



Russia: Implementation of Bushehr-2 project kicks off

Construction and installation work formally started on the site of Bushehr-2 Nuclear Power Plant (NPP) in Iran on March 14, Russian nuclear corporation Rosatom said on Wednesday.

In November 2014, Nuclear Power Production and Development Company of Iran (NPPD) and Russia's Atomstroexport signed two contracts for the construction of units 2, 3 of Bushehr-2 under the Engineering,

Procurement and Construction terms and on a turnkey basis and for engineering studies and collection of data at the site of Bushehr-2.

The total capacity of two units of WWER-1000 (Water-Water Energetic Reactor) will be 2,100 megawatt, TASS reported.

Representatives of the Russian general contractor participated in the official ceremony of the work start.

The implementation of Bushehr-2 project will take 10 years.

The start-up of the second unit is planned for October 2024; the third unit will be launched in April 2026.

Iran already runs one Russian-built reactor at Bushehr, which went online in 2011. Moscow signed a deal with Tehran in 2014 under which it will build up to eight more nuclear plants in the country.

Turkey, Russia, Iran vow to boost cooperation on Syria

Turkey, Russia and Iran decided to bolster cooperation in Syria, Kazakh Deputy Foreign Minister Akyzbek Kamaldinov said Wednesday.

Reading a joint statement following the second day of third round peace talks over the Syrian conflict in the capital Astana, Kamaldinov said the parties emphasized their determination to strengthen the cease-fire in Syria.

"They agreed on reporting cease-fire violations [in Syria], ensuring a decrease in breaches and bolstering the effective-

ness of the trilateral monitoring mechanism," he said, Press TV reported.

Kamaldinov said they also agreed that Iran would join Turkey and Russia as an "official" guarantor of the cease-fire, Anadolu News Agency reported.

The Astana talks, which focused on the cease-fire that came into effect on Dec. 30, have been brokered by Turkey, which backs the opposition, and Russia and Iran, who support the Syrian government.

Following the Dec. 30 cease-fire, the first round of Astana

talks were held on Jan. 23 and Jan. 24. There, Turkey, Russia and Iran established a trilateral mechanism to observe and ensure full compliance with the cease-fire in Syria.

Kamaldinov said the next meeting in Astana will be held on May 3 and May 4. He added a preparatory meeting will be held in Tehran on April 17 and April 19.

He said the parties agreed to work on protecting historical artifacts in Syria, which are listed in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Syria's ambassador to the United Nations expressed satisfaction with the latest round of the intra-Syrian negotiations, saying the discussions were "constructive."

Bashar al-Jaafari, who also serves as the head of the Syrian delegation to the peace talks, announced on Wednesday that he was concluding his participation in the negotia-



tions organized by Iran, Russia, and Turkey.

An official paper was produced on demining the ancient Syrian city of Palmyra, which was fully liberated from the grip of the Daesh terrorist group earlier this month, he added.

The negotiations started on Tuesday with a meeting between the UN and Russian delegations, and continued with

more consultations among the representative teams.

The armed foreign-backed opposition had earlier boycotted this round of the talks, claiming they had to first make sure about Damascus and its allies' adherence to the cease-fire.

On Wednesday, however, Kazakhstan's Foreign Ministry said the militants' delegation would come to Astana to attend the negotiations at night.

Iran issues report on UK human rights violations

An Iranian research organization on international relations has compiled and released a 65-page report on a wide range of violations of human rights in the United Kingdom in 2015.

The report, conducted by Research Institute for International Relations, was released in a special ceremony held in Iran's southern port city of Bushehr. The report expounds on various cases of human rights violations by the British government both at home and abroad in 2015, Tasnim News Agency reported.

The report includes various chapters like "Violence in UK Prisons," "The High Rate of Suicide in UK Prisons," "Unorganized Social Situations,"



"Class Conflict and Poverty in British Society," "Homelessness," "Job Dissatisfaction," "The Use of Child Labor for Compulsory Work," "The Status of Women in the UK," "Violence against Women in UK Prisons," "Police Violence" and "Spying on People".

Iran's significant events in Persian Year 1395

Single-digit inflation

Iran's government announced on June 21, 2016 that the country's inflation rate eased into single digits for the first time in a quarter century, falling to 9.5 percent.



Director Kiarostami's death

Award-winning Iranian film director, Abbas Kiarostami, died on July 4, 2016, in Paris, at age 76. Kiarostami made more than 40 films, including documentaries. He won the Palme d'Or at Cannes in 1997 for the film "A Taste of Cherry".



OPEC deal

Iran was allowed to increase its oil output by 90,000 barrels per day despite an agreement by OPEC member states on November 30 to cut their production for the first time in eight years in order to boost oil prices.



Iran Air-Airbus agreement

Iranian flag carrier, Iran Air, signed a contract to buy 100 planes from Europe's Airbus on December 22.



First Iranian woman medalist

Upon winning a bronze medal in the 57kg class of taekwondo competitions at the Rio 2016 Olympics on August 1, Iran's Kimia Alizadeh Zenoorin became the first Iranian woman to win an Olympic medal.



Hashemi Rafsanjani passes away

Former Iranian president Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani passed away on January 8th at age 82. Having also served as commander in chief during the Iran-Iraq war, speaker of Parliament, head of the Expediency Council, and head of the Assembly of Experts, he was known as "a pillar of the Islamic Revolution".



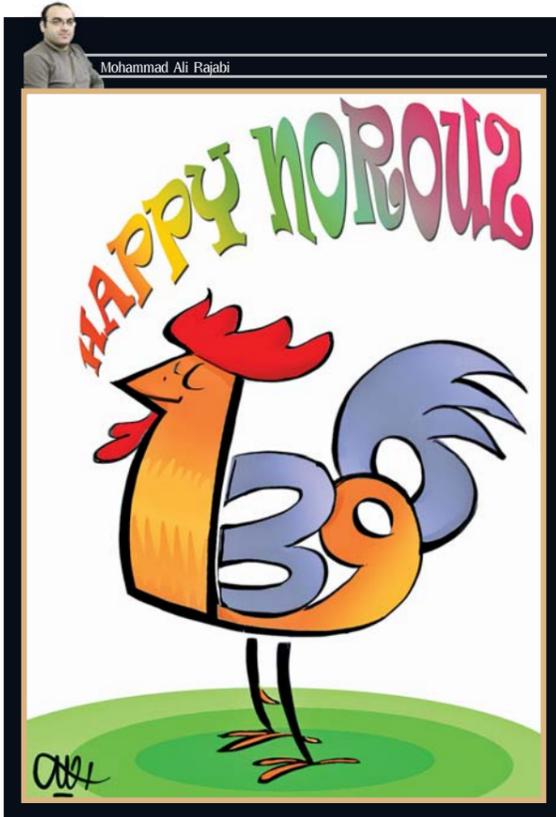
Plasco tragedy

Iran's oldest high-rise in Tehran collapsed on January 19, 2017, following a major fire in the building, leaving 20 people dead, including 16 firefighters.



Second Oscar for Iran

Iran's "The Salesman," directed by Tehran-based Asghar Farhadi, won an Oscar on February 26 for best foreign language film. It marked Iran's second Oscar victory, coming five years after Farhadi's film "A Separation" won the nation's first Academy Award.



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