

## 'Foreign Sponsors Propping Up Terrorists'

TEHRAN (Press TV) -- A senior Iranian security official said on Friday foreign patrons of Takfiri terrorist groups in Iraq and Syria have turned to politicking to save the outfits from a looming defeat in the Arab countries.

"Takfiri terrorists are declining toward their defeat in Iraq and Syria and thus their supporters have engaged in attempts to delay their defeat through political gambits," Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Ali Shamkhani said.

# Kayhan International



## Venezuelan President Due in Tehran

CARACAS (Dispatches) -- Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro plans to pay a visit to Iran as part of his tour of various oil-producing countries to help stabilize the international oil market.

Maduro will arrive in Tehran on Saturday and will hold talks with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani. The Venezuelan president began his four-day visit to Saudi Arabia, Iran, Qatar and Azerbaijan on Thursday as a drop in global oil prices has negatively affected his country's economy.

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### Viewpoint

By Kayhan Int'l Staff Writer

## Saudis Violate Yemen Ceasefire - Again

## Ambassador: Iran's Brilliant Culture Needs to Be Introduced to World



## Iran Jump to 27th, Remain Asia's Top-Ranked Team



## Terrorists Block Civilians From Leaving East Aleppo



## Rouhani: We Must Be Hospitable

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Iran's President Hassan Rouhani said Thursday that his country must be hospitable to foreign businessmen.

"The businessman and investor who wants to come, we must be hospitable. They must come and leave Iran easily," Rouhani said in a speech to promote trade here.

"All the efforts... of the government in the last three years including in the (nuclear deal) have been designed to remove obstacles in the way of businessmen, entrepreneurs, exporters of goods and services, entry of capital and banking relations," said Rouhani.

"Our aim was to remove Iranophobia. The government has done a great job in this regard. Iran is shouting with a loud voice that I am... kinder than how I have been portrayed in the world, I want peaceful coexistence with the region and the world," he added.

"I ask and request all factions and groups (within the country): let's hear Iran's voice and respond positively."

On Thursday, Maersk Line said it has resumed calls to Iran after a five-year hiatus and hopes that access to a new, rapidly growing market will help it through the current downturn.

The resumption of service to Iran comes nearly a year after Maersk's 2M Alliance partner Mediterranean Shipping Co. once again began sailing to the second-largest country in the Middle East.

"Global container trade has matured over the past years and is growing at a slower pace. Iran has the potential to be the market which stands out with faster growth," said Christian Juul-Nyholm, managing director, United Arab Emirates cluster, Maersk Line.

Iran's largest trading partners are China, the UAE, Iraq, Turkey, and South Korea, according to Global Trade Atlas, a sister product of JOC.com within IHS. Ties between Iran and South Korea have warmed up after the sanctions were lifted, and Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines during the summer launched a new service between the two countries.

Meanwhile, Western insurers are slowly reaching deals with Iran as they seek to re-enter a multi-billion dollar market although the pace of business is hampered by banking restrictions ten months on from the lifting of international sanctions.

Iran is in more active talks with insurers to provide cover in a market valued at \$9 billion overall last year and potentially double that in the next decade, Reuters reported on Friday.

Western companies need insurance in order to resume business with Iran. Shipping and trade

credit insurance, which remove the risk of non-payment for goods, are the first types of insurance being offered.

"There is generally a lower degree of fear and apprehension and that is because you have not had the big fines on the insurers that the banks have faced," said leading London sanctions lawyer Nigel Kushner.

"We are going to see greater and quicker movement there than on the banking side, at least in London and the UK," said Kushner, who is also a director of the British Iranian Chamber of Commerce.

As Iran has aimed to ramp up oil exports, securing marine insurance has been crucial. Top tier Western ship insurers have started offering services in recent months.

Iran's deputy oil minister, Amir Hussein Zamaninia, has said European insurers now have no problems insuring Iranian oil tankers, according to the oil ministry's news agency SHANA.

Protection and Indemnity (P&I) clubs - marine insurers owned by shipping firms - have started to provide cover for Iran's shipping fleet, including its oil tankers.

Jonathan Andrews, director and head of eastern underwriting with Britain's Steamship Mutual, said it was insuring ships for Iranian tanker operator NITC and also for Iranian cargo ship operator IRISL.

"We have a long history of insuring Iranian ship owners," Andrews told Reuters. "We are happy to be insuring our former members again."

Norwegian ship insurer Skuld said it was in discussions with IRISL, while it was already insuring NITC ships.

Others such as the UK's Standard Club said they were covering vessels trading to and from Iran, but did not say whether this related to Iranian shipping firms.

Ship insurers say there are still constraints on payments, given a freeze on using the U.S. financial system.

"Problems remain however in relation to the channeling of payments through the banking systems, both in relation to collection of premium and settlement of claims," said Andrew Bardot, executive officer with the International Group, which represents ship insurers.

This was due to the reluctance of many banks and financial institutions to process such payments, and was now the main concern for insurers and reinsurers, he said.

"Solutions are being found, but it is a difficult process and likely to remain so for the foreseeable future."

U.S. banks are forbidden to do business with Iran under domestic

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### Three Iranian Technicians Martyred:

# U.S. Jets, Daesh Massacre People in Kirkuk



Iraqi Kurds gather at a site of an attack by Daesh militants in Kirkuk, October 21, 2016.

