

Canada's blacklisting of IRGC 'mindless gift' to Israel, terrorists: *Acting FM*

In yet another hostile move against Iran, the Canadian government blacklisted the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) on Wednesday and designated the elite Iranian military force as a so-called "terrorist" entity. The belligerent move came less than a month after the Canadian House of Commons adopted a non-binding resolution calling on Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government to blacklist the IRGC and expel an estimated 700 Iranians. Iran's interim Foreign Minister Ali Bagheri Kani denounced the Canadian government's decision, describing it as a senseless gift to the bloodthirsty Israeli regime, terrorists and enemies of peace and stability in West Asia. "Canada's unlawful act of declaring an integral part of the official military force of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which has played an irreplaceable role in defending the national security and territorial integrity of dear Iran, and protecting the security and stability of the region and confronting the terrorism by Daesh, was malicious and violates the principles and rules of

international law," Bagheri Kani wrote in a post published on the social media platform X on Thursday. The Iranian official added that it was "a mindless gift to the bloodthirsty regime, terrorists and other enemies of peace and stability in the region." Bagheri Kani said the Canadian government will be held accountable for the consequences of the provocative and irresponsible decision.

FM spokesperson slams Canada's 'unwise' move

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kan'ani also said Tehran reserves the right to reciprocate with a "proper" response Canada's unlawful act to designate the country's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) as a "terrorist" organization. Kan'ani denounced the "political, unconventional and unwise" move by the Canadian government against the IRGC, and said such measures will fail to hinder the elite force from increasing the level and scope of its power rooted in the Iranian nation. He noted that the IRGC is an official and legal entity



enshrined in Iran's Constitution, which, along with other Armed Forces, is responsible to safeguard national security and borders and promote lasting security and stability in the region by fighting the vicious phenomenon of terrorism.

Italian ambassador called in over Canada's decision

Meanwhile, Iran's Foreign Ministry summoned on Thursday the Italian am-

bassador to Tehran in protest at the Canadian government's decision to blacklist IRGC. Paola Amadei, whose country represents the Canadian interests in the Islamic Republic, was called in by the Director-General for Americas at the Foreign Ministry and received Tehran's strong protest over Ottawa's unlawful action that contradicts the rules of international law.

The 59-year-old Italian diplomat was also warned

about the repercussions of such a move the Islamic Republic's right to take necessary measures.

Canada broke off diplomatic ties with Iran and closed its Tehran embassy in a surprise move in 2012, citing various reasons, including Iran's support for Syria, its nuclear work, and alleged threats to the Israeli regime. In the same year, however, Ottawa took off the anti-Iran terrorist Mujahedin Khalq Organization

(MKO) from its list of terrorist organizations.

In 2022, Iran's Foreign Ministry imposed sanctions on eight Canadian officials and one institution over their support for anti-Iran terrorists and acts of terror among other things. Canada has also been serving, for years, as a safe haven for Iranian embezzlers, who have fled their safe in the knowledge that Ottawa would not take the trouble to extradite them.

Grossi: JCPOA revival possible despite IAEA resolution



Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Rafael Mariano Grossi has in an interview with a Swiss daily newspaper voiced the possibility of bringing the 2015 Iran nuclear deal back to life as he rejected accusations about the Islamic Republic's "secret" nuclear plans.

In an exclusive interview with Neue Zürcher Zeitung on Thursday, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Rafael Mariano Grossi underscored the possibility of revitalizing the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) — the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers — despite a recent anti-Tehran resolution by the agency's Board of Governors.

Stressing that the resolution urges Tehran to "cooperate better," Grossi told the Zürich-based German-language paper that efforts to revive the 2015 nuclear agreement with Iran have thus far failed due to "mutual accusations."

"Iran now has more fissile material and more technical know-how," the IAEA chief said. "Unlike three years ago, it is also clear that one cannot simply return to that nuclear agreement, but must fundamentally renew it. Iran's technology has advanced light years since then."

Queried on the pointlessness of the IAEA's possible move to involve the UN Security Council in the case of Iran given Russia's veto power, Grossi said, "That is one of the negative consequences of the current geopolitical tensions and a further step backwards compared to the past. In the past, as IAEA Director General, I could always rely on a lowest common denominator among the veto powers of the Security Council and on them reacting as one in the event of Iranian misconduct. That is no longer the case."

Responding to a question whether Iran is "secretly enriching uranium somewhere or building a bomb," the IAEA chief said, "That would be too far-reaching a conclusion. We have no information that the Iranians are pursuing a secret, parallel nuclear program... there is no evidence of such a thing today."

