

Iran Daily

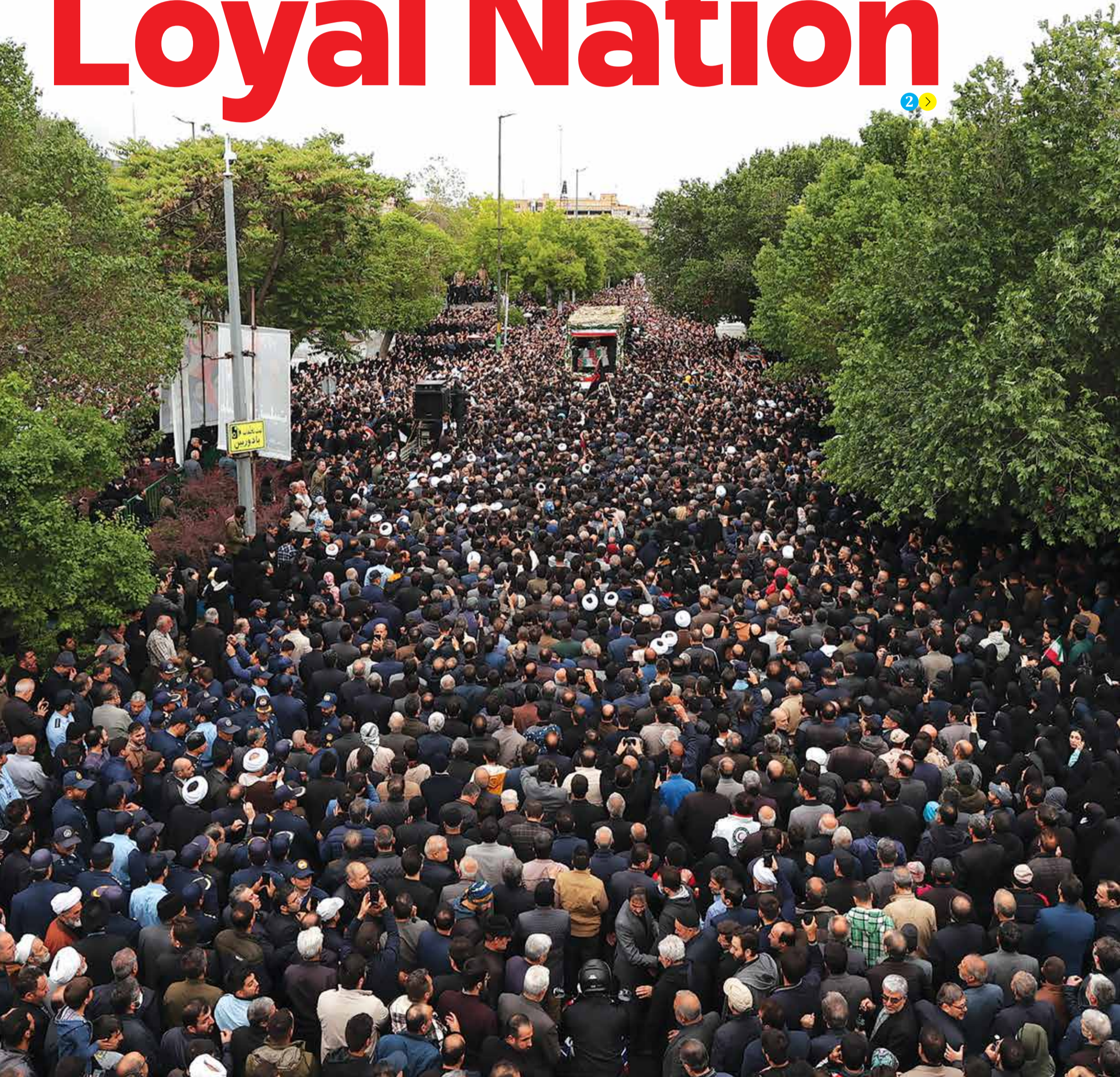
Hundreds of thousands turn out in Tabriz, Qom to mourn president, his entourage

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Martyred President Loyal Nation



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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
Member of Iran's Expediency Council

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 Leader'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.

