted the interest of several other nations, including Iran, who are vying

to secure a spot within this influential assembly.

The motivations driving Iran's quest for BRICS membership are manifold and strategically oriented, encompassing both political and economic dimensions. Aligning itself with this coalition of burgeoning economies holds manifold advantages for Tehran. The possible inclusion of Iran among these five nations promises to unlock fresh avenues for the Islamic Republic. In light of the four-decade-long sanctions regime imposed upon Iran by the United States, the prospect of BRICS membership assumes particular significance as it could attenuate the impact of US sanctions, facilitating the gradual ex-

pansion of Iran's economic horizons through access to new markets.

Iran's foreign policy strategy hinges upon the pursuit of a multipolar world paradigm. In this vein, BRICS, in tandem with the SCO, emerges as a counterforce to unilateralism, charting a course divergent from the hegemonic tendencies often exhibited by Western powers. Iran's historical stance against US hegemony, notably in the volatile West Asian sphere, underscores its alignment with BRICS' mission. The collective might of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa possesses the potential to establish a novel pole of influence, effectively challenging the unilateral pre-

dilections favored by the West. Consequently, these nations have the capacity to gradually erode, if not entirely dismantle, America's predominance across various geopolitical theaters, including the Middle East.

Central to Iran's foreign policy approach is its pursuit of a de-dollarized global economy. BRICS' ascendancy within the global economic landscape could position it to champion this initiative. Notably, China and Russia's shared aspirations toward de-dollarization converge with Iran's own objectives, further enhancing the allure of BRICS membership. The geopolitical and diplomatic imperatives under-

lying Iran's bid for BRICS entail political gains as well. Particularly noteworthy is the membership status of China and Russia as permanent fixtures on the United Nations Security Council, which imbues Tehran with a strategic advantage, helping it to overcome challenges in international forums and diplomatic circles.

However, Iran's path toward BRICS membership is not devoid of obstacles. Foreseeably, the United States, adhering to its established playbook of sanctions and isolation vis-à-vis Iran, is anticipated to exert pressure to impede Iran's accession, leveraging its historical strategy. Nonetheless, the

pivotal consideration rests in the motivations of the existing BRICS member states who have strong incentives to embrace Iran into their fold. In fact, Iran's prospective integration into BRICS is not merely a unilateral concession granted to Tehran; rather, it harbors substantial attractions for the incumbent members. Iran's geopolitical significance and its energy-related advantages synergize to enhance the collective weight of the BRICS alliance upon its inclusion. Evidently, the existing members display a welcoming disposition toward Iran's participation in BRICS, even if the realization thereof necessitates a measured timeline.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Vietnam speaker discusses ...

"Development of our relations may not sit well with some governments," Raeisi said, adding, "What matters, however, is [the adoption of] effective steps towards the fulfillment of the interests of the two countries and nations."

The Vietnamese top parliamentarian expressed interest on the part of his country in the expansion of Hanoi's interaction and cooperation with Tehran, according to Press TV. Within the first two days of Hue's three-day visit to Iran, the two sides have reached more cooperation docu-

ments, covering collaboration between the legislative bodies, plant and animal quarantine, culture, and education, among other fields. Vietnam's Chairman of the National Assembly attended a business forum on Wednesday, which was hosted by the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA). A 70-member delegation comprised of representatives from the Southeast Asian country's companies active in various sectors also attended the event to get to know their Iranian counterparts and discuss business

opportunities. Addressing the forum, Hue suggested Vietnam and Iran remove obstacles to raising their bilateral trade in the near future and continue perfecting legal frameworks to facilitate the operations of their businesses and investors. The Vietnamese legislature has been making all-out efforts to consolidate its legal system and untangle knots for foreign investors in the country, the NA Chairman affirmed, hoping that the Vietnamese and Iranian legislatures will work together to supervise the implementation of the documents.