

NEWS IN BRIEF

Mastermind of Shiraz attack arrested



TASNIM – Iran's Intelligence Ministry said its forces have arrested the most important element that provided logistical support for a recent deadly terrorist attack on a religious site in the southern city of Shiraz. In a statement released on Friday, the Intelligence Ministry said the suspect was in Iran and was in charge of direct contact with the operational ring-leader of Daesh terrorist group in Syria and Afghanistan.

The terrorist attack on the Shah Cheragh Shrine in Shiraz killed two people and injured eight others on August 13.

Iran begins producing 'most modern' satellite

TASNIM – The Iranian Space Organization (ISA) announced the launch of the production process of "Pars-3," the country's "most modern and accurate" satellite.

Hassan Salarieh, head of the ISA, noted on Thursday that the organization previously promised the production of remote sensing satellites with high accuracy. He named "Pars-2" and "Pars-3" as two such satellites, whose production procedures have officially started.

Iran reports record in gasoline use



PRESS TV – Iran is experiencing record demand for gasoline these days as authorities deny rumors about a potential fuel price hike that has caused long queues at filling stations in large cities like Tehran. CEO of Iranian Oil Ministry's fuel distribution company (NIOPDC) said on Thursday that peak demand for gasoline had reached a record of 142 million liters per day in recent days.

Ali Akbar Nejad'ali said that average demand for gasoline had also reached 120 million liters per day in Iran over the busy travel days of this summer.

Tehran-Riyadh ties on right track



Describing progress in the detente between Riyadh and Tehran, the Iranian foreign minister told a joint press conference with his Saudi counterpart, "Relations between Tehran and Saudi Arabia are on the right track, and we are witnessing progress," adding, "The talks were successful."

The top Iranian diplomat highlighted that Iran believes security in the region must be ensured through reliance on local capabilities, stating that Iran stretches out a hand of cooperation to neighboring countries.

"Within such a framework, we have planned promotion of solid relations

form in the history of the two countries and the path of regional security."

In June, Iran officially reopened its embassy in Saudi Arabia and Iranian media reported earlier this month that the kingdom's embassy in Tehran had resumed operations.

Prince Faisal confirmed on Thursday that the Saudi Embassy in Tehran has also resumed operations, which he described as "another step in the development of relations between the two countries".

"We look forward to a new phase in our relationship based on our Islamic brotherhood and work towards common interests," he said, adding that he welcomed Iran's endorsement of Riyadh's bid to host Expo 2030. The Thursday meeting came nearly two months after the Saudi foreign minister met Iranian officials in Tehran on his first trip to Iran since the China-brokered deal to resume relations and reopen diplomatic missions.

The last Iranian foreign minister to visit Saudi Arabia was Mohammad Javad Zarif, who traveled to the kingdom in 2015 to offer condolences for the death of King Abdullah. The two countries severed ties in 2016 after Iranian protesters, angry at the execution of the prominent Saudi Shia cleric Nimr al-Nimr, stormed Saudi's diplomatic missions in Iran.



Saudi Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan (R) receives his Iranian counterpart Hossein Amir-Abdollahian (C) in Riyadh on August 17, 2023. mfa.gov.ir

International Desk

Iran's foreign minister said relations between Tehran and Riyadh are on the right track after he paid a two-day visit to Saudi Arabia, marking the improvement of relations between the two regional powers.

On Friday, Hossein Amir-Abdollahian held talks with Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in Jeddah,

where the two sides reviewed bilateral relations and explored opportunities for cooperation between Tehran and Riyadh. They also discussed the latest international and regional developments. "Discussions were frank, beneficial and productive," Amir-Abdollahian said in a social media post after the meeting, adding that the countries "agree on the security and development of all in the

region". The meeting came as part of the Iranian foreign minister's visit to Riyadh on his first trip to Saudi Arabia since a Chinese-brokered rapprochement deal reached between the two countries in March. Earlier on Thursday, Iran's top diplomat held talks with his Saudi counterpart Prince Faisal bin Farhan. Amir-Abdollahian described Thursday's meet-

ing in the Saudi Foreign Ministry's Islamic Solidarity Hall as "a prelude to the meeting of the heads of the two countries," without specifying when Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi would visit Saudi Arabia at King Salman's invitation.

