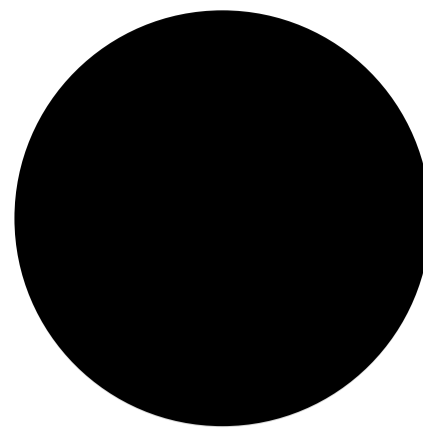


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# Iran Mourns Martyrs

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Wreckage retrieved

# When hours of anxiety, rigorous efforts end in tears

## National Desk

Just a few hours after a helicopter carrying Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi took off from the venue of an official ceremony held to inaugurate a dam on the Aras River in East Azarbaijan Province on Sunday, the flight vanished from radar screen and prompted rescue teams to start their search operations.

Onboard the chopper also were Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, Iran's East Azerbaijan Province Governor Malek Rahmati, and Ayatollah Mohammad Ali Ale-Hashem, the representative of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, as well as three crew members.

Two other helicopters carrying a number of ministers and officials accompanying Raisi in the inauguration ceremony of the dam reached the destination safely.

Initial reports showed that the helicopter had encountered difficulties and was forced to make a "hard landing" at Dizmar forest, between the cities of Varzaqan and Jolfa.

The Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) said that 65 emergency relief teams from six provinces of Tehran, Alborz, Ardabil, Zanjan, East Azarbaijan, and West Azarbaijan, have been deployed to the site of the incident and are currently searching the area.

Fifteen Red Crescent K-9 teams (sniffer dogs) along with two Red Crescent drones were searching the area for any trace of the helicopter carrying the Iranian President.

Due to the adverse weather



conditions and severe fog in the area, the Red Crescent's rescue helicopters were unable to fly, and the teams were conducting a ground search of the mountainous area.

Emergency medical teams, including technicians and doctors, were dispatched to the site immediately after the incident and an emergency helicopter was also deployed to provide assistance, but was forced to return as it was unable to land due to heavy fog.

Apart from the popular rescue teams, the Iranian Army, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) and the Police Command mobilized all their resources and

capabilities, including drones, to assist in the search and rescue operations.

The 65th Airborne Special Forces Brigade, known for their expertise in jungle warfare, was also deployed near the site of the helicopter accident between Varzaqan and Jolfa.

Despite strenuous efforts by the entire teams, Iranian government spokesman Ali Bahadori Jahromi said in a post on X that given the location of the crash and the weather conditions, there is still "no new information" available and "in these moments, patience, prayer, and trust in the rescue teams are the way forward." Iranian people in mosques and



Rescue team members work at the crash site of a helicopter carrying Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi in Varzaqan, in northwestern Iran, on May 20, 2024.  
● AZIN HAGHIGHI/MOJ NEWS AGENCY

holy shrines across the country, particularly the shrine of Imam Reza (PBUH), the eighth Shia Imam, in the northeastern city of Mashhad started praying for the health of Raisi and his accompanying delegation.

The wreckage of the chopper was finally discovered by emergency rescue teams in the wee hours of Monday morning after an extensive night-long search operation in the dense Dizmar forest, with Pir-Hossein Koulivand, head of the IRCS, announcing in televised remarks that no sign of life was found on the crashed chopper, ending all hopes of survivors.

The whole country plunged in a cloud of sorrow after the death of the popular and diligent president was officially confirmed by his administration and Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei expressed his condolences over the tragic loss.

"With deep sorrow and regret, I have received the bitter news of the martyrdom-like death of the people's President, the competent, hard-working servant of Imam Reza (PBUH), Sayyid Ebrahim Raisi and his esteemed entourage (may God be pleased with them)," the Leader said. "This bitter tragedy took place



while he was serving the people. The entire period that this great, self-sacrificing person held various responsibilities, both during his brief presidency and before that, he was totally dedicated to serving the people, the country, and Islam nonstop," he added.

