

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Iran on Tuesday condemned the European Union's move to blacklist several Iranian officials and institutions on a charge of "human rights violation".

"The Islamic Republic of Iran strongly condemns this move and considers it invalid," Foreign Ministry Saeed Khatibzadeh said in a statement. "Such acts are committed by those who claim to be supporters of, and falsely preach (respect for) human rights with political motives, but they have not only remained silent in the face of violations of Iranian people's rights due to the United States' inhuman and illegal sanctions, but also approved of such violations," he said.

Kayhan International



TEHRAN (Dispatches) – Iran on Tuesday reported a record 24,760 new COVID-19 cases in the past 24 hours, as the country faced a fourth coronavirus wave.

Health ministry spokeswoman Sima Sadat Lari said 24,760 new daily cases were identified, taking the total to 2,118,212 cases. The daily death toll rose to 291, the highest since Dec. 9, to bring the total number of fatalities to 65,055. Authorities have blamed the latest surge on millions travelling across the country for Iranian New Year last month and taking part in family gatherings.

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Viewpoint

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Iraq to Attain Security Via Expulsion of U.S. Troops



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Syria Launching Operation to Cleanse Raqqa From Daesh



The Prophet's Sermon on the Advent of Ramadhan

In the book "Uyoun Akhbar ar-Reza", compiled over a thousand years ago by the famous Iranian theologian, Shaikh Sadouq, it is narrated that Imam Reza (AS) has related on the chain of authority of his illustrious ancestors from the Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali (AS), that once on the advent of the blessed month of Ramadhan, Prophet Muhammad (SAWA) addressing the people delivered the following sermon:

"O People! The month of Allah has come with its mercies, blessings and forgiveness. Allah has decreed this month the best of all months; its days the best of all days, its nights the best of all nights and its hours the best of all hours. It is the month in which He has invited you (to fast and pray); He has honoured you in it. Every breath you take in it has the reward of tasbeeh (praise of Allah); your sleep is worship, your good deeds are accepted and your invocations answered. Therefore, you must invoke your Lord in right earnest with hearts that are free from sin and evil, and pray that Allah may help you to keep fasts, and to recite the Qur'an. Indeed, miserable is the one who is deprived of Allah's forgiveness in this great month. While fasting, visualize the hunger and thirst of the Day of Judgement. Give alms to the poor and the needy. Pay respect to your elders, have sympathy for your youngsters and be kind towards your relatives and kinsmen. Guard your tongue against unworthy words; your eyes from scenes not worth seeing (forbidden sights); and your ears from sounds that should not be heard. Be kind to orphans so that if your children were to become orphans they will also be treated with kindness. Do repent to Allah for your sins and supplicate with raised hands at the times of prayers as these are the best of times, during which Almighty Allah Looks at His servants with mercy; Answers if they supplicate; Responds if they call; Grants if they ask; and Accepts if they entreat."

"O people! You have made your conscience the slave of your desires. Make it free, by invoking Him for forgiveness. Your back is breaking under the heavy load of your sins; so prostrate before Him for long intervals and make it lighter. Do understand fully well that Allah has promised in the Name of His Majesty and Honour that He will not take to task such people who perform the prayers and the prostrations, and that He will guard their bodies against the fire of hell on the Day of Judgement."

"O people! If anybody from amongst you arranges for the iftar (food for ending of fast after sunset) of any believers, then Allah will give the reward as if he/she had set free a slave, and He will forgive previous sins."

When the audience asked: "But everybody amongst us does not have the means to do so," the Prophet replied: **"Keep yourself away from the fire of hell (by providing iftar), though it may consist of only half a date or even some water, if you have nothing else."**

The Prophet, in continuation of his sermon, said:

"O people! Anybody who in this month cultivates good manners will walk over the siraat (the bridge leading to Paradise via the rim of hell) on the day when feet will tend to slip. Anybody who in this month may take light work from servants, Allah will make easy his/her accounting, and anybody who does not annoy others in it, Allah will keep him/her safe from His wrath on the Day of Judgement. Whoever respects and treats an orphan with kindness in it, Allah shall look at him/her with kindness on that Day. Anyone who treats well kinsfolk in it, Allah will bestow His Mercy on him/her on the Day of Judgement, while anybody who maltreats kinsfolk in it, Allah will deprive him/her of His Mercy. Whoever offers recommended prayers in it, Allah will save him/her from hell; and whoever observes in it obligatory acts of worship, the reward will be sevenfold for such acts compared to other months. Whoever repeatedly recites salawat (blessings) on me in it Allah will keep the scales of good deeds heavy (on Judgement Day) whilst the scales of others would be tending to lightness. In this month whoever recites an ayah of the Qur'an, the reward will be that of reciting the whole Qur'an in other months."

