

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – The 2018 edition of the International Islamic Unity Conference, the world's baggiest gathering of Islamic scholars, is planned to be held in Tehran later this month. The 32nd International Islamic Unity Conference, organized by the World Forum for Proximity of Islamic Schools of Thought (WFPST), is slated to be held in Tehran on November 24-26 with representatives from more than 80 countries in attendance. High-ranking officials and religious figures, including 10 ministers and 40 Muftis, plan to participate in the international event.

TEHRAN (Press TV) -- Former German foreign minister Sigmar Gabriel says small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) can continue trade with Iran despite U.S. sanctions on the Islamic Republic. Gabriel is currently visiting Iran at the head of an economic delegation of chief executives and representatives of German companies. "Thousands of small- and medium-sized German companies that have nothing to do with the United States can easily trade with Iran," IRNA news agency quoted him as saying.

Viewpoint

Nuclear Arms Race in the Region Further Exposes US Hypocrisy

Iranian Researchers Find Way to Treat Diabetic, Traumatic Ulcers



Qatar Considering Iran Offer to Host World Cup Teams: Organizer



Saudi-Led Warplanes Target Entrance to Yemen's Hudaydah



Bolton: U.S. to Squeeze Iranians 'Very Hard'

SINGAPORE (Dispatches) – **Hardline U.S. national security adviser John Bolton said here Tuesday his country will keep up pressure on Iran after imposing new sanctions on the Islamic Republic early this month.**

Bolton said that Washington's ultimate aim was to zero Iran's oil exports despite backing down on the pledge after eight importers were given waivers when the sanctions took effect on Nov. 5.

"The objective has been from the beginning to get oil exports from Iran down to zero," Bolton said. "It is our intention to squeeze them very hard. As the British say: 'Squeeze them until the pips squeak'."

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has already threatened to "starve" Iranian people in remarks denounced by Iran's Foreign Minister Muhammad Javad Zarif as "a crime against humanity."

China, India, Greece, Italy, Taiwan, Japan, Turkey and South Korea are the eight countries that have been exempted from the U.S. sanctions.

Iran's Minister of Petroleum Bijan Zangeneh said last week that the waivers were not enough, warning of "painful months" ahead for consumers because of insufficient supplies.

Zangeneh said the Trump administration has "artificially" brought down oil and gasoline prices ahead of midterm elections by coordinating an increased draw in U.S. crude inventory, but the prices will "naturally" move up in the coming months.

Other Iranian officials have said U.S. claims of bringing Iran's oil exports down to zero and replace it with Saudi oil are a bluff.

"It is a lie that Americans tell the people of the world that Saudi Arabia and some other countries would replace Iranian oil," Vice President Es'haq Jahangiri has said.

On Monday, Riyadh unveiled plans to cut its oil production by 500,000 barrels per day from December.

Saudi Arabia's Energy Minister Khalid al-Falih also called for a global output cut of one million barrels per day to re-balance the market, drawing a veiled warning from U.S. President Donald Trump.

"Hopefully, Saudi Arabia and OPEC will not be cutting oil

production. Oil prices should be much lower based on supply!" he said on Twitter.

The Trump administration is under pressure after Republican losses in the midterm elections. It is extremely wary of any threats to the economy, including higher gas prices.

In June, Saudi Arabia persuaded fellow oil producers to end 18 months of production cuts and pump more crude as demanded by the U.S., drawing a harsh rebuke from Iran.

According to energy analyst Phil Flynn, OPEC leaders are angry Trump "duped" them into raising production ahead of the Iranian sanctions.

Trump's efforts to influence oil production threaten to further strain relations with the Saudis, even as his administration continues to describe Riyadh as a crucial partner, Bloomberg wrote.

And by pushing for zero Iranian oil exports, the Trump administration is putting itself between a rock and a hard place which explains why Iranian officials' dismissal of the U.S. threat as a bluff makes sense, according to Press TV.

Iranian officials, meanwhile, say the country will bypass sanctions and sell its oil even without the exemptions because so many countries are on its side.

Many analysts agree. "Iran's situation is better than pre-2016 because of high oil prices and the fact that the U.S. is isolated this time," Reuters quoted a European diplomat as saying last week.

"It will be a difficult period but Iran's economy will withstand it for various reasons, including the fact of Russia being under U.S. and EU sanctions, Saudi Arabia having its own financial and political issues, and trade war between China and the United States," the news agency said, citing a second diplomat.

On Sunday, Iran sold 700,000 barrels of crude oil to private companies for export in a second round of sales aimed at countering the U.S. sanctions.

A senior army official also said Iran's armed forces were ready to protect the country's oil tankers against possible threats after the United States said the ships should not be allowed to dock anywhere because they were a "floating liability."

Netanyahu Convenes War Cabinet:

Palestinian Retaliation Jolts Zionists



Security personnel check a structure in the occupied city of Ashkelon following a retaliatory rocket attack from Gaza, November 12, 2018.