Stressing that Raisi worked tirelessly, Ayatollah Khamenei said the Iranian nation lost a "devoted, sincere, valuable individual who served their country."

Following the tragic incident, the world leaders and presidents as well as international figures and personalities voiced their sorrow over the loss of Raisi and his entourage.



Rescuers retrieve bodies at the crash site of a helicopter transporting Iran's President, his Foreign Minister, and others in a fog-covered mountainous area of Varzaqan in northwestern Iran on May 20, 2024.  
● AZIN HAGHIGHI/MOJ NEWS AGENCY



## First VP Mokhber appointed as acting president

### National Desk

Iran's first Vice President Mohammad Mokhber was appointed as acting president of the Islamic Republic on Monday after the passing away of President Ebrahim Raisi in a helicopter crash in the country's northwest.

Mokhber, 68, is expected to serve as caretaker president until a snap election will be held on June 28,

2024. The Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei approved Mokhber's accession to the role.

Mokhber held an extraordinary meeting with judiciary chief Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei and Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, the parliament speaker, on Monday morning. "We will follow the path of Raisi in doing the duties entrusted without

any disruptions," Mokhber was quoted as saying by state media.

Iran's veteran nuclear negotiator Ali Baqeri was also named acting foreign minister to replace the top diplomat Amir-Abdollahian killed in the helicopter crash.

Baqeri, 56, had served as deputy to the foreign minister of Iran, Hossein Amir-Abdollahian. Baqeri worked in the foreign ministry in the 1990s.



## National Desk

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei extended his condolences to the Iranian nation over the martyrdom of President Ebrahim Raisi and his companions in a helicopter crash. In a message on Monday, the Leader announced five days of national mourning.

Ayatollah Khamenei said he received the bitter news of the martyrdom of the popular, competent and hardworking president and his companions with great sorrow.

The Leader noted that the tragic incident happened when Raisi and his team were making an attempt to serve the Iranian people.

The entire period of responsibility of this noble and devoted man, both during the short term of the presidency and before that, was completely spent in non-stop efforts to serve the people, the country and Islam, he emphasized.

"Dear Raisi did not know fatigue," Ayatollah Khamenei said, adding that the Iranian nation lost a sincere and valuable servant in this tragic incident.

He also noted that President Raisi preferred the satisfaction of people, which amounts to God's satisfaction, over everything else.

Therefore, ingratitude and jibes of some ill-wishers did not deter him from working day and night to achieve progress and improve the situation, Ayatollah Khamenei said.

The Leader noted that prominent figures including Friday Prayers leader of the city of Tabriz Seyyed Mohammad Ali Al-e Hashem, Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian and East Azarbaijan Governor Malek Rahmati as well as the crew also lost their lives in the sad incident.

According to Article 131 of the Constitution, Vice President Mohammad Mokhber assumes managing the executive branch, the Leader said.

Ayatollah Khamenei urged Mokh-

# Leader, officials grieve loss of president, FM



dent within a maximum of 50 days in cooperation with the other two heads of the three branches of the government.

## Parliament speaker, chief justice condole

Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf sympathized with Iranians over the incident.

"You had won the hearts of the Iranians," he addressed the late president, adding, "Your memory will last forever."

"Your dream came true by being martyred," he further noted, remi-

values of martyrdom school.

Chief Justice of Iran Gholam-Hossein Mohseni-Eje'i has expressed his condolences over the passing of Raisi noting that he was widely-accepted by various parties in the Islamic Republic.

## Condolences by other senior officials

In this regard, the custodian of the mausoleum of Imam Khomeini (RA) Hassan Khomeini lauded the personality of the late president.

Raisi enjoyed an exemplary and modest personality, he said, add-

about serving the nation.

Senior Iranian Cleric Ayatollah Nasser Makarem Shirazi also sent a message on the sad occasion.

He was a quintessential example of a committed, loyal, and revolutionary official. His remarks in the international bodies were a source of pride for the Islamic Ummah and the noble people of Iran.

