

Iran's official:

Iranian, Russian capital cities set to strengthen cooperation



Mehdi Chamran, head of the Islamic City Council of Tehran, has announced that the Iranian and Russian capitals have agreed to expand urban cooperation, emphasizing the long-standing ties between Tehran and Moscow's municipal institutions. Chamran, who has traveled to Russia to attend the signing ceremony of the Parliamentary

Movement of the BRICS Capitals and the BRICS Urban Future Forum, said on Monday that bilateral relations date back to 2004, when the two cities first established official contacts and signed a sister-city agreement. Following his meeting with Chairman of Moscow's City Duma Aleksei Shaposhnikov, the Iranian official high-

lighted the mutual desire to enhance collaboration between the capitals. He said that stronger intercity relations among BRICS member states could reinforce the bloc's efforts to counter unilateralism. Chamran stressed that the success of BRICS will deepen when cooperation extends beyond national governments to include cities and citizens, fostering solidarity among the peoples of member nations. This unity, he said, could empower independent nations to stand together against Western unilateral policies, particularly those led by the United States. The Moscow City Duma hosted the signing ceremony, attended by representatives from Tehran, Moscow, Addis Ababa, Havana, Minsk, and Tshwane, with Beijing also supporting the initiative. The declaration aims to build an international mechanism for dialogue among city councils of BRICS capitals. The BRICS Urban Future Forum will open Wednesday in St. Petersburg, gathering delegates from over 70 countries to exchange best practices and promote sustainable urban development.

Deputy FM:

Iran believes in diplomacy but rejects diktat

Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Majid Takht-e Ravanchi Tehran, IRNA - Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Majid Takht-Ravanchi stated that Iran favors dialogue to resolve disputes, provided the other side refrains from imposing its will. Speaking on Monday at the 4th International Conference on Contemporary Iranian Studies, Takht-Ravanchi addressed the recent war imposed on Iran by Israel and the United States, under the theme "Iran and the World after the 12-Day War." Commenting on the

reason behind the aggression, he said it was difficult to pinpoint a precise scenario with certainty, but noted that US President Donald Trump had acted provocatively, describing him as a war-monger due to his repeated threats. Takht-Ravanchi emphasized that indirect talks with the US could progress in a calm atmosphere if Washington refrained from imposing its views. "They entered into dialogue merely through rhetorical maneuvering, believing they could achieve their goals that way," he said, adding that the US-backed

Israeli attack just two days before the sixth round of talks revealed the extent of their bad faith. Reaffirming Iran's longstanding commitment to diplomacy, the Deputy Foreign Minister argued that one of the reasons the US opted for war was its failure to secure its "illegitimate demands." He noted that the US had exhausted various methods and ultimately concluded that diplomacy and dialogue had not yielded their desired outcomes. "They started the war out of frustration with their inability to impose their views," he said.

Hamas urges international action as Israel keeps violating ceasefire

Hazem Qassem, the spokesperson for the Hamas movement. Hamas says it is in constant contact with the mediators to inform them of Israeli violations of the Gaza ceasefire deal. Tehran, IRNA - The spokesperson for the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas has issued fresh condemnations of Israel's ceasefire violations in Gaza, warning that the international community's inaction could lead to an escalation of tensions. In an interview with Al-Araby Al-Jadeed, a London-based news outlet, Hazem Qassem reported the loss of dozens more Palestinians in Israeli attacks after the agreement was established under international supervision. Stating that Hamas is in constant contact with the truce mediators to inform them of Israeli violations, he warned that the international negligence on the issue may lead to new conflicts. Qassem also slammed Israel for obstructing aid deliveries, demanding uninterrupted aid to the besieged Strip under the supervision of international institutions, including the humanitarian mission of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA). Referring to past experiences, he criticized the return of the so-called Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF) that was created by the US and Israel, calling it a cover for committing crimes against

the Palestinian people. Last week, Qassem affirmed Hamas' commitment to the terms of the ceasefire agreement, including the simultaneous release of all living prisoners, but warned that Israel is exploiting the humanitarian aid issue as a means of "political blackmail" and pursuing the policy of starvation against civilians. Hamas accused the Tel Aviv regime of breaking the ceasefire, just a day after it went into effect on October 11, exposing the fragility of the agreement signed in the presence of representatives from 20 countries in Egypt. Hazem Qassem, the spokesperson for the Hamas movement. Hamas says it is in constant contact with the mediators to inform them of Israeli violations of the Gaza ceasefire deal. Tehran, IRNA - The spokesperson for the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas has issued fresh condemnations of Israel's ceasefire violations in Gaza, warning that the international community's inaction could lead to an escalation of tensions. In an interview with Al-Araby Al-Jadeed, a London-based news outlet, Hazem Qassem reported the loss of dozens more Palestinians in Israeli attacks after the agreement was established under international supervision. Stating that Hamas is in constant contact with the truce mediators to inform them of Israeli violations, he