"O people! The gates of Paradise remain open in this month, do pray to your Lord that they may not be closed for you; while the gates of hell are closed, do pray to your Lord that they may never be opened for you. Satans have been handcuffed, so invoke your Lord not to let them dominate you."

Imam Ali (AS) says: I asked: **"O Messenger of Allah, what are the best deeds in this month?"** The Prophet replied: **"O Aba'l-Hasan, the best of deeds in this month is to be far from what Allah has forbidden."**

The Imam seeing the Prophet visibly in grief, said: **"O Messenger of Allah what makes you weep?"** In reply the Prophet foretold the tragedy that was to befall Imam Ali (AS) decades later in Ramadhan:

"O Ali, I weep for that which will befall you in this month. (visualizing myself) to be in your place when you will be praying to your Lord, and the most wicked person of all times, like the one who chopped off the feet of the camel of (the tribe of) Thamoud (which was proof of Prophet Saleh's mission) will strike you on your head and your beard will be dyed in blood."

On being informed of his martyrdom, the first thought that occurred to Imam Ali (AS) was not about the life of this mortal world but about his faith, and he asked: **"O Messenger of Allah, will my faith be secure?"** The Prophet replied: **"Yes, your faith will be secure."**

The Prophet continued his sermon, as his companions listened – in amazement and some in disbelief:

"O Ali! Whoever kills you has (in fact) killed me; whoever annoys you has annoyed me; and whoever slanders you has slandered me, because you are to me like my soul. Your spirit is my spirit, and your nature is my nature. Surely, Allah the Praised and the Glorious created me then you; chose me then you; and selected me for Prophethood and selected you for Imamate. Whoever denies your Imamate has (in fact) denied my Prophethood."

"O Ali! You are my legate and father of my (grand)children, and husband of my daughter, and my Caliph (vicegerent) over my ummah both in my lifetime and after my death. Your bidding is my bidding, and your forbidding is my forbidding. By the Power that granted me Prophethood and made me the most excellent of creation, you are the Hujjat-Allah (Argumentation of Allah) over His creatures, and His Trustee over mysteries and His Caliph over His creatures."

Following Sabotage at Natanz:

Iran Starts 60% Uranium Enrichment



President Hassan Rouhani, second from right, listens to the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, Ali Akbar Salehi, while visiting an exhibition of Iran's nuclear achievements in Tehran on April 10, 2021.

TEHRAN (Dispatches) – Iran said on Tuesday it would start enriching uranium to 60% purity, higher than the program ever has before, after an attack on its Natanz nuclear facility, an Iranian nuclear negotiator said Tuesday.

Announcing 60% enrichment, chief nuclear negotiator Abbas Araqchi also said Iran would introduce 1,000 more centrifuge machines at Natanz, a nuclear installation targeted on Sunday that Tehran called an act of sabotage.

"From tonight, practical prepara-

tions for 60% enrichment will begin in Natanz; 60% uranium is used to make a variety of radiopharmaceuticals," Iranian nuclear agency spokesman Behrouz Kamalvandi said.

The International Atomic Energy Agency had been informed of the decision, Araqchi said.

The official is in Vienna for talks with the remaining signatories of the 2015 nuclear deal, due to resume on Thursday.

"We believe that this round of negotiations is the time for the U.S. to

present a list. I hope that I can go back to Tehran with the list of sanctions that will be lifted," Araqchi said in Vienna. "Otherwise, I don't believe we can continue like this. Otherwise, I believe this would be a waste of time."

Araqchi said informal talks would start Tuesday night, with a formal session beginning Thursday.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei had said in February that Iran would go to 60% enrichment if it was needed. "We are determined to develop

our nuclear capabilities in line with the needs of the country," Ayatollah Khamenei said then. "For this reason, Iran's enrichment will not be limited to 20%, and we will take whatever action is necessary for the country."

