

China's Xi hails Iran 'solidarity' Calls for early resolution of nuclear issue

AFP, Beijing

Chinese President Xi Jinping hailed Beijing's "solidarity" with Iran yesterday as he hosted the Islamic republic's President Ebrahim Raisi at the start of a three-day trip.

For the first state visit by an Iranian president to China in more than 20 years, Raisi has brought a large trade and finance delegation to Beijing and was earlier greeted by Xi on a red carpet.

"In the face of the current complex changes in the world, times, and history, China and Iran have supported each other (and) worked together in solidarity and cooperation," Xi said, according to state broadcaster CCTV.

Both countries face pressure from Western nations over their positions on Russia's invasion of Ukraine, while Iran is already under strict US sanctions due to its nuclear programme.

Iran has emerged as one of Russia's few remaining allies as Moscow has been pushed deeper into international isolation over the invasion.

Western countries have accused Tehran of supplying armed drones to Russia for use in the war in Ukraine, a charge it denies.

In December, Washington outlined what it said was an extensive relationship between Iran and Russia involving equipment such as helicopters, fighter jets and drones.

China "supports Iran in safeguarding national sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national dignity... and in resisting unilateralism and hegemonism", CCTV reported Xi as saying.

Beijing also "opposes external forces interfering in Iran's internal affairs and undermining Iran's security and stability", and will continue to "promote the early and proper resolution of the Iranian nuclear issue", the Chinese leader said.



An aerial photo taken yesterday shows flooding caused by Cyclone Gabrielle in Awatoto, near the city of Napier. New Zealand declared a national state of emergency yesterday as Cyclone Gabrielle swept away roads, inundated homes and left more than 100,000 people without power.

PHOTO: AFP

MAJOR NEW OFFENSIVE

Russia pounds Ukraine's south, east

REUTERS, KYIV

Russian forces bombarded Ukrainian positions along the frontlines in eastern Donetsk region yesterday in what appeared to be early salvos of a new offensive as Nato allies met in Brussels to plan stepped-up supplies to the Kyiv government.

The Donetsk region city of Bakhmut, a major target for Russian President Vladimir Putin's invading troops, was in a precarious position.

"There is not a single square metre in Bakhmut that is safe or that is not in range of enemy fire or drones," regional governor Pavlo Kyrylenko told Ukraine's national broadcaster.

He said Russian artillery was hitting targets all along the frontlines in Donetsk, which along with Luhansk region makes up the Donbas, Ukraine's

industrial heartland and a main objective for the Russians.

With the first anniversary of the invasion approaching, the Kremlin has intensified operations across a broad area of southern and eastern Ukraine and a major new offensive has been widely anticipated.

Nato Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said on Monday that the bombardments and ground attacks indicated the offensive was already underway.

Ukraine's military said yesterday its forces had repelled attacks in five settlements in Luhansk and six in Donetsk, including in Bakhmut, over the past 24 hours.



They had also beaten back an attack on a town in Kharkiv region, which borders Russia in northeast Ukraine.

"The situations is difficult as a whole, but controlled," Kyrylenko said. "The enemy has not been able to achieve a tactical or strategic success there."

The Russian assault on Bakhmut has been spearheaded by mercenaries of the Wagner group. Britain's defence ministry said yesterday the mercenaries had made small gains in the northern outskirts in the past three days.

The capture of Bakhmut would give Russia a new foothold in Donetsk and a rare victory after months of setbacks.

Bangladesh left out

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and Central Asian Affairs Bureau deputy assistant secretary Ambassador Kelly Keiderling during her visit to Bangladesh in 2021 had said the Biden administration could expand the list and hopefully Bangladesh could participate in the next summit.

However, that hope has been dashed as the list of the 110 invitees does not contain the name of Bangladesh this year.

Asked about it, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen yesterday said, "We are not worried about it -- if they invite us or not."

He also said a big majority of people in the US think their democracy is weak. "So we don't bother if we are invited or not."

Contacted, US Embassy acting spokesperson Bryan Schiller said President Joe Biden invited democracies that represented a diversity of regions, country sizes, and other factors.

Following the first summit, the US invited all participant countries to make commitments and make 2022 a "Year of Action" to strengthen democracy.

"We also encouraged countries not invited to the first summit, including Bangladesh, to make public their own Year of Action plans to demonstrate their commitment to strengthening democracy and countering authoritarianism, fighting corruption, and promoting respect for human rights," Schiller said.

He said one important factor in considering which countries to invite to the second summit was the degree to which countries

responded to this invitation and participated in the Year of Action in 2022 to strengthen democracy.

"Building on the first summit held in December 2021, the next summit, in March 2023, will highlight how democracies deliver for their citizens and are best equipped to address the world's most pressing challenges."

On March 29-30 this year, the US will co-host the second Summit for Democracy with the governments of Costa Rica, the Netherlands, Republic of Korea, and Republic of Zambia.

The summit will assemble world leaders in a virtual, plenary format, followed by gatherings in each of the co-hosted countries with representatives from government, civil society, and the private sector.




In a statement, US President Biden said, "No matter how challenging the problems we face, we know that democracy remains the best tool we have to unleash our human potential and deliver for all our people, and we will continue to champion it."

7m children affected

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the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Turkey, told reporters in the rebel-held town of Sarmada.


In the devastated Turkish city of Antakya, clean-up teams have been shifting rubble and putting up basic toilets as the telephone network started to come back in parts of the town, an AFP reporter said.

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Date: 15/02/2023

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following package:


Sl. No.	Tender ID No.	Name of works	Last Date and Time of Tender Security Submission	Tender Closing Date & Time
1.	788791	Establishment of Campus Networking and Related Service in Rangamati Govt. College, Rangamati	02/03/2023; 1:00 pm	02/03/2023; 2:00 pm

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered Banks' Branches upto 01/03/2023 at 4:00 pm.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP Held Desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).



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GD-267

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