

TEHRAN -- Belarusian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergei Aleinik met with his Iranian counterpart Hussein Amir-Abdollahian on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in Johannesburg and discussed bilateral ties and issues of mutual interests.

Talks included the implementation of a cooperation roadmap signed during Belarusian President Lukashenko's visit to Tehran in March, the press service of the Belarusian ministry of foreign affairs said.

Kayhan International

TEHRAN -- A police officer, Ali Bizhani Ziba, was martyred in a terrorist attack in southeastern Iranian province of Sistan and Baluchistan where he was on patrol, the provincial military headquarters announced in a statement.

Two other officers were injured after the terrorists' shooting in Sib and Suran county, the statement added. They were on patrol when they were attacked and killed by armed terrorist individuals, according to the statement.

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Saturday, August 26, 2023, Shahrivar 4, 1402, Safar 9, 1445, Price 300,000 Rials

Army Launches Massive Electronic Warfare Drill



Niger Authorizes Mali, Burkina Faso Troops to Enter Its Territory in Case of Attack



Iranian Judokas Claim Title in IBSA World Games



European Diplomats: Settlers Have Made Palestinian Lives Intolerable



Hebrew University Professor

Israeli Apartheid is 'Reality'

OCCUPIED AL-QUDS (Dispatches) -- **Accusing Israel of apartheid is not anti-Semitic, Amos Goldberg, a leading professor of the Holocaust at Hebrew University in Al-Quds is reported saying in German newspaper, the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ).**

The expert on anti-Jewish racism made his remarks in response to controversial comments made earlier this month by Germany's anti-Semitism commissioner, Dr Felix Klein.

Klein was reported as saying that applying the framework of apartheid to discuss Israel's treatment of Palestinians is "an anti-Semitic narrative". He made the comment during an interview with one of the Germany's most widely read newspapers, Die Welt.

Responding to Middle East scholar Muriel Assenburg, who said that Israel is "prima facie committing the crime of apartheid in the Occupied Territories", Klein answered by saying that "to accuse Israel of apartheid delegitimizes" the Zionist entity "and is, therefore, an anti-Semitic narrative".

Rejecting Klein's controversial remarks, Goldberg is reported as saying: "Accusing Israel of apartheid is not anti-Semitic—it's describing reality". Mentioning Klein, specifically, he added, "all decent people must decide which side of history they want to be on."

FAZ also mentioned a recent petition co-initiated by Omer Bartov, one of the world's foremost Holocaust and genocide researchers. Bartov is reported as saying that there could be "no

democracy for Jews in Israel while Palestinians live under an apartheid regime". The petition has now been signed by more than 1,900 scientists, mostly Jews and Israelis.

Writing on Israeli Holocaust Remembrance Day last year, Goldberg warned against the conflation of anti-Semitism with anti-Zionism.

"One of the most disturbing phenomena of the last decade or two is the identification of anti-Zionism and even harsh criticism of Israel with anti-Semitism," said Goldberg writing in the Middle East Eye.

"These identifications are serious because they are derived from alleged lessons of the Holocaust," Goldberg added. "And so it appears that any substantial criticism of Israel and Zionism is perceived in public opinion, and especially among national and international political and cultural institutions, as an ideological continuation of the Holocaust."

Goldberg explained that, as a consequence, "the emancipatory struggle of the Palestinians for liberation and decolonization is tagged as a struggle that is, in fact, a direct continuation of the Holocaust and Nazism."

Arguing that the identification of criticism of Israel and anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism is unfounded if only because some of the harshest opponents of Zionism were Jews, Goldberg pointed out that "from the moment Zionism appeared on the stage of history at the end of the 19th century, opposition to it was born within the Jewish world."

BRICS Agrees to Accept Iran as New Member

Rise of Emerging Powers



Leaders of BRICS countries and friendly nations pose for a group photo at the summit in Johannesburg on Thursday, Aug. 24, 2023.

JOHANNESBURG (Dispatches) -- **BRICS leaders announced on Thursday the "historic" admission of six new countries, as the bloc seeks to reshape the Western-led global order.**

BRICS -- Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa -- agreed at their annual summit to make Argentina, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates full members from January 1.

"This membership expansion is historic," said Chinese President Xi Jinping, whose nation is the most powerful in the group of large and populous economies.

"The expansion is also a new starting point for BRICS cooperation. It will bring new vigor to the BRICS cooperation mechanism and further strengthen the force for world peace and development."

Beijing has campaigned to rapidly expand and strengthen the BRICS as a counterweight to U.S. and Western dominance of world affairs, and the push to extend membership headlined the summit agenda in Johannesburg.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed hailed what he called "a great moment" for his country, the second most populous in Africa.

"The benefits of Iran's membership to BRICS will make history, and open a new chapter and a stronger step towards fairness... and lasting peace on the international stage," said Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi.

Egypt and the UAE also broadcast their readiness to work with the loosely defined group, which represents billions of people on four continents and a quarter of

the world's wealth.

