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In the Name of the Most High Viewpoint

Lebanon's Democratic Spirit Alive & Flourishing

By: Kayhan Int'l Staff Writer

Lebanon is supposed to be a sovereign independent country with functioning democratic institutions including parliamentary elections that are a barometer for determining the people's support for the views of their representatives regarding domestic, regional and international issues; and of course, full constitutional rights for all sectors of the population, with the three major denominations allotted the three top decision-making posts.

As a result, in accordance with the percentage of the population based on the 1946 census, the president is a Maronite Christian, the prime minister a Sunni Muslim, and the parliamentary speaker a Shi'a Muslim.

Over the past 75 years the ratios have dramatically changed with the first two groups falling in national percentage, while the third group, although not yet the absolute majority, showing a sharp increase in numbers to the extent that today it accounts for almost 45 percent of all Lebanese nationals.

The Shi'a Muslims, whose chief representative is the legendary anti-terrorist organization, the Hezbollah, followed by Amal, are not demanding any change in the sharing of the three top decision-making posts in order not to disturb the delicate balance in governing the country.

They are, however, determined that Lebanon should neither be mortgaged to international bully the US, nor to the oil-rich regional bully Saudi Arabia – the most undemocratic and unrepresentative Arab country, ruled by the Wahhabi minority cult with no identity and rights for either the 55 percent Sunni Muslims or the 30 percent Shi'a Muslims,

It is indeed a matter of regret that the national, political, democratic, and religious consciousness of the Lebanese people which is not limited to the Shi'a Muslims, but prevails amongst the Christian and Sunni populations of the country as well, is not found in those who like to call themselves politicians and consider themselves leaders.

These persons, have unfortunately made the fatal mistake of undermining the independence of their homeland by being browbeaten by the US and by the regime in Riyadh, whom some witless figures have called a "brother" that should not by annoyed through any reference to its crimes against fellow Arabs – as is evident in the almost 7-year war imposed on Yemen and by the brutal suppression of the Shi'as of the Eastern region who have no share in their own oil wealth.

Anyway, thanks to the indomitable nationalist, democratic, Arab, and Islamic spirit of Lebanon's Shi'a Muslims, last Wednesday the 6th martyrdom anniversary of Ayatollah Sheikh Baqer Nimr an-Nimr was held in Beirut, where opposition figures from Saudi Arabia and revolutionaries from Yemen were in attendance.

These included prominent activists such as Fouad Ibrahim, Abbas Sadeq, Hamza al-Hassan and Sheikh Jasem Mahmoud Ali. They paid glowing tribute to Martyr Nimr who was brutally beheaded in early January 2016.

They recalled his famous statement issued in 2011: Either we live in our homeland as free men, or die and be buried in it as pious men. We have no other choice.

Beirut-based Saudi opposition figure, Ali Hashem, told The Associated Press that Lebanon's democratic laws give him the right to express his opinion against the atrocities of the Riyadh regime, which he said will not rule Arabia forever.

A senior official of Hezbollah, Hashem Safieddine said Saudi Arabia should stop its policy of "bullying" others as well as its interference in Lebanon's internal affairs.

Despite the Saudi tag of terrorism on Hezbollah in line with US-Zionist policies, he said with political sagacity: "We want the best relations with Riyadh but it should stop its policy of bullying. Those who target us will get a response."

President Raisi: Neutralizing Sanctions Not Dependent on Vienna Talks



President Ebrahim Raisi talks to local people on Hormuz Island, southwest Iran on Friday.

TEHRAN -- President Ebrahim Raisi said Friday efforts to neutralize U.S. sanctions on Iran are not tied to Vienna negotiations with the remaining signatories of the 2015 nuclear agreement.

"Although the pursuit of removing sanctions is a serious agenda of the government, the effort in the thirteenth government to neutralize the sanctions has not been dependent on negotiations, so that today and under the sanctions situation, our oil sales have increased so much that we no longer worry and the proceeds are also returning to the country," Raisi wrote in a tweet.

Diplomats from Iran and the other remaining parties to the 2015 Iran agreement, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), are engaged in the eighth round of diplomatic negotiations in Austria's capital to bring

the U.S. back into the deal.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Thursday that there are only "a few weeks left" to save the JCPOA, warning that Washington was ready to look at "other options" if the Vienna talks failed.

"We have, I think, a few weeks left to see if we can get back to mutual compliance," Blinken said in an interview with U.S. public radio station NPR.

"We're very, very short on time," because "Iran is getting closer and closer to the point where they could produce on very, very short order enough fissile material for a nuclear weapon," he claimed.

Blinken said Tehran has made nuclear advances that "will become increasingly hard to reverse because they're learning things, they're doing new things as a result of having broken out of their

constraints under the agreement."

The U.S. and the Europeans use the hypothesis of an atomic weapon for propaganda against Iran's nuclear energy program which has been subject to the most intrusive UN inspections ever.

The UN nuclear agency has repeatedly verified the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear activities. Moreover, the Islamic Republic has a religious fatwa in place, issued by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Seyyed Ali Khamenei, forbidding nuclear weapons.

