

President: Iran proud of commonalities with Azerbaijan

Tehran, Baku sign seven cooperation documents

Pezeshkian says both neighbors can secure regional peace, stability

National Desk

"We are proud of commonalities" between Iran and Azerbaijan, President Masoud Pezeshkian said on Monday, stressing that based on these bonds Tehran is resolute in further strengthening of relations with Baku.

Referring to the two countries' cultural, religious, ideological, intellectual, and political commonalities, Pezeshkian said, "We take pride in these values, and based on these deep bonds, we are determined to further strengthen our relations. In many areas, we can share our experiences, benefit from each other's markets, and expand regional relations."

He made the remarks in a joint press conference with his Azerbaijani counterpart Ilham Aliyev in Baku, where the two countries also signed seven cooperation documents. The Iranian president pointed to an "important" decision to draw up a comprehensive

strategic program between the two countries, saying that it will "provide a framework for expanding industrial, scientific, cultural, economic, political, and security cooperation between Iran and Azerbaijan."

Pezeshkian also said that the two neighboring countries can establish peace, stability, and security in the region through cooperation and respect for their territorial integrity.

Economic cooperation

He also highlighted the need to expand economic cooperation, saying that the two countries can link up their transportation and financial networks, boost trade, activate East-West and North-South corridors more effectively, and create shared opportunities for investment and production.

He also described the familial and historical ties between the two nations as an obstacle to any attempt to sow division between the two nations. Aliyev said Pezeshkian's visit

"is a reflection of the high level of relations between the two countries."

"Our peoples have lived for centuries in an atmosphere of friendship and brotherhood. Today, our interstate relations are developing on this solid foundation," he added.

During his one-day visit to Baku, the two countries signed seven memoranda of understanding in political consultations, transportation, cultural exchanges, healthcare sector, media activities and investment.

Aras Corridor

Earlier on Sunday, the Iranian president in an interview with an Azerbaijani TV network said a project to establish a land link between Azerbaijan's mainland and its exclave of Nakhchivan via Iran is progressing rapidly. In October 2023, Tehran and Baku agreed to establish the transit route called the Aras Corridor, which allows Azerbaijan to access Nakhchivan through Iranian territory.



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (R) and his Azerbaijani counterpart Ilham Aliyev come down the stairs at Azerbaijan's Zulfuqar Presidential Palace in Baku on April 28, 2025.

president.ir

Bypassing Armenia, the Aras Corridor presents an alternative to the Zangezur Corridor with the potential of reducing Iran's

concerns for its common border with Armenia. Baku had been seeking to establish unimpeded access to Nakh-

chivan by opening the Zangezur Corridor through Armenia. The idea has been strongly rejected by Iran.

Interior minister blames 'negligence' for Iran port blast

Death toll rises to 65

National Desk

Iran's interior minister on Monday blamed "negligence" for a massive explosion that killed 65 people at the country's largest commercial port, with firefighters still battling a blaze at the facility three days after the tragic incident.

The blast took place on Saturday at the Shahid Rajaei Port in Iran's south -which is the most advanced container port in the country.

Hormozgan Governor-General Mohammad Ashouri Taziani said on Monday that the death toll in the Shahid Rajaei Port fire has reached 65. Also, more than 1,000 people have been injured in the explosion.

Only "120 wounded are still in hospital," Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni, who is in the area, said on Monday.

He added that "culprits have been identified and summoned," and that the blast was caused by "shortcomings, including noncompliance with safety precautions and negligence."

Iran's state TV showed images of firefighters still dousing the flames Monday, and said the dam-



age would be assessed after the fire was fully brought under control.

Meanwhile, the Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei ordered a probe into the incident.

In a message on Sunday, Ayatollah Khamenei said the tragic incident has caused sorrow and concern. He urged security and judicial officials to identify any negligence or deliberate acts that may have caused the tragedy and to take necessary legal action in accordance with the law.

All officials must consider themselves responsible for preventing such bitter and damaging incidents, he said.