Terror lobby against ...

Canada, the US, and certain European nations have fallen under the influence of anti-Iranian terrorist groups like the Mojahedin Khalq Organization (MKO) which is notorious among Iranians for its decades of terrorist activities. The MKO has regained organizational momentum and financial strength since being removed from American and European blacklists and allowed to operate in Albania and other European countries. Leveraging its organizational resources and financial power, the MKO infiltrated European, Canadian, and US parliaments with its agents or formed lobbies within these countries to further its terrorist agenda. Aside from the MKO, another

terrorist group that has felt the sting of the IRGC is ISIS. While ISIS doesn't appear to be openly active, it continues its political pursuits covertly in Canada and the US. It's no surprise that these terrorist groups, thwarted by the IRGC, would strike back at this official and legitimate military force of Iran by convincing the Canadian government to blacklist the IRGC.

I have made clear that the blacklisting won't impede the IRGC's lawful activities. The people who stand to lose the most from the designation are Iranians residing in Canada. Given that the IRGC is an official military force alongside the regular army, a significant number of Iranian men have done their mandatory

military service within this force. Now, with the passing of this law, Iranian men who served in the IRGC and live in Canada are branded as terrorists, even though many may have no ongoing ties to Iran and have simply become collateral damage in the terrorist lobby's campaign against the IRGC. In response, it's expected that Tehran will take retaliatory action once the dust settles from the presidential election scheduled for next Friday, and the Iranian parliament will legally designate Canadian military forces in the West Asian region as terrorists. Although there may not be a large number of Canadian troops in the region, they will be viewed as terrorists by the Islamic Republic of Iran. As Iranian officials have emphasized, Canada bears full responsibility for this unwise decision.

Presidential hopefuls outline social welfare plans

The second of five debates was aired live by national TV on Thursday, with six presidential candidates unveiling their economic and social welfare blueprints.

The second televised debate commenced with the remarks of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, emphasizing the virtues of discipline, and moral and ethical conduct.

The debate focused on economic roadmaps conceived by the presidential hopefuls for advancing justice-centric social amenities, scrutinizing their proposals encompassing healthcare, education, and the scientific apparatus.

The 240-minute debate followed the same format underpinned by four distinct segments.

The inquiries during the first segment revolved around subsidies, their fair allocation to either producers or consumers, and candidates' blueprints to combat the scourge of poverty. The second segment of the debate underscored the pivotal theme of healthcare reform and cost reduction for patients.

Delving into the intricacies of preventative measures, human resource management, and technological advancements within the health sector, the six candidates articulated their visions for improving the country's healthcare landscape.

In the third segment of the four-hour debate, the focus shifted towards education and the integration of industry with academia to combat brain drain and propel the country towards scientific excellence.

The six candidates outlined their strategies to improve and modernize the country's education system, promote a just framework, and cultivate strong ties between universities and industries to foster innovation and economic growth.

In the final segment of the debate, each candidate had the opportunity to present a six-minute summary of their plans and visions for the country.

Each candidate's summary revealed their unique visions and priorities for the country, ranging from economic growth and social welfare to administrative efficiency and justice, offering voters a comprehensive understanding of their proposed agendas for the future.

Amir-Hossein Ghazizadeh Hashemi, a former lawmaker and a second-time presidential hopeful, emphasized the pivotal role of the "people and families" in his government, stressing the importance of collective work and a robust foreign policy to drive economic growth. He also highlighted his focus on economic justice through targeted subsidy law, aiming to ensure the fair distribution of resources and oppor-

tunities within society.

Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, a veteran political figure and parliament speaker, positioned his government as a supportive shield for the people, advocating for the provision of comprehensive welfare programs to uplift the nation.

Mostafa Pourmohammadi, a former minister who also held senior posts in the Judiciary, outlined his plans to maximize the country's existing capacities and streamline the bureaucratic system for more efficient governance.

By focusing on leveraging current resources effectively and implementing administrative reforms, he aimed to enhance governmental performance and service delivery to the public.

Alireza Zakani, the mayor of Tehran and former lawmaker, reiterated his government's commitment to key sectors such as healthcare, education, and higher education.

Masoud Pezeshkian, a former health minister and seasoned lawmaker, drew from his experience as the former health minister, highlighting his dedication to serving marginalized strata. Saeed Jalili, a former lead nuclear negotiator and head of the country's top security body, underscored the importance of utilizing the country's vast and untapped potential based on principles of justice to propel the nation forward.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

