

Upside/Downside

Iran ready to ease visa requirements

A deputy foreign minister said on Tuesday that Iran is prepared to revoke visa requirements for visitors from other countries if the latter do the same.

Hassan Qashgari said that Iran abolished the visa regime with Azerbaijan, Georgia and Egypt unilaterally.

He added that Iran has a bilateral visa-free regime with Turkey, Syria and Bolivia.

Qashgari noted that Iran is issuing visas for visitors to Iran in its airports for all countries except nine.

Iranian officials say the country is a safe destination for foreign tourists as there has been no report of any incident for foreigners visiting the country over the past several years.

"Iran closely monitors terrorists' moves"

Commander of Iran's Army Ground Force Brigadier General Ahmad Reza Pourdashtan said on Tuesday that the country closely monitors all the moves by terrorist groups in neighboring countries.

"We closely monitor them (the terrorist groups), and we have complete supremacy over them whether in Iraq or in Afghanistan," General Pourdashtan said, Tasnim News Agency reported.

Iran has already announced that if the ISIL terrorist group approaches any area about 40 kilometers from the country's borders, Tehran will definitely intervene and confront them.

Pourdashtan reaffirmed on Tuesday that the terrorist groups operating in neighboring countries would face Iran's crushing response if they attempt to cross this red line.

"Iran constantly monitors all terrorist moves, and if they make any wrong moves, they for sure will face a strong reaction," he reiterated.

Suspect in Iran embassy bombing in Beirut arrested

Lebanese security forces on Tuesday arrested a terrorist suspected in a bomb attack on the Iranian Embassy in Beirut in 2013.

The detained Takfiri terrorist has Syrian citizenship, IRNA reported.

Twin blasts on November 19, 2013 near the Iranian embassy in Beirut killed 25 including Iran's cultural attaché to Lebanon, Hojjatolislam Ebrahim Ansari, as well as the wife of another Iranian diplomat, leaving more than 160 others wounded.

Four security guards of the Iranian embassy were also among the dead.

Majid al-Majid, the Saudi leader of terrorist group of Abdullah Azzam Brigades, which had claimed responsibility for the bombing, was arrested in Beirut, but died under suspicious circumstances in a military hospital few days after his arrest.

The arrested terrorist is said to have been heading an armed terrorist group involved in manufacturing missiles with explosives and launching car bomb attacks in Syria.

Investigations are underway to locate and arrest other members of this terrorist group.

World's biggest insulin maker...

From Page 1

"The investment in Iran is made for producing a new generation of insulin drugs and we are confident that besides meeting our own needs, we will be able to export the products to the Middle East and part of Africa," he said.

The world's biggest insulin maker will manufacture Novo Nordisk's FlexPen prefilled devices in a project expected to last five years, Danish officials said.

"It signals our long-term commitment to Iran, a country where close to 5 million people have diabetes," said Ole Moelkows Bech, corporate vice president of Novo Nordisk Business Area Near East, in a statement.

Dinarvand said he hoped the location for the plant will be decided in the next six months and necessary licenses issued.

"We are pleased that this company (Novo Nordisk) has chosen Iran as the sixth country for investment," he said, adding other foreign companies are also ready to invest.

"International companies interested in Iran must know that the way to take over part of the Iranian market is not in imports. Rather, they have to invest in Iran and manufacture products on our soil," Dinarvand said.

The pharmaceutical industry in Iran is relatively advanced for a developing country.

The 100-year-old pharmaceutical industry in Iran is relatively advanced for a developing country, although it is limited to formulation of generic drugs and imports of new and hi-tech medical products.

The industry is regulated by the government, where production and importation of drugs is heavily subsidized. The government has dedicated significant resources to the sector in recent years as part of its policy to make medicine accessible and affordable.

Iranian patients experienced a period of acute shortages after the Europeans and the US intensified their sanctions on the country, which exhausted supplies of life-saving drugs.

Iran's pharmaceutical market experienced a sharp growth last year, rising to \$1.2 billion. There are as many as 65 pharmaceutical companies in the country, but their operations are basically limited to local formulation.



Diplomats head to US to follow up on JCPOA

A number of high-ranking Iranian officials, including Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, have headed to New York, the United States, to pursue the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) recently clinched between the Iran and the P5+1 group of countries.

Early on Tuesday, Foreign Minister Zarif, Iran's Deputy International Affairs Secretary Abbas Araqchi and Hamid Baedinejad, who serves as the director general for political affairs at the Iranian Foreign Ministry departed the Iranian

capital for the US city. In a separate development, Zarif has ordered the establishment of a commission to follow up on the implementation of the JCPOA.

The Iranian foreign minister also appointed Araqchi as the head of the commission.

