

TEHRAN – Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi said here Wednesday the U.S. is undoubtedly the axis and at the apex of all evil acts in the world after the country vetoed a UN Security Council resolution for a ceasefire in Gaza.

The president said the U.S. government is the main sponsor of the Zionist regime's crimes and genocidal atrocities in Gaza and the one that is responsible for the continuation of crimes against Palestinians.

SANAA (Dispatches) -- Yemeni authorities have held "constructive talks" with the representatives of the EU to ensure the safety of shipping in the Red Sea, Deputy Foreign Minister Hussein al-Ezzi said Wednesday.

His country has ensured EU authorities during bilateral talks that the Red Sea is safe for international transit. "We once again reiterate that the Red Sea is absolutely safe. Only passage to ships linked to three parties, namely the US, Israel and Britain, are blocked," he said.


Viewpoint

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PM: Iraq No Longer Needs U.S. Forces



The Blessed Eve of Mid Sha'ban

By: Seyyed Ali Shahbaz

We are on the threshold of the auspicious 15th of Sha'ban, for which certain rituals have been prescribed. It is also the eve on the morning of which the 12th and Last Infallible Heir of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA), Imam Mahdi al-Qa'em (AS), who will reappear in the end times to fill the earth with peace, prosperity, was born in Samarra, in 255 AH (869 AD). Here we present you excerpts of the merits and observances of the blessed eve of mid Sha'ban translated by Seyyed Ali Quli Qara'i from "Mafatih al-Jinan":

The Prophet's 6th Infallible Heir, Imam Ja'far as-Sadeq (AS) says that his father, Imam Mohammad Baqer (AS) when asked about the excellence of this night, replied: "It is the best of nights after the Night of Qadr. During it, God Almighty confers His Grace on His servants and forgives them out of His Favour and Munificence. Therefore, try earnestly to obtain nearness to God during the course of this night. Indeed it is a night wherein God has sworn by His Sacred Being not to turn away empty-handed any supplicant from His Threshold, unless something sinful is requested. It is a night which God Almighty has appointed for us, the progeny of the Prophet, in the same way that He appointed the Night of Qadr for our Prophet. Therefore, apply yourself to celebrating His praise and supplicating Him this night."

First, one should perform a bath, an act which leads to remission of sins. Second, observing the night's vigil while engaging in prayer, supplication and "istighfar", or seeking forgiveness from the Lord Most High, as was the practice of the Prophet's 4th Infallible Heir, Imam Zain al-Abedin (AS). It is stated in a hadith that whoever keeps vigil during this night, his heart shall not die on the day when the hearts die.

The Third highly recommended act on this night is performance of the "ziyarah" of the Martyr of Karbala, Imam Husain (AS). This is the most meritorious of observances and an effective means for forgiveness of sins. It has been said that whoever wishes to shake hands with the spirits of the 124,000 prophets, should perform the "ziyarah" of Imam Husain (AS) this night (in Karbala). The least one can do is to ascend the roof of the house, cast a glance to the right and the left, raise the head toward the sky and greet the Imam with the following words:

"O Abu Abdullah, peace upon you! Peace upon you, and may Allah's mercy and His blessings be upon you!"

Whoever does this, at whatever time and regardless of his location, there shall be written for him/her the reward of a Hajj pilgrimage and an Umrah.

According to Imam Sadeq (AS) the following "dua" is meant for this night:

"Allah, You are the Living, the All-Sustainer, the All-Exalted, the All-Great, the All-Creator, the All-Provider, the Giver of life and the Causer of death, the Beginner, and the Originator. To You belong all Glory, Grace, and Praise, and to You belong all Favours, Generosity, Munificence, Command, Majesty, and Thanks! You are One and have no partner! O Single, O One, O All-Embracing, O You Who neither begat, nor were begotten, nor have You any equal!

"Bless Mohammad and the Progeny of Mohammad and forgive me and have mercy upon me! Suffice me concerning that which is of concern to me, pay my debts, and expand my Your provision, for You resolve every vital matter on this night, and provide any of Your creatures that You wish! So provide me, as You are the Best of providers! Indeed You have said, and You are the Best of speakers, "Ask Allah for His grace." So I beseech You for Your grace, having turned toward You, putting my reliance on the son of Your Prophet, I pin my hopes in You! So have mercy on me, O Most Merciful of the merciful!"