Ayatollah Raisi's 28 foreign trips in 34 months

Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi served for 1,019 days from August 3, 2021, to May 20, 2024. On his final working trip, he met with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev to inaugurate the "Qiz Qalasi" dam on the Iran-Azerbaijan border. Tragically, he was martyred upon returning due to a helicopter crash.

Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi undertook a total of 28 foreign trips to 23 countries. During this period, he traveled twice to Tajikistan, Russia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and the United Nations. The travel record of the eighth President of the Islamic Republic of Iran clearly indicates that his foreign policy priorities were focused on strengthening cooperation with neighboring countries, particularly those in Central Asia.



Tajikistan

Ebrahim Raisi's first foreign trip was to Tajikistan in September, exactly one month after the presidential elections. This trip resulted in the signing of eight cooperation documents between the two countries and the significant achievement of Iran's permanent membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

Turkmenistan

Three months later, in December 2021, he traveled to Ashgabat, the capital of Turkmenistan. On the sidelines of the ECO summit, a trilateral gas swap agreement was signed, valued at 1.5 to 2 billion cubic meters of gas annually, facilitating the transfer of gas from Turkmenistan to Azerbaijan via Iran.

Russia (First Trip)

Raisi's first trip to Russia took place on January 19-20, 2022. During this visit, he met with Vladimir Putin in Moscow, discussing a wide range of economic cooperation in energy, banking, transit, and security sectors. Three months later, on February 21-22, he visited Qatar, where the discussion on the Gas Exporting Countries Forum highlighted the region's significance.

Oman

Three months later, on May 23, 2022, Raisi visited Oman, another Gulf country. During this visit, he referred to Sultan Haitham bin Tariq Al Said of Oman as a sincere and reliable friend of Iran and discussed with economic stakeholders ways to resolve trade issues between the two countries.

Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan were the next destinations of Raisi's foreign trips. He visited Turkmenistan on June 29, 2022, and on September 15 of the same year, he traveled to Uzbekistan for the second time in less than a year since the beginning of his presidency to participate in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit, highlighting the importance of strengthening cooperation with northern neighbors. During this trip, Iran's full membership in the SCO was officially announced. He held 11 meetings with the leaders of Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, China, Turkey, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan, resulting in the signing of various cooperation agreements.

First trip to New York

Two days after concluding this regional tour, on September 18, 2022, Raisi traveled to New York for the first time to attend the United Nations General Assembly. During this trip, he met with the Presidents of France, Switzerland, Finland, Serbia, Bolivia, Zimbabwe, and the Prime Ministers of Japan, Pakistan, Lebanon, Iraq, and Armenia. In his speech at the 77th UN General Assembly, he protested the assassination of "Martyr Qasem Soleimani" by holding up his photograph and emphasized the failure of Western sanctions against Iran.



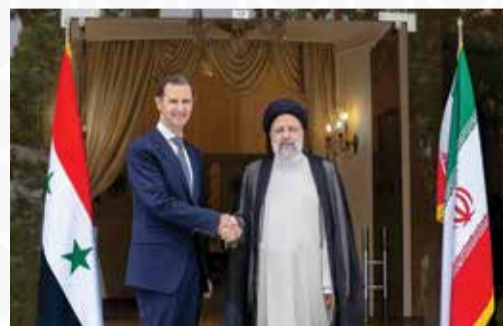
Kazakhstan

The next trip of the late Raisi, the deceased President of Iran, was 22 days after his New York visit to Kazakhstan, a northern neighbor of Iran. During this trip, he met with the Emir of Qatar and the President of Azerbaijan, telling Ilham Aliyev that Iran was ready to use its capacity to resolve conflicts between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

China

Raisi's last foreign trip in 2022 was to China, Iran's largest trading partner. On February 13, 2023, he went to Beijing for a three-day visit. During this trip, 20 cooperation documents and memoranda of understanding were signed in various fields including crisis management, information and communication technology, media, trade, intellectual property, cultural heritage, and crisis management.

Syria



On May 2, 2023, the late President of Iran traveled to Damascus, the capital of Syria, and met with Bashar al-Assad. This was the first visit by an Iranian president since the Syrian war crisis. During this visit, 14 cooperation documents were signed in various fields such as oil and energy, trade, and facilitating pilgrimage affairs between the two countries.