BRICS makes decisions by consensus and agreed on the six nations after approving rules for admission during three days of bilateral talks and closed-door meetings.

Officials said months of pre-negotiations were needed to reach the breakthrough. It paves the way for future expansion of the group of big and small economies.

More than 20 countries had formally applied to join and about the same number from non-Western nations across the so-called Global South have expressed interest.

Some 50 world leaders attended the summit, underscoring what BRICS leaders say is the attractiveness of its message and growing relevance on the world stage.

BRICS has risen to prominence at a time of intense geopolitical rivalry and analysts foreshadowed that its 15th summit could be pivotal.

"Our diversity strengthens the fight for a new international order," said Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, who supported Argentina's membership.

Michael Kugelman, director of the South Asia Institute at the Wilson Center, said the summit had given BRICS "a shot in the arm".

"In reality, BRICS does have something approximating a common vision, and that is providing alternatives to the West," he said.

"I think it's a goal that's gained momentum amid greatly intensifying power competition."

BRICS leaders championed its New Development Bank as a fairer lender for emerging markets than U.S.-based institutions like the World Bank.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said an overhaul of the world's "outdated, dysfunctional and unfair global financial architecture" was necessary "but it won't happen overnight".

"In the absence of such reform, fragmentation is inevitable," he told leaders in Johannesburg.

The admission of oil-producing giants Iran, Saudi Arabia and UAE would boost the BRICS economic heft, with some observers says Tehran's inclusion colors the bloc with an anti-American hue.

President Raisi says Iran's accession will boost the country's political clout and economy.

"Although imperialism seeks to hamper our economic growth, this

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'Absolute Lie': Kremlin Denies Ordering Killing of Prigozhin

MOSCOW (Reuters) -- **The Kremlin said that Western suggestions Russian mercenary boss Yevgeny Prigozhin had been killed on its orders were an "absolute lie" while declining to definitively confirm his death, citing the need to wait for test results.**

Russia's aviation authority has said that Prigozhin, head of the Wagner mercenary group, was on board a private jet which crashed on Wednesday evening northwest of Moscow with no survivors.

President Vladimir Putin sent his condolences to the families of those killed in the crash on Thursday and spoke of Prigozhin in the past tense, breaking his silence after the incident which occurred exactly two months to the day after Prigozhin led a failed mutiny

against army chiefs.

Putin cited "preliminary information" as indicating that Prigozhin and his top associates in the Wagner mercenary group had all been killed and, while praising Prigozhin, said he had also made some "serious mistakes."

Putin said the passengers had "made a significant contribution" to the fighting in Ukraine.

"We remember this, we know, and we will not forget," he said in a televised interview with the leader of Donetsk region, Denis Pushilin.

Putin recalled that he had known Prigozhin since the early 1990s and described him as "a man of difficult fate" who had "made serious mistakes in life, and he achieved the results he

needed — both for himself and, when I asked him about it, for the common cause, as in these last months. He was a talented man, a talented businessman."

Western politicians and commentators have suggested, without presenting evidence, that Putin ordered Prigozhin to be killed in order to punish him for launching the June 23-34 mutiny against the army's leadership which also represented the biggest challenge to Putin's own rule since he came to power in 1999.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said the accusation and many others like it were false.

"There is now a great deal of speculation surrounding this plane crash and the tragic deaths of

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Nearly 400 Listed as Missing in Hawaii Wildfires

LAHAINA, Hawaii (Reuters) -- **Hawaii officials released the names of 338 people still missing more than two weeks after the deadliest U.S. wildfire in more than a century swept through the resort town of Lahaina.**

The list, compiled by the FBI, includes only people whose full names are known and who were reported missing by someone for whom authorities have verified contact information.

The death toll from the Aug. 8 fire on the island of Maui stands at 115, but officials have warned that figure is likely to rise substantially, with search teams still sifting through the ashes.

In releasing the names late on Thursday, authorities urged anyone who knows that someone on the list is safe, or has additional

information that might help locate them, to contact the FBI.

Officials also encouraged relatives to submit the names of anyone else still missing and to provide DNA samples to assist in identifying remains. The number of families that have provided DNA is lower than authorities had hoped thus far, making a difficult job even more challenging.

"We also know that once those names come out, it can and will cause pain for folks whose loved ones are listed," said Maui County Police Chief John Pelletier. "This is not an easy thing to do, but we want to make sure that we are doing everything we can to make this investigation as complete and thorough as possible."

Officials had said earlier in the week that they had a running list

of 1,000 to 1,100 people still unaccounted for. But they warned that the tally included some people with only a single name, some duplicate listings and some people whose genders were unclear.

As of Thursday afternoon, an additional 1,732 people initially reported missing had been found, officials said.

Many families have waited anxiously for news about missing loved ones after the wildfire tore through Lahaina at lightning speed, fueled by high winds from a passing hurricane and dry conditions. Survivors, some of whom jumped into the Pacific Ocean to escape the flames, have said they had little or no warning, prompting officials to launch reviews of the island's emergency alert protocols.

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