The oppressed people in the world will never forget this figure, he underlined.

Senior Shia cleric Ayatollah Jafar Sobhani said that Raisi spent all his time solving the economic and po-

Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Sistani, the Supreme Shia Marja of Iraq, in his message of condolence to the Iranian nation, stated that the news of the death of Raisi and his companions in the helicopter crash was regretful.

In his message, Ayatollah Sistani offered his condolences to the honorable nation and the officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran for this painful loss, and prayed to God Almighty for mercy and divine grace for the deceased loved ones and for the survivors and grieving families for patience and great reward.

Iran's government spokesman Ali Bahadori Jahromi reacted to the incident on his X account.

Martyrdom is the reward for the valued president, he wrote.

Iranian Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Ezzatollah Zarghami said that Raisi's everlasting services will be recorded in history.

Mohsen Rezaei, the head of the Supreme Council of Economic Coordination for the three branches of the Iranian government, said that Raisi delivered services wholeheartedly. He made the utmost sacrifice on the path of serving the Islamic system, Rezaei said.

Iran's former vice president Eshaq Jahangiri highlighted the personal traits of the late president.

He described Raisi as extremely careful about observing social values and etiquette.

Ali Shamkhani, the political advisor of the Supreme Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, termed Raisi as tireless, hard-working and popular. Saeed Jalili, a member of the Expediency Council and Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), said that the popular presidents was martyred after the years of making efforts.

Raisi tried his utmost to help realize the ideals of the Islamic Revolution, he underlined.

Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi said that Raisi sincerely delivered service for Iranians.

The path of martyrs of the service will be continued, he further noted. A member of the Expediency Council, Ali Larijani, said that the news of martyrdom saddened every Iranian.

God willing, his priceless services will bring about prestigious states before Allah, he noted.

Former Iranian president, Seyyed Mohammad Khatami, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Hassan Rouhani also in separate messages extended their condolences over the passing of Raisi and his companions in the helicopter crash.

## World leaders condole Iran's tragedy

## International Desk

Leaders across the world have expressed their condolences after President Ebrahim Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian died in a tragic helicopter crash on Sunday.

Many friendly countries also declared days of mourning to pay tribute to the Iranian president and his entourage onboard the aircraft.

The UN Security Council observed a minute of silence on Monday for late Iranian president.

Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev who jointly inaugurated a dam project with Raisi hours before the arial mishap, said on Monday that he was "deeply shocked by the heavy loss that befell the brotherly and friendly Islamic Republic of Iran and its people."

Russian President Vladimir Putin praised Raisi as an "outstanding politician."

"Raisi was an outstanding politician whose entire life was dedicated to serving his homeland," Putin said. "As a true friend of Russia, he made an invaluable personal contribution to the development of good-neighborly relations between our countries."

Chinese President Xi Jinping called Raisi's death "tragic" and said "the Chinese people have lost a good friend," a spokesman for China's foreign ministry said.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan called Raisi a "valuable colleague and brother."

"As a colleague who personally witnessed his efforts for the peace

of the Iranian people and our region during his time in power, I remember Mr. Raisi with respect and gratitude," Erdogan said on social media.

Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said Turkey's relevant institutions, including the defense ministry and the disaster management authority, tried "their best but unfortunately, we weren't able to hear good news".

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad expressed solidarity with Iran, and said Syria worked with Raisi "to ensure that strategic relations between Syria and Iran flourish always."

Syrian government also announced three days of national mourning for the Iranian president and foreign minister.

Japan's government spokesperson, Yoshimasa Hayashi said that Japan expresses its deepest condolences to the government and people of Iran over the death of President Raisi and the foreign minister.

## Arab countries

Iran's Persian Gulf neighbors also mourned the deaths of Iranian officials.

Saudi Arabia, which mended ties with Tehran last year after a long-time rift, offered "condolences to his excellency, the acting head of the executive authority, Mohammad Mokhber, on the death of his excellency Ebrahim Raisi, president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and his companions," said a statement carried by the official Saudi Press Agency.

Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa Al

Khalifa "expressed his sincere condolences and deep sympathy to Iran's Leader and the brotherly people of the Iranian Republic over this painful incident," according to a statement carried by the official Bahrain News Agency.

Oman's Sultan Haitham bin Tariq al-Said and Kuwait's emir Sheikh Meshal al-Ahmad Al-Sabah separately sent cables of condolences to Iran's Leader.

In a short statement on X, UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan said he extends his deepest condolences to the Iranian government and the people of Iran over the passing of Iranian President and his foreign minister. Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani expressed "great sadness and great sorrow."

Nechirvan Barzani, president of the Iraqi Kurdistan Region said, "The passing of President Raisi is an immense tragedy and a profound loss for the Islamic Republic of Iran, its people, and its friends."

"Nevertheless, we have faith that the noble people of Iran and the Islamic Republic will overcome this immense loss. May God Almighty provide assistance and protection to all, and may the memory of the departed be blessed."

Jordan's King Abdullah also posted a message on X.

"My deepest condolences to the brothers, leadership, government and people of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the death of Brother President Ebrahim Raisi, Foreign Minister Brother Hossein Amir Abdollahian and those accompanying them, may God have mercy

on them all," Jordan's King said. Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sissi expressed Egypt's solidarity with "the leadership and people of Iran in this great loss."

## India and Pakistan

Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif declared a day of mourning in Pakistan.

"May the martyred souls rest in heavenly peace. The great Iranian nation will overcome this tragedy with customary courage," Sharif wrote on X.

"Pakistan will observe a day of mourning and the flag will fly at half-mast as a mark of respect for President Raisi and his companions and in solidarity with Brotherly Iran," Shehbaz said.

India also announced a one-day state mourning on Tuesday.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he was shocked by the development and that "India stands with Iran in this time of sorrow."

"His contribution to strengthening the India-Iran bilateral relationship will always be remembered. My heartfelt condolences to his family and the people of Iran. India stands with Iran in this time of sorrow," Modi wrote on X.

## Messages from Europe

European Council President Charles Michel said the European Union "expresses its sincere condolences."

Josep Borrell, the bloc's foreign policy chief, also offered his condolences.

"The EU expresses its sympathies

to the families of all the victims and to the Iranian citizens affected," he said in a statement.

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, a close ally of Iran, said: "I am shocked by the death of the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran and his accompanying staff as a result of the helicopter crash."

## Resistance movements

Region's resistance movements also expressed their condolences for the death of Iranian president. Lebanon's Hezbollah group praised Raisi as "a strong supporter, and a staunch defender of our causes... and a protector of the resistance movements".

The Hamas resistance group praised Raisi and Amir-Abdollahian for supporting Palestine against Israel and expressed confidence that Iran's "deep-rooted institutions" will overcome "the repercussions of this great loss".

"Asking God Almighty for mercy and forgiveness for [those killed] and for their families with patience and solace. We belong to Allah and to Him we shall return," Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani wrote on X.

Mohammed Ali al-Houthi, head of the Houthi's Supreme Revolutionary Committee, expressed his "deepest condolences" to the Iranian people and the families of the officials who died in the crash.

Iraq's Popular Mobilisation Forces, or Hashed al-Shaabi, also expressed their sympathies, adding that Raisi had "always declared that Iraq and Iran are one people that cannot be separated".

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro said he was "deeply saddened" by Raisi's death, calling him "an excellent human being, defender of the sovereignty of his people and unconditional friend of our country."

Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim said Raisi "exemplified a deep commitment to the welfare of his people and the dignity of his nation, which represents a proud and rich civilization rooted in the principles of Islam."

"In these difficult times, we stand alongside the people of Iran and pray for forgiveness for all the victims of this incident and for patience for their families," Afghanistan's Acting Prime Minister Mullah Mohammad Hassan Akhund said.

## International bodies

The NATO military alliance also on Monday expressed "condolences" to Iran over the death of Raisi.