KIRKUK (Dispatches) -- A U.S. airstrike killed 15 women on Friday at a shrine near the city of Kirkuk in northern Iraq, local officials and medics said.

"Fifteen women were killed and another 50 wounded in a raid that targeted a place of worship at Dakuk," local council chief Amir Huda Karam told AFP.

The toll from the afternoon raid was confirmed by Dr Abbas Mustafa Dakuki at the local hospital, some 50 kilometers (30 miles) south of Kirkuk.

The killing came after militants of

the Daesh group attacked Kirkuk in an apparent effort to divert thousands of troops and militiamen closing in on their stronghold in Mosul, Iraq's second city.

The assault on Kirkuk, which lies in an oil-producing region, killed 18 members of the security forces and workers at a power station outside the city, including three Iranians.

Iraqi government forces captured eight villages south and southeast of Mosul. Militia forces attacking from the north and east also captured several villages, according to statements from their respective

military commands overnight.

The offensive that started on Monday to capture Mosul is expected to become the biggest battle fought in Iraq since the U.S.-led invasion in 2003.

The United Nations says Mosul could require the biggest humanitarian relief operation in the world, with worst-case scenario forecasts of up to a million people being uprooted.

About 1.5 million residents are still believed to be inside Mosul. Daesh has taken 550 families from villages around Mosul and is hold-

ing them close to its locations in the city, probably as human shields, a spokeswoman for the UN human rights office said in Geneva.

Prime Minister Haidar al-Abadi, addressing a meeting in Paris via video link, said the offensive was advancing more quickly than planned.

Once inside Mosul, Iraqi special forces would have to go from street to street and from neighborhood to neighborhood to clear explosives and booby traps, the official said.

In Kirkuk, Daesh attacked several police buildings and a power station in the early hours of Friday and some of the attackers remained holed up in a mosque and an abandoned hotel.

The militants also cut the road between the city and the power station 30 km (20 miles) to the north.

The assailants in Kirkuk came from outside the city, said the head of Iraq's Special Forces, Lieutenant General Talib Shaghatai, speaking on a frontline east of Mosul. Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi reacted to the killing of the Iranian citizens in Kirkuk, saying these attacks are "the last breath of terrorists in Iraq."

Iraq's top Shia cleric, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, on Friday renewed a call to spare civilians.

"All those who are participating in the battle have to respect the humanitarian principles and refrain from seeking vengeance," said a sermon delivered in Sistani's name in the holy city of Karbala by one of his representatives.

## U.S. Claims Against Iran 'Suspicious, Paranoid'

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Iran has strongly dismissed U.S. accusations linking Tehran to alleged missile attacks on American warships in the Red Sea, denouncing the claims as "imaginary, whimsical, suspicious and baseless."

The strong-worded rebuttal by Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi on Thursday came after the top U.S. commander in the Middle East, Joseph Votel, said he thought Iran was playing a role in alleged missile launches.

"The contradictory and incomprehensible remarks by American officials in the past few days are incompatible, laced with paranoia, and inappropriate and a sign of their bewilderment," Qassemi said.

Last week, the U.S. claimed that its warships had been fired upon at least twice in the Red Sea off the coast of Yemen, blaming Houthis for the alleged attack. A U.S. destroyer then launched missile attacks against Yemen and de-

stroyed three radar sites.

Yemeni officials have rejected the allegations as "unfounded" aimed at providing a pretext for the intelligence and logistics support which the U.S. has provided to Saudi Arabia in its military campaign.

U.S. accusations came in the wake of a Saudi aerial attack on a funeral which killed more than 140 people attending a wake for the father of Yemen's interior minister in the capital Sana'a.

Some observers said U.S. allegations of Yemeni attacks on its warships aimed to turn away attention from the Sana'a carnage and reduce pressure on Washington over its aid to the Saudis.

Votel went even further on Wednesday, telling a Washington think tank that "some of the technology that we've seen there are things that are associated with" Iran.

"The American military, which through its direct and indirect aid

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## EU Backs Down on Russia Sanctions Threat

BRUSSELS (Dispatches) -- The European Union on Friday refrained from issuing an explicit threat of sanctions against Russia for supporting the Syrian government, amid divisions within the 28-member bloc over any such measure.

EU leaders, who had initially prepared a strongly-worded draft statement for a summit in Brussels, issued a watered-down version of the text at the end of the event.

The summit was held at the request of Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi to discuss EU's strategy toward Russia, which is helping the Syrian government battle terrorists in Aleppo and elsewhere.

The West has stepped up pressure on Russia to stop targeting militant-held neighborhoods in Aleppo and blamed the country for the worsening humanitarian situation in the city.

The original draft had said the EU was "considering all options, including further restrictive measures targeting individuals and entities supporting" Syria. The draft text

only mentioned Russia by name among the supporters of Damascus.

However, Renzi demanded that any explicit reference to sanctions be removed from the final statement.

"I believe there wouldn't have been any sense in inserting a reference to sanctions," the Italian prime minister told reporters after the summit.

The final statement was reworded to say the EU "strongly condemns" attacks by Syria "and its allies, notably Russia," and called for an "immediate cessation of hostilities."

Renzi's opposition to sanctions laid bare disagreements among EU members. European Council President Donald Tusk cried foul, saying Russian foreign policy was an attempt to "weaken the EU."

The European leader accused Russia of a myriad of offences, but said leaders had to forgo the sanctions threat to "keep the unity of the EU" toward Russia.

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