

Pezeshkian: BRICS members mull creation of alternative to IMF

International Desk

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian said members of the BRICS group of emerging economies discussed the establishment of a new fund in the face of the International Monetary Fund to counter US unilateral actions.

Pezeshkian made the remarks upon his return to Tehran from the 16th BRICS Summit in Russian city of Kazan, where he said "security, economic, and social issues" were central to discussions.

"BRICS seeks to counter US unilateralism tied to the dollar, as it imposes sanctions at will, exacerbating global economic challenges," he said, adding that a decision was made to establish a new fund in the face of the International Monetary Fund to counter US unilateral actions,

aiming to neutralize sanctions policies and bolster financial security in member nations' monetary exchanges.

The Iranian president said that the enactment of BRICS 2024 decisions will "gradually thwart the conspiracy of the US and its allies."

He also referenced the summit's 32-page final declaration, which covered a range of significant issues, including the Israeli crimes in Gaza.

"The final statement was notably strong, condemning the killings and atrocities committed by Israel in Gaza and Lebanon," Pezeshkian stated.

The declaration, he continued, "underscored the need for member countries to strengthen financial, economic, cultural, scientific, and security cooperation."

"I believe that if we can implement the goals of this organization and the discussions and agreements made at this meeting, the conspiracy by the United States and its allies will gradually be neutralized," he stressed.

The Kazan Declaration, themed "Strengthening Multilateralism for Just Global Development and Security," emphasized BRICS solidarity and strategic partnerships, with leaders committing to fostering peace, a fairer international order, and sustainable development. Pezeshkian described the Islamic Republic's participation as "an excellent opportunity for bilateral talks with various countries." He also quoted UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, who expressed a desire to visit Iran, highlighting the

importance of resolving bilateral issues independently and avoiding external interference.

Pezeshkian and Sheikh Al Nahyan met for the first time on Wednesday on the summit's sidelines.

He also highlighted his meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping, noting that both sides agreed to move forward with the implementation of Tehran-Beijing agreements and emphasized strengthening bilateral ties.

The meeting, held on the sidelines of the summit, marked Pezeshkian's first face-to-face talks with Xi since taking office.

Pezeshkian arrived in Kazan on Tuesday night to attend the summit following an official invitation from Russian President Vladimir Putin.

During the 16th BRICS Summit, the Iranian presi-



dent held discussions with the presidents of Russia, China, Egypt, South Africa, Belarus, Venezuela, Bolivia, and the UAE, as well as with the prime ministers of India and Ethiopia.

Iran officially joined BRICS at the beginning of 2024, five months after being accepted as a full member alongside Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia.

Originally formed by Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, BRICS represents approximately 40% of the global population and a quarter of the world's GDP.

Israeli strike on Lebanon journos 'war crime'

Lebanon accused Israel of targeting journalists in a "deliberate" attack that killed three media workers in the country's south on Friday, calling the incident a "war crime."

Lebanese television channel Al Mayadeen said cameraman Ghassan Najjar and broadcast engineer Mohammad Reda were killed in the strike on a compound housing the journalists in Hasbaya, south Lebanon.

Another TV outlet, Al-Manar, run by Hezbollah, said video journalist Wissam Qassem was also killed in the strike on a bungalow located in a resort that several media organizations covering the Israeli war had rented out.

The strike "targeting journalists" was, according to Prime Minister Najib Mikati, among the "war crimes committed by the Israeli enemy." He also said the attack was "deliberate."

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail

Baghaei strongly condemned the Israeli airstrike, denouncing it as a "deliberate" attack on media personnel. In a post on X, Baghaei said that the attack was "another instance of Israel's atrocious war crime."

Journalists from other media organizations, including Lebanese broadcaster Al-Jadeed, Sky News Arabic and Al Jazeera English, were also resting nearby when the strike hit, in an area outside Hezbollah's traditional strongholds.

Friday's deaths are the latest in a long list of journalists who have been killed by Israel in the past year in Gaza and Lebanon, with media reports putting the number of fatalities among reporters and journalists at north of 180.

After nearly a year of war in Gaza, Israel expanded its focus to Lebanon and last month launched a massive bombing campaign across the country, sending in ground troops



on September 30.

The regime's savage attacks have so far killed around 3,600 civilians in Lebanon, leaving over 12,000 others injured.

