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Iran

Digest

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Foreign Minister Abdollahian visits India

Iran's foreign minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian made his first official visit to India from 8-10 June. The ministerial talks between Abdollahian and [Indian External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar](#) focussed on the Russia-Ukraine war and its fallout, the situation in Afghanistan and Iran nuclear talks. Abdollahian also met with India's [National Security Advisor](#) Ajit Doval, and discussed enhancing connectivity through the Chabahar port, boosting trade and investment ties and expansion of cooperation in education and research. Speaking at an interactive session organised by the [Federation of Indian Export Organisations](#) and UCO Bank, Abdollahian stated that infrastructure and related issues being faced by Indian traders will be resolved soon, as he called for greater bilateral engagement not just in trade but in all other critical areas. In [Hyderabad](#), speaking at an event organised by the Federation of Telangana Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Abdollahian underscored the role Telangana can play, given its strengths in information technology, pharmaceuticals and agriculture, towards furthering India-Iran ties.

President Raisi attends Caspian Summit in Ashgabat, meets Russian President

President Raisi, at the sixth summit of the Caspian Sea Littoral States in Ashgabat, described Caspian Sea as a [“sea of peace and friendship”](#), noting that “cooperation among littoral countries, especially due to international developments, has become increasingly important and this interaction not only will lead to an economic boom and increased prosperity for our nations but also strengthens regional peace and stability and solves the issues of the Caspian Sea region through reliance on the littoral countries' capabilities [with no foreign powers presence].” In his meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin, Raisi noted that Iran pursues [“strategic relations”](#) with

Russia, and called for strengthening of the North-South corridor, establishing banking and monetary relations independent of the Western financial system and cooperation in the field of energy, including swaps.

Iran and the EU resume indirect nuclear talks with the US

On 25 June, European Union (EU) foreign policy Chief [Josep Borrell](#) held talks in Tehran with Iranian Foreign Minister Abdollahian, and agreed to revive stalled nuclear talks. In March, Borrell had announced a ‘pause’ in nuclear talks after Russia had demanded that Western sanctions related to Russia-Ukraine war would not hamper its economic and military relations with Iran. At that time Borrell had maintained that final text of an agreement to revive the JCPOA had been reached. Tehran has maintained that the US need to make [political decisions](#) to revive the deal. Subsequently, Iran and the US held two days of indirect talks in Doha mediated by Enrique Mora, the EU coordinator of the JCPOA commission. After the talks ended without results, Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson blamed the US insistence on its proposed draft text in Vienna, which excludes any [guarantee for economic benefits](#) for Iran.

Tehran hosts Presidents of Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan

On 19 June, President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev arrived in Tehran. Tokayev and his Iranian counterpart Ebrahim Raisi were present in the meeting of [Iran-Kazakhstan joint cooperation commission](#), during which the two sides signed a memorandum of understanding on joint cooperation in the field of oil and gas, developing transit transportation, energy, and trade. After the first freight train carrying Kazakhstan's sulphur cargo destined for Europe arrived at Incheh Borun on Iran-Turkmenistan border, both Raisi and Tokayev participated in the ceremony to launch the [Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran \(KTI\) transit corridor](#) to Turkey. Over the last few months, EU-China trade through Russia has been impacted by

tensions on Poland-Belarus border, diplomatic squabble between Lithuania and China over Taiwan, and most recently because of the EU sanctions on Russia in the wake of the Russia-Ukraine war. Kazakhstan therefore is keen to operationalise an alternative rail route to Europe through Iran and Turkey. Iran is also celebrating the 30th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic ties with both Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. On 15 June, President of Turkmenistan Serdar Berdimuhamedow visited Iran, his first such visit after he assumed office in March 2022. In his [meeting with Ayatollah Khamenei](#), Berdimuhamedow stressed on his priority is to expand relations with its neighbours, and that the two countries are “working to further strengthen the good relations between the two countries in various fields, especially gas, electricity and freight.”

Foreign Minister Abdollahian visits Ankara

On 27 June, Iran’s Foreign Minister Abdollahian visited Ankara, following close on the heels of Ankara hosting Saudi Arabia’s Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman, and Israeli Foreign Minister [Yair Lapid](#). During his visit, Lapid had announced the upgrading of bilateral diplomatic relations to the level of ambassador and thanked Turkish leaders for foiling an alleged Iranian assassination plot against its citizens in Istanbul. Abdollahian rejected Lapid’s claims as “[baseless](#)”. At a joint news conference with his Turkish counterpart Mevlut Cavusoglu, Abdollahian praised Turkey for its consistent [support for Palestine](#) and asserted that “the Zionist regime is the Muslim world’s number one foe.” On Turkey’s planned operation in Syria to establish a [30 km security zone](#) along its southern border and target Kurdish armed groups in Tal Rifaat and Manbij in northern Syria, Abdollahian struck a conciliatory note, saying “We understand that a special operation might be needed. [Turkey’s security concerns](#) must be tackled fully and permanently.”

Iraqi Prime Minister visits Iran to restart Iran-Saudi talks

On 26 June, Iraq’s Prime Minister [Mustafa al-Kadhimi](#) arrived in Tehran after a visit to Jeddah, where he met with Saudi Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman. Kadhimi has hosted five rounds of talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia aimed at restoring diplomatic ties between the two countries and resolving key regional issues, such as the Yemeni civil war. In March 2022, Iran had paused talks after Riyadh [executed 81 people](#) including backers of Yemen’s Houthi rebels and Saudi Shi’i. Iranian [foreign ministry spokesperson](#) noted that Al-Kadhimi conveyed the message from Saudi Arabia that it is ready to upgrade the talks from high-ranking security and intelligence officials to the diplomatic level. In recent months, the Saudi backed Yemeni government has accused Houthis of attacking the [oil-rich Marib province](#), even as the truce between the Yemeni government and Houthi rebels was extended for an additional two months on 2 June. In response, Saudi Arabia [threatened to boycott](#) the next round of talks with Iran, leading Al-Kadhimi to engage in shuttle diplomacy between Jeddah and Tehran.

Tehran, Kabul reach an agreement on Helmand River water sharing

On 21 June, Afghanistan’s Ministry of Energy and Water announced that in the current year, it will share the water of the [Helmand River](#) with Iran based on the 1973 Helmand Water treaty. The announcement came following the 25th meeting of [Helmand River Water Commissars](#) in Tehran on June 15-17, during which the Iranian side had briefed the Afghan delegation on its concerns on water rights. Since taking control of Kabul in August 2021, the Taliban had expressed commitment to implement the water sharing treaty, reversing the stance taken by former President [Ashraf Ghani](#) who had maintained that Afghanistan will not give water to its neighbours free of charge, but in exchange for oil. But, until recently, the Taliban had [blamed drought](#) and technical issues for the low supply of water to Iran.