

Iran FM touring region to stop Israeli crimes, promote peace

International Desk

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, who has embarked on a regional tour, expressed hope that his visits to the regional countries would lead to better conditions for Palestine, Lebanon and peace in the region. Araghchi made the remarks upon his arrival in Saudi Arabia's capital Riyadh on Wednesday, where he held talks with his Saudi counterpart Prince Faisal bin Farhan. The Iranian foreign minister said that the purpose of his trip to Saudi Arabia and other regional countries is to discuss regional issues, especially developments in Lebanon, Gaza, crimes committed by the Israeli regime as well as the Lebanese people who have been displaced following Israel's attacks on their country. Iranian Foreign Minis-

try spokesman Esmail Baghaei in message on X described the meeting as constructive, saying that both sides discussed the latest developments in the region, especially in Gaza and Lebanon. Baghaei said that the two foreign ministers called for cessation of Israel's genocidal war on Gaza and Lebanon as well as providing refugees with humanitarian aid. Earlier on the day, Baghaei said on X that Araghchi's visit would focus on stopping "the Israeli regime's genocide & aggression" and aimed to "alleviate the pain and suffering of our brothers and sisters in Gaza and Lebanon." Israel has been waging a year-long war on the Gaza Strip where more than 42,000 Palestinians – mostly women and children – have been killed in the regime's strikes. Hezbollah, based in Lebanon, began firing on north-

ern Israel in support of Palestinians in Gaza, and since last month, Israel has significantly ramped up its strikes on the resistance movement's positions. Baghaei said the meetings in Riyadh were "in furtherance of our diplomatic efforts, in coordination with countries of the region." In Beirut on Friday, Araghchi said Tehran supports efforts for a "simultaneous" cease-fire in Lebanon and the Palestinian territory.

Tehran-Riyadh ties

The Saudi Press Agency (SPA) reported that the top diplomats "discussed bilateral relations and ways to enhance them in various fields" and also addressed regional developments. After meeting with Saudi officials, the Iranian top diplomat will travel to Qatar to hold talks with the officials of the Persian Gulf



Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (R) meets Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on October 9, 2024. SPA

country. The Islamic republic has called Hamas's last year Operation al-Aqsa Storm on Israel "a turning point in the history of the legitimate struggle of the Palestinian people against Israel."

Iran has also repeatedly accused Israel of committing genocide and war crimes since the Gaza war began. Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest oil exporter and custodian of Islam's two holiest sites, paused US-brokered talks on nor-

malizing ties with Israel after the Gaza war broke out. Saudi officials said they wanted a pathway towards a Palestinian state as a condition of normalization. But last month, the kingdom's de facto ruler, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Sal-

man, toughened his tone, explicitly saying that an "independent Palestinian state" was necessary. Araghchi also met and discussed latest regional developments with Bin Salman after talks with his Saudi counterpart.

Pezeshkian to meet Putin in Turkmenistan visit

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian to meet Russian President Vladimir Putin for talks Friday at a forum in the Central Asian country of Turkmenistan. Yury Ushakov, Putin's aide on foreign policy, told journalists the leaders would meet in Ashgabat while attending an event celebrating a Turkmen poet. "This meeting has great significance both for discussing bilateral issues as well as, of course, discussing the sharply escalated situation in the Middle East," Ushakov said. Leaders of Central Asian countries are meeting to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the birth of 18th-century poet Magtymguly Pyragy. Putin's attendance had not been previously announced. Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin visited Iran last week for talks with Pezeshkian and First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref. Russia has close rela-



tions with Iran, and Western governments have accused Tehran of supplying Moscow with drones and missiles, which it has repeatedly denied. Pezeshkian will also hold talks with Putin during a visit to Russia this month to participate in a BRICS summit of emerging economies.

After killing more than 42,000 people in the Gaza Strip, the Israeli regime is now focused on Hezbollah, the Lebanese ally of Hamas resistance group in the Gaza Strip. Israel launched ground incursions into southern Lebanon on September 30 where some 10,000 peacekeepers

Spanish PM calls for global action to stop Israeli 'invasion'

International Desk

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez described Israel's military offensives in Lebanon as an "invasion" on Wednesday, saying that the international community had to act. "It is clear that there has been an invasion by a third country of a sovereign state such as Lebanon, and therefore the international community cannot remain indifferent," the Socialist premier told parliament. "We denounced (this situation) in Ukraine, we also denounce it in Gaza and now we are also denouncing the invasion of Lebanon," he added. After killing more than 42,000 people in the Gaza Strip, the Israeli regime is now focused on Hezbollah, the Lebanese ally of Hamas resistance group in the Gaza Strip. Israel launched ground incursions into southern Lebanon on September 30 where some 10,000 peacekeepers

are deployed under the command of a Spanish general. According to official Lebanese figures, nearly 2,000 people have been killed in Lebanon since October 2023, including more than a thousand since the start of Israeli strikes in the south and east of its territory, as well as in the southern suburbs of Beirut, on September 23. Sanchez is one of the most outspoken critics among European Union leaders of Israel's response to the Hamas attack on the Israeli positions in the occupied territories on October 7, 2023. He has angered Israel by saying he had "serious doubts that Israel is complying with international humanitarian law" in Gaza and under his watch Madrid in May recognized a Palestinian state. Sanchez also expressed his regret at the "lack of agreement within the European Union" on the situation in West Asia.



'Zionist terrorist organization'

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan also on Wednesday decried Israel's genocidal war in Gaza and Lebanon, calling it a "Zionist terrorist organization." Arguing that last year Israel made a choice between being a state and being a terrorist organization, Erdogan, addressing the ruling Justice and Development (AK) Party's meeting in Ankara, said since then it has been acting like a "terrorist organization."

He said Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his "murderous network are delusional and embarking on a very dangerous adventure." Erdogan also criticized western countries of defending cease-fire on stage, while continuing to provide Israel with weapons. "History will never forgive those who applaud the monster responsible for the blood of tens of thousands of Palestinian children, women, civilians," he said.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Quds Force commander to receive top order from Leader: IRGC

International Desk

An advisor to the chief commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) said Brigadier General Esmail Qa'ani is in good health and will receive Order of Fat'h (Conquest) from the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei in the coming days. Brigadier General Ebrahim Jabari made the remarks on Wednesday, amid Western media speculations that the IRGC

Quds Force commander might have been wounded, or even martyred, in a massive Israeli strike last week that was reported to have targeted senior Hezbollah official Hashem Safieddine in Beirut's densely populated southern neighborhood of Dahiyeh, Press TV reported. Qa'ani also sent a message to the 7th International Conference on Solidarity with Palestinian Children and Adolescents this week and offered his apologies for not being able to take part.

Iran roundly rejects plot accusations by UK

International Desk

Tehran adamantly dismissed accusations put forward by a British security official that the Islamic Republic has been involved in "potentially lethal" plots against the UK. Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baghaei said on Wednesday that such anti-Iran accusations have been leveled against the country over the past two years without a shred of evidence or documenta-

tion. UK's MI5 spy chief has claimed on Tuesday 20 Iran-backed potentially lethal plots had been disrupted in Britain since January 2022. Ken McCullum accused Iran of being behind "plot after plot" on British soil. Baghaei said Britain was hosting "terrorist" groups that take advantage of free speech to promote violence, according to the statement and asked London to reconsider its policies towards "the nation of Iran and West Asia."