

Tehran Called on the Western Countries to Be Worried About a Wave of Strikes Affecting Their Health Sectors Instead of Making Interventionist Statements About Iran and Voicing "Insincere Concern" About Its Women

# IRAN NEWS

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday Lauded Relations With Iran as "Very Good," Voicing Moscow's Determination to Further Develop Ties With Tehran

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## Iran Opposed to Any Geopolitical Changes in Caucasus Region

TEHRAN (PressTV) - President Ebrahim Raisi doubled down on Iran's opposition to the opening of the Zangezur Corridor in the Caucasus region, saying Tehran is against any geopolitical changes in the region. Raisi made the remarks in separate meetings with Armen Grigoryan, secretary of the Security Council of Armenia, and Khalaf Khalafov, special representative of Azerbaijan's president, in Tehran on Wednesday, amid persisting tensions over the Nagorno-Karabakh region. Azerbaijan took full control of the breakaway region last month following a 24-hour military operation against pro-Armenian forces. Now speculation is rife that Azerbaijan might use force to open a corridor connecting the Azerbaijani exclave of Nakhchivan to mainland Azerbaijan through the southern Armenian province of Syunik. Armenia opposes the plan on the grounds that it would violate its sovereignty. Iran has supported Armenia's position, stressing that the territorial integrity of countries must be respected. Raisi argued the Zangezur Corridor allows external powers

to make inroads into the region and undermine interests of nations there. "In both meetings, the president stated that a Zangezur corridor would be a NATO foothold, a national security threat for countries, and is thus resolutely opposed by Iran," said Mohammad Jamshidi, the Iranian president's deputy chief of staff for political affairs, in a post on X social media network, formerly known as Twitter. A readout by the website of the presidential office said Raisi also told the two officials that Iran believes the dispute between Azerbaijan and Armenia must be resolved through talks. He said Iran is ready to help pave the way for the settlement of disputes between the two countries and promote peace in the region. Armen Grigoryan, the secretary of Armenia's Supreme National Security Council, hailed Iran's call for respecting the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries in the region, and said his country attaches special importance to its relations with Iran.

## Iran Conducts First Drone on Drone Combat Operation



TEHRAN (PressTV) - The commander of the Iranian Army's Air Defense Force says a home-made drone has successfully carried out the first aerial combat mission involving the targeting of another drone with missiles. "A drone targeted another drone with a missile in an aerial combat (mission) which has been done for the first time in the country and we managed to destroy the targeted drone," said Brigadier General Alireza Sabahi-Fard. Sabahi-Fard said the successful operation had been carried out during the ongoing drone drills being held in seven border provinces by four divisions of the Iranian Army. He described aerial combats between unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) as a rare and complicated operation, adding that only a couple of countries in the world have the ability to carry out such mission. Iran has been the first to show off its capability in this regard, according to the commander. The spokesman of the Iranian Army's joint exercise says homegrown kamikaze and combat drones have successfully hit all their targets during the maneuver. "We in the Islamic Republic of Iran Armed Forces displayed this potential to the world to declare that we were able to carry out ... one of the most complicated aerial operations in the world while facing the maximum cruel and unjust sanctions (imposed) against the Islamic Iranian nation," said the general. Iran has expanded its fleet of home-made UAVs in recent years in a bid to increase its defense capabilities and to boost its military deterrence. Various divisions of the Iranian Army are now using drones manufactured by the Iranian defense industries for different military operations.