The U.S. abandoned the JCPOA in 2018 under former president Donald Trump and imposed more than a thousand sanctions on the Islamic Republic. Undoing Trump's wrongs would mean the U.S. needs to verifiably remove all of those sanctions.

In a letter addressed to U.S. Secretary
(Continued on Page 7)

Iran Slams Suspension of Voting Right at UN

TEHRAN -- The Iranian Foreign Ministry has strongly denounced suspension of its right to vote at the United Nations, stressing that the United States' cruel sanctions have led to the situation.

Spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh made the remarks after the Islamic Republic was denied the right to cast its vote on various matters at the UN General Assembly and the UN Security Council, due to the sanctions that prevent the country from paying up its membership dues for a second consecutive year.

"As a founding and active member of the world body, Iran considers itself duty-bound to fully and timely pay its membership fee at the UN and other international agencies and organizations,"

he noted.

However, the country has come across some difficulties concerning payment matters as a result of "the U.S.'s oppressive and illegal sanctions," the official added.

The U.S. returned the sanctions around four years ago after leaving the 2015 agreement with Iran and world powers that had partially suspended the coercive economic measures.

Tehran has prepared the fees and is conducting necessary consultations with others to resolve the issue through a "safe payment channel," said the spokesman.

He also urged the UN secretary general and the world body's secretariat to

take the situation of sanction-stricken countries into account and do not deny them their good offices that could enable them to pay up their membership dues.

Secretary General Antonio Guterres said Tuesday that a total of 11 countries, including Iran, are behind in their payments.

Under the UN charter, a member country's right to vote is suspended when its arrears equal or exceed the amount of dues it should have paid over the preceding two years, but if the outstanding debt is deemed to be "due to conditions beyond the control of the member," the assembly may let that country continue to vote.

Yemeni FM Welcomes Iran's Peace Initiative

SANAA (Dispatches) -- Yemeni Foreign Minister Hisham Sharaf Abdullah has praised the Iranian peace initiative, saying it presents an effective solution to the ongoing conflict in the war-ravaged country.

"The Iranian initiative offers a solution, deals with the war and blockade in Yemen, and provides a mechanism for inclusive intra-Yemeni dialogue as well as ways to de-escalate the status quo," Abdullah said on Thursday.

"The study or slight modifications of the Iranian initiative will help resolution of the lingering crisis in Yemen, and everyone should consider the plan," the foreign minister of the Yemeni National Salvation Government

added.

In April 2015, Iran proposed a four-point peace plan for Yemen. The plan called for an immediate ceasefire and end of all foreign military attacks, humanitarian assistance, a resumption of broad national dialogue and "establishment of an inclusive national unity government."

Abdullah noted that Saudi Arabia was looking for a pretext to prolong its devastating military aggression against Yemen.

"What we want to tell them is the fact that they will not manage to defeat the Yemeni nation through their onslaught. All we want is negotiations in good faith," Abdullah stated.

"Massacre and destruction is not the right way," he said. "We are fighting for our nation. We do not want anything from Saudi Arabia, but Riyadh seeks dominance over our country."

He called on the Saudi-led coalition to end its support for takfiri terrorist groups in Yemen, stressing that the foreign-backed extremists would not lead to a peaceful settlement of Yemen crisis by any means.

Abdullah also lambasted Saudi Arabia for having used footage from a documentary on the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq to accuse Yemeni armed forces of stockpiling ballistic missiles in the besieged Red Sea port city of Hudaydah.

(Continued on Page 7)

The
Holy
Qur'an



And whenever a chapter is revealed, saying: Believe in Allah and strive hard along with His Apostle, those having amplex of you and say: Leave us (behind), that we may be with those who sit.

The Holy Qur'an (9.86)

PRAYER TIMINGS

Noon (Zohr)	12:14
Evening (Maghreb)	17:33
Dawn (Fajr) "Tomorrow"	05:45
Sunrise "Tomorrow"	07:14

Gen. Hajizadeh: Solid-Fuel Rocket Launched Into Space

TEHRAN -- The commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC)'s Aerospace Division said Thursday Iran has mastered the technology of satellite carriers and has tested its first carrier rocket using solid fuel.

"From now on, Iran will be able to launch a great number of satellites using low-cost engines," Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh told a gathering of religious scholars in the holy city of Qom.

He touched on a recent test on an Iranian satellite carrier engine operating on solid fuel, saying it was successfully carried out for the first time in the country.

"All Iranian satellite carriers tested over the past two years operated on liquid fuel. But in this test, we succeeded to use a solid fuel engine with a 66-tonne thrust," the commander added.

Hajizadeh said Iran's new satellite carriers are made of non-metal and composite fuselage, which increases the rocket's energy and leads to considerable saving in relevant costs.

Composites also make a rocket lighter so it can boost a heavier satellite or payload into orbit.

In December 2020, Iran's Defense Ministry announced its first successful launch of a domestically-built satellite carrier rocket named Simorgh (Phoenix), sending three research devices into space.

Last month, Iran said it launched a rocket with a satellite carrier bearing three devices into space.

The State Department at the time said it remained concerned by Iran's space launches, which it claimed "pose a significant proliferation concern" in regards to Tehran's ballistic missile program.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh stressed that scientific and research progress, including in the field of aerospace, is Iran's inalienable right.