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Murdered Lawyer's Funeral Turns Into Anti-Regime Protest

In Mashhad today, a large ceremony mourning the suspected regime killing of human rights lawyer Khosro Alikordi turned into a protest against the Islamic Republic, with footage showing Iranians chanting "Death to the Dictator!" and "Long Live the King!"

Additional chants included the names of slain protesters, such as Majidreza Rahnavard, with today marking three years since his execution. Attendees also called for the release of high profile political prisoners like Fatemeh Sepehri.

There have been multiple reports of regime forces violently arresting attendees, including Ali Adinezadeh, the father of Abolfazl Adinezadeh, a teenager killed by security forces during the 2022 uprising.

Brief Notes

Tehran Seizes Alleged Fuel Smuggling Tanker in Sea of Oman: The Islamic Republic says it has seized a foreign vessel in the Sea of Oman, accusing it of carrying six million liters (~1,585,000 gallons) of smuggled fuel. The vessel's flag nation was not disclosed.

FBI Warns of Ongoing Plots to Avenge Soleimani's Killing: The FBI told lawmakers today that the Islamic Republic's efforts to retaliate for the U.S. strike that eliminated Qassem Soleimani in 2020 remain active. The FBI's operations director, Michael Glasheen, testified before the House Homeland Security Committee, saying that Tehran continues plotting attacks on former U.S. officials and engages in "surveillance of Jewish and Israeli facilities and individuals inside the United States." He also warned, "It is possible the Israel–Hamas conflict and ensuing strikes between Iran and Israel will provoke increased Iranian surveillance of U.S.-based Jewish and Israeli persons," he told lawmakers.

Pezeshkian and Putin Meet in Turkmenistan

President Masoud Pezeshkian met with Russian President Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of the International Peace and Trust Summit in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, with Pezeshkian praising Moscow's support for Tehran in

international forums and reaffirming Tehran's commitment to the two nations' bilateral Comprehensive Strategic Cooperation Agreement.

Pezeshkian said joint work on "power generation, transportation, and trade corridors" is advancing, but urged Russia to speed up implementation: "We expect the Russian side to also accelerate and finalize the process of implementing these agreements."

During the meeting, Pezeshkian also stated, "We have no choice but to work together, particularly within international and regional frameworks such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and Brics, to counter unilateralism."

Putin described the signing of the Comprehensive Strategic Cooperation Agreement between the two countries as a "turning point in bilateral relations and a very important event." Putin also highlighted the "very positive and expanding trend" in the two nations' bilateral relations, stating that cooperation on power plant projects and corridor infrastructure development will continue, adding that Russia is also "considering collaboration in the export of gas and electricity to Iran."

Pezeshkian also used the visit to Ashgabat to highlight expanding ties with Turkmenistan, praising what he called warm, stable neighborly relations and recent agreements on gas, transport, and trade.

On the Radar

- Friday Prayer Imam Haj Ali Akbari warned that Western governments, referring to them as the "Satanic Front," are waging a "cognitive and cultural war" to weaken the Islamic Republic. Echoing the Supreme Leader's recent statements, Ali Akbari accused adversaries of sowing "mental chaos" and denying Tehran's supposed "victory" in the 12-Day War. He urged officials and media to avoid amplifying these "distractions," arguing the real battlefield is "soft, cognitive warfare." A large portion of his sermon focused on the necessity for the hijab and "chaste living," which he linked to family stability and broader social trends.
- Tehran will host a regional meeting on Afghanistan next week, bringing together envoys from Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, China, and Russia. Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baghaei framed the initiative as part of Tehran's push to prioritize regional stability amid strained Pakistan–Afghanistan relations. He said the regime "spares no effort" to encourage dialogue among regional states. The announcement follows Saudi-mediated Pakistan–Afghanistan talks that ended with no notable progress.

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