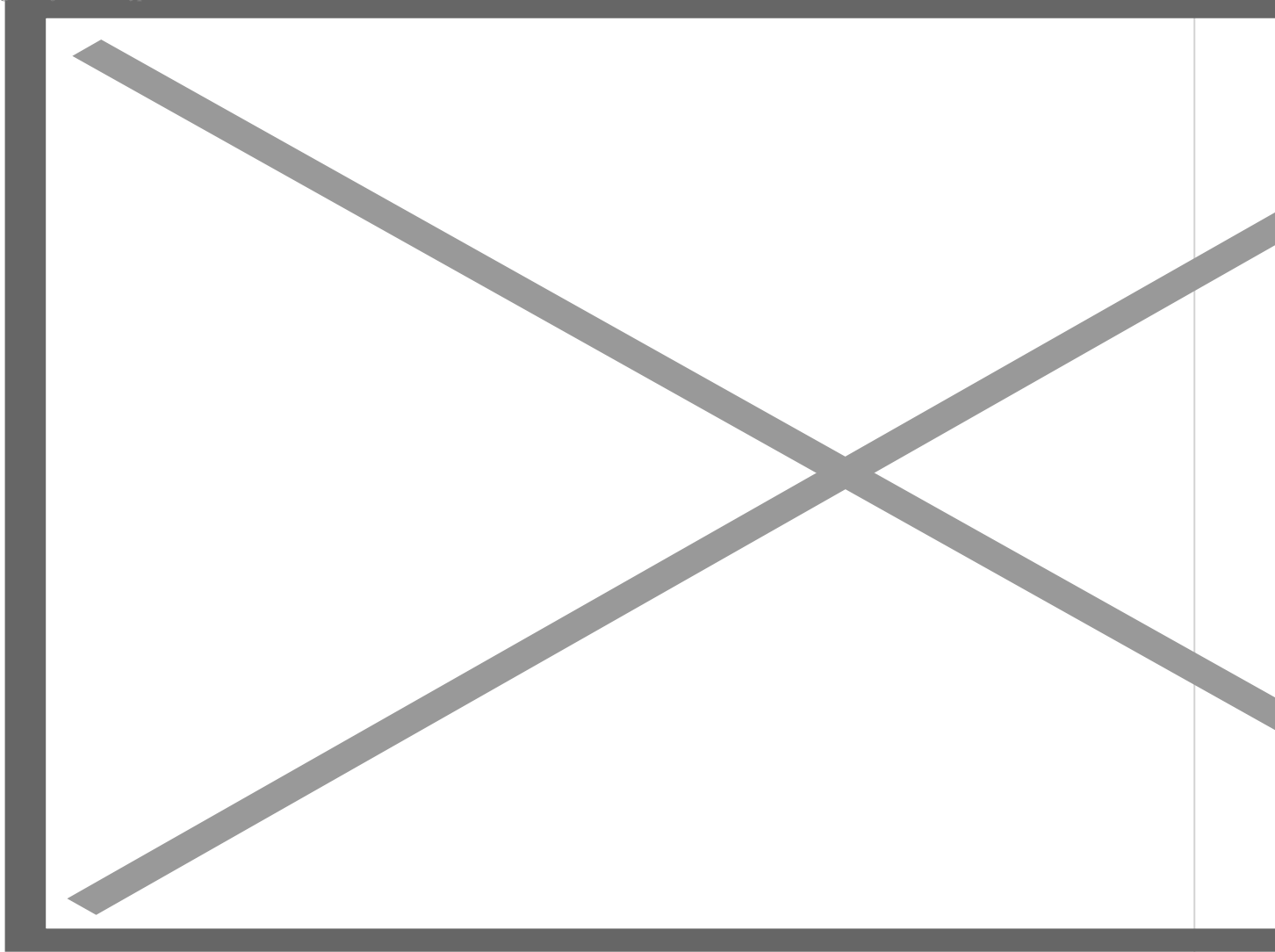


Iran kicks off the Ten-Day nationwide ceremonies marking 45th anniversary of Islamic Revolution

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The late founder of the Islamic Republic, Ayatollah Seyyed Rouhollah Khomeini, disembarks from an Air France jet on returning home after more than 14 years in exile, in the Iranian capital, Tehran, February 1, 1979.

Tehran, February 2 (RHC)-- Iranians have started Ten-Day Dawn ceremonies across the country, marking the 45th anniversary of the 1979 Islamic Revolution, which put an end to the ruling of the US-backed Pahlavi regime in Iran.

The annual nationwide celebration started all over Iran on Thursday, symbolically marking the date of the homecoming of the late founder of the Islamic Republic, Imam Khomeini. The Imam arrived back home from exile at 9:27 a.m. local time on February 1, 1979. He spent more than 14 years in exile, mostly in the Iraqi holy city of Najaf. He also spent some time in Turkey and France before returning to Iran.

Millions of people converged on the capital from across the country on the day of his return. His arrival gave considerable momentum to popular protests against the US-backed Pahlavi regime, which eventually led to its overthrow ten days later.

During the Fajr celebrations, Iranians take part in different events and activities to mark the occasion.

The festivities will culminate in nationwide rallies on February 11 this year, the anniversary of the Islamic Revolution.

Imam Khomeini's arrival intensified months of popular protests against the Pahlavi regime. On February 8, 1979, a group of commanders, pilots, and staff of the Air Forces (Homafaran) went to Imam Khomeini's home and expressed their loyalty to the revolution.

On February 11, 1979, the commanders of the armed forces attended Imam Khomeini's home and submitted their resignation, declaring support to the founder of the Islamic Revolution. After the armed forces declared neutrality, the Shah regime's main institutions and all other remnants collapsed.

Following the developments, Shapour Bakhtiar quickly fled Iran for France. These influential events marked the end of 2500 years of monarchy in the country as Imam Khomeini called on the people to restore peace and order.

The Islamic Revolution established a new political system; a republic based on Islamic values and democracy. The beginning of the Fajr period is usually marked by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei's visit to Imam Khomeini's shrine.

On Wednesday, the Leader visited the Imam's mausoleum in southern Tehran outskirts to pay his tributes. He also paid respect at the burial ground of martyrs who lost their lives during the popular uprising that led to the revolution.

The Leader then paid his respects to the Iranian martyrs who lost their lives in terrorist operations by the anti-Iran and anti-revolutionary Mujahedin Khalq Organization (MKO) and Iraq's 1980-88 imposed war on the Islamic Republic as well as other martyrs. He also paid homage to the grave of martyr Mohammad Amin Samadi, who was recently assassinated during an Israeli strike on Syria, and several other martyrs who helped defeat Daesh during Iran's fight against the terror group in recent years.

Similarly, Iran's President Ebrahim Raeisi and his cabinet ministers visited the mausoleum and the cemetery.

On the eve of the Fajr celebration, Ayatollah Khamenei earlier visited an exhibition in Tehran featuring domestic products, especially those developed in knowledge-based companies and production supply chains.

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