GAZA/OCCUPIED AL-QUDS (Dispatches) – **The occupying regime of Israel carried out more strikes on the Gaza Strip on Tuesday and Palestinians retaliated with rocket attacks on Zionist targets in the most serious exchanges of aerial fire since a 2014 war.**

The fighting - which has martyred six Palestinians, five of them militants, and a Palestinian man in Occupied Palestine since Monday - threatened to derail efforts by the United Nations, Egypt and Qatar to head off another major conflict in the impoverished, densely populated enclave.

Hamas, Gaza's dominant resistance movement, and other armed factions fired over 400 rockets or mortar bombs across the fenced separation barrier after carrying out a surprise guided-missile attack on Monday on a bus of troops, the military said.

The Zionist regime claims one soldier was injured but the ferocity of its attacks on Gaza suggests high casualties, according to observers.

Meanwhile, the Palestinian retaliatory salvos were the fiercest since the seven-week Gaza war in 2014. Hamas said it was retaliating for a botched Israeli commando raid

in Gaza that killed one of its commanders and six other resistance fighters on Sunday. A Zionist colonel was also killed in that incident.

In Gaza City, people gathered in front of a large mound of debris that was once a multi-floor structure. It was flanked by five-storey buildings still standing after the airstrike, their shattered stone facades adding to the tall pile of rubble.

In the occupied coastal city of Ashkelon, a settler was taken to hospital in critical condition after a rocket attack.

The body of a man, killed when the rocket hit the home, was next

to her. Zionist PM Benjamin Netanyahu, who said on Sunday he hoped to avoid another Gaza war, convened his security cabinet to discuss the occupying regime's next moves.

A Palestinian official said Egypt and the United Nations had stepped up efforts to end the current round of fighting.

"The (Palestinian factions) agreed to hold fire to give Egyptian efforts to end Israeli aggression a chance, but the factions will respond to every Israeli attack," the official said.

There was no word from the security cabinet session whether the occupying regime would agree, and retaliatory rocket attacks continued amid Israeli airstrikes as the forum met.

Since the 2014 war, both Hamas and the Zionist regime have pulled back after brief bouts of fighting from another large-scale conflict.

Sirens again rang out in southern occupied towns on Tuesday after Palestinian rockets crashed into several structures overnight.

They came after Israel carried out dozens of airstrikes, hitting buildings overnight that included the studios of Al-Aqsa Television.

A statement issued by resistance movements in Gaza said Ashdod, a major occupied port just north of Ashkelon, and Beersheba, the biggest city in southern Occupied Palestine, would be hit next if the Zionist regime didn't cease fire.

In Gaza, Israeli missiles flattened seven buildings, mostly in Gaza City including the TV station.

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New York Times:

Recording Suggests MBS Role in Khashoggi Murder

NEW YORK (Dispatches) -- **An audio recording of journalist Jamal Khashoggi's murder strongly suggests that Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman was involved, the New York Times has reported.**

Citing people familiar with the audio recording, the U.S. newspaper said a member of the crown prince's security detail, Maher Abdulaziz Mutreb, who was part of the 15-member hit team sent to Turkey to kill Khashoggi, told an aide of the crown prince to "tell your boss" after Khashoggi's murder.

While bin Salman, commonly known as MBS, was not mentioned by name, American intelligence officials believe "your boss" was a reference to the crown prince, the Times reported.

A former CIA officer also told the newspaper the comment

strongly incriminates MBS.

"A phone call like that is about as close to a smoking gun as you are going to get," Bruce Riedel, who now works at the Brookings Institution, told the paper. "It is pretty incriminating evidence," he added.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan confirmed on Saturday the existence of an audio recording of Jamal Khashoggi's death and said he had shared it with the United States, Saudi Arabia, Germany, France and the UK.

On Tuesday, Erdogan said a Saudi intelligence officer was shocked when played audio of Khashoggi's murder, a recording he described as "appalling". The Saudi officer, Erdogan said, posited the theory that whoever was responsible "must have taken heroin".

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U.S. Airstrikes Kill Scores of Civilians in Syria

BEIRUT (Dispatches) – **U.S. airstrikes killed at least 72 people last week in eastern Syria, the so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said Tuesday.**

The group reported that most of those killed in the raids were civilians, including 31 children, adding that bodies have now started to be retrieved from the site.

As many as 28 were killed in strikes Sunday in the village of Al-Shaafa, the London-based group said after the U.S. targeted homes.

The U.S. says it is supporting Kurdish militants in their offensive against Daesh's remaining pocket of control around the eastern Syrian town of Hajin.

The Syrian government is wary of Washington's role in the war, including its plans to carve out a "statelet" for Kurdish separatists in the country.

U.S. airstrikes pummeled areas near Dayr al-Zawr Thursday, Fri-

day and Sunday, the observatory said, in the deadliest air raids since the Kurdish militants launched the offensive on Sept. 10.

The U.S.-led SDF group late last month said it was forced to suspend operations after Turkish shelling of Kurdish militant positions along Syria's northern border killed four.

But they said Sunday they were resuming their battle after "intensive contacts" with the U.S. military and "strong diplomatic activity" to defuse the crisis.

U.S. support for the Kurds has increased tensions with Turkey, a NATO ally that also views the YPG as a "terrorist" force and an offshoot of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in Turkey. The Turkish government has long opposed the establishment of an autonomous Kurdish area in north-eastern Syria, fearing it could embolden separatists at home.

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