Iran previously had said it could use uranium enriched up to 60% for nuclear-powered ships.

Iranian Foreign Minister Muhammad Javad Zarif issued a warning to Washington.

"Americans should know that neither sanctions nor sabotage actions would provide them with an instrument for talks," Zarif said in Tehran alongside visiting Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov. "They should know that these actions would only make the situation difficult for them."

Zarif separately renewed his earlier warning to Israel over the sabotage, saying that if Iran determines the occupying regime was behind it, "then Israel will get its response and will see what a stupid thing it has done."

Kayhan urged Iran to "walk out of the Vienna talks, suspend all nuclear commitments, retaliate against Israel and identify and dismantle the domestic infiltration network behind the sabotage."

"Despite evidence that shows the role of the U.S. as main instigator of nuclear sabotage against Iran, unfortunately some statesmen, by purging the U.S. of responsibility, (aid) Washington's crimes against the people of Iran," the paper said in Tuesday's editions.

Lavrov: No Limit to Iran-Russia Expansion of Ties

TEHRAN (Dispatches) – Russia put on a united front with Iran against the United States and Europe Tuesday amid talks in Vienna on bringing Washington back into a troubled 2015 nuclear deal and removing sanctions on the Islamic Republic.

Iran and the remaining parties to the deal have been discussing how to remove the U.S. sanctions that then president Donald Trump reimposed when he quit the deal in 2018.

"We are counting on the fact that we will be able to save the agreement and that Washington will finally return to full and complete implementation of the corresponding UN resolution," Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov told a joint press conference with his Iranian counterpart Muhammad Javad Zarif after talks in Tehran.

Lavrov also blasted the European Union for slapping sanctions on eight Iranian security officials, saying that the blacklisting threatens current efforts to restore

the deal.

"There is no coordination at the EU. The left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing," he said.

He stressed that "if this decision was taken voluntarily in the midst of negotiations in Vienna to save (the deal), then it is no longer unfortunate, it is a mistake worse than a crime".

In response to EU sanctions, Iran said Monday it is suspending cooperation with Europe on various fields including "terrorism, drug (trafficking) and refugees".

Zarif warned the U.S. that it would gain no extra leverage in Vienna through "acts of sabotage" and sanctions.

He also blasted the occupying regime of Israel, which Iran has accused of being behind a Sunday sabotage attack on its Natanz uranium enrichment facility, of having made a "very bad gamble".

"We have no problem with returning to implementing our JCPOA commitments," Zarif said

Police, Protesters Clash for 2nd Night in Minneapolis

BROOKLYN CENTER, Minn. (AP) — Police clashed with protesters for a second night in the Minneapolis suburb where an officer who authorities say apparently intended to fire a Taser, not a handgun, fatally shot a Black man during a traffic stop.

Brooklyn Center Police Chief Tim Gannon described Sunday's shooting death of 20-year-old Daunte Wright as "an accidental discharge." The shooting sparked protests and unrest in an area already on edge because of the trial of the first of four police officers charged in George Floyd's death.

Hundreds of protesters faced off against police in Brooklyn Center after nightfall Monday, and hours after a dusk-to-dawn curfew was announced by the governor. When the protesters wouldn't disperse, police began firing gas canisters and flash-bang grenades, sending clouds wafting over the crowd and chasing some protesters away. A long line of police in riot gear, rhythmically pushing their clubs in

front of them, began slowly forcing back the remaining crowds.

"Move back!" the police chanted. "Hands up! Don't shoot!" the crowd chanted back.

In Minneapolis, 13 arrests were made, including for burglaries and curfew violations, police said.

Law enforcement agencies had stepped up their presence across the Minneapolis area after Sunday night violence. The number of Minnesota National Guard troops was expected to more than double to over 1,000 by Monday night.

Brooklyn Center is a modest suburb just north of Minneapolis that has seen its demographics shift dramatically in recent years. In 2000, more than 70% of the city was white. Today, a majority of residents are Black, Asian or Latino.

Mike Elliott, the city's first Black mayor, immigrated from Liberia as a child. On Monday night, he was joined by Keith Ellison, the state's first Black attorney general, in addressing

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