

Kayhan Group of Newspapers

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In the Name of the Most High Viewpoint

Are Trade Transactions Worth with Fraudulent Regimes?

By: Kayhan Int'l Staff Writer

It is gross injustice, or more properly outright fraud, on the part of countries purchasing crude oil and other goods from Iran worth billions of dollars and then refusing to pay the money on a variety of lame pretexts, including the criminal sanctions the US has imposed for the sole reason the Islamic Republic does not bow to its dictates.

With the UN being a passive spectator of Washington's international terrorism, there is no choice for Tehran but to aggressively pursue the case of its illegally frozen assets by unprincipled and fraudulent customers who are complicit in US crimes.

There is no question of Iran meekly submitting to this blackmail and waiting in vain for the Americans to show some flexibility so that it could beg for the release of its own money in installments, rather than getting back the full payment along with the interests accrued and the damages incurred.

An example in this regard is South Korea, a country created by the Americans in 1948 by dividing the Korean Peninsula at the 38th parallel and installing a regime that not only holds 51 million people hostage to US interests, but is forced to host thousands of terrorists from the other side of the world so as to prevent unification of this ancient east Asian land.

Currently, Seoul holds in its banks some ten billion dollars of money it owes to the Islamic Republic for crude oil purchases and is making all sorts of silly excuses to transfer it to Tehran.

Now comes the news that South Korea has agreed to release only "a part" of this huge amount of Iranian money, following a meeting in Tehran yesterday between its ambassador Ryu Jeong-hyun and Chief of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), Abdon-Nasser Hemmati.

The CBI statement said an agreement was reached on how the undisclosed paltry amount of Iran's illegally withheld money will be transferred to desired destinations.

It is nothing but peanuts, although Hemmati told Ryu that Iran will continue its legal efforts to obtain damages incurred from a "lack of cooperation by South Korean banks".

It is not known what measures Iran will take to compel fraudulent customer South Korea pay back the complete amount of ten billion dollars.

Hopefully, Iran will get back its money, not only from South Korea but also from other countries which have resorted to the same fraudulent policy of refusing to pay for oil and other imports from the Islamic Republic of Iran.

It is worth noting that this is not the first time these countries have betrayed Iran's trust in them following the illegal sanctions of the thug Donald Trump, who is now no longer the US president.

They had committed the same crime over a decade earlier during a similar policy of blackmail by Barack Obama, before releasing the illegally frozen Iranian money in installments or forcing Iran to enter into barter agreements, when the US lifted part of the sanctions after compelling Iranian negotiators to sign a flawed accord in Geneva in 2015 that reduced enrichment from 20 to a mere 3.67 percent, and gave Washington the veto power to endorse the deal every three months.

In view of this bitter experience, Iran ought to be extra cautious in trade transactions with weak or opportunist regimes, such as that of South Korea.

At the same time, no matter what the JCPOA meets, on no account should the Islamic Republic compromise its independence and sovereignty by holding talks on issues of vital interest to Iran and the Iranian people, such as nuclear, missile, and other national development projects, as well as its stabilizing role in the region to help the legal governments and the popular movements fight terrorism and the US bid to impose its hegemony.

Ayatollah Jannati Re-Elected as Head of Experts Assembly



Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati, center, chairs a meeting the Assembly of Experts along with his deputies Ayatollah Muhammad Ali Movahedi Kermani, right, and Ebrahim Raisi in Tehran, Feb. 22, 2021.

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Members of Iran's Assembly of Experts on Monday re-elected Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati as the chairman of the body, which is empowered to appoint and dismiss the Leader of the Islamic Revolution and supervise his performance.

They also re-elected Ayatollah Muhammad Ali Movahedi Kermani as the first deputy and Ebrahim Raisi, who is also the head of the Judiciary, as the second deputy of the assembly.

Speaking at the event, Ayatollah Jannati paid homage to General Qassem Soleimani, who was assassinated during a U.S. strike in Iraq on January 3, 2020, directly ordered by former president Donald Trump.

"May God damn Trump and

America and those who played a role in the assassination of this beloved man and made a nation suffer his loss," he said.

The Americans did not dare respond to Iran's attack against Ain al-Assad airbase in western Iraq, where U.S. forces were stationed, said Ayatollah Jannati, who is also the head of the Guardian Council, an oversight body which examines the qualifications of candidates in elections.

Five days after the assassination of General Soleimani, who was in Baghdad on an official visit at the time, Iran retaliated by firing dozens of missiles at Ain al-Assad air base in Al-Anbar Governorate, western Iraq, as well as another U.S. air base in Erbil, declaring that the attacks were part of its

promised "tough revenge" for the assassination.

Trump, who had threatened to attack Iran's positions in case of any attack by the Islamic Republic, backed down after Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) went on with the retaliation, which turned out to be a painful humiliation for him and his hawkish administration.

"Trump disgraced America and showed that they are not committed to anything," Ayatollah Jannati said.

He noted that while the United States' power is declining and coming to an end, Iran is gaining strength "and the future is ours."

"Our strength comes from the strength of God, and the weakness of America is beyond our imagi-

Ministry Rejects Direct Talks With U.S. on Prisoners

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Iran's foreign ministry has dismissed U.S. claims that Tehran and Washington had begun talks over prisoners held in the two countries, saying that there has been no direct talks on any matter.

Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said there are a number of Iranian prisoners in the United States who have been detained on false charges without going through due process, and securing their freedom has been always a priority for the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The spokesman, however, denied any direct contacts with the United States over the situation of prisoners under the new U.S. administration,

noting that some messages regarding this issue have been exchanged with American officials via the Swiss embassy in Tehran, which serves as the U.S. interests section, or foreign ministers of other countries.

