

## NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran executes  
terrorist  
ringleader

MIZAN

## National Desk

Iran on Saturday executed a Swedish-Iranian dissident convicted of leading an Arab separatist group which launched several attacks, including one on a military parade in 2018 that killed 25 people, the Iranian Judiciary said.

The Swedish Foreign Ministry said it had summoned Iran's deputy ambassador to protest the execution of Habib Farajollah Chaab, which it confirmed took place earlier in the day.

Chaab had been sentenced to death for being "corrupt on earth," a capital offence under Iran's Islamic laws.

Iran brought him to trial in 2022 on charges of leading the Arab Struggle Movement for the Liberation of Ahvaz, which seeks a separate state in the oil-rich Khuzestan Province in southwestern Iran, and plotting and carrying out "numerous bombings and terrorist operations."

Iranian  
destroyers  
equipped with  
homegrown  
cruise missiles

Iran's Navy Commander Rear Admiral Shahram Irani has announced that the country's destroyers have been equipped with "Abu Mahdi" cruise missiles, which will be unveiled soon. In an interview with Fars news agency, Irani unveiled plans to equip the country's destroyers with Abu Mahdi cruise missiles that can perform well in the electronic warfare space, adding that the tests on this missile have been carried out.

He further noted that the combat capability, the destruction rate, and the range of the Abu Mahdi cruise missiles are considerable, adding that increasing the range of the missiles is on the agenda.

Implementing Iran-Uzbekistan  
deals to boost ties: **Raeisi**

## International Desk

In a meeting with the visiting Uzbek parliament speaker, Iran's President Ebrahim Raeisi stressed that the implementation of bilateral agreements will enhance the level of bilateral relations.

Raeisi received the Speaker of the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis (Parliament) of Uzbekistan Nurdinjon Ismoilov for a meeting in Tehran on Saturday.

During the meeting, the Iranian president noted that 18 cooperation agreements and memoranda of understanding have been signed between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Uzbekistan.

"The exchange of experiences between the parliaments of Iran and Uzbekistan will be an effective and positive step towards the development of relations between the two countries," Raeisi continued.

He then pointed out the civilizational and cultural commonalities between Iran and Uzbekistan as a suitable ground for the expansion and promotion of commercial and economic cooperation, stating, "Although the growth



Iran's President Ebrahim Raeisi (R) talks with Nurdinjon Ismoilov, the speaker of the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis (Parliament) of Uzbekistan, in Tehran on May 6, 2023.

president.ir

of political and economic relations between Iran and Uzbekistan in the past year has made the situation different from before, (fulfilling) their potential requires doubling the efforts to promote the economic and commercial relations be-

tween both sides."

For his part, Ismoilov praised the foreign policy of the Raeisi administration in prioritizing the development of relations with neighbors, noting, "In line with the same principled policy, the development of relations

with neighbors has similarly been prioritized in the process of amending Uzbekistan's constitution."

Stating that the parliaments of the two countries should play an effective role in the development of the co-

operation between the governments, the Uzbek top legislative official concluded, "I assure you that the Parliament of Uzbekistan will use all its facilities and potentials in order to implement the agreements between the two countries."

## Iran, KSA cooperation ...

Referring to the need to strengthen the relations between countries with rich resources and reserves in the world, Rahimi said that naturally, the Western powers are trying to achieve their goals and exploit their resources by "creating an unhealthy competition between these countries and causing rifts among them."

He then went on to note that the more the countries that are aligned and have common interests can deepen their relations and coordinate their actions, especially in the field of oil and energy, the more prominent of a role they can play in producing, supplying, and pricing energy, "which is the main economic indicator in the world today." "Improving our relations with countries like Saudi Arabia and other producers (of oil and gas) in the region can both enhance our impact on the world's energy economy and expand our activities by creating an energy hub," the MP highlighted.

He then noted that Iran must increase its cooperation with countries like Saudi Arabia according to the good neighborliness policy. "If we want to have security and expand our economy and trade ties in the region, we must prioritize cooperation with our neighboring countries," he said.

