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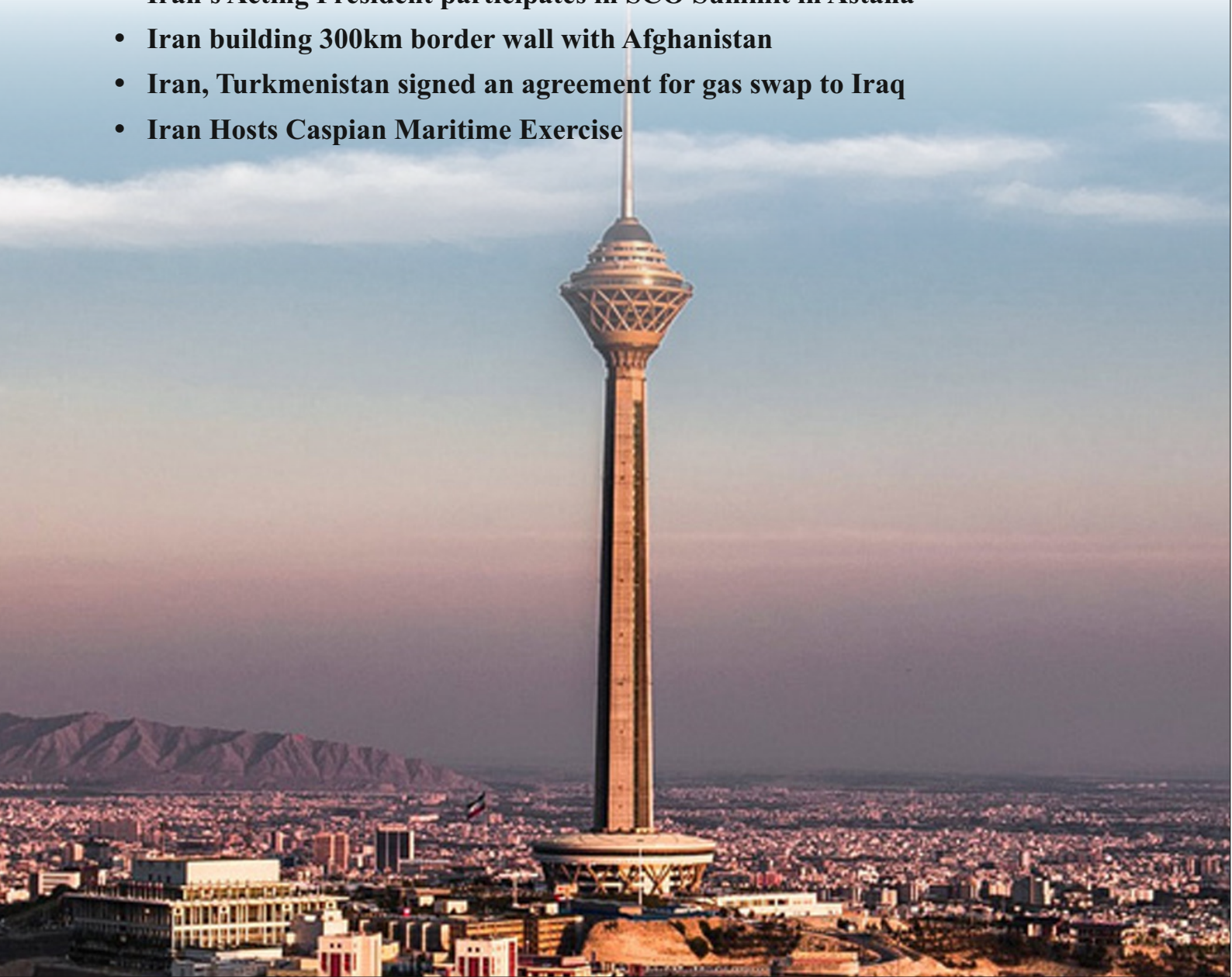
मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

Iran

Digest

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Masoud Pezeshkian sworn in as the ninth president of Iran

On 30 July, President-elect Masoud Pezeshkian was sworn-in before the parliament as the ninth president of the Islamic Republic of Iran by the Judiciary Chief Gholam Hossein Mohseni Eje'i. Pezeshkian in his [inaugural speech](#) argued for a constructive engagement with the world while upholding national dignity and interests. On the issue of Western sanctions, he said “I consider the normalization of Iran's economic and trade relations with the world to be Iran's legitimate right, and I will not rest until the unjust sanctions are terminated”. He noted that his priority will be strengthen relations with neighbouring countries and that his administration seeks a '[strong region](#)', in which neighbouring countries do not waste their resources in competition and war of attrition with each other, but cooperate towards development and prosperity. Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, in his address said that “Iran's parliament will employ all its legislative, supervisory, and advisory capacities to bolster the 14th government in its challenging path to serve the esteemed nation of Iran. Earlier, on 28 July, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei had endorsed Pezeshkian as Iran’s new president in a ceremony at Imam Khomeini Hussainiya. In his [endorsement speech](#), Khamenei described Pezeshkian as an "intellectual, honest, popular and scholarly person”. On the country's foreign policy priorities, Khamenei emphasised on relations with neighbours, African and Asian countries that have helped Iran through sanctions and pressures. He made pursuit of relations with European countries conditional to their behaviour towards Iran. According to the presidium of Iran's parliament, [representatives from over 70 countries](#) including ministerial delegations participated. There was a large presence from Africa, including ministerial delegation from South

