

## Lawmaker hails FM's 'powerful diplomacy'



By Sadeq Dehqan  
Staff writer

Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian conducted "powerful diplomacy" during his three-year tenure, lawmaker Ara Shaverdian told Iran Daily on Tuesday, two days after the top diplomat died in a helicopter crash in northwestern Iran. The fatal mishap also killed President Ebrahim Raisi and two local officials from East Azarbaijan Province. "The Ministry of Foreign Affairs under Amir-Abdollahian had a brilliant and dynamic performance," said Shaverdian, who represents Armenian Iranians in the parliament.



He said Iran secured numerous "diplomatic triumphs" on the global stage amid sanctions, threats, and pressure, "thanks to Amir-Abdollahian's efforts and Raisi's tact." "One can say Iran regained its authority... as Amir-Abdollahian brought about effective changes in Iran's foreign policy," Shaverdian added. The lawmaker noted that during the term of President Raisi, Iran joined major regional and international records including the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the BRICS group of major emerging economies — Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa — and signed a free trade agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union, which comprises Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Russia. "These achievements can undoubtedly be attributed to the tireless efforts of both Amir-Abdollahian and President Raisi." Shaverdian described the deceased foreign minister as a "person with a unique personality," whose loss is a "huge setback" to Iran's diplomacy. The legislator said Amir-Abdollahian's successor in the Iranian Foreign Ministry would have a "very difficult job" as he should follow in his footsteps. He pointed to Iran's direct missile and drone strike on Israel in April and said Operation True Promise needed "intense diplomatic activities" that the foreign minister managed to handle properly. Shaverdian hailed Amir-Abdollahian's policies of good-neighborliness and the promotion of ties with regional nations. "Due to his efforts, Iran fostered closer ties with South Caucasus, Persian Gulf, and Resistance countries, the latter of which includes Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon."

# Martyred President Loyal Nation

### National Desk

Hundreds of thousands of Iranians, many of them dressed in black, turned out in the city of Tabriz on Tuesday to mourn president Ebrahim Raisi and seven members of his entourage who passed away in a helicopter crash on Sunday. Waving Iranian flags and portraits of the late president, mourners set off from a central square in the northwestern city of Tabriz, where Raisi was headed when his helicopter crashed. They walked behind a lorry carrying the coffins of Raisi and those who died with him, who also included Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, Friday prayers leader of Tabriz Ayatollah Mohammad Ali Al-e-Hashem and Governor of East Azarbaijan Malek Rahmati. Iranians also gathered in other cities to mourn the victims of the tragic incident. "We, the members of the government, who had the honor to serve this beloved president, the hardworking president, pledge to our dear people and Leader to follow the path of these martyrs," Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi said while addressing the ceremony. "Everyone has come to bid farewell to the martyred president and his companions regardless of their faction, ethnicity or language," said Tabriz lawmaker Masoud Pezeshkian. The helicopter lost communications while it was on its way back to Tabriz after Raisi attended the inauguration of a joint dam project on the Aras River, which forms part of the border with Azerbaijan, in a ceremony with his counterpart Ilham Aliyev. A massive search and rescue operation was launched on Sunday when two other helicopters flying alongside Raisi's lost contact with his aircraft in bad weather.



People participate in a funeral procession alongside a lorry carrying the coffins of President Ebrahim Raisi and his entourage who died in a helicopter crash in Tabriz, East Azarbaijan Province, on May 21, 2024.  
● ATA DADASHI/MOJ NEWS AGENCY

Rescuers found the wreckage of the helicopter early on Monday after hours of extensive search which involved more than 70 teams.

### Investigation

Iran's Armed Forces Chief of Staff Mohammad Hossein Baqeri ordered an investigation into the cause of the crash. No cause has yet been offered by Iran's government for the crash. Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei in a message on Monday declared five days of national mourning. He also extended his condolences to the Iranian nation over the martyrdom of Raisi and his entourage. The Leader noted that the tragic incident happened when Raeisi 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. Ayatollah Khamenei also assigned Vice President Mohammad Mokhber, 68, as caretaker president until a presidential election can be held.