## Iranian, Saudi FMs Stress Need to Boost Mutual Cooperation

IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK



TEHRAN - Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian and his Saudi counterpart have underlined the need to accelerate the development of bilateral cooperation in various fields, including economy and tourism. During a telephone conversation on Thursday night, Amir-Abdollahian and Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud exchanged viewpoints on multiple areas of common interest, highlighting that relations between the two countries are improving in all areas. They emphasized the need to speed up joint cooperation in various fields, including economy, commerce, investment and tourism. The two top diplomats went on to point to the meeting between Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Iran's foreign minister on August 18 in the Red Sea port city of Jeddah, stressing that necessary steps should be taken on the path towards enhancement of political ties between Tehran and Riyadh. Amir-Abdollahian and his Saudi counterpart also noted the significance of bilateral cultural and sports cooperation in order to improve the atmosphere of friendship between the two nations. The two foreign ministers agreed to advise their respective sports institutions to resolve the dispute over the recent cancellation of the AFC Champions League 2023/24 Group C match between Saudi professional football club Al Ittihad and Iran's Sepahan through mutual respect, dialogue, and understanding. They underscored the importance of continued football matches between the two countries in order to strengthen all-out cooperation. Slated to be held on Monday in Isfahan's Naghsh-e-Jahan Stadium, the match was called off after the Saudi squad refused to take the field over unspecified reasons. The team left Iran hours later. Sepahan Sport Club then issued a statement, saying they have prepared an official complaint, which will be filed with the AFC. They added that the pitch had been inspected time and again by the AFC, the Iranian Football Federation and other relevant authorities, and had received their approval. In a statement, the AFC said the match was canceled due to "unanticipated and unforeseen circumstances." Elsewhere in the conversation, the Saudi foreign minister invited his Iranian counterpart to attend the first football match between Iranian and Saudi football clubs in Saudi Arabia.

## Tehran Slams UK's Interventionist Statement on Iran's Satellite Launch

TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran has robustly denounced an "interventionist" statement by the British government on the Islamic Republic's latest satellite launch. "Achievement of scientific and research advancements, including in the field of aerospace, is the Islamic Republic's obvious right," Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani said. Such meddling statements that indicate "the British regime's irritation and self-centered attitudes" concerning the Islamic Republic's advancements, fail to adversely affect "the Iranian nation's determination towards progress in the field of science and technology," he added. As per international regulations, the spokesperson affirmed, Iran faces no restrictions in furthering its space research. The country, therefore, reserves its right to use peaceful technologies towards scientific advancement, Kanaani concluded. London's statement came after Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Aerospace Force successfully launched the homegrown imaging satellite Nour (Light)-3 into orbit in late September. The statement said the Qased (Messenger) satellite carrier that had been used to put the satellite into orbit, had used "technology essential for the development of a long-range ballistic missile system," before repeating the West's accusations against Iran's missile work of being geared towards non-conventional purposes. Iran has slammed the reaction of some Western countries to its successful launch of a new precision-guided ballistic missile, saying they are opposed to the enhancement of the Islamic Republic.

## "Language of the Nation, Existence of the Nation" Unveiled in Tehran

By: F. Taherpoor

TEHRAN - The second volume of the book "Language of the Nation, Existence of the Nation: Language and Time", written by Tajikistan President Emomali Rahmon was unveiled in a ceremony at the embassy of Tajikistan in Tehran on October in the presence of some prominent Iranian literary figures concurrent with the Tajik Language Day in Tajikistan. Tajikistan Ambassador to Tehran Nizamuddin Zahedi hosted the event where Gholam-Ali Haddad, Head of Iran's Saadi Foundation and Academy of Persian Language and Literature and chairman of Iranian-Tajikistan Parliamentary Friendship Group, Dr. Jalil Rahimi Jahanabadi were the prominent Iranian participants. Addressing the event, Tajik Ambassador H.E. Zahedi welcomed the participants and said that common language is source of pride for Iranian, Tajik and Afghan nations. Touching upon the book, he said that the first volume of the book "Language of the Nation, Existence of the Nation" was written by Tajikistan President Rahmon and published and unveiled in 2019 in Iran with a preface written by Dr. Haddad-Adel. He added that the first volume was on the development of the Persian language from its birth till the attack of Mongol dynasty on Iran and the second volume which is now being unveiled to cover the period after the Mongols attack till the 20th Century. Zahedi then touched upon the reasons for writing and publishing of the book by Tajik President as the president since the independence of Tajikistan in 1991 has been seeking making national government and making contemporary nation. He added that President Rahmon has been focused on restoring national identity, language and revival of the national values and traditions. He reiterated that revival of the place of national language has been the most important secret of the governmental independence of Tajikistan. He added that with the initiative of the president some fundamental and practical changes were adopted and the committee of the languages became independent and since then Tajikistan every October 5 marks language and culture as it was named the Tajik Language Day. Zahedi then touched upon good ties between Iran and Tajikistan because of the common language and it has helped both states to reinforce their ties. Then Head of Saadi Foundation Haddad Adel for his part congratulated the publication of the book and hailed the ambassador for holding such a ceremony while the Tajiks are marking Tajik Language Day. He added that one of the properties of the language is communication and because of the language we can communicate and know what has happened in the past. He reiterated that this book is important from two aspects, first it recounts history and the development of the language for Tajiks and above all the highest official in the country by writing the book promotes this language more. He announced readiness of Iranian academics and foundation for cooperation with Tajik brothers. Then chairman of Iran-Tajikistan Parliamentary Friendship Group Dr. Jahan Abadi, for his part, hailed the publication of the book and said that language is one of most important medium for relations and called Tajiks as the guard-