"We are sure that these meetings and cooperation will help the unity of the Islamic world," he said, proposing a "regional dialogue".

with other countries like Iraq, Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates apart from restoration of ties with the friendly and neighboring Saudi Arabia."

Regional security

Prince Faisal, for his part, said on Thursday, "Our meeting today is a continuation of the steps taken towards implementing the agreement to resume diplomatic relations, which represents a pivotal plat-

IRGC countered West's ...

Ayatollah Khamenei pointed to a summit of senior officials from the US, UK, France, and Germany on the French island of Guadeloupe just before the victory of the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

At that point, he added, they had concluded it was "impossible" to save the US-backed Pahlavi regime in Iran. Nevertheless, they adopted a strategy of "sequential crises" in the hope of destabilizing any new government in Iran, the

Leader said, recounting the series of crises, riots, security threats, and extensive acts of terrorism that marked the early phase of the Islamic Revolution. Ayatollah Khamenei highlighted that evidence obtained from the former US embassy in Iran also revealed that these incidents aligned with the West's deliberate strategy of instigating consecutive crises within Iran.

The Leader commended the IRGC for its exceptional efforts, noting that the elite force effectively

thwarted all those crises, safeguarding the Iranian people from their repercussions.

Therefore, he warned of enemies' attempts to tarnish the image of the IRGC and Basij volunteer forces. "Why is that? Because the IRGC is awe-inspiring, and Basij is impressive, which makes them (enemies) worried and anxious," the Leader stated. The last meeting between Ayatollah Khamenei and senior IRGC commanders was held some four years ago with the

presence of Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani, Iran's top anti-terror general who was assassinated by the United States a few months after the meeting.

Enemies have no way of tarnishing the reputation of the IRGC other than through "false news, rumors and all kinds of tricks and ploys," the Leader added, praising the IRGC elite force as "the world's biggest anti-terrorism organization".

Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi also hailed

the role that the IRGC has played in the fight against terrorism in the region, noting that European countries would have been dominated by Daesh terrorists without IRGC's efforts.

Addressing the second day of the Supreme Assembly of Commanders of the IRGC on Friday in Tehran, Raeisi said, "The peaceful life Europe enjoys today is a result of the efforts of the IRGC."

However, he added, it is unfortunate that they are assassinating the heroes who combat terrorism

and labeling the IRGC, which leads the fight against terrorism, as terrorists, adding that this raises important questions that international organizations must address.

The IRGC was established on April 22, 1979, by the founder of the Islamic Republic Ayatollah Khomeini as a paramilitary organization tasked with protecting the newborn Islamic Republic.

The IRGC has made great sacrifices in the fight against terror outfits operating in the region.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



€130m power plant unit launched in northwest

A new power plant unit came on line in Iran's northwestern province of Ardebil near the border with Azerbaijan with an investment value of 130 million euros. A deputy CEO of Iran's Thermal Power Plants Holding Company (TPPH) said on Thursday that the new steam unit opened at Sabalan Combined-Cycle Power Plant has a capacity to generate 160 megawatts (MW) of electricity, according to Press TV. Mohammad Ramazani said that the unit is

at Sabalan power plant, an electricity station with six gas-fired units that has now a total generation capacity to 1.44 gigawatts.

Ramazani said the launch cuts natural gas consumption in the power plant by 250 million cubic meters per year and increases its efficiency rate to 50%.

Sabalan power plant is one of TPPH's largest electricity stations in Iran. It is located to the north of the city of Ardebil near the border with Azerbaijan. The power plant has a combined cycle system

where the exhaust heat from gas-fired turbines is used to raise steam to drive the steam turbines.

The efficient, environmentally-friendly system has become increasingly popular in Iran in recent years as the country relies on its massive natural gas resources to expand its electricity sector.

The government has offered incentives like cheap and stable supply of natural gas to encourage private investors to build combined-cycle power plants in various regions.