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In the Name of the Most High Viewpoint

Auspicious Start to Further Expansion of Iran-Pakistan Fraternal Ties

By: Kayhan Int'l Staff Writer

Pakistan's Prime Minister made an auspicious start to his first ever formal visit to the Islamic Republic as the Executive Head of his country by opening his account with Iran with a spectacular "Six" when he landed in holy Mashhad on Sunday and straightaway paid his respects at the sacred shrine of Imam Reza (AS) – the 8th Infallible Heir of Prophet Muhammad (AS) – and that too on the blessed 15th of Sha'ban, which both Shi'a and Sunni Muslims mark as the birthday of the Awaited Saviour of mankind, Imam Mahdi (AS) – may God hasten his reappearance to rid Planet Earth with all vestiges of oppression and corruption through establishment of the global government of peace, prosperity and justice.

Imran Khan then stroked a scintillating cover drive to score "Four" mere the next day in Tehran when he announced formation of a joint Iran-Pakistan anti-terrorism border force to weed out terrorists during talks with his host, President Hassan Rouhani.

Next he showed his prowess as an all-rounder on the political pitch as well when he discussed at the two countries' joint chamber of commerce, Pakistan's purchase of gas, petroleum, electricity and various other goods from Iran thereby dismantling the sanctions castle of the US president, "lock, stock and barrel" with a fast-paced "Yorker" that has caught Donald Trump and his team of thugs on the wrong foot.

His brilliant captaincy of the national cricket team that had brought many laurels for Pakistan including the One-Day International World Cup, now faces an acid test in the diplomatic corridors of Islamabad as the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, granted Imran Khan and his delegation an audience, where he provided valuable guidelines for fair play in the political arena, without the least concern for the state terrorism of the US, which frequently targets Pakistan.

Holy Mashhad hosts at least 400,000 Pakistani pilgrims every year, and Imran Khan, who humbly prayed at the holy shrine of Imam Reza (AS) like any other ordinary pilgrim, expressed gratitude for the local government of Khorasan for excellent facilities provided to visitors from Pakistan.

He said the guiding light for his government are the principles on which the Prophet of Islam established his state of social justice in Medina – which reached its pinnacle in Kufa, Iraq during the 4-year model government of Imam Ali ibn Abi Tale (AS).

He said Pakistanis can never forget that Iran always stood with Pakistan in

Pakistan's relations with Iran are marked by close historic and cultural linkages and strong people-to-people exchanges. Both countries are also members of the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

According to Rouhani, he and his guest agreed on the need for both sides to expand joint efforts to bring peace to Afghanistan. He also said Tehran was interested in expanding trade between Iran's Chabahar and Pakistan's Gawader ports by connecting them with a railway.

The Iranian president noted that Iran, Turkey and Pakistan as co-founders of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) could increase economic cooperation by connecting their railway systems. This, he said, would open a corridor from Europe to China.

Other security issues discussed in the meeting included US President Donald Trump's recent attempt to label the famed humanitarian defence organisation, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), as 'terrorist' and his mischievous endorsement Israel's illegal annexation of Syria's Golan Heights

Addressing reports about Saudi and US pressure on Pakistan to join an Arab-Israeli front against Islamic Iran in the region, Rouhani said Imran Khan had assured him that Pakistan "has never joined and will never join any coalition."

All said, it would be interesting how Imran Khan bats or bowls without resorting to stone-walling tactics against neighbouring Iran.

President Rouhani: IRGC Key to Countering Threats



President Rouhani attends an IRGC event in this file photo.

TEHRAN (Dispatches) – Iran's President Hassan Rouhani on Monday highlighted the major role that the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) plays in countering threats against the country.

In a message, Rouhani congratulated Major General Hussein Salami a day after he was appointed as the new IRGC commander by Leader of Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

Rouhani hoped for stronger unity among Iran's armed forces and further strengthening of the Islamic Republic in the face of hostile

plots and threats through prudent employment of the IRGC capacities and the great potential of its popular forces.

The president further admired Salami's predecessor, Major General Muhammad Ali Jafari, for his sincere service in office.

General Salami is a war veteran, one of the key military commanders during the Iraqi war on Iran in the 1980s.

He was born in the city of Golpayegan in Iran's central province of Isfahan in 1960.

In 1978, he enrolled in the me-

chanical engineering department of Iran University of Science and Technology.

Salami joined the IRGC at the start of the 1980-88 war of the former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein against the Islamic Republic.

He served as the commander of 25th Karbala Division, 14th Imam Hussein Division and Noah Headquarters during the eight-year war.