Iran holds U.S. responsible for Israeli acts  
against its nuclear program

## International Desk

Secretary for Iran's Supreme National Security Council has held the United States responsible for the criminal and terrorist actions of Israel against Iran's nuclear program and its scientists.

In a tweet on late Friday, Admiral Ali

Shamkhani said, "Jake Sullivan has said that if #Iran tries to produce nukes, U.S. will recognize Israel's freedom of action to counter. This admission means that U.S. has been and will be responsible for all terrorist acts of Zionists against Iran's facilities and people, accepting its consequences."

Shamkhani was responding to his American counterpart, Jake Sullivan who made a keynote speech on Friday at an event organized by the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, a U.S.-based think tank.

"We are also engaging Iran diplomatically regarding its nuclear program, and we continue to believe that it was a tragic mistake to leave the deal with nothing at all to replace it. But we have made clear to Iran that it

can never be permitted to obtain a nuclear weapon. As President Biden has repeatedly reaffirmed, he will take the actions that are necessary to stand by this statement, including by recognizing Israel's freedom of action," Sullivan said at Washington Institute on Friday.

Hailing the United States' close cooperation with Israel, the U.S. national security adviser said that there can be "no doubt that we are walking the walk and not just talking the talk when we say that our commitment to Israel's security is ironclad."

Exemplifying the U.S.'s "ironclad commitment," Sullivan said, "Earlier this year in the Eastern Mediterranean, the United States and Israel held the largest joint military exercise ever in the history of our two countries."

## JCPOA prospects: To snapback or to salvage?

If this is to happen, Iran will take commensurate measures, which could involve a withdrawal from the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Iran has already augmented the purity of its uranium enrichment far beyond the limits set in the nuclear deal in response to the West's increasing sanctions. Concerned with the worst possible outcome, Europeans have reportedly threatened Iran in response that they would trigger a return of UN sanctions if Iran's uranium enrichment reaches the optimal level for a nuclear weapon. The situation was always likely

to escalate to the point where the West would threaten Iran with the restoration of UN sanctions, and Iran would, in turn, raise the possibility of withdrawing from the NPT. Now, the likelihood of rejuvenating the JCPOA has actually been minimized, and it evidently would only be revived on the condition that the JCPOA's parties could agree on a robust and dependable resolution.

The last meeting for the revival of the JCPOA was held in September 2022, and the subsequent delay in holding another meeting has emboldened the anti-JCPOA groups in the United States. Moreover, issues

that are off-topic, including the allegation that Iran has militarily supported Russia in the Ukraine conflict, have already been brought forth in the nuclear dossier. This predicament has forced Iran to address new challenges in addition to the case of the nuclear deal, highlighting a need for both sides to establish a more conducive atmosphere to ease tensions and resume nuclear talks.

Iranian officials have rejected the idea of a temporary deal as it would not live up to all the demands of Tehran which include above all the permanent removal of sanctions. However, certain analysts believe the

existing challenges between Iran and Western countries could potentially be resolved through an interim agreement. Such an accord would involve Western monitoring of Iran's nuclear activities and partial removal of sanctions against Iran. Through this interim agreement, some mutual concerns of both parties could be addressed, paving the ground for further trust-building and diplomatic efforts to fully revitalize the JCPOA.

If Western countries choose to trigger the snapback mechanism to target Iran's weaponry, they would inevitably face higher costs. Taking such

action is thus understandably not preferable as it poses great risks for the West and the U.S. As a result, a snapback that may be triggered with the purpose of addressing Iran's conventional weapons development or its uranium enrichment in mind would become a stumbling block that also makes the revival of the JCPOA all the more challenging. Moreover, the possibility for things to spiral out of control is greater than it seems on paper as there's no telling what words will be said and what reactions will be made.

Therefore, it is in everyone's interest to reach a diplomatic

resolution to the current impasse. The Western nations should abandon the futile policy of maximum pressure. Instead, they should engage in good-faith negotiations with Iran to find a mutually beneficial solution that addresses all parties' concerns. Iran has repeatedly expressed its willingness to return to compliance with the JCPOA provided the other parties fulfill their obligations under the agreement. As such, the West should not miss this opportunity to salvage the JCPOA, as Iranian officials have repeatedly maintained that the window of opportunity will not be open forever.