It was not immediately clear what caused the explosion. CCTV images on social media showed it began gradually, with a

small fire belching orange-brown smoke among a few containers stacked outside, across from a warehouse.

A small forklift truck drives past the area and men can be seen walking nearby.

About one minute after the small fire and smoke become visible, a fireball erupts as vehicles pass nearby, with men running for their lives.

The explosion has destroyed some nearby buildings and damaged vehicles parked near the site of the incident.

Shipping containers burned, goods inside were badly damaged and the explosion was so powerful that windows several miles away were shattered. The blast was also heard in Qeshm, an island 26 kilometers south of the port.

Netanyahu trying to dictate US policy in talks: Araghchi

Trump says negotiations going 'very well'

International Desk

Iran's top diplomat said Benjamin Netanyahu is trying to dictate US policy in Tehran-Washington negotiations, after the Israeli prime minister called for the complete dismantling of the Islamic Republic's nuclear program and the inclusion of its ballistic missile capabilities in any deal.

"What is striking... is how brazenly Netanyahu is now dictating what President Trump can and cannot do in his diplomacy with Iran," Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said in a post on X.

On Sunday, Netanyahu said any real Iran-US deal would be one "which removes Iran's capacity to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons" and "bring in the prevention of ballistic missiles."

The remarks came a day after Iranian and US delegations met in Oman for a third round of high-level talks on Tehran's nuclear program, with both sides reporting progress.

"Israel's fantasy that it can dictate what Iran may or may not do is so detached from reality that it hardly merits a response," Araghchi said on Monday.

He noted that Iran was able to thwart "any attempt by malicious external actors to sabotage its foreign policy or dictate its course."

"We can only hope our US



Abbas Araghchi

counterparts are equally steadfast," he added.

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Majid Takht-Ravanchi, who is also present in the negotiations, on Sunday reassured Iran's parliamentarians that zero-uranium enrichment, Iran's defense capabilities, and its regional power are non-negotiable.

Takht-Ravanchi was briefing the Parliament's Committee on National Security and Foreign Policy on Sunday on the third round of talks which was led by Araghchi and US President Donald Trump's envoy Steve Witkoff. Earlier in the day, technical-level talks between Iranian and American experts also took place in Muscat.

Takht-Ravanchi explained that the Saturday talks in Muscat focused on building confidence about the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear program in return for the lifting of all sanctions.

He emphasized that Iran's nuclear case in the UN Security Council and the International Atomic Energy Agency's Board of Governors must be closed.

Since April 12, the two countries have launched high-stakes negotiations to resolve a decades-long dispute over Iran's nuclear program.

Since then, Tehran and Washington have held three rounds of talks in Oman and Italy, which have been described as "positive and constructive" by both sides.

On Sunday, the US president said his administration's ongoing nuclear talks with Iran are going "very well" and that "a deal is going to be made there."

"We'll have something without having to start dropping bombs all over the place," Trump said.

The next round of the negotiations is scheduled to be held on Saturday, with the venue yet to be specified.

Iran foils cyberattack on national infrastructures: Official

A senior Iranian official said the country successfully thwarted a large-scale and sophisticated cyberattack targeting its critical national infrastructures.

Behzad Akbari, deputy minister of communications and information technology, made the announcement via a post on the social media platform X, former Twitter, on Sunday. The official did not elaborate on the nature of the attack or its origin, but emphasized that rapid detection and defensive response had prevented

any damage to the targeted systems, Press TV reported.

"By the grace of God and through the efforts of the security and technical teams at the Telecommunication Infrastructure Company and the Ministry of Communications, a major and sophisticated cyberattack targeting the country's infrastructure was identified and preventive measures were successfully taken yesterday," he wrote. The Islamic Republic has been a frequent target of cyber strikes, including by the United States

and the Israeli regime.

According to domestic officials, the country has developed a robust cyber defense program over the past decade to protect its critical infrastructures, including its banking systems, communication networks, and energy sectors.

One of the most notable cyberattacks against Iran was the Stuxnet malware incident, jointly orchestrated by the United States and the regime around 2010, which targeted the country's nuclear facilities.