

Editorial Dept. Tel.: 33911561, 33110251-9

Ext.: 2334, 2336, 2337

Advertising Dept.: 33110251-9 Ext. 2336

Subscription Ext.: 2322

Facsimile: 33114228 & 33111120

Website: www.kayhan.ir/en

E-mail: kayhanintl@yahoo.com

P.O. Box: 11365/9631

Address: Martyr Shah Cheraghi Street, Ferdowsi Avenue,  
Tehran – Islamic Republic of Iran

### In the Name of the Most High Viewpoint

## Iran, the Vital Link in the North-South Corridor

By: Kayhan Int'l Staff Writer

*The International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) got a fresh boost on Wednesday with the signing of a 1.6 billion deal by Iran and Russia for completion of the vital 162 km rail link between Rasht in Gilan Province with the northern part of the city of Astara which lies in the Republic of Azerbaijan.*

*When complete in the next three years this would be a 7,200 km long rail track stretching from Iranian ports on the Persian Gulf to major east European cities, thereby significantly reducing the time and freight charges for transit of cargoes from Russia to India and beyond.*

*The grand project facilitates transit of goods originating in Europe and destined for India through Russia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, and the Islamic Republic of Iran, avoiding the circuitous and expensive sea route through the Mediterranean Sea, the Suez Canal and the Red Sea.*

*Iran which is a land bridge for the landlocked countries to its north in the Caucasus and Central Asia, is already linked by rail and road to the republics of Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kirghizstan, all of which have flourishing trade ties with India.*

*This is indeed an economic bonanza for all countries involved, and an incentive for India to speed up development of the section of the Chabahar Port on the Gulf of Oman allotted to it by Iran for storage and transport of goods.*

*Iran is also fast modernizing its ports on the Caspian for receiving of cargoes from Russia via the world's largest inland sea for shipment through the Islamic Republic for several south Asian and African countries.*

*As remarked by President Hojjat al-Islam Seyyed Ibrahim Raisi in Tehran at the signing ceremony: "Iran and Russia are cooperating in different fields. Today's [railway construction] deal is one of the manifestations of cooperation not only between the two countries, but also other states on the path of the INSTC."*

*It is obvious that the common enemies of Iran and Russia, such as the US, are mad with rage at these developments which nullify the illegal American sanctions, and are indeed a "win-win" situation for all countries of the free world involved.*

*As noted by Iran's Chief Executive: "The INSTC will benefit all regional states as it will establish friendship, convergence and commercial cooperation between the countries in East Asia, as well as those in the Caucasus and Northeastern Europe."*

*In Moscow President Vladimir Putin was also fully confident of the benefits of this safest, shortest, and cost effective route, when he said via video link: "The unique North-South transport artery, of which the Rasht-Astara railway will become a part, will help to significantly diversify global traffic flows."*

# President Raisi Meets Tribal Heads in Zahedan



President Raisi meets with tribal chiefs in Zahedan on Thursday night.

TEHRAN -- President Ebrahim Raisi has held a friendly meeting with tribal chiefs in the country's Sunni Muslim-majority province of Sistan and Baluchestan during a visit aimed at pursuing the development projects in the region.

During the meeting on Thursday evening, Raisi said the province is a beloved part of the Islamic Republic.

He warned against attempts to disrupt national unity and said, "National convergence should be protected, and anyone who tries to break the national unity takes a step

on the path of enemies."

Raisi referred to the acts of violence in Sistan and Baluchestan during months of riots and protests in the country last year, saying, "Rioting is unacceptable to any citizen."

In September 2022, a wave of unrest broke out across Iran in the aftermath of the death in custody of a young Iranian woman.

According to Iranian officials, taking advantage of the public anger, different terror groups and hooligans engaged in deadly acts of violence in different provinces, including in Sistan and Baluchestan.

Later that month, 35 people lost their lives and dozens more were injured as armed terrorists launched attacks on several police stations and public places in Zahedan, the province's capital.

Referring to the attacks, President Raisi said, "Those who were hurt in the incident need attention and sympathy."

The president said he asked officials to address the sufferings of those harmed in the attacks as soon as the incidents happened, and that he himself would also visit them and the families of the victims.

## Iran Warns Taliban to Respect Its Water Rights

TEHRAN — Iran's president warned Afghanistan's Taliban rulers on Thursday not to violate water rights of the Iranian people over their shared Helmand River, the official IRNA news agency reported.

President Ebrahim Raisi said his government is determined to defend Iran's water rights.

"We will not allow the rights of our people to be violated," he said and warned the Taliban to take his words seriously, emphasizing the importance of Helmand River, which flows from Afghanistan into Iran.

Raisi spoke in a Pakistani border town on Thursday, during his first official visit to the neighboring country in 10 years, to inaugurate the first of six markets along the Iran-Pakistan border.

He also urged the Afghan Taliban to allow Iranian hydrologists to check the water levels of the river, which originates in the Afghan

Hindu Kush mountain range.

