

NEWS IN BRIEF

Turkmenistan's
speaker
due in Iran

MEHR – Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, the chairman of the People's Council of Turkmenistan and the country's former president, will visit Tehran on Tuesday.

Mahdi Rahimi, an Iranian PR official at the president's office, tweeted the news of the visit, stating that "other important guests will come soon."

Minister calls
Netanyahu's
claim
'ridiculous'

● AFP

International Desk

The Iranian Minister of the Interior said the fact that the Zionists, who do not have the power to exercise their will in the slightest in a small area like Gaza, make threats against others is "the most ridiculous and ironic thing ever".

"We constantly surprise Iran and all our enemies," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said. Referring to the above statement, Ahmad Vahidi responded, "At the moment, Netanyahu himself is more than surprised with the recent developments and problems that have occurred in the occupied territories."

No limit
to military
exports:
Defense Minister

TASNIM – Defense Minister Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Ashtiani said Tehran places no restrictions on supplying weapons to countries that are committed to world peace and security including Venezuela.

Ashtiani added that the Iranian Defense Ministry, which coordinates the activities of the Iran-Venezuela Joint Economic Commission, organizes plans to provide the Latin American nation with various domestic capabilities such as in the security and defense spheres.

Iran blames Taliban for 'repeated'
border clashes

National Desk

Iran's deputy police chief Brigadier General Qassem Rezaei called a recent deadly shooting by Taliban forces at the border unnecessary, saying that the current Afghanistan rulers have repeatedly made mistakes at the border.

Rezaei said that two Iranian border guards were killed and two others wounded after Taliban forces opened fire on Iran's Sasoli border police station around 10 a.m. in the southeastern city of Zabol.

Rezaei, who traveled to Sistan and Baluchestan Province on Sunday, said there was evidence showing the Taliban forces started the clashes. Despite being warned by the Iranian side about the continuation of shooting, the Taliban forces continued to fire at the police station, Rezaei said.

Iranian forces responded by firing at the Taliban forces, killing one of them and wounding several others. He said that situation is now calm at the border and no incident has occurred since then.

Commander of the Iranian Army's Ground Force Brigadier General Kioumars Heidari, who was accompanying Rezaei during the visit to Zabol, said Iran will change its approach if Afghanistan fails to respect international regulations



and the principles of good neighborliness.

"If the neighboring state respects international border regulations, we will observe [the principles of] good neighborliness in return and display mutual respect," General Heidari said.

The commander stressed that border areas with Afghanistan are under complete control of the Iranian Army's Ground Forces.

Chief of the Law Enforcement Command of the Islamic Republic of Iran Brig-

adier General Ahmadreza Radan has ordered the border forces to decisively defend the country's borders, and not to allow anyone to trespass and approach the borders. He underlined that Iran will decisively respond to any aggression towards its borders.

Radan added that the current rulers of Afghanistan must be held accountable for their ill-considered actions that are in violation of international principles.

Clashes between Iranian

and Taliban forces came amid soaring tensions between the two sides over Iran's water rights from the Hirmand River (known as Helmand in Afghanistan). Iran and Afghanistan have been locked in a long-running dispute over their shared water resources. At the heart of the dispute is the Hirmand River, which flows 700 miles (1,126 kilometers) south, before flowing into the Hamoun wetlands, located in Sistan and Baluchestan Province.

Following more than a century of rifts over Hirmand's water supply, Iran and Afghanistan signed a treaty in 1973 to establish a means of regulating each country's use of the river.

Iran should receive an annual share of 820 million cubic meters from Hirmand under the accord, which Afghanistan has grossly violated in letter and spirit, endangering the lives of many Iranians who rely on the Hamoun wetlands for drinking water, agriculture, and fishing.

● IRNA

Muscat, a safe channel for Tehran

By Hassan
Danaei FardRegional affairs
expert

EXCLUSIVE

Since a year ago, there have been signs of West Asian countries moving toward peaceful coexistence. Now, rumors have come true and we are witnessing significant developments that surpass even our previous expectations.

The most important positive development was Tehran

and Riyadh's move to normalize relations, which, of course, brought about other pleasant events. The other important development was the return of Syria to the Arab League.

These two developments, which were linked to one another, conveyed the critical message that the countries of the region have recognized the necessity of having regional cooperation and transforming their confrontational approach to an interactive one. It also indicated that if countries

outside the region were to diminish or stop their meddling, regional countries would be quite able to find peaceful ways to solve their disputes through dialogue and mutual respect.

The visit of the Sultan of Omani to Iran has taken place within this context, a year after the Iranian president visited Muscat. One can also look at the sultan's visit in light of bilateral cooperation between Iran and Oman, regional and international developments.

In terms of bilateral ties,

Tehran and Muscat have always had amicable relations, showing a kind of mutual trust. Even under the sanctions and the maximum pressure policy of the United States against Iran, the route that Iran-Oman political and trade ties were taking was defendable. During President Raisi's visit to Muscat last year, 12 cooperation deals were signed, which are predicted to be followed by a number of new deals in the ongoing talks. As a result, Sultan Haitham bin Tariq's trip to Tehran will accelerate

the development of bilateral political and trade ties.

Within the context of regional developments, it seems that Oman is continuing to play its role as a safe channel between Iran and its regional countries. As media outlets of the region predicted in recent days, the Sultan of Oman, who visited Egypt a few days earlier, will most likely facilitate the normalization of relations between Tehran and Cairo.

Looking at the visit from an international perspective, it doesn't seem far-fetched that Haitham bin Tariq is carrying a new message or initiative for resuming the JCPOA talks. Oman is among

the few countries in the region that has had a positive outlook toward the nuclear deal from the beginning and always acted as a proper mediator between Iran and Western countries, especially the U.S. Now that the regional developments and Iran's nuclear activities have given Iran a better footing compared to a year ago, it seems that the groundwork has been laid for resuming nuclear talks and reviving the JCPOA. So, it is expected that as a result of the Sultan of Oman's visit to Iran, both the Tehran-Cairo relations and the revival of the JCPOA would show considerable progress.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
CartoonistRelease of Iranian diplomat
'big defeat' for MKO: *Official*

International Desk

Iran's vice president for legal affairs described the release of an Iranian diplomat from a Belgian prison as an important success for Iran and "a big defeat and disgrace" for the anti-Iran Mujahedeen Khalq (MKO) terrorist organization.

Mohammad Dehghan said on Saturday that the detention and trial of Assadollah Assadi, a former Iranian diplomat, was a blatant violation of the basic principle of diplomatic immunity,

IRNA reported. He maintained that Assadi's release showed the Islamic Republic's determination to safeguard the rights of Iranian nationals all over the world. Assadollah Assadi, a former Iranian diplomat imprisoned in Belgium on false charges, returned home after five years on Friday.

Belgian police arrested Assadi in June 2018, accusing him of plotting an attack against the MKO terrorist organization, a claim that

has been strongly rejected by the former diplomat and Iranian authorities.

According to an informed source, the Belgian government repeatedly gave the cold shoulder to the ringleader of the MKO, who had asked Brussels to refrain from releasing Iranian diplomat Assadollah Assadi.

However, Maryam Rajavi, the notorious ringleader of the MKO terrorist cult, had made every effort to obstruct the release of Assadi, Tasnim news agency wrote.