"Our condolences to the people of Iran for the death of President Raisi, Foreign Minister Amir-Abdollahian, and others who perished in the helicopter crash," said NATO spokesperson Farah Daklallah on X. OPEC also conveyed its condolences on the tragic passing of Iranian President Raisi.

"In these difficult times, on behalf of myself and all the staff at the OPEC Secretariat, I extend my condolences and sympathy to the esteemed leadership and people of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the families of HE President Raisi and other officials," OPEC Secretary General He Haitham Al Ghais said.

*Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi is seen below in various stages of his life, which was cut short in a tragic accident. He was a prominent figure in Iran's political and judicial spectrum for over four decades. Raisi's legacy reflects his dedication to public service and includes significant contributions throughout the post-Revolution Iran. He served as Iran's judiciary chief from 2019 to 2021. Raisi, who became the eighth president of Iran after winning the 2021 presidential election, died in a chopper crash on May 19, 2024.*





# President Raisi: A lifetime of service

## National Desk

Elected as Iran's president in June 2021, Ebrahim Raisi assumed office on August 5, pledging to tackle the country's economic and bureaucratic corruption and address livelihood hardships that mainly stemmed from years-long draconian US sanctions.

Raisi, 63, was born on December 14, 1960, to a clerical family in the Noghan district of Mashhad in the northeast of Iran. His father died when he was five years old. Raisi started attending a seminary in the holy city of Qom at the age of 15. In 1975, he went to the Ayatollah Boroujerdi School in order to continue his education in Qom Seminary. He received a PHD degree in private law from the Shahid Motahari University.

During his early years of tutelage, he took part in mass protests and widespread rallies against the deposed Iranian ruler, Mohammad Reza Shah, who was eventually toppled in 1979 during the Islamic Revolution led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

After the revolution, Raisi joined the Iranian Judiciary, serving as a prosecutor in several cities. He assumed several positions in the country's judicial system, including deputy chief justice (2004-2014), attorney general

(2014-2016), and head of the judiciary (2019-2021). he was also the prosecutor and deputy prosecutor of Tehran in the 1980s and 1990s.

Raisi was elected to be a member of the country's Assembly of Experts — the 88-member clerical body responsible for electing the next leader — for the first time in the 2006 election, running from South Khorasan Province.

For years, he was the custodian and chairman of Astan Quds Razavi from 2016 to 2019. The institution runs the shrine of Imam Reza (PBUH), the eighth Shia Imam, in the northeastern city of Mashhad as well as all various charities and organizations affiliated with it.

In 2017, Raisi ran for president, but Hassan Rouhani, a fellow cleric, won a second term by a landslide, receiving 57% of the vote. Raisi, who presented himself as an anti-corruption figure, came second with 38%.

In 2019, Leader of the Islamic Republic Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei appointed him to head the judiciary. A week later, he was also elected the deputy chairman of the Assembly of Experts.

As judiciary chief, Raisi implemented reforms that led to a reduction in the number of people sentenced to death for drug-related offenses in the country.

In 2021, Raisi ran again for the presidency. Announcing his candidacy for the presidential election, he stated that he had "stepped in as an independent to make changes in the executive management of the country and to fight poverty, corruption, humiliation, and discrimination". He went on to secure a victory, winning 62% of the vote in the first round.

Raisi took office on August 3, following an endorsement from the Leader. In his inaugural address, Raisi pledged to work towards lifting the US-imposed sanctions on Iran, emphasizing that foreign influence would not determine the country's economic policies.

He was sworn in before the Iranian Parliament on August 5, in a ceremony attended by 260 national and foreign officials. During his address, he placed a premium on Iran's role in the stability of the Middle East region and expressed his determination to resist foreign pressure while expanding external relations, particularly with Iran's neighbors.

Raisi pledged to support any diplomatic efforts to lift Western-led sanctions and reiterated that Iran's nuclear program was solely for peaceful purposes. Additionally, he vowed to enhance the quality of life for Iranians and uphold human rights.



## Hossein Amir-Abdollahian: A diplomat of Resistance

### National Desk

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, who died in a helicopter crash on Sunday alongside President Ebrahim Raisi, will be best remembered by his all-out efforts to safeguard the Palestinians' rights in the aftermath of the war in Gaza and establish peace and safety in the region.