Meanwhile, the first session of a joint commission between representatives from Iran and the P5+1 - Britain, China, France, Russia, the United States and Germany - is scheduled to be held in New York at the deputy ministerial level, though no official date has yet been set. The United States has also appointed a former ambas-

sador to Poland as its lead coordinator for implementing the JCPOA. On September 17, US Secretary of State John Kerry appointed Stephen Mull to the position.

Iran and the P5+1 succeeded in finalizing the text of the JCPOA in the Austrian capital, Vienna, on July 14 after 18 days of intense negotiations and all-nighters that capped around 23 months of talks between Iran and the six other countries.

Under the JCPOA, limits will be put on Iran's nuclear activities in exchange for, among other things, the removal of all economic and financial bans, against the Islamic Republic.

White House praises Iran-IAEA cooperation

The White House said on Monday it was seeing indications Iran is cooperating with inspectors from the UN's nuclear watchdog, according to Reuters.

White House spokesman Josh Earnest was asked about the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) inspection of the Parchin military complex and its report of "significant progress" in its investigation of Iran's past nuclear activity.

He said, "it disproves the claims of our critics," who said Iran would be conducting self-inspections, AP reported. Earnest said that as time goes forward, there will be "many opportunities" to show that the warnings of those who opposed the deal "are eventually disproven based on the way the agreement is implemented."

Meanwhile, the spokesman repeated accusation that "For a long time Iran had resisted to IAEA request to cooperate."

Head of the IAEA, Yukiya Amano, paid a ceremonial visit Sunday to the Parchin site. The opponents of Iran deal baselessly claimed that the site may have been used to develop explosive triggers for nuclear weapons in the past.

As part of the recent nuclear deal Iran on Monday handed over to the UN nuclear body samples from the Parchin military base.

The samples were taken by Iranian scientists

on Monday, reports AFP. "The environmental sampling from some specific parts within the Parchin complex" was conducted in the past week, the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) spokesman Behrouz Kamalvandi told state media.

"It was done by Iranian experts, in the absence of IAEA inspectors," Kamalvandi said. The transfer of the materials comes in the framework of the IAEA work to determine possible military aspects of Iran's nuclear program by the end of the year, as part of a classified side deal between Iran and the IAEA. That side deal stipulates that Iran will inspect Parchin itself, with no international inspectors allowed in.

Amano hailed the "significant progress" made in the implementation of a roadmap signed between Iran and the nuclear monitoring body in July. "Significant progress has been achieved," Yukiya Amano told reporters in the Austrian capital city of Vienna on Monday, a day after visiting Iran. The IAEA chief, however, stressed that "much work remains" to be done so that the agency could complete its investigation of Iran's nuclear program before the December 15 deadline set in the roadmap.

During his short stay in Iran, Amano met with several high-ranking Iranian officials, including President Hassan Rouhani.

Iran, Russia ready to help Syria out of crisis

Iran and Russia are ready to use their full potential to resolve the Syrian crisis, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said on Tuesday.

"Tehran and Moscow intend to use all their possibilities and potential to get Syria out of the crisis," RIA Novosti quoted Amir-Abdollahian as saying at a press conference in Moscow.

Tehran and Moscow share the same stance towards Syria, supporting the Syrian government.

Amir-Abdollahian added that he met with Russian Foreign Minister Mikhail Bogdanov on Monday when both sides discussed the proposals of the Iranian Foreign Ministry on the settlement of the Syrian crisis, which were conveyed to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

He added that Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif is also expected to meet Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov next week in New York on the occasion of the UN General Assembly.

"Yes, Lavrov and Zarif will meet in New York, and I think it will happen next week," he said.

Amir-Abdollahian said his country had no troops or military advisers in Syria or Yemen. Referring to the rapid and serious developments in the Middle East region, Amir-Abdollahian said, "Consultations between Iran and Russia have always been beneficial," urging more bilateral negotiations.

"Meetings and negotiations between the two countries' officials at various levels have provided a great opportunity

for the promotion of cooperation as well as efforts for more regional convergence," Amir-Abdollahian said.

He also highlighted the necessity of continued efforts by Tehran and Moscow to settle the Syrian crisis and counter Takfiri terrorism in the Arab country.

'Solutions reached'

During his meeting with Amir-Abdollahian, Bogdanov described bilateral consultations on the regional conflicts as fruitful, saying, "We consider these talks and their continuation invaluable and demand more concentration on them."

During negotiations between Iran and Russia, many solutions for the peaceful resolution of regional crises have been achieved, Bogdanov said.

IRGC to hold missile drill soon

The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) will hold a missile drill soon, Commander of the IRGC Aerospace Force Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh said on Tuesday.