After the war, he continued his academic studies and graduated with a master's degree in defense management.

At IRGC, he has served in sev-

China, Iran Discuss Expansion of Military Ties

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Iranian Navy chief Rear Admiral Hussein Khanzadi, who is Qingdao at the invitation of his Chinese counterpart Shen Jinlong, has announced Tehran's readiness to expand naval cooperation with the Asian giant.

"There are very good capacities for military cooperation between the navies of the two countries and we hope that this trip will lead to many achievements in this regard," Khanzadi said.

The two countries have long been close partners. Some domestically-produced Iranian weaponry, such as air defense systems, naval missiles, armored vehicles, artillery and small arms, are based on Chinese models.

The two countries signed an agreement to boost defense cooperation in November 2016.

Khanzadi is in Qingdao to attend China's navy parade to mark its 70th anniversary at which the military is expected to display new warships including nuclear submarines and destroyers.

The Iranian navy chief said he was participating as the representative of the Iranian armed forces, given the high importance of the international event.

His visit indicates the mutual understanding of the two countries and their armed forces, the commander added.

Khanzadi also expressed hope that Iranian and Chinese navies would strengthen "educational, technical and operational" cooperation in the near future.

Iran and China have close diplomatic, economic, trade and energy ties, and in recent years have developed their military relations as well.

Amid Inhuman U.S. Sanctions:

Flood-Hit Areas Struggle to Emerge From Disaster

AHVAZ, Iran (Dispatches) — Two weeks since the storms started, relentless rain and flooding throughout Iran has left some 2 million people facing a humanitarian crisis.

The deluge has swamped large swaths of the country, from the mountains in the north down to the Persian Gulf in the south.

Twenty-five out of 31 of Iran's provinces have been affected. Officials say 76 people have been killed so far, with some 150,000 homes partially or completely destroyed. Bridges across the country and miles upon miles of road have been left unusable. Authorities say the estimated bill to repair the damage stands at least \$2.5 billion.

The country's agriculture sector, which makes up about 14 percent of Iran's GDP, has been badly hit.

In the oil-rich city of Ahvaz, in Khuzestan province, a local sports stadium is now home to rows of Red Crescent tents lined up next to each other.

The aid group, the Muslim world's equivalent to the Red Cross, is working with the government to respond to the disaster.

Hussein and Farideh Abdekhan, an elderly couple whose village was consumed by the floods, have sought shelter there for the past 10 days along with their daughter, son-in-law and two grandchildren.

Farideh, a seamstress, told NBC News that the family had lost everything they had worked so hard for. "Between us we had two fridges, three heaters and a television. Along with our home, it's all gone," she said.

"All we have left are the clothes we are wearing," she added, tugging the shirt her husband was wearing and pulling on her chador. "We have nothing. I don't know how we are going to rebuild our lives," she added.

In the nearby village of Hamidiyeh, farmer Jasem, 26, looked out at what was his once his livelihood.

His family had spent decades building their family home and toiling on arable land. Now they fear they will never rebuild what they have lost.

Jasem said he will move to the capital Tehran, some 600 miles from where he has spent his entire life, and try to find work in a restaurant.

Twelve percent of the country's land is agricultural, like that which once proved so fertile for Jasem and his family.

"The heads of the American regime have revealed their true vicious and inhuman nature," President Hassan Rouhani said at a cabinet meeting screened live on state TV.

The Red Crescent are doing what they can to reach these often rural communities devastated by the floods, but damaged infrastructure has hampered their mobility.

A helicopter allows them to reach Lorestan province, a mountainous region in the country's west.

Because of U.S. sanctions,

The Holy Qur'an

Say: Tell me if His punishment overtakes you by night or by day! what then is there of it that the guilty would hasten on? And when it comes to pass, will you believe in it? What! now (you believe), and already you wished to have it hastened on.

The Holy Qur'an (10:51)

PRAYER TIMINGS

Noon (Zohr)	13:03
Evening (Maghreb)	20:03
Dawn (Fajr) "Tomorrow"	04:52
Sunrise "Tomorrow"	06:22

eral capacities, including the commander of IRGC University of Command and Staff, operations deputy of IRGC Joint Staff, and commander of IRGC Air Force.

He is currently a faculty member at Supreme National Defense University.

In a Sunday decree, Ayatollah Khamenei appointed General Salami, who previously served as IRGC's second-in-command, as the new chief commander of the elite force, also promoting him to the rank of major general.

The Leader issued another decree, appointing General Jafari as the new head of Hadhrat Baqiatollah al-A'zam Cultural and Social Headquarters.

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