ians of Persian language as one can find many Persian and Iranian names in any part of Tajikistan. Then some other literary guests in the event in their speeches hailed Tajikistan and publication of the book and called for more cooperation for boosting and saving Persian language which is Tajik in Tajikistan and Dari Persian in Afghanistan. At the end of the ceremony, Tajik Ambassador Zahedi along with prominent guests unveiled the book.

## Doha Keen to Expand Economic Ties With Tehran

IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK



TEHRAN - Secretary of Iran's Free Zones High Council Hojjatollah Abdolmaleki met Ahmad Al-Sayed, the minister of state and chairman of the board of directors of the Free Zones Authority in Qatar, and the Qatari side expressed his country's willingness to expand economic ties with Iran. Al-Sayed presented a history of the creation of free zones in Qatar and said that on behalf of the Emir of Qatar, they have a mission to develop trade with Iran, the Iranian Free Zones News Agency (Freena) reported. He said the capacity of free trade and special economic zones is of special importance for the development of commercial relations between the parties. In this meeting, the secretary of Iran's Free Zones High Council, gave explanations about the activity and position of the free trade and special economic zones of Iran, as well as the effect of these zones on the country's economy. During his trip to Qatar, Abdolmaleki also met Mohamed Bin Ahmed Twar Al Kuwari, the vice chairman of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of that country. During the meeting, Al Kuwari announced his country's readiness to become a hub of re-exporting Iranian products.

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# Russian Strike Kills 51 in East Ukraine

GROZA (Dispatches) - A Russian strike killed at least 51 people gathered for a wake in northeastern Ukraine Thursday, provoking outrage from Western leaders for what the UN warned could be a war crime. The mourners for a fallen Ukrainian soldier had gathered at a cafe in the village of Groza, in the Kharkiv region. People who had been in a shop in the same building were also killed in the attack on the small village, which had a population of 330 people. A spokeswoman for the regional assembly, quoted by Ukrainian media, said it was the single deadliest attack since the start of Russia's full-scale invasion on February 24, 2022. AFP journalists at the scene of the aftermath saw blackened and dismembered bodies spread out on the ground opposite the ruins of the cafe. Police and soldiers loaded white body bags of unidentifiable bodies onto trucks that would take them to Kharkiv, where forensic experts would carry out DNA searches. "My son was just found without a head, without arms, without legs, without anything. They recognised him from his documents," Volodymyr Mukhovaty, 70, told AFP. A six-year-old child was also among the victims, said Interior Minister Igor Klymenko, who added that a total of 60 people had been attending the memorial service. Groza is located around 30 kilometres (18 miles) from the frontline town of Kupiansk, an area Russian forces have been pushing to recapture since they lost the territory to Ukrainian troops last year. Klymenko said initial evidence showed an Iskander missile had been used. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, who was attending a European summit in Spain, said he had no doubts that the strike had been deliberate. "The Russian military could not fail to know where they were hitting," he said. "It was not a blind strike." Zelensky also said he had secured agreements from several countries to provide Kyiv with more air defense systems and artillery. "We will have more air defense -- there are clear agreements," he said. "This is very important before winter. Spain, Italy, France, Germany, Great Britain -- thank you!" German Chancellor Olaf Scholz had announced that Berlin would supply Kyiv with a new Patriot air-defense system. Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock later posted on X, formerly Twitter: "As long as bombs hail on supermarkets and cafes, we do everything for #Ukraine to protect itself from Putin's missile terror". Denise Brown, the UN's humanitarian coordinator for Ukraine, called the attack "absolutely