### Snap election

State media later announced that the election will be held on June 28. Iran's top nuclear negotiator Ali Bagheri, who served as deputy to Amir-Abdollahian, was named acting foreign minister. From Tabriz, Raisi's body was flown to Tehran to an honor guard at the airport. Then, his body was flown to the holy city of Qom later Tuesday before being moved to Tehran during the evening. Processions will be held in the capital on Wednesday morning before the Leader leads prayers at a farewell ceremony. Raisi's body will then be flown to his home city of Mashhad, in the northeast, where he will be

buried on Thursday evening after funeral rites.

Raisi, 63, had been president since 2021. He succeeded Hassan Rouhani, at a time when the economy was battered by US sanctions imposed over Iran's nuclear activities. Meanwhile Tuesday, Iran's new Assembly of Experts opened its first session after an election that decided the new assembly, a panel of which both Raisi and the late Tabriz Friday prayer Mohammad Ali Ale-Heshem were members. A flower-ringed portrait sat on the seat Raisi would have occupied at the meeting of the 88-member panel.

### Messages of condolence

Condolence messages also flooded in from many countries and international bodies around the region. Several countries also declared days of mourning. Members of the UN Security Council, including the United States, observed a minute of silence on Monday in memory of Iranian President Ebrahim

Raisi and his entourage. On Tuesday, foreign ministers and diplomats from around a dozen of Iran's political and economic partners also paid tribute to late Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi at a meeting of a China-led regional bloc. Envoys from Russia, China, India and Pakistan were among those who stood for a minute's silence at the start of a Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan. "Despite these difficult times, Iranian representatives are taking part in this ministerial council for the first time," Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev said in a statement released by his office. Iranian President Mohammad-Ali Rajai, the only other president to die in office when he was killed in a 1981 bombing, was buried in Tehran. Iranian presidents including Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Abolhasan Banisadr both survived their own helicopter crashes while in office.

## Art of listening well



By Mohammad Reza Bahonar  
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### EXCLUSIVE

The passing away of Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and his entourage in a tragic helicopter crash on Sunday has greatly affected all Iranian people. The grand funeral procession participated by a large number of Iranians in the northwestern city of Tabriz on Tuesday indicated the popularity of the top fallen figures among the people. Today's procession in the capital Tehran will also be a serious test that will prove Raisi was a hard-working and popular president. There are reasons behind his popularity. In the position of a president, he was not a man who would just sit at his desk



● FARS

and give orders. He knew the art of "listening well". He listened to the problems of the villagers living along the borders as well as economic activists whose factories shut down due to economic problems. His main concerns were the

country's economic prosperity and resolving the people's woes. That's why, during his presidency and also when he was the chief of the country's judiciary, one of his main concerns was the reopening of companies and factories that

were shut down due to various problems. He was ever seeking to bring Iranians more satisfaction. That's why the late president insisted on making provincial trips to be closely aware of the problems and demands of the people in all parts of the country. During his short tenure, fine plans were implemented in the country to improve infrastructure, especially in the financial and economic fields. Although the president did not tie the country's economy to foreign policy, he used diplomacy to boost the country's economy. By adopting an informed strategic policy, he managed to improve relations with Iran's neighbors and develop economic cooperation. However, his government's foreign policy was not limited to the improvement of relations with neighbors.

Under his presidency, Iran also joined two important international organizations, namely the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and BRICS, a group of emerging economies. Following Sunday's tragic incident, condolence messages flooded in from many countries and international bodies. The declaration of national mourning in several countries further proved how much the late Iranian president and his foreign minister were well-known and loved across the world. The loss of this beloved president is a loss for the Islamic Republic of Iran and its people. But, due to prior challenging experiences, people's support, and the Establishment's prudence, the Establishment has become so strong that there will be no disruption in the work of the country in the wake of the passing away of President Raisi.