Strikes in Gaza

Israeli strikes in the southern Gaza Strip city of Khan Yunis killed at least 38 Palestinians and Israeli forces launched a night-time raid on a hospital in the north, Palestinian officials said.

The Gaza Ministry of Health said many of the casualties from the Israeli strikes on houses in southeast Khan Yunis were women and children, with approximately 28 from the Alfarra family. The Israeli attack, which

included airstrikes and shelling, according to health officials, targeted several residential buildings in neighborhoods east of Khan Yunis. Six members of the Abdeen family were also killed, according to health officials.

'Ethnic cleansing'

Jordan's Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi called for pressure on Israel to end "ethnic cleansing," in strong remarks as he met US Secretary of State Antony Blinken in London. Deploing the humanitarian situation in northern Gaza, Jordan's Ayman Safadi told Blinken, "We do see ethnic cleansing taking place, and that has got to stop."

Leader lauds Safieddine as 'constant companion of Nasrallah'

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei paid tribute to Hashem Safieddine, a top-ranking Hezbollah leader recently assassinated by Israel. "He was one of Hezbollah's most prominent figures and a constant companion of Syyed Hassan Nasrallah. It was through the wisdom and courage of leaders like him that Hezbollah was able to

shield Lebanon from the threat of disintegration and collapse, successfully neutralizing the threat posed by the occupying regime, whose brutal army at times trampled as far as Beirut," Leader said in the message issued on Thursday, Press TV reported.

"His courage and sacrifices and those of other commanders and fighters of the Nasrallah axis

were key in averting the threat of the occupation and annexation of southern Litani, Tyre, and other cities in the region by the Zionist regime," the message added.

Hezbollah on Wednesday confirmed that Safieddine, who was touted as the likely replacement for Nasrallah, had been assassinated in an Israeli attack several weeks ago.

Saudi Arabia proposes joint naval drills with Iran in Red Sea

Saudi Arabia has proposed joint naval exercises with Iran in the Red Sea, a move that has caught global attention.

Iranian Navy Commander Shahram Irani on Wednesday confirmed the proposal, stating, "Saudi Arabia has requested joint exercises with Iran," and noted that both nations have extended invitations

for naval port visits. Irani added that the exercises might include participation from other countries, with coordination efforts already in progress.

In response, Saudi Defense Ministry spokesman Turki Al-Malki told AFP that the Saudi and Iranian navies had recently completed joint drills with other nations in the Gulf of Oman.

Last week, Iran conducted joint naval drills involving Russia and Oman near the Gulf of Oman, with observers from countries such as Saudi Arabia, India, and Pakistan.

Saudi Arabia and Iran cut diplomatic ties in 2016. However, they restored relations in March of last year following mediation by China.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Fresh efforts to ...

In this context, Hebrew-language sources have reported that David Barnea, the head of Mossad, has traveled to Cairo with representatives from Israel's Shin Bet security agency and met with General Hassan Rashad, the head of Egypt's intelligence agency. Meanwhile, it has been reported that a Hamas delegation, representing Khalil al-Haya, has also arrived in Egypt. According to the Qatari website Al-Araby al-Jadid, the Hamas delegation's visit to Egypt was at the request of Cairo and took place on Thursday, lasting around five hours. During the meeting, the Egyptian and American proposal for a truce was discussed.

Meanwhile, a Hamas official told AFP that the resistance movement is ready to stop the war if Israel commits to a truce, withdraws from the Gaza Strip, allows the return of refugees, implements a prisoner exchange, and sends aid.

The presence of Israeli and Hamas delegations in Cairo is apparently a preliminary step towards resuming official ceasefire negotiations in Doha, Qatar. Al-Araby al-Jadid reported that over the next few days, mediation and negotiation teams will travel to Doha to hold meetings with the participation of Mohammed bin Abdul Rahman Al Thani, Qatar's prime minister and foreign minister, Hassan Rashad, head of Egypt's intelligence

agency, William Burns, head of the CIA, and David Barnea, head of Israel's Mossad.

This comes as US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who recently visited Israel and Saudi Arabia, met with the Emir of Qatar on Thursday in Doha. Previously, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi had also visited Doha as part of a regional diplomatic tour, discussing regional developments and the need for a ceasefire with Qatari officials. Araghchi's tour also included visits to Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, Jordan, and Egypt, with the main item on agenda being negotiations to stop the war and establish a truce.