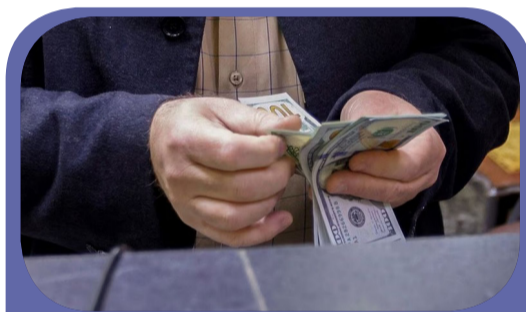
horrifying", stressing that "intentionally directing an attack against civilians or civilian objects is a war crime". British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said the strike "demonstrated the depths of depravity Russian forces are willing to sink to", according to a spokesperson. Large swathes of the Kharkiv region, including Groza, were captured by Russian forces in the early days of their invasion launched in February

last year. Zelensky's advisor Mykhailo Podolyak said the attack had "no military logic". "This is a reminder to anyone who is willing to smile and shake hands with war criminal (Russian President Vladimir) Putin at international conferences," he said. Meanwhile, Moscow said overnight that it had destroyed eight Ukrainian drones in western Russia's Kursk and Belgorod regions, but made no mention of any casualties.

## Biden to Build More U.S. Border Wall Using Trump-Era Funds



WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - President Joe Biden's administration said it will add sections to a border wall to stave off record migrant crossings from Mexico, carrying forward a signature policy of former President Donald Trump. Trump is the frontrunner for the Republican Party nomination to challenge Biden, a Democrat, in the 2024 presidential race. Trump made building border barriers a central tenet of his first campaign for president with the rally chant, "Build That Wall." One of Biden's first actions after taking office in January 2021 was to issue a proclamation pledging that "no more American taxpayer dollars be diverted to construct a border wall" as well as a review of all resources that had already been committed. The administration said Thursday's action did not deviate from Biden's proclamation because money that was allocated during Trump's term in 2019 had to be spent now. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said in a statement that there was "no new Administration policy with respect to border walls. From day one, this Administration has made clear that a border wall is not the answer." Mayorkas said the construction project was appropriated during the prior administration and the law requires the government to use the funds, with an announcement made earlier in the year. "We have repeatedly asked Congress to rescind this money but it has not done so and we are compelled to follow the law," he said. Trump, however, was quick to claim victory and demand an apology. "As I have stated often, over thousands of years, there are only two things that have consistently worked, wheels, and walls!" Trump wrote on social media. "Will Joe Biden apologize to me and America for taking so long to get moving..." Mexico's President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador called the move "a step backwards." Immigration will likely be a campaign theme in the U.S. presidential race with a majority of Americans - 54% - agreeing with the statement that "immigration is making life harder for native-born Americans," a September Reuters/Ipsos poll found. Some 73% of Republicans and 37% of Democrats surveyed agreed with that statement. The Biden administration decision to move forward with the border barriers will open the president to criticism from his left-leaning base, including immigration advocates and environmentalists opposed to more construction. In a notice published in the Federal Register on Thursday, Biden's Department of Homeland Security said it needed to waive a number of laws, regulations and other legal requirements to construct barriers in Starr County, Texas. The county is in Rio Grande Valley Sector where Border Patrol agents have encountered more than 245,000 people entering the United States this fiscal year, Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said in the Federal Register post.