Indonesia

The next foreign trip of Raisi was to East Asia. On May 22, 2023, he traveled to Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia. During this visit, 11 cooperation documents were signed in various fields including trade, science and technology, cultural exchanges, pharmaceutical production, and oil and gas.

Latin America: Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Cuba

In June 2023, the President of Iran visited Latin America, traveling to Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Cuba from June 11 to 15. Discussions with the leaders of these countries focused on investments by Iranian knowledge-based companies in Venezuela and Cuba, cooperation in de-dollarization, reducing U.S. hegemony and influence, and mitigating the effects of sanctions.

Second trip to New York

On September 18, 2023, Raisi made his second trip to New York to attend the United Nations General Assembly. During this four-day visit, he delivered a speech at the General Assembly, stating, "The American project of global dominance has failed, and the ideology that sought to be a global model has become a cautionary tale, nearing its end."

Second trips to Tajikistan and Uzbekistan

On November 8-9, 2023, the Iranian President made his second visits to Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, participating in the 16th ECO Summit in Tashkent, Uzbekistan's capital. He emphasized Iran's determination to mobilize more resources and energy to enhance cooperation within the ECO framework.

Saudi Arabia

One of the most significant foreign trips of the late Raisi in 2023 was his historic visit to Saudi Arabia after seven years, facilitated by China's mediation. On November 11, he traveled to Riyadh to attend an emergency meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation on the Gaza conflict. During this visit, he met with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, where both parties emphasized the development of bilateral relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia.



Russia

On December 7, 2023, Raisi made his second visit to Moscow, the capital of Russia. During his meeting with Vladimir Putin, he stated, "Iran and Russia have good cooperation in energy, agriculture, and scientific activities, and further significant steps can be taken." Raisi added that the Israel-Hamas war is a challenge for all humanity and that the bombing of Gaza must be stopped immediately. Putin announced that the volume of economic exchanges between the two countries had reached \$5 billion.



Turkey

The next trip for the Iranian President was to Ankara, the capital of Turkey. On December 24, 2023, Raisi traveled to Turkey, where 10 cooperation documents were signed between Tehran and Ankara.

Algeria

Raisi's last foreign trip in 2023 was to Algiers, the capital of Algeria. During this visit, he participated in the meeting of the Gas Exporting Countries Forum and met with the leaders of Qatar, Tunisia, Mozambique, Iraq, and Bolivia.

Pakistan

Raisi's first foreign trip in 2024 was to Pakistan. From April 22 to 24, he visited Islamabad, followed by visits to the cities of Lahore and Karachi. During this trip, eight cooperation documents were signed, envisioning a trade volume of \$10 billion between the two countries, with an emphasis on securing the borders.

Sri Lanka

On April 24, 2024, the Iranian President traveled from Pakistan to Sri Lanka for his last foreign trip, aimed at economic development with East Asian countries. During this one-day visit, he participated in the inauguration ceremony of the multi-purpose Uma Oya Dam and Power Plant project alongside Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe, marking one of Iran's major engineering service export projects.

Iran-Azerbaijan border

In his final working trip, Raisi visited the Iran-Azerbaijan border and met with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev at the zero point border along the Aras River. During the ceremony, he stated, "The Qiz Qalasi Dam is a symbol of regional development and a testament to the determination of the two countries and peoples of Iran and Azerbaijan to expand cooperation."

Artistic community unites in grief after Raisi's passing away

Iranian pavilion at Cannes becomes memorial for president



The tragic death of President Ayatollah Ebrahim Raisi and his delegation in a helicopter crash has prompted an outpouring of grief and solidarity from more than 250 Iranian filmmakers and artists, who issued a statement expressing their condolences to the Iranian people. The statement praised Raisi as a dedicated servant of the people who remained connected to the cultural and cinematic community, even during his tenure as president.

Several visual artists, including Hassan Rouholamin, Ahmad Mansoub, and Mehdi Taheri, among others, responded to the tragedy through various artistic expressions, from paintings and calligraphy to digital media, reflecting their sorrow and respect for Raisi and his companions.

