

NEWS IN BRIEF

FM: Iran to promote cooperation within ACD

PRESS TV - Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said Tehran will do its best to boost cooperation among the members of the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) during its rotating presidency of the forum. He made the remarks in a Monday meeting with Secretary General of the ACD Pornchai Danvivathana in Tehran.

The top diplomat said during its rotating presidency of the ACD, in addition to promoting cooperation within the body, Iran will do its utmost to pave the way for the realization of its goals.

Amir-Abdollahian said the Kuwait-based ACD secretariat plays a leading role in bolstering cooperation among its members, and expressed Iran's readiness to help the secretariat and the ACD Cultural and Tourism Coordination Center, which is based in Tehran, in this regard.

Danvivathana, for his part, briefed Amir-Abdollahian on ACD's foreign ministerial meeting, which is set to be held in September on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly's annual meeting. Iran's one-year presidency of the ACD will start following that meeting.

The first of its kind in Asia, the Asia Cooperation Dialogue is a continent-wide forum, which was inaugurated in Thailand in 2002.

Nine Iranian pilgrims killed in Iraq road crash

REUTERS - At least nine Iranian pilgrims died and dozens were injured when a bus carrying them collided with a truck in the southern Iraqi city of Nassiriya on Monday, two medical sources said.

The bus was crammed with pilgrims en route to the holy city of Karbala. One of the medical sources said 31 people, including women and children, were injured and five of them were in a critical condition.

Every year, millions of Iranians travel to neighboring Iraq to participate in Arba'een march, which is the 40th day after the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein, Shias' third imam.

BRICS, SCO opportunity for Iran's economy

Raeisi: Enemy failed to isolate Iran

National Desk

Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi said alliances like BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization are a very good opportunity for Iran to increase its economic capacities and confront the West's unilateralism. Speaking during a news conference in Tehran on Tuesday, Raeisi said that relations with the alliances' great economies will surely help the economy's growth in Iran.

Back in July, Iran gained full membership of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which is a political organization with eight members, namely, Russia, India, Pakistan, and the Central Asian countries of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. The BRICS group of emerging economies also approved Iran's full membership in the organization last week.

President Ebrahim Raeisi said that efforts by the enemies to isolate Iran and drive the Iranian people to despair have failed, whereas all indicators attest to growth and progress in the country.

Enemy's failed policy
"Relations with Latin America, Africa and many

Asian countries, becoming active in the Eurasian Economic Union and membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and, recently, in BRICS all show that the enemy did not succeed in its policy to isolate Islamic Iran, and our political, commercial and economic situation shows the failure of the enemy in this strategy."

Raeisi added that Iran has also forged strong relations with Islamic and like-minded countries, its enemies are also knocking on the door after initially trying to ditch the country when riots broke out following the death of Iranian girl Mahsa Amini last September.

"The enemy tried to follow two strategies of isolating Iran in the world and disappointing the people inside, and it failed in both.

Raeisi was referring to sanctions imposed on Iran since the United States torpedoed the nuclear deal in 2018, as well as protests that erupted in September 2022 over the death of Mahsa Amini in custody.

"That is because we follow numerous agendas in our foreign policy all at the same time, one of which is the JCPOA," the president said, referring to the 2015 nuclear deal, which is on life support after the US



Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi speaks at a press conference in Tehran on August 29, 2023.
● ABOLFAZL NESAEI/IRAN DAILY

withdrawal. "We've followed relations with neighboring countries as well as Islamic and aligned states, and improved the level of political, economic and commercial relations, where commercial ties have grown 14 percent over the previous government," he said.

Economic ties
"In the area of regional trade ties and business

measures, in which some believed little can be done, the government broke the record and it turned out that there are many capacities in the country," Raeisi added.

The president said the people's efforts and hope have increased day by day, as shown by production, science and technology indicators and knowledge-based initiatives of Iranian youths. "Today is the day Islamic

Iran is known as an advanced and technological country," he said.

US media reports have said the Biden administration has been negotiating quietly to open diplomatic channels with Iran. The indirect talks, they say, reflect a resumption of diplomacy between the United States and Iran after the collapse of more than a year of negotiations to restore the 2015 nuclear deal.

The Iranian side has not commented on such claims, but President Raeisi said on Tuesday, "We have not abandoned the negotiating table for removing the sanctions".

"The other side left the negotiation table, and now they regret it, stating that they are ready to negotiate." But, he added, "We are not tying the country's economy to the wishes of Western countries".

Over 2.5m Iranians in Iraq for Arbaeen march

Iran's Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi said more than 2.5 million Iranians have entered Iraq to participate in the Arbaeen march. The Iranian interior min-

ister made the remarks in a meeting with his Iraqi counterpart Abdul Amir al-Shammari in Iraq's capital, Baghdad. Omar Adnan al-Waeli,

head of the Iraqi Border Crossings Authority, said that the number of pilgrims is expected to be higher compared to previous years.

Earlier on Friday, Ahmad Vahidi had visited Khosravi and Manzar border crossings, during which he expressed appreciation to Iraqi officials for facilitating the movement of Iranian pilgrims.

It is expected that this year more than four million Iranian pilgrims will travel to Karbala to attend the Arbaeen march. Iran's Foreign Minister Amir-Abdollahian said

the millions-strong Arbaeen March, an annual event that marks the 40th day after the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein (PBHU), symbolizes the fight against oppression and the struggle for freedom.

"As one of the largest gatherings of people in the world, the Arbaeen March represents a colossal, noble and deep-seated motion, which annually brings together millions of Muslims from all over the world with different nationalities, races and languages to commem-

orate the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (PBHU)," Amir-Abdollahian wrote in a message published in Iraq's Arabic-language Al-Zora and Al-Sabaah newspapers.

The top Iranian diplomat noted that faith in religion, trust in God, ethics, justice, defense of the oppressed, and unity of Muslim countries, confronting global arrogance, and formation of a united Muslim Ummah are among the fundamentals of the Arbaeen march. Millions of Muslims across the world are

observing the annual mourning rituals of Arbaeen, which mark the 40th day after the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein (PBHU), the third Shia Imam.

He underscored that Iraqi people have for many years offered services to Arbaeen pilgrims of all nationalities, especially Iranians, irrespective of their ethnicity. Arbaeen brings together millions of people from across the world, who undertake an 80-kilometer (50-mile) walk between the holy Iraqi cities of Najaf and Karbala.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Iran seeks to visit Hirmand dam in Afghanistan

Iran demands to inspect the reservoir of a dam on the Hirmand River in Afghanistan that has caused a standoff with the Taliban administration over Iran's share of water from the river.

Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi said on Tuesday that a committee has been formed to facilitate an Iranian delegation's visit to the dam to verify the claims by Afghan officials that the river suffers from unprecedentedly low levels of water, IFP reported.

The Taliban have been refusing to allow Iran's share of water from Hirmand, known as Helmand in Afghanistan, to stream into Iran, blaming drought and technical issues for the low supply of water in the past months.

However, Iran's Space Agency said images obtained from Iranian satellites show that the Taliban government is preventing water from reaching the Iranian side of the border by building numerous dams and diverting the

flow of water.

Vahidi said the situation would cause a drought and social issues in Iran's southeastern province of Sistan and Baluchestan, which is located in a hot and dry region and receives low rainfall compared to other regions in the country.

Iran stresses that Afghanistan must adhere to the terms of the internationally-binding 1973 Hirmand River Water Treaty and supply Iran with its share of water from the river.