Here is another "dua" for this night quoted from Prophet Mohammad (SAWA):

"O Allah, grant us a share of Your Awe that may serve as a barrier between us and disobedience to You. Grant us a share of Your Obedience that will enable us to attain Your approval. Grant us a share of certainty that may enable us to bear with ease the afflictions of this world! O Allah, grant us to enjoy the benefit of hearing, sight and strength, as long as You keep us alive! Appoint him our heir and avenge our blood against those who wrong us. Help us against those who are hostile to us, and do not let our afflictions be those that affect our religion. Do not make mundane concerns our biggest worry, and the sum and substance of our knowledge. Do not impose on us someone who will show us no pity, by Your mercy, O Most Merciful of the merciful!"

The following supplication is tantamount to performing the "ziyarah" of the Lord of the Age, Imam Mahdi (AS) – may Allah hasten his reappearance.

"O Allah, for the sake of this night and for the sake of him who was born on it, Your Testament and the Promised Saviour (by virtue of whose birth) You have added to its merit, thus fulfilling Your Word, truly and justly: there is none who can change Your Words or repeal Your Signs. He is Your brilliant light, Your Shining Radiance, the banner of light in the pitch dark night, who is concealed and in occultation. Exalted is his birthday and honoured is his lineage. The angels are his assistants, and God is his Supporter and Sponsor, when the promised time comes the angels will be among his assistants. "He is the Sword of Allah that never misses its aim, and His Light that never grows dim. He is the gentle one who never deviates. (The Imams are) the axis of the age, the spirits of the era, the guardians of Divine sovereignty, the destinations of that which comes down in the Night of Ordainment, the superiors at Resurrection, the interpreters of His Revelations, and the guardians of His Commands and Prohibitions. O Allah, bless their Seal and their Qa'em, who is concealed from their realms. O Allah, enable us to witness his days, his appearance and his rising, and appoint us to be among his helpers, avenging the martyrs alongside him. Write us among his supporters and dedicated friends; bring us to life in his reign, prosperous, enriched by his company, defending his cause, and secure from all ills, O Most Merciful of the merciful. All Praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds, and may His Blessings be on our master, Muhammad, the Seal of the Prophets and Envoys, and on the truthful members of his household and blessed progeny. (O God), may Your Curse be on all oppressors! Judge between us and them, O Fairest of all judges."

Among observances of this blessed night are the special "salawaat" from Imam Zain al-Abedin (AS) that is recited daily in this month at the time of noon. It is also highly recommended to recite on this night the "Du'a Kumail", the famous supplication taught by the Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali ibn Abi Taleb (AS), to his disciple Kumail ibn Ziyad, which is indeed an eloquently moving petition in the Divine Court that opens up the doors of mercy for the suppliants.

Abu Yahya narrates: "I asked my master Imam Ja'far Sadeq (AS) about the best supplication for this night. He replied: "After offering the Isha Prayer, perform two rak'a'ahs with "Surat al-Hamd" and "Surat al-Kaferoun" in the first, and "al-Hamd" and "Surat at-Tawhid" in the second. After salaam, say "Subhan-Allah" (Glory to God) 33 times, "al-Hamdu lillah" (Praised be Allah) 33 times, and "Allahu Akbar" (God is Greatest) 34 times. Then recite this supplication: "O You, Who are the Refuge of Your servants in exigencies and with whom the creatures take shelter in misfortunes! O Knower of all that is open and hidden! O You, from Whom are not hidden the thoughts that pass in the minds and their unrestrained ideas! O Lord of the creatures and the earth's denizens! O You in Whose Power is the dominion of all the heavens and the earths! You are Allah, there is no god besides You, and I turn to You for there is no god besides You! O You besides whom there is no god, appoint me this night among those at whom You look and have mercy on them, listen to their supplications and answer

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World Condemns U.S. Veto of Gaza Ceasefire 'Diplomatic Catastrophe of the Century'



Some 1.4 million people in Rafah now live in crowded shelters and makeshift tents as the Zionist regime plans a full-scale invasion of the area.

TEHRAN – Condemnations poured in from world countries after the U.S. once again vetoed a United Nations Security Council resolution that demanded an immediate ceasefire in Israel's months-long genocidal war on the besieged Gaza Strip.

