

Iran's 12th Parliament inaugurated



Iranian lawmakers take oath during the inauguration session for the new Parliament in Tehran on May 27, 2024. **ALI SHARIFZADEH/IRNA**

National Desk
Iran's 12th Parliament was officially inaugurated

on Monday with a message of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

In his message, the Leader stressed the importance of continuing and strengthening "religious

democracy", describing it as a "big divine gift" to the Iranian nation. Ayatollah Khamenei said

each member of the parliament is a representative of the entire nation which means that the main work of the lawmakers is to secure the country's national interests. Iran's acting President Mohammad Mokhber also addressed the parliament in his first public speech since May 19's helicopter crash that killed his predecessor and seven others. His speech came as Iran prepares for a presidential election to replace the late President Ebrahim Raisi in just a month. In his remarks, Mokhber praised Raisi's time in office, noting that Iran's crude oil production—a key source of hard cur-

rency for the country — climbed to more than 3.6 million barrels a day. That comes after Oil Minister Javad Owji said Sunday that Iran was now exporting around 2 million barrels a day, despite Western sanctions targeting the Islamic Republic. Mokhber also asserted that the country's economy remained stable under Raisi when Iran took military actions in Iraq, Israel and Pakistan in recent months. Many high-ranking Iranian officials as well as foreign guests attended the opening ceremony during which the new parliamentarians took oath. Iranians elected 290 members of the parliament in two rounds of the elections which were held on March 1 and May 10. Iran announced a turnout of 41 percent in the parliamentary elections.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Strong ties only way to expel outsiders from Mideast



Iran's Acting Foreign Minister Ali Baqeri Kani said stronger bonds and ties among the neighboring states are the only way to expel foreigners from the Middle East region. Baqeri Kani made the remarks in a joint press conference with Omani Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr al-Busaidi, who arrived in Tehran on Monday to express his country's solidarity with Iran following the death of President Ebrahim Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian in a helicopter crash last week, Press TV reported.

"Today, we are consolidating friendly and fraternal relations and promoting multilateral ties with our neighbors," Baqeri Kani said.

Baqeri noted that foreign policy had a special position in the doctrine of Raisi's administration which included the expansion of political ties with the neighboring countries and enhanced trade cooperation. The Omani foreign minister, for his part, said he exchanged views with Baqeri Kani on issues of common interest concerning the region, particularly Israel's massacre and destruction in Gaza.

Mokhber: Iran will follow late president's policy of boosting ties



IRNA

International Desk

Iran's Acting President Mohammad Mokhber said on Monday Tehran will follow the late president's policy of expansion of relations with countries. Iran is determined to expand and strengthen its international relations, especially with the Muslim and allied countries, Mokhber told the visiting President of the National

Assembly of Mali Abdoulaye Maïssouma in Tehran. He described the late president Ebrahim Raisi and his foreign minister, Hossein Amir-Abdollahian as valuable assets for the Islamic world. Mokhber called for the use of capacities in both countries to promote economic relations between Iran and Mali. Malick Diallo, for his part, expressed his condolenc-

es to Iran over the loss of President Raisi, and said Mali hopes to continue expanding economic and trade relations with Iran. Raisi, Amir-Abdollahian and six others died on May 19, when their helicopter crashed in foggy weather in the mountains near the northwestern border with Azerbaijan. The charred wreckage of the aircraft was found the following day.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Israel faces global outcry over deadly strike on Rafah camp

Israel faced a wave of international condemnation Monday over a strike that Gaza officials said killed 45 people when it set off a fire that ripped through a tent city for displaced Palestinians.

The UN called on Israel to conduct a "thorough and transparent" investigation into the Rafah strike, as the Israeli military said it was launching a probe into civilian deaths, AFP reported. French President Emmanuel Macron wrote on X that "these operations must stop. There are no safe areas in Rafah for Palestinian civilians. I call for full respect for international law and an immediate ceasefire."

EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said he was "horrified by news coming out of Rafah on Israeli strikes killing dozens of displaced persons, including small children. I condemn this in the strongest terms". Israel launched the attack on Sunday evening, hours after Hamas had unleashed a barrage of rockets at Tel Aviv and nearby areas which sent Israelis running for bomb shelters even though most were intercepted by air defenses. Israel's army claimed its aircraft "struck a Hamas compound in Rafah" and killed Yassin Rabia and Khaled Nagar, both senior officials for the resistance group in the occupied West Bank. Gaza's civil defense agency said the strike set off a fire that tore through a displacement center in northwestern Rafah near a facility of the UN agency for Palestinians, UNRWA. "We saw charred bodies and dismembered limbs ... We also saw cases of amputations, wounded children, women and the elderly,"



said agency official Mohammad al-Mughayyir.

Footage from the Palestinian Red Crescent Society showed chaotic night-time scenes of paramedics racing to the fiery attack site and evacuating the wounded, including children. The ICRC said one of its field hospitals was receiving an "influx of casualties seeking care for injuries and burns" and that its teams were "doing their best to save lives".

Mughayyir said the rescue efforts were hampered by war damage and the impacts of Israel's siege. Across the region, the Israeli attack sparked strong protests from mediators Egypt and Qatar as well as from Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Turkey. Egypt deplored the "targeting of defenseless civilians" and labelled it part of "a systematic policy aimed at widening the scope of death and destruction in the Gaza Strip to make it uninhabitable".

Jordan accused Israel of "ongoing war crimes" and Saudi Arabia condemned "in the strongest terms the continued massacres committed by Israeli occupation forces". Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said "we

Palestinians gather at the site of an Israeli strike on a camp for internally displaced people in Rafah on May 27, 2024. **EYAD BABA/AFP**

will do everything possible to hold these barbarians and murderers accountable".

Qatar condemned the Israeli bombing as a "dangerous violation of international law" and voiced "concern that the bombing will complicate ongoing mediation efforts and hinder reaching an agreement for an immediate and permanent ceasefire".

The African Union chair Moussa Faki Mahamat also condemned the attack on X saying: "Israel continues to violate international law with impunity and in contempt of an ICJ ruling two days ago ordering an end to its military action in Rafah." "The ICJ order must be urgently enforced if global order is to prevail," he added. In a case brought by South Africa alleging that the Israeli military operation amounts to "genocide", the ICJ on Friday ordered Israel to halt its Rafah offensive, and demanded the release of hostages and the "unhindered provision" of humanitarian aid into Gaza.

Jordan seeks 'amicable' relations with Iran



Jordan's Crown Prince Al Hussein bin Abdullah II said Jordan seeks amicable relations with Iran.

In an exclusive interview with Al Arabiya, the crown prince said that Jordan, along with all Arab countries, seeks amicable relations with Iran, based on the principle of good neighborly relations and non-intervention in the affairs of other countries. Last week, Jordanian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ayman al-Safadi in a phone conversation with Iran's acting Foreign Minister Ali Bagheri conveyed the Jordanian king's condolences to the Iranian Leader on the deaths of Iran's president and foreign minister and their companions in a tragic helicopter incident.