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Pezeshkian stresses need for ECO infrastructure

President Masoud Pezeshkian says that the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) today, more than ever, requires fundamental infrastructure for economic development. Pezeshkian made the remarks in the fourth ECO Interior Ministers Meeting underway in Tehran. The holding of this meeting after a long hiatus signifies the determination of member countries to enhance cooperation in key areas of mutual relations, he said. He acknowledged the ECO's long-standing efforts toward economic integration and its notable accomplishments. However, he pointed out that many potential areas for cooperation still remain unexplored. He mentioned the development of an ECO vision 2035 as a key initiative that promises a positive future for the region. He also identified the creation of an ECO police force, ECOPOL, as an important unfinished project for the organization. Elsewhere in his remarks, Pezeshkian addressed the serious challenges the region faces. He stated that the area has frequently been targeted by foreign intervention and is currently affected by the largest ongoing occupation of the century, referring to the Israeli occupation of Gaza. Pezeshkian also condemned the actions in Gaza over the past two years as the most horrific genocide and crime against humanity in the world.

Civil defense measures key to countering foreign threats

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi says strengthening Iran's civil defense system is vital to protect national infrastructure against enemy threats and to boost resilience in the face of sanctions. In a message marking Iran's Civil Defense Week on Monday, Araghchi said the occasion offered an opportunity to highlight the importance of measures aimed at enhancing the safety, preparedness, and immunity of critical infrastructure against various threats from adversaries. He said Iran's approach focuses on resistance to external pressure and on reducing vulnerabilities and potential damage, adding that an all-round defense strategy using all available capacities - particularly political and diplomatic defense capabilities - remains a key priority for the Islamic Republic's foreign policy.

Border security, water rights on agenda of deputy FM's visit to Afghanistan

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baqaei says Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi visited Afghanistan to discuss several issues that remain on the agenda of relations between the two countries, including border security. Baqaei made the remark during his weekly press briefing in Tehran on Tuesday, two days after the deputy foreign minister's visit to neighboring Afghanistan. "Mr. Gharibabadi's trip was aimed at discussing several issues that remain on the agenda of relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Afghanistan. These issues include border security, water rights, as well as legal and judicial cooperation. All these three issues were specifically discussed during meetings with relevant Afghan officials," the spokes-

person explained while responding to IRNA's correspondent. He added that Gharibabadi and Afghan officials also agreed to resume the implementation of a plan to renovate border signs, which had been suspended for a long time. Constructive talks were also held on ways to counter unauthorized movements, drug and human trafficking, and other forms of transnational organized crime, Baqaei said, expressing hope that the latest discussions would facilitate broader interactions between the two countries in various fields.

UNICEF says Gaza ceasefire 'vital chance' for 1 million children in need

The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) says the Gaza ceasefire agreement is a "vital chance" to protect one million children in the Palestinian enclave. "Israeli military operations in the Gaza Strip have resulted in wholesale devastation. Words and numbers alone cannot convey the scale of the impact on children that I saw - an impact that will last for generations," UNICEF Middle East and North Africa Regional Director Edouard Beigbeder said in a statement on Sunday, according to Turkish Anadolu Agency. He said the Gaza ceasefire, which "offers a vital chance for the survival, safety, and dignity of children," cannot be allowed to fail. "It will take time, but an inclusive future that prioritizes the rights of Gaza's one million children is possible with peace, action, and collective will." According to UN data, more than 64,000 children have been killed or injured, and more than 58,000 have lost a parent since the Israeli regime launched its genocidal war in the Gaza Strip in October 2023. "One million children have endured the daily horrors of surviving in the world's most dangerous place to be a child, leaving them with wounds of fear, loss, and grief," Beigbeder said. He noted that UNICEF is working to save children from "preventable threats, like malnutrition, disease, and the winter cold." "The importance of restoring education in this early recovery work cannot be overstated. After two lost years, families know that a return to proper education will provide a foundation for learning, healing, hope, and long-term social cohesion in their communities," Beigbeder said. The regional director called for "the safe, rapid and unimpeded movement" of humanitarian aid into the Gaza Strip, noting an increase in the amount of UNICEF aid allowed, which is still not sufficient to meet the needs of civilians in Gaza. He demanded that Israel open all border crossings simultaneously for the entry of humanitarian aid and needed equipment and materials, allowing relief to move through all feasible supply routes, including through Egypt, Jordan, and the West Bank.