## Iraq to End All Dollar Cash Withdrawals by Jan. 1 2024

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) - Iraq will ban cash withdrawals and transactions in U.S. dollars as of Jan. 1 2024 in the latest push to curb the misuse of its hard currency reserves in financial crimes and the evasion of U.S. sanctions on Iran, a top Iraqi central bank official said. The move aims to stamp out the illicit use of some 50% of the \$10 billion that Iraq imports in cash from the New York Federal Reserve each year, Mazen Ahmed, director-general of investment and remittances at the Iraqi central bank (CBI), told Reuters. It's also part of a broader push to de-dollarize an economy that has seen the greenback preferred over local notes by a population weary of recurring wars and crises following the 2003 U.S. invasion. People who deposit dollars into banks before the end of 2023 will continue to be able to withdraw funds in dollars in 2024, Ahmed said. But dollars deposited in 2024 could only be withdrawn in local currency at the official rate of 1,320. The parallel market rate of the Iraqi dinar sat at 1,560 on Thursday, roughly 15% percent below the official rate. "You want to transfer? Transfer. You want a card in dollars? Here you go, you can use the card inside Iraq at the official rate, or if you want to withdraw cash, you can at the official rate in dinars," Ahmed said. "But don't talk to me about cash dollars anymore." A central bank statement later said the ban on cash dollar withdrawals would only apply to accounts receiving transfers from abroad. Iraq has already set up a platform to regulate wire transfers that make up the bulk of its dollar demand and that used to be a hotbed of fake receipts and fraudulent transactions that siphoned dollars to Iran and Syria, both countries under U.S. sanctions. Set up in concert with authorities in the U.S., where Iraq's \$120 billion in reserves from oil sales are held, that system was now nearly airtight, Ahmed said, providing dollars at the official rate to those engaged in legitimate trade such as imports of food and consumer goods. But the cash withdrawals have continued to be misused, he said, including by would-be travellers provided with a state quota of \$3,000 who have found ways to game the system. Iraq is heavily reliant on Washington's goodwill to ensure oil revenues and finances do not face U.S. censure. At the same time, the current government, which is backed by powerful parties and armed factions close to Iran, has been careful not to alienate Tehran, nor anger the parties and armed groups with deep interests in Iraq's highly informal economy. DOLLAR SHORTAGE Many local banks have already been limiting dollar cash withdrawals in the past months, compounding a shortage that has seen the parallel market exchange rate continue to rise. Ahmed said some banks were low on dollars because many people were trying to withdraw dollars at once amid a feeling of unease over the financial system, while some banks also had shortages because they provided dollar-denominated loans that were then paid back in dinars. The CBI had also limited the amount of dollars it was providing as part of an agreement with the Fed to limit cash and shift towards e-payment, he said. He denied reports of a stoppage in cash shipments to Iraq from the Fed, noting the latest regular shipment had arrived on Wednesday. Ahmed said the CBI expected the dinar could lose more value as the new measures went into force but said it was an acceptable side-effect of formalising the financial system and the CBI was providing dollars at the official rate for all legitimate purposes. "The cost we are carrying today is nothing compared to this goal," he said, describing the parallel market rate as a rate used mostly for illegitimate transactions.