In a Foreign Ministry statement on Monday, Amir-Abdollahian was hailed for playing a "historic, influential, and everlasting part in the Islamic Republic of Iran's politics and foreign relations for the past three years at the office."

"Improving Iran's status in the world order, consolidation of friendship and bond among the countries and nations in the region, formation of constructive relations in the international system, as well as advocating for justice on a global and regional level" were just a piece of tireless efforts made by the President and his foreign minister.

However, the three-year spell was only a small part of his rich career as a diplomat for more than two decades.

Born in 1964 in Damghan, some 320 kilometers north of Tehran, Amir-Abdollahian received a bachelor's degree in international relations from the School of International Relations in the Iranian Foreign Ministry in the early 90s and went on to obtain a master's degree in the same major from Faculty of Law and Political Sciences at the University of Tehran

as well as a PhD in the high-profile university.

He held numerous roles in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dating back to 1997, when he began his distinguished professional career as the deputy head and expert at the Iranian Embassy in Baghdad. He was also a deputy to Foreign Ministry's special envoy in Iraq affairs from 2003 through 2005.

The Iranian ambassador to Bahrain (2007-2008), the director general for the Persian Gulf and West Asia desk at the Foreign Ministry (2010-2011), and the deputy foreign minister for Arab and African Affairs (2011-2016) were also among his major roles.

The peak of his career came in August 2021, when he was appointed as the foreign minister by Raisi. Throughout his career, Amir-Abdollahian had strong ties to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), and most significantly late Quds Force commander, Lt. Gen. Qassem Soleimani, who was assassinated by a US drone strike near Baghdad Airport in January 2020. Amir-Abdollahian always praised Soleimani's "strategic genius" and in a June 2020 interview called him a "true diplomat" for his negotiation skills.

"You should thank the Islamic Republic and Qassem Soleimani because Soleimani has contributed to world peace and security," Amir-Abdollahian once said. "If there was no Islamic Republic, your metro stations and gathering centers in Brussels, London and Paris would not be safe."

Amir-Abdollahian's time as Iran's top diplomat was marked by intense efforts aiming to end Iran's isolation and offset the impact of US sanctions over the country's peaceful nuclear program. He particularly sought to forge relations with the Islamic republic's Arab neighbors.

In a landmark Chinese-brokered deal in March 2023, Tehran and Riyadh agreed to restore ties and Amir-Abdollahian visited the kingdom as part of the plan to reopen the respective embassies after seven years of political rift between the two regional powerhouses.

Amir-Abdollahian was in charge of the Foreign Ministry when a 25-year comprehensive cooperation agreement between Iran and China – signed by his predecessor Mohammad-Javad Zarif – entered the implementation stage during his meeting with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi in Wuxi – a strategic accord entailing economic, military and security cooperation between the two countries under different levels of United States sanctions.

Since the Israeli invasion of Gaza broke out last October, the Iranian top diplomat dedicated his time to advocating for innocent, war-ravaged Palestinians and stability in the Middle East, travelling across the region to coordinate with allies, including Hezbollah in Lebanon, while conveying Iran's stance on the matter to neighboring countries.

"Over the past months, the Security Council has held several meetings to deal with various types of

war crimes and genocide by the Israeli regime against Gaza, which have yielded no practical result, I repeat, no practical result despite the adoption of three resolutions and a statement and call for an immediate ceasefire, and extensive delivery of aid to the people," Amir-Abdollahian said in a speech at the UN Security Council in mid-April.

In his statement, the foreign minister condemned the Israeli airstrike on Iran's consulate in Damascus, which killed several IRGC members. "No member state would ever remain silent in the face of such a brazen and serious military attack on its Embassy, which is considered a symbol of its sovereignty as well as the killing of its officially-assigned diplomat agent."

Messages of consolation poured in following the devastating news on Monday morning.

