

Russia, Iran Discuss Operation of Rasht-Astara Railway

TEHRAN – Senior officials from Iran and Russia here on Saturday explored the implementation and operation of Rasht-Astara railway in northern Iran.

Iran's Minister of Road and Urban Development Mehرداد Bazrpash met Igor Levitin, an aide to the Russian president, and Leonid Slutsky, the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of Russia's State Duma. They talked about implementing the strategic railway which is a key part of the International North-South Transit Corridor (INSTC).

Kayhan International



Iran to Put Two Satellites Into Orbit Next Month

TEHRAN -- Head of the Iranian Space Agency (ISA) Hussein Salariyeh says the country plans to send two domestically-developed satellites into space onboard home-grown launch vehicles within the next month.

"Over the past three years, 12 launches have been carried out in the space industry, of which 10 were local and the remaining two were international. We will have many launches by the time the tenure of the incumbent administration ends. We have set plans for two launches within the next month," he said

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Leader Calls for Increased Participation in Elections



Thousands March in France in Pre-Election Protest Against Far Right



Mehdi Saberi Bags Gold at Asian Throwing Championships



UN: Israel 'Eroding Foundation for Societal Growth' With School Strikes



Day of Divine Favours

By: Seyyed Ali Shahbaz

"I am leaving behind among you the Two Weighty Things (Thaqalayn); the Book of God (holy Qur'an) and my progeny the Ahl al-Bayt. Hold fast to them and you will not go astray for the two never part with each other even when they return to me at the Fountain (of Kawthar on Judgement Day)."

The above is the famous statement of the Messenger of Mercy, emphasized on the Day of Arafa (9th Zilhijjah) at the plain of the same name from atop Jabal ar-Rahma (Mount Mercy), as part of his memorable sermon to a huge gathering of Muslims during his Farewell Hajj pilgrimage in 10 AH.

Known as Hadith Thaqalayn, it is found in the authoritative books of all Muslim denominations, whether Sunni or Shi'a.

But did the Muslims heed the words of Prophet Muhammad (SAWA)? Alas, they didn't, otherwise the Ummah would not have so hopelessly divided into sects today.

These are the points to be pondered upon by the faithful on the occasion of the blessed day of Arafa as well as the auspicious day of Eid al-Adha that follows it.

Arafa is not any ordinary day. It is the day on which God the All-Merciful had accepted the repentance of the Father of the human race, Adam, after his expulsion from the Garden of Eden and separation from his wife, Eve, for having eaten the fruit that had been forbidden to them as a divine test.

Arafa is the day which Prophet Abraham, on God's commandment, institutionalized it as part of the Hajj rituals, while achieving the complete cognizance of the One and Only Creator to whom he had been obedient since childhood by passing all divine tests, including his unscathed emergence from the huge fire into which he was flung by the tyrant Nimrod; his subsequent expulsion from his homeland Mesopotamia; his settling in Canaan or modern Palestine; his leaving of his second wife Hajar and his firstborn child, Ishmael, in the wilderness of Mecca; and last but not the least, his sacrifice of the youth Ishmael which was miraculously substituted with a ram sent from heaven by the Almighty.

Arafa is also the day on which Prophet Mohammad (SAWA) while stressing the significance of the Thaqalayn, emphasized the equality of all mankind, irrespective of the superficial differences of ethnicity, languages spoken, colour of skin, and place of birth.

The Prophet of Peace did not leave Muslims in the dark. He specified by name his divinely-designated successors, of whom the first was his cousin and son-in-law, Imam Ali ibn Abi Taleb (AS), who was proclaimed by him on God's express orders at Ghadir-Khom, exactly nine days after Arafa, with those immortal words: *"For whomsoever I am Master, this Ali is his Master."*

The 12th and the Last of the Prophet's Infallible Heirs, is Imam Mahdi (AS) who will reappear in the end times to end tyranny on Planet Earth by establishing the global government of peace, prosperity and justice.

Since Arafa is the day for proper cognition of the One and Only Creator, the faithful, whether on the plain of Arafat for the Hajj rituals or in their own towns and cities, observe the rituals of this day, especially recitation of the famous supplication taught by the Prophet's grandson Imam Husain (AS), whose holy shrine in Karbala is the rendezvous every year on the 9th of Zilhijjah of devotees from all over the world.

It is the day regarding which the Survivor of the tragedy of Karbala, Imam Zain al-Abidin (AS), says in part of his supplication:

"O Allah! This is the Day of Arafa, a Day which You have made noble, bestowed honour and magnified. Within it You have spread Your mercy, showed kindness through Your pardon, made plentiful Your grants, and by it You have been bounteous towards your servants."

Arafa is also the day on which in the year 60 AH, Muslim ibn Aqeel, the emissary of Imam Husain (AS) to the people of Iraq, was tragically martyred in Kufa by Obeidollah ibn Ziyad the tyrannical governor of the accursed Yazid. The believers, wherever they are, hold mourning ceremonies for this martyr.

While felicitating you all on the threshold of Eid al-Adha, let us reflect on a passage from the famous supplication of Imam Hussain (AS) for this day:

"You are verily Originator and Reproducer (of the creation) and worthy of all praise and full of all glory. Holy be Your Names as Your bounties are so immeasurable. Which of Your favors, O my God, can I count in numbers and examples? Or which of Your gifts can I thank properly?"

"They are, O my Lord, too numerous to be counted by counters or to be realized by memorizers. Moreover, that which You have warded off and repelled."