## Astana to Host 21st meeting of Secretariat of Congress of Leaders of World, Traditional Religions

By: F. Taherpour



TEHRAN - Astana, the capital city of Republic of Kazakhstan, will hold the 21st meeting of the Secretariat of the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions on October 11. According to reports, the meeting will be held on Wednesday 11 but the event is to actually start from October 10th with some programs for marking the jubilee of the meeting. Two delegations from the Islamic Republic of Iran are to participate in this event. The event will bring together representatives of Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism, Hinduism, Taoism, and Shintoism from 24 countries, including Azerbaijan, China, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, Japan, Mongolia, Pakistan, the United Kingdom, the United States, the Vatican, and others. The meeting will be attended by the Secretary-General of the Islamic Research Academy at Al-Azhar Nazir Ayad, Chairman of the Caucasian Muslims Office Sheikh-ul-Islam Allahshukur Pashazade, Patriarch Theophilos III of Jerusalem, Secretary General of the World Fellowship of Buddhists Montian Thananart, among other religious leaders, political figures, representatives of international organizations, and leading world media. Since its independence, Kazakhstan has taken some initiatives to play an effective role in many spheres and bringing countries closer together and launching this annual event has been one of the events which is aimed at bringing together nations with different religions. The idea of creating the N. Nazarbayev Center for Development of Interfaith and Intercivilization Dialogue was initiated by the participants of the VI World and Traditional Religions Leaders Congress in October 2018. The N. Nazarbayev Center for Development of Interfaith and Intercivilization Dialogue was established by Decree No. 226 of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan on April 25, 2019. Goals and objectives of the Center are: promoting peace and harmony between all religions in an atmosphere of mutual respect; ensuring an ongoing basis interaction with domestic and foreign religious associations and their spiritual leaders; interaction with international structures (organizations, centers, etc.), conclusion of

memoranda of cooperation on issues of interreligious and intercultural dialogue; organizing and conducting of the following events: Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, the Secretariat of the Congress and the Working Group; organizing and participation in the preparation for international, republican and regional conferences, round tables, seminars, events and competitions on religious issues aimed at strengthening interreligious and intercultural dialogue; analysis of the state and dynamics of development of the religious situation in the world; monitoring of materials on religious subjects in foreign and domestic media; assistance to state bodies of the Republic of Kazakhstan and participation in the activities of awareness-raising groups of all levels in the implementation of state policy in the field of religion, including on combating religious and other manifestations of extremism; and promoting the Kazakh experience of interfaith dialogue at the international level. In the face of contemporary global challenges and erosion of the international security architecture, the Republic of Kazakhstan continues to promote and increase the role of religion in the rapprochement of different civilizations, cultures and peoples. Kazakhstan also shares and promotes its experience globally, as reflected in the idea to convene the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions. Through this truly unique institution, which has been working seamlessly for 20 years since the First Congress in September 2003, Kazakhstan showcases to the entire world community an example of national consensus and unity. The seven (7) Congresses were held in Astana from 2003 to 2022 greatly contributed to the enhanced mutual understanding between Eastern and Western civilizations, developed inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue. Thanks to its commitment to peacebuilding and responsibility towards global processes, Kazakhstan is rightfully recognized and respected at the international level as a global international center for inter-faith dialogue.

## Drought Caused Historic Global Hydropower Drop in Early 2023

BANGKOK (Dispatches) - Dry conditions, particularly in China, caused a "historic" global drop in hydropower generation in the first half of 2023, a new analysis shows, highlighting the effects of climate change. The research by renewable energy think tank Ember argues the drop is a "warning shot that hydro output could negatively affect the speed of the electricity transition". The group said global hydropower generation fell 8.5 percent in the year to June, more than any full-year decline over the last two decades. Three-quarters of that decline was the result of falls in China, which baked through record temperatures earlier this year. Between winter 2022 and spring 2023, most areas of southwest China experienced significantly less precipitation and higher temperatures than in a normal year, according to Beijing's ministry of emergency management. The fall in hydropower output meant global carbon emissions rose very slightly in the first half of 2023, despite a 12-percent increase in solar and wind power worldwide. Lower growth in electricity demand helped keep the rise in emissions smaller than it might otherwise have been, Ember said in the report released Thursday. China, however, saw its emissions rise nearly eight percent as it compensated for the loss of hydropower. But while the extreme heat and drought conditions that caused this year's decline may have been driven by climate change, the think tank warned it remains hard to calculate future effects.