Zarif, in a statement, praised his successor, calling him "a brother", and a war veteran, who suffered injuries during the Iraqi-imposed war on Iran in the 80s due to a chemical attack.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov was also quick to pay his tribute to President Raisi and his foreign minister, as "true friends" of Moscow.

"In Russia, President Raisi and Foreign Minister Amir-Abdollahian, were seen as true and reliable friends of our country," Lavrov said, describing them as "patriots... who firmly defended the interests of their State and gave their lives in selfless service to the Motherland."



# Iran will weather political vacuum

## Popular president goes down in history



By Ebrahim Beheshti  
Staff writer

**EXCLUSIVE**

The passing of Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian has resonated globally. Condolences have poured in from around the world addressed to Iran's Leader and officials. The Iranian people are also affected by this loss. Iran Daily interviewed Abouzar Gohari Moqaddam, a political analyst and professor at Imam Sadiq University in Tehran, to discuss the enduring characteristics of Raisi as well as the current situation in Iran. He believes that the Islamic Republic will pass through this historical period with strength.

**IRAN DAILY:** In your opinion, what are the most enduring characteristics of Raisi that will be remembered by the people?

**MOQADDAM:** His most prominent characteristic was his focus on popular governance. Giving attention to the fundamental needs of the people was the cornerstone of his plans and policies in various political, security, economic, cultural, and social areas. Serving the people and ensuring their interests and desires were his top priorities. He ultimately became a martyr on this path of belief, which is serving the people.

Another feature was his sincerity and ethics. Unlike many

politicians worldwide who disregard ethics and use any means to achieve their goals, he paid great attention to political ethics and advised all his colleagues in the government to uphold them.

Another remarkable trait was his unwavering loyalty to the commitments made by himself and his government. He remained dedicated and faithful to the Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

Thanks to these positive characteristics, today all Iranians with different tendencies and intellectual tastes are affected and saddened by his martyrdom.

**The Islamic Republic has lost**



Abouzar Gohari Moqaddam

**its president and foreign minister. Now, elections must be held quickly to introduce a new government. Does the system of the Islamic Republic of Iran have the necessary capability to overcome these circumstances?**

Yes, it certainly can do so. The Islamic Republic has experienced various crises over the past 45 years, including war, sanctions, assassinations, natural disasters, and the loss of its officials. It has successfully weathered many upheav-

als. The Islamic Republic has now become a sturdy oak tree, with deep roots that remain unharmed by changes in its leadership. At this juncture, the constitutional capacities and leadership measures, coupled with the people, will ensure its safe passage.

We witness that based on these very principles of the Constitution and the decree of the Leader, the First Vice President has been entrusted with the responsibilities of the Executive branch. The government's activities are

ongoing. In a tranquil atmosphere, affairs are being conducted, and with the support of the people, just like in the past, there is no harm to the Islamic Republic and the country. Opponents who harbor erroneous notions about this historical period of the Islamic Republic of Iran must learn from the past and understand that these baseless notions will not lead anywhere with the presence of the people and the Leader. Therefore, the system of the Islamic Republic will safely navigate through this period as well.

**Since the announcement of the president's passing, political currents and figures who had political and ideological disagreements with him have expressed their condolences and emphasized adherence to the provisions of the Constitution. Do you think this loss could further enhance social and political cohesion in Iran?**

It is crucial, as you pointed out, that all critics of the president have also expressed regret over his passing. What matters to

the political currents within the Islamic Republic is the stability of the country. All these political currents understand that no harm should come to the country and its people at this sensitive juncture, so their positions are geared towards strengthening internal cohesion rather than disrupting the country's order and stability. Nevertheless, the Constitution has clarified everything. Within 50 days, a council composed of heads of the Legislative and Judicial branches, along with the first deputy of the president, will prepare the necessary arrangements for holding presidential elections. A similar event occurred in the early years following the victory of the Islamic Revolution, where elections were held after the passing of the then-President within the legal timeframe, leading to the formation of a new government. Now, there is the capability for elections to be held on time and for a new government to take office. Therefore, as the Leader has stated there would be no disruption in the management of the country in the wake of the incident.