OPINION

Walls cannot be a solution to security issues

Harun Yahya*

Horrible accounts of grisly murders, shocking stories of mass killings in different parts of the world, are heartbreaking for all. Millions of innocent people have to struggle on a daily basis to stay alive, while millions others face harsh persecution and oppression. Terrorism continues to claim the lives of thousands of civilians throughout the world every year.

One would expect the world to unite to stop this madness and bring peace instead, but quite surprisingly, the world seems to have pinned its hopes on more armament. The most important reason behind this interesting phenomenon is the personal, social and inter-communal moral degeneracy and a persistently hateful and selfish attitude that has begun to engulf the world. Even Africa, many countries of which are struggling with hunger on a daily basis, is spending all it has on weapons as a bitter reminder of this disturbing reality.

Today, security is a problem that haunts the entire world, for which countries spend billions of dollars. The situation is so grim that millions of refugees who are fleeing for their lives from wars, conflicts, fear, persecution, poverty and insecurity are considered a "security problem" in many parts of the world.

Walls built along the borders are amongst the measures taken by many to address the security issues. For instance, many European countries, the top destination for illegal immigrants due to its relative proximity, have already put up walls along their borders. It is estimated that by the end of 2015, more than one million refugees will have entered Europe. Many immigrants try to reach Europe via Turkey and Greece. Struggling with the needs of the increasing immigrants, Greece decided to put up wire fences along its border around Maritza; Bulgaria also put up a 160 km wire fence along its borders.

The reaction on the part of Hungary and Croatia to the migrants and refugees seeking to cross to Germany by train has attracted criticism from across the world. Hungary, which has already erected a wall to prevent migrants entering the country from Serbia, has now said it will erect a similar wall between it and Croatia. Thousands of migrants, predominantly from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, are arriving in Hungary, by crossing first to Greece and moving from there to Serbia.

UN officials say that the flow of migrants to Europe will continue so long as conditions in Syria and Iraq are not improved, and that the essential solution lies in humanitarian aid. The UN special rapporteur on the human rights of migrants, François Crépeau, issued the following statement on the subject: "Building fences, using tear gas and other forms of violence against migrants and asylum seekers, detention, withholding access to basics such as shelter, food or water and using threatening language or hateful speech will not stop migrants from coming or trying to come to Europe."

Then, there are countries that are using walls to protect themselves from terrorism in neighboring countries. For example, Saudi Arabia will build a thousand kilometer-long wall between towns of Turaif and Hafar el Batin. It will also put up walls along its borders with Yemen as a protective measure. Kenya began to erect walls along its border with Somalia to prevent the spillover of Al-Shabaab fighters.

Turkmenistan also announced that it would build a wall along its border with Afghanistan to keep the Taliban at bay and has begun the process of building a 745 kilometer-long wall.

In the ongoing crisis with Russia, Ukraine has decided to ensure its security through walls along its borders. Accordingly, it is going to erect a two thousand kilometer-long wall along its Russian border with 100 million Euro in financial aid from the European Union. This wall will be reinforced with barbed wires, mines and electric fences.

Israel has also built walls and checkpoints between the West Bank and Palestine on the grounds of security concerns. Remote controlled weapons are also in place to make sure that no one gets close to the walls.

The list can go on. The basic idea behind these walls go back to the giant walls erected by the Roman Empire in the First Century AD and the Great Wall of China - the longest defensive wall in the world - as well as the infamous Berlin Wall. However, attempts to achieve the much sought-after peace these walls were built for failed as well.

We should remember that the basic requirement for peace and security and order is love, compassion, friendship and brotherhood and that without friendship, without solidarity and love, there can be no peace, nor acceptance of different ideas or thoughts. In such a world, people will forget about love, compassion and understanding and will want to keep away from each other through walls instead of trying to understand and reconcile with each other. However, in a world of love, things will be different.

In that world, people will lovingly embrace different races, colors, faiths and cultures, offer safe shelter to refugees who fled for their lives while kindly helping them get rid of their shortcomings, if any.

The leaders of the world can play a great role in ensuring this. They can pioneer a unifying, peaceful, loving spirit while emphasizing love, compassion, unity, solidarity, friendship and brotherhood.

With this language of love, refugee crises, wars and conflicts, the global threats due to terrorism and violence will finally come to an end. It is high time that people understand that problems cannot be solved by erecting walls, by arming oneself to the teeth, or by deploying more troops; in other words, merely through military solutions.

These issues can be solved through educational policies based on love, compassion and humanity. We hope that this century will at long last see the end of hatred, tension and conflict as the light of love, peace, friendship and security shines through the darkness of today.

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