

HAMED JAFARNEJAD/ISNA

Pezeshkian: No limit to expand Iran-Serbia ties

Iran ready for 'constructive dialogue' with Arab world

International Desk

Iran's President-elect Masoud Pezeshkian said Tehran has no limit to expand relations with Serbia. He made the remarks in a phone conversation with his Serbian counterpart Aleksandar Vučić. Referring to the fact that he had chaired Iran-Serbia parliamentary friendship group, Pezeshkian said he has a good knowledge of Serbia and expressed hope that the two countries would use their capacities for further cooperation. The Serbian president, for his part, congratulated Pezeshkian on his election as the head of Iran's 14th government. He said relations between the two countries developed very well during the presidency of the late president Ebrahim Raisi, expressing hope that the trend would continue during Pezeshkian's time in office. In another devel-

opment, Pezeshkian assured Hamas' Political Bureau Chief Ismail Haniyeh of Palestinians' eventual victory in the face of the Israeli regime's genocidal war against the Gaza Strip. Pezeshkian made the remarks in a message that he addressed to Haniyeh on Wednesday as means of responding to the Palestinian resistance movement leader's earlier congratulation of his victory in Iran's runoff presidential vote. In recent days, many world leaders have sent messages of congratulation or called Pezeshkian to felicitate his election victory. During the phone calls, the new Iranian chief executive expressed his government's willingness to further expand Iran's relations with other countries. In an opinion piece, titled "Together, for a Strong and Prosperous Region," which was published in the London-based Al-Araby Al-Jadeed newspaper on

Wednesday, Pezeshkian invited the regional Arab countries to engage in "constructive dialogue" and joint endeavor with Iran towards the enhancement of unity, security, and prosperity across the region. "I am willing to address my brothers and sisters and neighbors in the region so we can take steps together down the path of constructive dialogue and enhancement of cooperation and solidarity among the regional nations and governments," he wrote. Pezeshkian called on all regional countries to work towards "laying the foundation of the structure of a strong region" by relying on "the power of logic instead of the logic of power" among other things. "I extend the hand of friendship and brotherhood to all the regional neighbors and countries towards realization of this goal," the president-elect wrote.

Iran dismisses NATO allegation it supplies ballistic missiles to Russia



Iran categorically rejected allegations it is providing ballistic missiles and related technology to Russia, raised by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), to be used in the military campaign against Ukraine.

In a statement on Thursday, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani said NATO has made "totally baseless and politically-motivated" claims, Press TV reported.

In their declaration issued on Wednesday, the NATO leaders claimed that North Korea and Iran were fueling Russia's military operation against Ukraine by providing direct military support to Moscow, such as munitions and uncrewed aerial vehicles (UAVs), which they said impacted Euro-Atlantic security and undermined the global non-proliferation regime.

They said any transfer of ballistic missiles and related technology by Iran to Russia would represent a substantial escalation.

The Iranian spokesman, in reaction, said the ongoing developments in Ukraine are the result of NATO's "provocative" policies and measures led by the United States.

Kanaani added that any attempt to link the war in Ukraine to the cooperation between Iran and Russia is "politically-motivated" with the aim of legitimizing the West's interference and their military aid to Ukraine.

He once again reiterated Iran's unwavering strategy to play a constructive role in promoting enduring security in the region and across the world.

Iran has never provided Russia with any type of drones during the military conflict in Ukraine and still emphasizes the importance of settling the crisis and establishing lasting peace through political channels, the diplomat pointed out.

Iran has repeatedly rejected accusations that it has supplied weapons to Russia for direct use in the war in Ukraine. It has also discarded allegations of supplying weapons to anti-Israeli and anti-US groups in the region.

Meanwhile, Russia has repeatedly warned that a flow of Western weapons to Ukraine will only prolong the conflict.

Since the start of the war in Ukraine, the US, alone, has provided approximately \$51.4 billion in military assistance to Kiev, the US State Department said in early July.