The Algeria-drafted resolution called for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza and the "unconditional" release of prisoners, with representatives of 13 countries at the 15-member Security Council voting in favor of the resolution and Britain abstaining.

The veto, which marks the third time Washington has opposed such a resolution, drew criticism from many countries including China, Russia, Saudi Arabia and even close U.S. allies, France and Slovenia.

Iran's Foreign Minister Hussein Amir-Abdollahian called the veto the "diplomatic catastrophe of the century", saying the United States remains responsible for Israel's

Aid Agencies Warn of Looming Famine in Gaza

GAZA STRIP (Dispatches) – Heavy fighting rocked besieged Gaza on Wednesday as aid agencies warned of looming famine and new talks were held in Cairo towards a ceasefire and a deal to release captives.

The White House sent Middle East envoy Brett McGurk for renewed talks involving mediators and Hamas, a day after a United Nations Security Council resolution calling for a ceasefire was blocked by the U.S.

Global concern has spiraled over the high civilian death toll and dire humanitarian crisis in the Israeli war on Gaza.

Israeli strikes again stalled the sporadic aid deliveries for desperate civilians in Gaza, where the UN has warned the population of 2.4 million is on the brink of famine and could face an "explosion" of child deaths.

The UN World Food Program said it was forced to halt aid deliveries in north Gaza because of "complete chaos and violence" after a truck convoy encountered gunfire and was ransacked by looters. Hamas called the move a

savage campaign in Gaza since early October.

"This continued veto clearly makes the White House responsible for the continuation of the genocide by the fake Israeli regime in Gaza and its war crimes in the West Bank," the Iranian minister wrote in a post on X. "The world must hold the U.S. accountable."

China warned that Washington's decision to veto the resolution has pushed the war in Gaza into an

Asif Ali Zardari, the husband of assassinated former prime minister Benazir Bhutto, as president.

"The Pakistan Peoples Party and Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz have attained the numbers and we will form a government," said PPP chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, the son of Zardari and Bhutto.

"We are hopeful that Shehbaz Sharif will soon become the prime minister of the country and the whole of Pakistan should pray that the government should be successful."

Sharif, seated next to Bhutto, added: "After 76 years, we find ourselves dependent on loans, and overcoming this situation is easier said than done. There are significant challenges that we are facing ... We have to take Pakistan out of these challenges."

Bhutto Zardari said that ministerial portfolios had been agreed upon and would be announced in the coming days.

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Under Power-Sharing Agreement, Shehbaz Sharif to Return to Pakistan Premiership

ISLAMABAD (AFP) – Two Pakistan parties have reached a power-sharing agreement that will return Shehbaz Sharif to the premiership, leaving out politicians loyal to jailed former leader Imran Khan despite winning the most seats in this month's vote.

The army-backed Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) said they had settled days of negotiations on securing a majority to form a coalition government that will also include several smaller parties.

Candidates loyal to Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party won the most seats but were forced to stand as independents.

After weeks of negotiations, Khan's adversaries announced at a late-night press conference in the capital Islamabad that a power-sharing agreement had been reached.

Under the deal, the PML-N and PPP will put forward former leader Sharif as prime minister and

"even more dangerous" situation.

"China voted in favor of the draft resolution," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told a regular briefing in Beijing. "The United States has once again single-handedly vetoed it, pushing the situation in Gaza into an even more dangerous situation, in which all parties concerned... have expressed their strong disappointment and dissatisfaction."

Russia's Ambassador to the UN Vasily Nebenzia said the U.S. veto marked "another black page in the history of the Security Council."

Nebenzia said the U.S. was trying to play for time so that Israel could complete its "inhuman plans" for Gaza, namely to squeeze the Palestinians out of the territory and completely "cleanse" the enclave.

The Russian envoy added that no matter how bitter the "aftertaste" of the vote may be, "we are not in the mood to give up."

France's UN envoy Nicolas de Riviere expressed regret that the resolution "could not be adopted, given the disastrous situation" in Gaza.

De Riviere underlined that France, which voted for the resolution, would continue to work towards all captives being released and for a ceasefire to be "implemented immediately."

Amar Bendjama, Algeria's UN

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