Africa, [Egypt](#), [Eritrea](#), Niger and Libya, and representatives from Ghana, Sudan, Gambia, Comoros and Madagascar. From the neighbourhood, President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon, Pakistan’s Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Foreign Ministers of Kuwait, the UAE, Turkey and Turkmenistan, Mansour bin Miteb bin Abdulaziz, Minister of State and Advisor to Saudi king, Kurdistan Region President Nechirvan Barzani, Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia Al-Sudani, Deputy Prime Minister of the Acting Government of Afghanistan Mullah Abdul Kabir attended. Prime Ministers Irakli Kobakhidze of Georgia, Nikol Pashinyan of Armenia, Marrero Cruz attended, while from Russia the Chairman of State Duma Vyacheslav Volodin, Chinese President Xi Jinping's Special Envoy Peng Qinghua, Japan’s State Foreign Minister Yoshifumi Tsuge, EU deputy foreign policy chief [Enrique Mora](#) were present. The Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Cuba, Colombia, Brazil, Malta, Serbia, also sent representatives. From South Asia, Hussein Mohamed Latheef, Vice President of the Maldives; Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena, Speaker of the Sri Lankan Parliament and India’s Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari attended. Among Iran's allies in the 'resistance axis', Syrian Prime Minister Hussein Arnous, Hamas political leader Ismail Haniyeh, Islamic Jihad leader Ziyad al-Nakhalah, Hezbollah Deputy Secretary-General Naim Qassem, the spokesman of the Houthi rebels in Yemen, Mohammed Abdulsalam.

Iran’s Acting President participates in SCO Summit in Astana

Iran's acting president, Mohammad Mokhber participated in the 24th Meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the SCO in Astana, Kazakhstan. In his [address](#), he called on member countries to use the International North–South Transport Corridor, and Iran's

southern ports. He also proposed creating a network of free zones and preferential and free trade agreements within the SCO, advocated for the use of national currencies in trade settlement, and establishment of a SCO joint bank to advance joint economic projects. On the side-lines, Mokhber met with Russian President [Vladimir Putin](#). President Putin noted that Iran-Russia relations are truly friendly and constructive, and that the free trade agreement between the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and Iran will certainly contribute to the further strengthening of economic ties. He also supported Iran's application for observer state status at the EAEU, which is currently under review.

Iran building 300km border wall with Afghanistan

Brigadier General Ahmad Akbari, the commander of Army's Ground Forces engineering group, in a meeting with Mehdi Shirdel, mayor of Taybad city, located close to Dogharoun border crossing with Afghanistan, announced that the "technical operations for the closure are being carried out along the [300-kilometer border](#) shared between Khorasan Razavi province and Afghanistan." Referring to the technical specifications of the border wall, it is 4 meters high and 1 meter in thickness. He noted that four engineering groups from the army and the Khatam al-Anbiya construction headquarters of the IRGC are carrying out the work using domestic capacities. Shirdel emphasized that the [official crossing of Dogharoun](#) is the most important gateway for the entry and exit of Afghan nationals to Iran and that the security of the border will be enhanced with the construction of this border wall. Iran shares a 945-kilometer border with Afghanistan.

Iran, Turkmenistan signed an agreement for gas swap to Iraq

On 3 July, Iran and Turkmenistan have signed a gas [swap deal](#) under which Iran will

supply up to 10 billion cubic meters (bcm) of natural gas to Iraq in exchange for receiving the same volumes from Ashgabat into adjoining Golestan province in north-eastern Iran, which experiences gas shortages in winter months. Under the agreement, Iranian companies will construct a new 125-kilometer gas pipeline along with three gas pressure booster stations in Turkmenistan aimed at boosting annual shipments of gas to Iran to 40 bcm. The contract was signed in the presence of Ali Mojtaba Rozbahani, Iran's Ambassador to Turkmenistan, and Maksat Babayev, head of Turkmenistan's state-run gas company "Turkmen Gas". They also released a [joint statement](#) noting the positive experience of joint efforts to export Turkmenistan's gas to Iran and through that country's territory to other nations is a solid basis for increasing the capacity of bilateral cooperation. In October 2023, Turkmenistan and Iraq agreed on a gas trade deal, according to which Turkmenistan would supply Iraq with 9bcm/year via the Iran-Iraq existing pipeline infrastructure. Turkmenistan which does not have the option of LNG shipping relies on Iran's transit capacity to reach markets in Iran's neighbours, namely Azerbaijan, Iraq and Turkey who are connected to Iranian gas pipeline network.

Iran Hosts Caspian Maritime Exercise

On 22 July, Iran and Russia conducted a one-day joint exercise "[Caspian Maritime Rescue, Relief and Security 2024](#)" in the Caspian Sea, with Azerbaijan as an observer. The drills were hosted by the Northern Fleet of the Iranian Navy, which includes the missile boats Paykan, Joshan, Derafsh, and Separ, along with two AB 212 helicopters, marine units from the IRGC and the police, participated in the rescue exercise. The [Russian vessel](#) SB 45 also took part, contributing to the coordinated efforts which included a fire extinguishing operation.