Ayatollah Khamenei Demands in Hajj Message:

Full Support for Palestinian Resistance in Every Way



Ayatollah Khamenei's message to the 2024 Hajj pilgrims calls on Muslims to fully support the Palestinian resistance and Gazans in every possible way.

TEHRAN -- Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei says the "tragedies in Gaza" leave no room for any tolerance toward "the ruthless Zionist regime", calling on Muslims to fully support the Palestinian resistance.

In his annual Hajj message, the Leader called on millions of Muslim pilgrims from around the globe who commenced their pilgrimage in Mecca Saturday to demonstrate their "renunciation of the Zionist regime and its sup-

porters, in particular the U.S., in words and actions".

The issue of renunciation of the polytheists or bara'at in Qur'anic terms is the central point of Ayatollah Khamenei's annual Hajj messages. This year, "the issue of bara'at is more significant than ever before", he said.

"This year's renunciation of the polytheists must continue beyond the time and place of Hajj to all Muslim countries and cities worldwide. It must continue beyond just the Hajj pilgrims and

be extended to the general populace," he added.

Ayatollah Khamenei touched on the tragedies in Gaza, which he said are unparalleled in the contemporary history.

Those tragedies "along with the audacity of the ruthless Zionist regime, which is the embodiment of cruelty and villainy, and of course the declining state of Zionism, leave no room for any consideration or tolerance by any individual, party, government or Muslim denomination", he said.

General Salami: Iran at Peak of Power

TEHRAN -- Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) Major General Hussein Salami said Saturday Iran has reached the peak of its military and political power and has become a key element in international equations.

"We are at the best power position in the course of the past decades. Iran is today a country with global stretch of influence which no one can ignore or eliminate from any important political and security equations in the world," said Salami.

The general made the remarks in a ceremony to commemorate the late Iranian foreign minister, Hussein Amir-Abdollahian, who lost his life alongside President Ebrahim Raisi in a helicopter crash in northwestern Iran last month.

He said that Amir-Abdollahian had played a major role in elucidating Iran's military power in the region and in the world through his diplomatic endeavors.

Salami said the late foreign minister's diplomatic work was key to preparing the conditions for an

Iranian military operation, dubbed the True Promise, against Israel in mid-April, which came after Israel bombed Iran's consulate in the Syrian capital Damascus earlier that month.

"We fired missiles in the True Promise Operation but it wasn't enough because there was a need for a powerful diplomacy which could relate these missile firings to the legitimacy of an attack," he said.

In a first of its kind, Iran fired more than 300 missiles and drones on Israeli targets during the True Promise operation.

The operation came amid heightened regional tensions due to the conflict in Palestine, with many expecting the Zionist regime to respond to the Iranian attacks in order to escalate the war in Gaza by spreading it to other parts of the region.

Experts say Iran's anti-Israel operation changed the military equations in the region and further weakened the position of the occupying regime and their allies in their ongoing war against Gaza.

Hezbollah Pounds Zionist Positions, Warns of Wider War

BEIRUT (Dispatches) -- Hezbollah has carried out a fresh round of strikes against Israeli military positions in the north in response to the recent assassination of a top commander in southern Lebanon.

Sami Abdallah, better known by the nom the guerre Abu Taleb, was assassinated along with three other people in Israeli strikes that targeted a residential building in the southern Lebanese town of Jwaya on Tuesday.

Hezbollah said in separate statements on Saturday that its forces targeted "with guided missiles" Israel's spying equipment and radar systems on Mount Meron as well as a gathering of the occupying regime's soldiers in support of Palestinians in the besieged Gaza Strip and in response to the killing of Abdallah.

"In support of our steadfast Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and in support of their brave and honorable resistance, and as part of the response to the assassina-

"This renunciation of the Zionist regime and its supporters, in particular the government of the United States of America, must be demonstrated in the words and actions of nations and governments, and it must impede the actions of the murderers.

"The ironclad resistance of Palestine and the patient, oppressed people of Gaza – whose remarkable patience and resistance have earned them admiration and respect globally – must be fully supported in every way," Ayatollah Khamenei added.

The following is the full text of the Leader's message to the 2024 Hajj pilgrims:

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds, and peace and blessings be upon the best of creation, our Master Muhammad al-Mustafa, and upon his Pure Progeny, upon his chosen Companions and upon those who follow them in righteousness until the Day of Judgment.

The appealing Abrahamic call, which by God's command summons all human beings in all eras to the Kaaba during the time of Hajj, has once again this year, attracted the hearts of a number of Muslims from around the world to this center of tawhid and unity.

It has created this magnificent, diverse gathering of a multitude

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tion carried out by the Zionist enemy in the town of Jwaya, the fighters of the Islamic Resistance, targeted the headquarters of the Air Surveillance and Operations Management Unit at the Meron base with guided missiles, hitting and destroying part of its equipment and radars," the movement said.

Hezbollah said it also "targeted a position of Israeli enemy soldiers at the Hadab Yaroun site with a guided missile, achieving a direct hit and causing those among them to be killed and wounded."

In its biggest attack since October 8, Hezbollah fired on Wednesday around 30 drones and 150 rockets at Israel in reprisal for the assassination of Abdallah.

Major General Ori Gordin, the head of the Israeli military's Northern Command, on Friday said the evacuation of dozens of settlements in the north was Hezbollah's "greatest achievement."

"Looking back, I would have

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