## MP commends FM's successful neighborly policy



By Sadeq Dehqan  
Staff writer

An Iranian lawmaker praised Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, the foreign minister, as a valuable asset in the country's Foreign Ministry, citing the reduction of tensions and misunderstandings in the region between Iran and its neighbors as a significant achievement during his time in the foreign policy arena.

In an interview with Iran Daily, Jalil Rahimi Jahanabadi said Amir-Abdollahian was among the diplomats who gradually progressed through his educational and professional stages at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, gaining a comprehensive understanding of all aspects of work in the ministry and the Islamic Republic's approaches in foreign policy, especially in the Middle East and the areas of Resistance [against arrogant powers and Zionism].

The member of the parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Commission called Amir-Abdollahian a loyal diplomat to the Islamic Republic, the Leadership, and the ideals of the Islamic Revolution and martyrs, stating that he had a very positive outlook on the interaction between the field of action and diplomacy, establishing very good relations with governmental sectors, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps forces, and also Parliament members.

"Since he entered the field of foreign policy, he played a very influential role in the country's foreign policy apparatus in de-escalating relations with neighboring countries. We have witnessed instances of this in relations with countries in Central Asia, Arab countries in the Persian Gulf region, and East Asian countries," he added.

As a member of the Iran-Vietnam and Iran-Tajikistan parliamen-

tary friendship groups, Rahimi said Amir-Abdollahian's emphasis and attention to details for resolving issues were commendable in relations with these two states during the visits of the Tajik and Vietnamese parliament speakers to Iran in August and December respectively.

"Amir-Abdollahian was a seasoned diplomat and a great asset to the country's foreign policy apparatus, and this bitter incident (his death in the helicopter crash) is considered a great sorrow for all of us," he said.

The Iranian parliamentarian explained the important fields pursued during Amir-Abdollahian's tenure as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, saying "The first axis was the resolution of tensions and misunderstandings with our

neighbors, exemplified by the improvement of relations with Saudi Arabia and the UAE".

"He also made significant efforts to enhance relations with Egypt and Jordan. Additionally, in managing tensions with Azerbaijan, Amir-Abdollahian was highly effective," Rahimi said, adding that, "Moreover, he adeptly addressed issues in Iran's relations with Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. When border issues arose between Iran and Pakistan, Amir-Abdollahian demonstrated expertise in resolving them".

The Iranian MP emphasized that the foreign minister's prioritization of improving relations with neighbors and efforts in regional tension reduction should continue to guide foreign policy in the future.

Rahimi said that the next axis of actions initiated by Amir-Abdollahian, which he launched and executed well, was his very positive interaction with representatives in Parliament and his belief in public diplomacy and parliamentary diplomacy.

"In this context, many representatives who were prominent on the global stage were regularly invited to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. His last appearance in Parliament was his discussion with the National Security Commission last week".

The lawmaker mentioned that Amir-Abdollahian had been inviting representatives to various parliamentary commissions and areas in the past few weeks, requesting their progress reports and incorporating their perspectives in diplomatic matters. He praised Amir-Abdollahian's positive engagement with Parliament as a significant factor.

Rahimi highlighted Amir-Abdollahian's strong relationships with regional Resistance groups as his third key feature, emphasizing "the importance of Palestine and Iran's support for resistance groups, which are part of the policies and ideals of the Islamic Revolution that should continue under the next Minister of Foreign Affairs".

The MP believed that the fourth positive characteristic of Amir-Abdollahian was his belief in consultative and specialized work. "For instance, if there were discussions about appointing individuals to various responsibilities or the need for certain changes and reforms within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Amir-Abdollahian used to address these issues by forming councils".

The lawmaker emphasized that these traits should be pursued by the next Minister of Foreign Affairs in the country.



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# Iran in tears

Iranians gather for public prayers and mourning after the helicopter carrying President Ebrahim Raisi came down on May 19, 2024, resulting in his death. People from all walks of life came together to pay their respects and honor to the late president. The nation grieved deeply, with many expressing their sorrow and admiration for his four decades of service.



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