

Iran 'ready' to reopen embassy in Syria

Damascus responds in kind in diplomatic talks



country. During a press conference on Tuesday, Mohajerani stated that Iran would pursue the matter through diplomatic channels, Press TV reported.

"Our approach to reopening embassies is diplomatic, as it always has been, and we stand ready for this," she said.

"They are also prepared, and we are currently engaged in diplomatic talks for the reopening of embassies," she added.

After HTS militants seized control of Syria on December 8, which brought an end to Bashar al-Assad's 24-year presidency, the country continues to face significant challenges on both national and international fronts.

Syria's stability and future are threatened by various factors, including Israel's illegal occupation of Syrian territory, driven by its expansionist

policies, and the persistent presence of the so-called Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), which are backed by the US, in the country's northern regions.

Clean energy to ease crisis

In another part of the press conference, the government spokesperson regarding addressing the energy imbalance said that, following President Masoud Pezeshkian's directive to the Planning and Budget Organization for investment in renewable energy, a joint working group has been formed, one member of which is the Ministry of Energy.

Given the country's climatic conditions, it is possible to produce 30,000 megawatts of solar power, and she expressed hope that the country can move towards clean energy.

With over 300 sunny days per year and high wind capacity in various regions, Iran has vast potential for gen-

erating electricity from clean energy sources.

Tehran and other provinces have faced rolling power blackouts for weeks in October and November.

Regarding the implementation of power outages, the government spokesperson stated, "Currently, the supply of liquid fuel diesel to power plants has doubled, showing a 200 percent increase. We hope that with the increase in gas supply and the import of gas from some countries, this declining trend that we have witnessed in recent days in the number of outages and the amount of damages done to the industry will continue."

"To overcome this situation and avoid facing another problem in the summer, 14 major projects have been designed and are currently being worked on at the Ministry of Energy," Mohajerani added.

International Desk

The Iranian government spokeswoman expressed Tehran's readiness to

reopen its embassy in Damascus, amid challenges facing Syria two weeks after Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) militants took over the Arab

Report: Iran pondering Japan's mediation in talks with Trump admin



International Desk

An informed Japanese source claimed that the Iranian government is considering Japan's mediation in behind-the-scenes negotiations with the second administration of Donald Trump, the elected president of the United States, regarding the nuclear issue.

The Kyodo News Agency reported that the previous Trump administration had a hardline approach to Iran's nuclear program, which increased tensions in Iran-US relations, ISNA reported. Japan is considered a friendly country to Iran, and if it mediates, it is expected to play a role in reducing tensions between the US and Iran concerning its nuclear program and the issue of sanctions.

Iran has stepped up nuclear work since 2019, a year after the first administration of Trump pulled Washington out of the 2015 nuclear agreement, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which was clinched under Trump's predecessor Barack Obama. Tehran started to reduce its commit-

ments under the JCPOA in a series of pre-announced and clear steps after witnessing the other parties' failure to secure its interests under the agreement.

Iran says it will continue to cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to resolve disputed issues surrounding its nuclear program, rejecting media reports and statements by Western government officials that suggest Tehran is not willing to cooperate with the UN nuclear agency because it has not benefited from the JCPOA.

On Sunday, the Iraqi newspaper Baghdad Alyoum reported that Iran received a message from the US president-elect through Oman proposing high-level talks on issues including the nuclear file. No Iranian or US official has commented on the report at the time of writing this report. Meanwhile, US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan on Sunday said the outgoing Biden administration is briefing Trump's team on the growing risk of Tehran pursuing the development of a nuclear weapon.

First step in removing Internet curbs

Iran cyberspace council votes to lift ban on WhatsApp, Google Play



National Desk

Iran's top council responsible for safeguarding the Internet voted Tuesday to lift a ban on the popular messaging application WhatsApp, as well as digital distribution service Google Play Store, which have been subject to restrictions for over two years.

"Ban on WhatsApp and Google Play was removed by unanimous vote of the members of the Supreme Council of Cyberspace," IRNA reported, adding that "this is the first step in the plan to remove restrictions."

During the council's 104th meeting,

the members emphasized the importance of lawful governance in cyberspace and unanimously voted in favor of lifting access restrictions to some widely used foreign platforms, including WhatsApp and Google Play. The meeting was attended by the heads of the three branches of government, ministers, and members of the Supreme Council of Cyberspace. During the meeting, the members stressed the importance of supporting domestic platforms.

Iranians often bypass the government-imposed ban on the Internet by utilizing Virtual Private Network (VPN) software applications, which make



The 104th meeting of the Supreme Council of Cyberspace is attended by the heads of the three branches of government, ministers, and members of the council in Tehran, Iran, on December 24, 2024. [president.ir](https://www.president.ir)

their computer appear to be located in another country. Censoring the Internet, which is being monitored by the country's Internet Censorship Committee, led by the prosecutor general, restricts users from accessing websites and social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Telegram, and YouTube, due to their offensive and criminal content.

Iran, Resistance spearheading ...

At the request of legitimate governments and through offering practical support and with the help of Resistance forces in countries like Iraq and Syria, Iran succeeded in preventing the spread of terrorism and extremism in the Middle East.

With its dynamic and active diplomacy in cooperation with regional countries, Iran has always sought to institutionalize the discourse that sustainable security can only be achieved through the will and cooperation of regional countries. In fact, peace and security in the Middle East will not be achieved due to conflicting interests among trans-regional actors, who themselves have been the source of multiple crises and challenges. Therefore, the presence of transregional actors will not help maintain sustainable peace and security in the region. Utilizing the capacities of international and regional organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, however, provides a suit-

able opportunity for member countries to adopt strategic decisions in combating the growing threats of terrorism in the region.

Iran has been associated with a collection of groups and forces known as the "Axis of Resistance," which have had a successful track record in combating terrorism. The Axis of Resistance, now a major player in West Asia, has always been under maximum pressure and attacks from its enemies, primarily the criminal Zionist regime and the United States. Nevertheless, America's efforts to weaken and eliminate the Axis of Resistance in the region have not been successful and have instead only exacerbated instability in the region.

On the other hand, America's actions in the region have shown that its talk of seeking peace and prosperity for the people of the region is more of a ploy to deceive public opinion and a reason to remain and further entrench itself in the Middle East with the aim of plundering the wealth of its nations.

It is very clear that the US played a pivotal role in creating and organizing extremist and terrorist groups like ISIS, equipping and supporting them with the aim of injecting instability into the region. Only the ideology of resistance stands in the way of America's growing influence in the region, and it is evident that the culture of resistance has always been a nightmare for the Western bloc and its supporters. Unsurprisingly, using any means to weaken the resistance is on top of their agenda as clearly demonstrated as of late.

Undoubtedly, the Axis of Resistance is recognized as one of the most active and influential movements in the Middle East. Considering the current complex developments and the new order, the Axis will continue to play its effective role in the regional power structure by intelligently utilizing its advantages and capabilities and will be able to change the regional equations as the spearhead of the fight against terrorism and extremism.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