At the Cannes Film Festival, international filmmakers from countries such as the UK, Germany, the US, and France, gathered at the Iranian pavilion to pay their respects. They signed a memorial book and expressed their condolences, demonstrating global solidarity with the Iranian artistic community.

In addition, numerous Iranian artists from different fields, including cinema, theater, and music, shared their sorrow through media statements.



Reza Mirkarimi

Veteran director Reza Mirkarimi said, "It was heartbreaking news. Regardless of political views, as an Iranian, it's devastating to lose top officials while on duty. Like many, I stayed up all night hoping for a positive outcome, but fate had other plans."

Actor **Farhad Qaemian** noted Raisi's special attention to artists and cultural figures, saying, "We lost a great supporter."

Actor **Mehran Rajabi** called Raisi "a man of action who brought stability to the country," and actor Mohsen Afshani remembered Raisi's close relationship with artists, recounting a memorable dinner where Raisi answered all their questions with transparency.

Cultural manager **Abolfazl Hamrah** remarked that Raisi and his entourage embodied the spirit of martyrdom.

Director **Ahmad Moazzami** praised Raisi's dedication to truth, justice, and faith, calling him "a servant of Imam Reza (PBUH)."



Dariush Arjmand

Veteran actor Dariush Arjmand wrote, "Raisi's martyrdom was a reward for his tireless efforts. He was a man of action, always ready to serve the people's needs."



Ebrahim Hatamikia

Director Ebrahim Hatamikia described the crash as "one of the saddest events in our history," and expressed hope for unity and peace in this sensitive time.



Hadi Marzban

Theater director Hadi Marzban canceled rehearsals in honor of Raisi, and actor Ja'far Dehghan highlighted Raisi's friendly relations with artists and his fight against corruption.

Actor **Reza Rouygar** expressed hope that such tragedies would not recur, and veteran actor Mohammad Fili noted Raisi's strong connections with the artistic community.

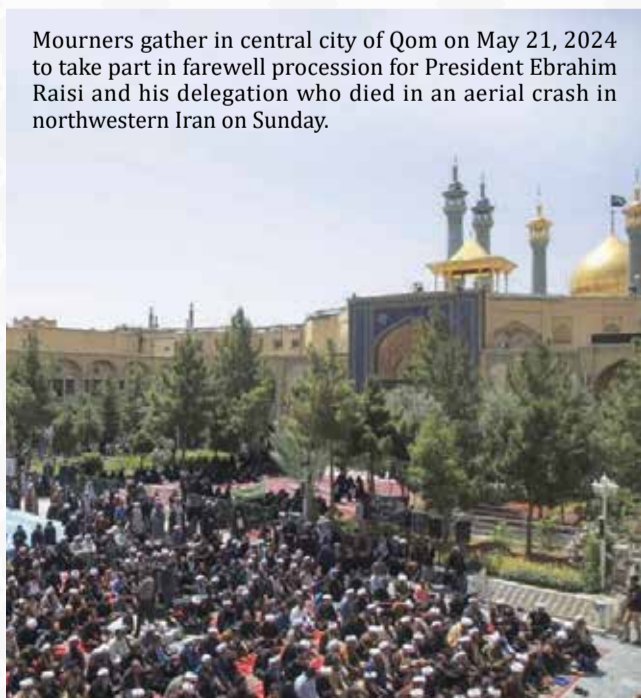


Saeed Aboutaleb

Poet and TV host Hamed Askari acknowledged Raisi's hard work and expressed shock over his sudden death, while director and documentarian Saeed Aboutaleb emphasized Raisi's sincerity, purposefulness, and perseverance.



People bid farewell to Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian in Tabriz, northwestern Iran, on May 21, 2024 after they died in a helicopter crash on May 19.



Mourners gather in central city of Qom on May 21, 2024 to take part in farewell procession for President Ebrahim Raisi and his delegation who died in an aerial crash in northwestern Iran on Sunday.



Coffins containing bodies of President Ebrahim Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian arrive at Mehrabad Airport, Tehran, Iran, on May 21, 2024 for funeral ceremonies in the Iranian capital and the nearby holy city of Qom.