"Our policy is to secure freedom of our countries' prisoners in the United States and we are ready for this issue, but we have had no direct talks with the United States," he said.

Earlier on Sunday, the White House national security adviser, Jake Sullivan, said Washington had begun communication with Tehran over the detention of American citizens.

Speaking with CBS News' "Face the Nation", Sullivan said it was a significant priority of the Biden administra-

tion to get the detained Americans "safely back home."

He said that the Biden administration would not accept a long-term proposition where "they continue to hold Americans in an unjust and unlawful manner."

"We have begun to communicate with the Iranians on this issue," Sullivan said when asked if the administration had started "hostage negotiations" with Iran.

Following his remarks, an Iranian informed official denied Sullivan's claim, saying the Iranian government has not entered into any direct talks with the U.S. government regarding the issue.

Nour News quoted the unnamed of-

nation," he said, adding, "Today, they (American rulers) are at each other's throats."

Trump ordered the assassination of General Soleimani as part of his "maximum pressure" policy against Tehran, which included harsh economic sanctions and reckless military provocations. He also targeted top Iranian leaders, including Ayatollah Jannati, with sanctions. Back then, the senior cleric joked about the restrictions, saying he wouldn't be able to visit the U.S. for Christmas anymore.

The Assembly of Experts also issued a statement at the conclusion of its eighth annual meet, stressing that Iran's defense and missile capabilities will never be subject to negotiations.

The 88-member chamber also described renegotiations with the U.S. on what has been already agreed upon as a "red line" of the Islamic Republic, stressing that all

(Continued on Page 7)

official as saying that the alleged American individuals are "prisoners who have been detained in accordance with the law and have enjoyed legal rights at all stages."

The informed source also dismissed the use of the term "hostage" for American prisoners as a distortion of facts by the American side.

The Islamic Republic has denied allegations that it detains certain Western citizens as what Western officials and media outlets claim to be "hostages."

The Iranian administration has repeatedly said the country's Judiciary is an independent entity, rejecting as unacceptable any foreign meddling in the issuance of sentences by Iranian judges.

FM Zarif: Saudi Arabia Cannot Win Yemen War

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Iran's Foreign Minister Muhammad Javad Zarif says Saudi Arabia's war on Yemen is doomed, and that the kingdom will not be able to impose its will on the Yemeni people through negotiations either.

"Saudi Arabia cannot either achieve military victory in Yemen or obtain what it has failed through military means via negotiations," Zarif told Lebanon's Al-Manar television network.

He recalled how the kingdom estimated in the beginning of the war that it would come out victorious within just three weeks. Six years have passed without Riyadh being able to achieve that goal, Zarif added.

Riyadh will not be able to get its own way through talks ei-

ther, the foreign minister said and invited the Persian Gulf's littoral states to sit down for talks and address the regional affairs together.

The Islamic Republic wants to see calm and security restored in Yemen, he said.

Back in 2016, Zarif forwarded Iran's proposal for the return of peace to Yemen. The proposal called for the cessation of the Saudi-led attacks, the removal of a Saudi-led siege, the transfer of humanitarian supplies to Yemen, and the holding of intra-Yemeni talks.

Earlier in February, United Nations Yemen envoy Martin Griffiths traveled to Tehran to consult with Iranian officials about the situation in the war-wracked country and a potential resolution

of the conflict.

The kingdom led its allies into the war in March 2015 to restore power to Yemen's former pro-Riyadh officials who had fled the country amid a power struggle and refused to stay behind to negotiate a solution.

Tens of thousands of Yemenis have died in the course of the war and the country has been pushed close to the brink of outright famine.

The Yemeni defense forces comprising the Army and Popular Committees, though, have continued resisting the aggressors.

On Sunday, Abdullah al-Hakim, chief of the Yemeni Army's military intelligence, said popular forces are about to liberate the west-central province of Ma'rib

as militants serving the Saudi-led coalition on the ground are laying down their arms in the face of advancing Yemeni forces.

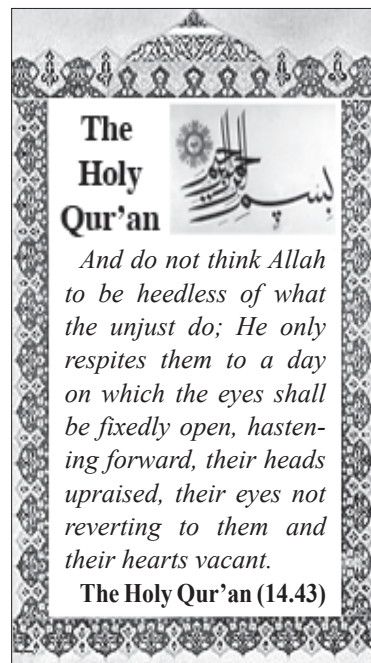
"Monumental victories and great advances have been made in all military areas," he said, Yemen's Al-Masirah television network reported.

The mercenaries have no other choice than to give up their arms, he added.

Ahmed al-Qane'a, a Yemeni official for reconciliation and national dialogue, said a general amnesty that has been announced by San'a for the mercenaries to cease hostilities and be granted clemency in return, is still in place.

"Each day, tens, hundreds, and

(Continued on Page 7)



PRAYER TIMINGS	
Noon (Zohr)	12:18
Evening (Maghreb)	18:13
Dawn (Fajr) "Tomorrow"	05:18
Sunrise "Tomorrow"	06:41