

Tehran, Cairo discuss expansion of tourism ties



Iran FM Hossein Amir-Abdollahian (r) shakes hands with his Egyptian counterpart Sameh Shoukry in the Gambian capital Banjul on May 4, 2024.
 ● IRNA

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian met with his Egyptian counterpart Sameh Shoukry in the Gambian capital Banjul on Saturday. The two foreign ministers held talks ahead of the 15th Heads of State and Government Summit of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) with an emphasis on the strengthening of people-to-people and tourism relations, IRNA reported.

At the beginning of the meeting, the FMs, while conveying the warm greetings of the presidents of the two countries to each other, emphasized the special efforts of the leaders of the two countries to pursue the strengthening of bilateral relations. Shoukry and Amir-Abdollahian agreed to "continue consultations to address all outstanding topics and issues toward normalizing relations."

Tehran and Cairo have increased their interactions since the Israeli regime launched its war on Gaza in early October.

Iran's monthly foreign trade up around 48%: **IRICA**



Iran's foreign trade registered about 47.63 percent hike in the first month of the current Iranian year (March 20 to April 22). The country's foreign trade, including the crude oil, gas condensates, techno-engineering services and electricity included, reached \$10.42 billion during the month to April 22, showing a 47.63 percent growth compared to the same period last year, IRNA reported.

In the period, Iran exported \$7.68 billion worth of products. In return, the

country imported \$2.74 billion worth of goods, the report added.

Iran's trade balance, with the crude oil, gas condensates, techno-engineering services and electricity included, turned positive as much as \$4.94 billion in the first month of the current Iranian year (started March 20). According to the report, Iran exported \$4.18 billion worth of crude oil, gas condensates and fuel oil from March 20 to April 22.

In addition, 9.7 million

tons of goods were exported from the country between March 20 and April 22.

China, Iraq, the UAE, Turkey, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Oman were of Iran's main export target markets in the first month of the current Iranian calendar year.

Regarding the foreign goods transited from the country, the report added that 1.6 million tons of foreign products were transited through the Iranian land and territory in the first month of the cur-

rent Iranian year.

Iran-EU's trade up 30%: Eurostat

Also, according to the statistical office of the European Union (Eurostat), the trade between Iran and 27 EU members has grown by 30% in February 2024 compared to the same month last year.

In February, Germany's exports to Iran grew by 46 percent while Italy's import of products from Iran showed a 96-percent hike.

The figures also show

that the value of trade exchanges between Iran and 27 EU member states in January and February 2024 reached €847 million, showing an eight-percent increase compared to the last year's corresponding period.

The EU members have imported €144 million in goods from Iran in January and February 2024, indicating a three percent growth compared to the same period in 2023.

Italy's import of non-oil products from Iran in

February 2024 has doubled, the Eurostat added. German exports to Iran in February this year grew by 46 percent and reached €141 million as France's exports to Iran have also increased by 37 percent to €33 million.

According to Eurostat, Romania's exports to Iran in February 2024 witnessed an eye-catching rise compared to the same period last year and increased from €2.5 million in February last year to €57 million in February in 2024.

Iran, EAEU to launch FTA in two months

A member of Iran-Russia Joint Chamber of Commerce predicted that more than 88% of commodities will be exchanged between Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union's member states with zero tariffs within the next two months.

The free trade agreements between countries will facilitate the exporters' access to the target market, member of the board of directors of Iran-Russia Joint Chamber of

Commerce, Kambiz Mirkarimi said.

He noted that a Free Trade Agreement between Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union's members, including Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Armenia, was one of the most important deals signed by the country in recent years.

Iran's exports to the EAEU members stood at about \$260 million until 2018, but after the implementation of the FTA

in 2019, the country's exports to these countries immediately increased to above \$400 million, he said.

It is expected that the FTA will be ratified by the parliaments of all members states of the union within the next two months, he said.

This development will increase the competitiveness of Iranian products against the goods made in China, India and other rivals, Mirkarimi stated.

Afghanistan's second rail cargo to depart for Turkey via Iran

The Afghanistan railway administration announced plans for the departure of the country's second rail shipment to Turkey passing through Iran.

Head of Afghanistan's railway administration Bakht Rahman Sharafat posted a message on X about the second Afghan rail cargo being prepared to go to Turkey via Iran, reported Tasnim News Agency.

He said Afghanistan is commit-

ted to the principles of connected world and fast transportation facilities. "We not only transport goods, but also connect the hearts," he added.

Afghanistan's railway authority has not provided details of the shipment. Afghanistan's first export cargo, including 1,100 metric tons of mineral ore, was exported by train from the Roznak station in Herat to Turkey through Iran on April 23.



The shipment was destined for the coastal city of Mersin in southern Turkey.

Astana keen on developing relations with Tehran: **Envoy**



Kazakhstan is keen on boosting ties with Iran, said Ontalap Onalbayev, the Kazakh ambassador to Iran on the sidelines of a ceremony for the opening of Shanyrak National Kazakh Corner at the embassy of the country in Tehran on May 1.

Speaking in the event which was held in conjunction with the Day of Unity of the Peoples of Kazakhstan, the envoy focused

on political and economic reforms, new international initiatives of the President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev.

He also paid special attention to the statement of the Kazakh president regarding the major natural disaster - floods that occurred in a number of regions of the country.

"As President said, within the framework of the unity and cooperation of

the people of Kazakhstan, the threat of floods is behind us. Government, state agencies, competent institutions and volunteers worked together. Thanks to that, more than 119,000 people were moved to a safe place in time. About 45 thousand of them are children. Most importantly, all efforts were focused on saving human lives."

Onalbayev stated that May 1 - the day of the unity of

the peoples of Kazakhstan is of special importance for our country, thanks to unity and harmony, Kazakhstan has achieved significant achievements in creating an independent state.

It was noted that by the initiative of Tokayev starting from this year, Nauryz (Nowrouz) holiday in Kazakhstan has been organized around the following themes: Day of meeting, Day of kindness, Day of Culture and national traditions, Day of Shanyrak, Day of national clothing, Day of

renewal, Day of national sports, Day of cooperation, New year and Day of purification.

During the event, a special exhibition was opened in order to widely introduce the national jewelry and handicrafts of the Kazakh people to the guests and to promote the culture and art, customs and traditions of the people, to show the current level of development of the applied and decorative arts through the works of the craftsmen of Kazakhstan.