US must pay \$6.8b in damages to EB patients: Iran court



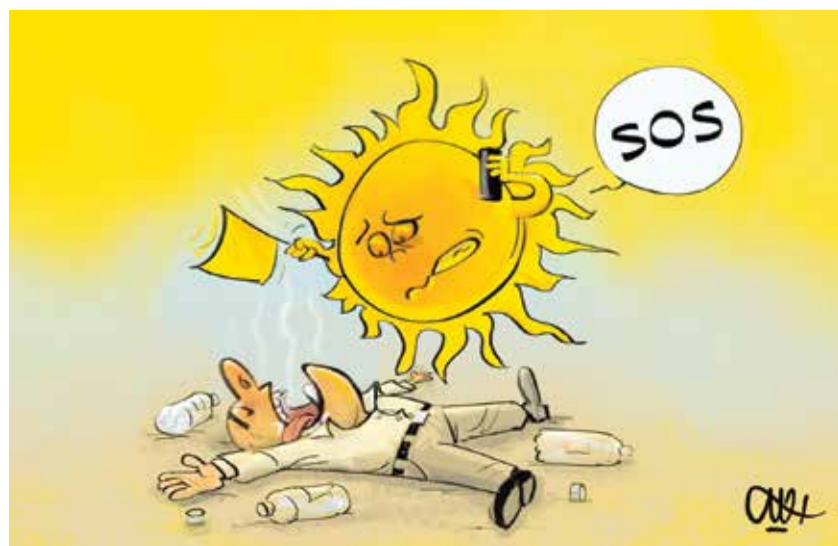
The Tehran Legal Court of International Relations said that after the withdrawal of the US administration from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), some companies affiliated to the US and Europe cut off business trade with the Islamic Republic, among them the Swedish company Mölnlycke. The world-leading Med-Tech company is a major producer of medical bandages and healing dressings for EB patients across the world. It stopped transactions with Iran as soon as new sanctions were imposed by the then-US President Donald Trump. The court said that over a span of about eight months after the reinstatement of sanctions, the Iranian EB patients ran out of medicine and ointment to heal their deep skin wounds, as a result of which about 20 lost their lives and many others who survived endured irreparable physical injuries.

An Iranian court has ruled that the United States must pay some seven billion dollars in damages over its illegal sanctions affecting the country's patients suffering from Epidermolysis Bullosa (EB), a rare hereditary disease that causes the skin to become fragile and easily injured.

The Tehran Legal Court of International Relations issued the verdict on Thursday and said the US government and officials have been sentenced to pay 6,785,000,000 dollars as part of material, moral and punitive damages to the plaintiffs in the case of Iran's EB patients, Press TV reported. The ruling was made after

295 Iranian EB patients and family members of patients lodged lawsuits in protest at the US-imposed sanctions that had hampered the import of much-needed pharmaceuticals and wound dressings for those suffering from the rare skin disease. In the ruling, the court addressed cases such as the illegal and illegitimate nature of unilateral US sanctions against Iran, the illegitimate blocking of humanitarian items, including medicine, the illegitimate sanctions against children and other vulnerable groups, the adverse effects of sanctions on the life, health and well-being of EB patients and their families.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Biden: There's a lot I wish I'd been able to convince Israelis to do



US President Joe Biden said Thursday that there's a lot of things in retrospect I wish I had been able to convince the Israelis to do as he acknowledges that he has been frustrated with the Israeli cabinet at times over its handling of the war in Gaza. Biden, in a high-stakes, nearly hour-long news conference aimed at repudiating doubters of his reelection bid, acknowledged concerns about Israeli actions despite his overall support for the US ally.

"There's a lot of things in retrospect I wish I had been able to convince the Israelis to do, but the bottom line is we have a chance now. It's time to end this war," he said after a NATO summit in Washington.

Biden acknowledged there remained "difficult, complex issues" between Israel and Hamas.

"There are still gaps to close. We're making progress," Biden said.

"The trend is positive, and I'm determined to get this deal done and bring an end to this war, which should end now," he said.

US President Joe Biden holds news conference at the 2024 NATO Summit on July 11, 2024 in Washington, DC.
KEVIN DIETSCH/GETTY IMAGES/AFP

Biden more than a month ago laid out a plan in which Israel would temporarily halt its offensive in Gaza and Palestinian fighters would release captives, setting the stage for talks for a permanent end to the devastating nine-month war. Hamas came back with counterproposals and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has faced pushback from some of his hard-right cabinet allies.

Biden threw his support behind Israel after the October 7 attack by Hamas which resulted in the deaths of 1,195 people. Israel responded with a military offensive that has killed at least 38,345 people in Gaza, also mostly civilians, according to figures from Gaza health ministry.

Biden, 81, recalled his meeting a half-century ago

as a young senator with Israeli prime minister Golda Meir -- and acknowledged that times have changed. "We pushed it really hard, and Israel occasionally was less than cooperative," Biden said of Netanyahu's cabinet.

"This war cabinet is one of the most conservative war cabinets in the history of Israel, and there's no ultimate answer other than a two-state solution here," he said.

Biden also stood firm on his decision to hold up delivery of massive 2,000-pound bombs, even as his administration moves forward on other munitions.

"I'm not providing the 2,000-pound bombs. They cannot be used in Gaza or any populated area without causing great human tragedy and damage," Biden said.

He again pressed Israel for a "day-after" plan for the war's end and spoke of his diplomacy to persuade Arab states to help with security.

"At the end of the day, there has to be no occupation by Israel in the Gaza Strip," Biden said.