

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran, U.S. 'close' on prisoner swap: **Oman**



IFP – Iran and the United States are close to finalizing a deal on the release of American inmates held in Tehran, Oman's Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr Albusaidi told Al-Monitor. Albusaidi said in an interview Wednesday he senses "seriousness" on the part of both Washington and Tehran as their negotiators try to salvage the 2015 nuclear deal under which Iran agreed to curb its nuclear activity in exchange for sanctions relief.

"I can say they are close," Albusaidi said of a potential prisoner agreement. "This is probably a question of technicalities."

"They need to have a framework [and] a time-frame of how this should be orchestrated," he said of the frozen funds, noting, "I think they're ironing those things out."

Albusaidi also stated that there is a "positive atmosphere" surrounding the nuclear issue, adding that Muscat believes the Iranian leadership is serious about reaching an agreement.

"As long as the other side also reciprocates in good faith, they're willing to do this," he continued.

Top Saudi diplomat to visit Iran today



PRESS TV – Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud will visit Iran today amid warming relations between the two Middle Eastern powers, official sources said.

Hours after the report, Iran's government spokesman Ali Bahadori Jahromi said the Embassy of Saudi Arabia in Tehran will officially resume activities next Iranian week, which starts on Saturday.

Asked by reporters about the timing of the official re-opening of the Saudi Embassy, the spokesman said, "The Saudi foreign minister will be visiting Iran and will take a set of measures in that regard."

Israel invited Reza Pahlavi to 'recruit him as its pawn'



Iran's former ambassador to Jordan, Mojtaba Ferdosipour (l.), speaks in a panel, titled "Israeli and Iran's Opposition," in Tehran on June 13, 2023. **TASNIM**

International Desk

A distinguished panel of speakers gathered on Tuesday, June 13, 2023, to discuss the outcomes of the earlier visit of Reza Pahlavi, the son of Iran's ousted Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, to Israel and his subsequent meetings with Israeli officials.

The panel titled, "Israeli and Iran's Opposition," was organized by Tasnim news agency and the Tehran International Studies and Research Institute in Tehran. Among the speakers at the event were a number of the Islamic Republic's former diplomats, commanders of the Armed Forces, and analysts of regional affairs.

Mojtaba Ferdosipour, Iran's former ambassador to Jordan, came out of the gate swinging, claiming that each presidential candidate in the United States and France must first persuade the Zionists, guarantee to champion their interests, or, in the case of the U.S., address the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) pro-Israel lobbying group.

"That is why Reza Pahlavi, who had been trying to get recognized as the leader of the opposition, went to Israel to drum up their support,"



Reza Pahlavi, the son of Iran's last king, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, visits the Western Wall (Wailing Wall) in East Al-Quds on April 18, 2023. **Anadolu Agency**



he added. But what were the Israelis trying to get out of the visit?

Ferdosipour believes, "The Zionists invited Pahlavi to officially recruit him as their pawn and characterize him as their approved figure under the Zionist framework of governance."

Giving a military perspective on the current state of Israel, Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) Commander Hossein Kanaani-Moqaddam maintained that Israel is "at best a large military base, not a government or state," unlike what Reza Pahlavi might have imagined. "I believe the visit to Tel Aviv could be the final nail in Pahlavi's coffin," he said.

Building on what Kanaani-Moqaddam had said, Brigadier Gen-

eral Khodadad Fallah, the political deputy of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Army, stressed that Israel cannot launch a military attack against Iran, but its ally, the United States, can put the Islamic Republic under economic pressure. Nevertheless, Pahlavi put his efforts into bewitching the Armed Forces of Iran, especially the Army, to join the rioters, which, Fallah added, failed horribly as no one joined his misguided cause.

Reza Pahlavi, the son of the U.S.-backed former Shah of Iran, who fled the country in 1979, arrived in Israel on April 17. During the four-day trip, he met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, President Isaac Herzog, and a number of other officials.

The 62-year-old was received and accompanied throughout his visit by Israeli Intelligence Minister Gila Gamliel.

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani was asked at the time if he would comment on the visit, to which he replied, "Neither the person you've mentioned [Pahlavi], nor the purpose of this trip, or the place he wants to travel to are worthy of discussion."

The panelists of the event also highlighted the importance of reinforcing the Palestinian Resistance Movement in its fight against the usurping Israeli regime, especially since "the Zionists are organizing and supporting riots in Iran to erode the Islamic Republic's support of the resistance."

Iranian diplomacy spans ...

Additionally, Iran has signed cooperation agreements in South America. Moreover, Iranian diplomacy remains active on other fronts, including ongoing negotiations with the United States prisoner exchanges, the release of frozen Iranian assets abroad, and the nuclear issue. The forthcoming visit of the Saudi foreign minister to Iran is expected to pave the way for the strength-

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ening of political ties between Tehran and Riyadh, subsequently accelerating the process of regional de-escalation, aligning with the Islamic Republic's regional stance. Iran's international role is demonstrated through the continuation of nuclear talks, efforts to implement agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency, and even potential deals with the United States.

Presently, Iranian diplomacy spans from the East to the West, encompassing the West Asian region and extending to South America, with the aim of finding solutions and opportunities to address the country's economic challenges while enhancing political cooperation to safeguard national interests. The emphasis on the West Asian region and constructive dialogue serves to clear up misunderstandings and

promote mutual interests, forming the foundation for further consultations between Iran and the West. Furthermore, Western nations, including the United States, have realized that the Islamic Republic of Iran is not isolated under imposed pressure. Instead, they recognize that engaging in constructive dialogue, based on respect and reciprocity, is a more favorable option.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Raeisi: Bullying powers ...

Raeisi said Cuba and Iran would seek to work together in biotechnology, mining, electricity generation and other areas.

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"I hope this meeting will help facilitate integration as well as an exchange of ideas and opinions," Raeisi said.

After the forum, Raeisi and Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel toured biotechnology production plants in the western part of the capital, and then headed to a closed-door reception at Cuba's Palace of the Revolution.

Diaz-Canel hailed Raeisi's visit as "meaningful" and a sign of "common values and views" between the two states.

"The three countries that you chose as the destination for your regional trip have a meaningful relationship with the Iranian Revolution. I am confident that your visit to Cuba will be a turning point

in the history of relations between the two countries," he said.

"Venezuela, Nicaragua, Cuba and Iran are among the countries that have had to heroically confront sanctions (...) threats, blockades and interference by Yankee imperialism and its allies with a tenacious resistance," Diaz-Canel said.

Heading a high-ranking delegation, Raeisi arrived in Havana on Wednesday evening local time. Earlier, he had visited Venezuela and Nicaragua.

Raeisi also held talks with former Cuban president Raúl Castro.

During the meeting, Raeisi emphasized the importance of solidarity and cooperation among independent countries against imperialist powers, especially in light of recent developments in the international arena and the shift of the world order to a multilateral system.