

## NEWS IN BRIEF

Prisoner  
exchange  
with US

**PRESS TV** – Iran's Foreign Ministry has put the blame on the US administration for prolonging the process of prisoner exchange.

The spokesman for the ministry, Nasser Kan'ani said Washington lacks the resolve to finalize the exchange of prisoners with Iran.

Iran has always been serious about the prisoner swap considering the importance that it attaches to the fate of its citizens, he underlined.

Raeisi: Iran  
supports ...

The Iranian president underlined that Tehran does not accept any geopolitical changes at borders of the regional countries and supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all the countries of the region.

Earlier in the day, the Armenian foreign minister held talks with his Iranian counterpart Hossein Amir-Abdollahian. During the meeting, Iran's top diplomat reaffirmed Tehran's call for comprehensive and sustainable peace in the Caucasus region and warned against foreign exploitation of the situation there.

Amir-Abdollahian said Iran focuses on the establishment of peace in the Caucasus region and welcomes progress in peace talks between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

"We believe that enhanced peace and security among the neighbors can serve the common interests of regional countries," Amir-Abdollahian added.

Amir-Abdollahian further said the Caucasus region should not turn into a conflict zone and a battlefield among powers because it would postpone the establishment of regional peace. Tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan remain relatively high nearly two years after the arch-foes fought a war over the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region. The six-week conflict, which claimed more than 6,500 lives on both sides, ended in November 2020 with a Russian-brokered deal.

Nagorno-Karabakh is internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan but has been populated by ethnic Armenians. Russia has deployed 1,960 peacekeepers to the region for an initial five-year period. Since the truce, the two sides have accused each other of breaching the peace deal.

# Message of drill: Stable security for Iran, region

## Iran's bomber, kamikaze drones destroy mock targets



● IRNA

## National Desk

Iran's top general Mohammad Hossein Baqeri praised the accomplishments of a large-scale drill

held in Iran's central province of Isfahan on Monday, on the sidelines of the exercise as the Iranian Air Force's bomber and kamikaze

drones successfully hit and destroyed mock enemy targets.

The Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces commended the Air Force units for

achieving the primary objectives of the war game, underscoring how Iran's military readiness serves as a deterrent against hostile actions from adversaries. He also lauded the Air Force for their diverse operations and tactical maneuvers, which involved drones, fighter jets, transport and logistical aircraft, as well as air ambulances. The major general said the Air Force units conducted a full range of operations, and exercising various tactics in the drill with drones, fighter jets, transport, logistical and refueling aircraft, as well as air ambulances. Speaking on Monday, Brigadier General Alireza Rudbari, the spokesman for the exercises, said 500-pound bombs were previously carried by F-4 and F-5 fighter jets, but during the maneuvers, Karrar drones dropped them on ground targets and obliterated them, press TV reported. Arash kamikaze drones,

equipped with warheads, also hit "important and vital" positions of hypothetical enemy and destroyed them, he added.

The operation was carried out after an RF-4 plane, as well as Mohajer-6 and Kaman-12 reconnaissance drones photographed the targets, he said.

Sending images online, Mohajer-6 drone targeted mock enemy equipment using smart, precision-strike and upgraded Qaem bombs, Rudbari said.

The Islamic Republic of Iran Air Force (IRIAF) has launched the 11th edition of the drills, code-named Devotees of Velayat Sanctuary, in Anarak District of Na'een County on Sunday.

The Islamic Republic military forces hold routine exercises according to a detailed schedule in various parts of the country in order to test their weaponry and equipment and evaluate their combat preparedness.

# European states must prevent recurrence of Qur'an desecration: *SpoX*



Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman holds a copy of the Qur'an at his weekly press conference in Tehran, Iran, on July 24, 2023.

● AMIN JALALI/IRNA

The spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry said European countries must adopt proper measures aimed at preventing the recurrence of Holy Qur'an desecration by extremist individuals or groups.

Nasser Kanaani once again denounced the recent act of sacrilege against Islam's most revered book in Sweden, while holding a copy of the Qur'an at his weekly press conference in the Iranian capital Tehran on Monday, Press TV reported.

He said the desecration of the Qur'an is "a shameful act," stressing that "insulting divine and Abrahamic religions is unacceptable and cannot be justified by any means."

The senior Iranian dip-

lomat also called on the European states, in which such shameful insults were perpetrated, to take decisive measures against the offenders or hand them over to Muslim countries' judicial systems for punishment.

Kanaani added that Iran has summoned Mattias Lentz, Swedish ambassador to Tehran, sent out a note of protest to Stockholm, and written a letter to United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres in this regard.

He added that Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian has held a telephone conversation with Hissein Ibrahim Taha, the secretary general of the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC), over the

matter.

All such efforts resulted in consensus on an emergency meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to discuss the latest act of desecration of the Holy Qur'an in Sweden, the diplomat said.

Tehran believes that Muslim countries should seriously utilize their potentials. Muslim states expect the offenders to be prosecuted, Kanaani said.

On Friday, members of the Islamophobic and far-right nationalist group "Danske Patriotere (Danish Patriots)" burned a copy of the Holy Qur'an in front of the Iraqi Embassy in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Earlier this week, Salwan Momika, a 37-year-old Iraqi refugee living in Swe-



den, stomped and kicked the Holy Qur'an, just weeks after he set fire to pages of the holy book outside a Stockholm mosque. On Monday, two protesters set fire to a copy of the holy book in front of the Iraqi Embassy in the Danish capital, risking further deterioration of relations

between the two countries, Reuters reported.

In January, Rasmus Paludan, a far-right Danish leader, burned a copy of the Qur'an in front of the Turkish Embassy in Stockholm. The incident sparked outrage and condemnation across the Islamic world.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist



# Six more uranium mines to run, as reserves are greater than estimated: AEOI

The head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) said the Islamic Republic's uranium reserves are much larger than previous estimates, and that the country plans to operate six more uranium mines by the end of the current Iranian year (ending March 19, 2024). Mohammad Eslami said on Sunday that currently eight uranium mines are operating in the country, Press TV reported. "Our uranium reserves

in the country now exceed the previous estimates. We are currently operating eight mines, and six more mines are planned to come on stream by the end of the [Iranian] year," he said.

He added that over the past year and a half, they have located and run several mines to complete the nuclear fuel chain.

Eslami also said that extraction of uranium ore from mines and its pro-

cess through the heap leaching method greatly benefits the chain of valuable elements.

"The AEOI has drawn up and compiled a 20-year perspective plan to pave the way to attain Iran's nuclear industry objectives". Eslami said thanks to the plan, the agency has a proper understanding of the path ahead both at the national and international levels and is moving forward with a viable strategy.