The Taliban seized power in Afghanistan in August 2021 after the United States and NATO pulled out of the country following two decades of occupation.

Iranian officials have always stressed the importance of the implementation of the 1973 Helmand River treaty between Iran and Afghanistan, which envisions shared water resources.

Drought has been a problem in Iran for some 30 years, but has worsened over the past decade, according to the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization. The Iran Meteorological Organization says that an estimated 97% of the country now faces some level of drought.

On Friday, Iranian Foreign Minister Hussein Amir-Abdollahian said Afghan officials had refused to allow Iranian experts to visit dams built on the Helmand River.

In a tweet posted in Farsi, Amir-

Abdollahian said he has repeatedly called on acting Afghan foreign minister Amir Khan Muttaqi over the past months to let Iranian experts visit the dams and measure the volume of water.

He said political statements by Taliban authorities cannot help resolve the problem, adding the only solution is for Afghan officials to let Iranian technicians visit the dams.

Iran's foreign ministry also rejected contradictory statements issued by Afghanistan's governing body, saying the treaty between the two countries clearly pronounces Iran's water right.

It stressed that Iran's water right is a legal, objective and definite. Based on Article 5 of the treaty, it said, Afghanistan is committed to respecting Iran's right and not taking any action to deprive the Islamic Republic of its right.

(Continued on Page 7)

## Three Murderers of Security Forces in Isfahan Hanged

TEHRAN -- Three men, convicted of launching a deadly terrorist attack against security forces in the central Iranian city of Isfahan during foreign-backed riots last year, have been executed, Mizan news agency reported on Friday.

The agency, affiliated with the Iranian Judiciary, announced the executions of Majid Kazemi, Saleh Mirhashemi and Saeed Yaghoubi in the central city.

They were convicted of "moharebeh", or "war against God", for drawing a gun during a riot in Khaneh Esfahan town on November 16, 2022, leading to the martyrdom of two members of

the Basij voluntary force and a

law enforcement officer.

The executions were carried out after the Supreme Court of Iran upheld the death sentences against them.

Citing confessions of convicts in the court, Mizan noted that they were in contact with the terrorist Mujahedin Khalq Organization (MKO), and carried out the terrorist attack upon orders from the Albania-based cult.

The court also handed imprisonment sentences to a number of other convicts of the case while dropping charges against another suspect.

Foreign-backed riots broke out in Iran in mid-September after

the death of 22-year-old Iranian woman Mahsa Amini. She fainted at a police station in the capital Tehran and was pronounced dead three days later at the hospital. An official report by Iran's Legal Medicine Organization concluded that Amini's death was caused by illness rather than alleged blows to the head or other vital body organs.

Iran's intelligence community has said several countries, including the United States and the United Kingdom, have used their spy and propaganda apparatuses to provoke violent riots in the country.

(Continued on Page 7)

The Holy Qur'an

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

They do not ask leave of you who believe in Allah and the latter day (to stay away) from striving hard with their property and their persons, and Allah knows those who guard (against evil).

The Holy Qur'an (9.44)

### PRAYER TIMINGS

Noon (Zohr)	12:01
Evening (Maghreb)	19:27
Dawn (Fajr) "Tomorrow"	04:56
Sunrise "Tomorrow"	03:16

## Guterres Hails Iran-Saudi Reconciliation

TEHRAN — UN chief António Guterres has praised an agreement between Iran and Saudi Arabia to restore diplomatic ties after seven years of estrangement, terming it as "a turning point" that marks the beginning of a new era of constructive interactions in the Middle East.

Guterres pointed to a UN conference on Afghanistan in the Qatari capital of Doha in early May, stating that all participants in the two-day meeting reached a consensus on the need to form an inclusive government with the participation of all ethnic groups in Afghanistan, fight against terrorism, support and empower Afghanistan's economy, fight against drug production and trafficking, and secure the right to education for girls and women in the country.

The UN chief praised Iran for hosting millions of Afghan refugees and underscored the need for international assistance to the Islamic Republic to ease the burden.

He also expressed hope that the Ukraine war would come to an end as soon as possible, referring to a peace initiative developed by a group of African heads of state, and the meeting of senior officials in Istanbul to extend a deal allowing exports of Ukrainian grain and agricultural fertilizers through the Black Sea.

Guterres further stressed the need for a sustainable ceasefire in Yemen, and praised Iran's important and constructive role in the region.

For his part, Amir-Abdollahian described the closed-door summit on Afghanistan in Qatar as positive, stating that Iran has been hosting millions of Afghan refugees and assisting them with various services for decades.

The management of such a high number of refugees requires international attention and support, the Iranian foreign minister said.

The minister also expressed hope that the war and siege in Yemen would come to a close as soon as possible.

Amir-Abdollahian underlined Iran's vehement opposition to the Ukraine war, expressing hope that the parties involved would return to the path of dialogue, end the war and establish peace.

The Iranian foreign minister and the UN chief also discussed issues related to the revival of the 2015 nuclear deal and removal of sanctions, besides Tehran's cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency to resolve remaining issues.