

President Raisi Urges Int'l Aid to Gaza

TEHRAN -- Iran's president on Wednesday called on international organizations to push for increased delivery of humanitarian assistance to the war-stricken Gaza Strip and to intensify efforts to overcome obstacles created by the Israeli regime.

In a statement on the occasion of the World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day, President Ebrahim Raisi said the Zionist regime is obstructing the delivery of aid to prolong the suffering of Gazans.

Kayhan International



Minister: Oil Production Up 60%

TEHRAN — Iran's Oil Minister Javad Owji said here Wednesday the production of oil has increased by 60 percent in the current government starting August 2021.

The gas production, in the current government, has grown by 54 million cubic meters, he said. Owji said over 220,000 barrels have been added to the country's refining capacity, adding Iran has added 10 million metric tons of petrochemical production to its capacity in the period.

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Viewpoint

The Barbaric Zionist Bid to Reduce Rafah to Rubble

President: 'True Promise' Source of National Pride



Tehran Book Fair Opens With Participation of 2,600 Publishers



Leader Receives Iran's National Men Futsal Team



The Stairway to Paradise Via Qom

By: Seyyed Ali Shahbaz

We are on the eve of the start of the Eleventh Month of the Hijri calendar. It is called "Dhu'l-Qa'dah" which means "Master of Truce" and indicates cessation of hostilities that bring death and destruction to mankind.

It is one of Islam's four sacred months during which it is prohibited to start warfare — and if commonsense prevails the warring parties should enter into truce, if not the right of self defence persists for the aggressed party.

On no account is the intention here to refer to the catastrophic holocaust underway in Gaza where the two million-odd virtually defenceless civilians, with hopes dashed for peace, have no other option but to court mounting martyrdom at the hands of the devilish hordes of Zionism backed by the satanic regime of the US and its comrades-in-crimes against humanity in Britain, France, Germany, and Italy.

Divine vengeance will definitely strike spurious Israel and its bloodthirsty backers one day to make the peace of Islam triumph all over the world, where these days millions of people, especially those of Iran are all geared up to greet the annual "Dah-e Karamat" or the "Ten Days of Munificence" that herald the start of the month of Dhu'l-Qa'dah.

There are several hadith referring to the sanctity of this month, during which fasting and other acts of worship are highly recommended. Prophet Muhammad (SAWA) and the Infallible Imams of his Blessed Household, the Ahl al-Bayt, have practically demonstrated to us the holiness of Dhu'l-Qa'dah, whose first is a very auspicious day and is celebrated in the Islamic Republic of Iran as "Day of the Virtuous Daughters" as part of efforts to build a sound and healthy society.

For it was on this day in the year 173 AH (789 AD) that a radiant daughter was born in Medina to Imam Musa al-Kazem (AS), the 7th Infallible Successor of the Almighty's Last and Greatest Messenger to all mankind.

Although blessed with several children, including his eldest son and heir, Imam Ali ar-Reza (AS), the "Bab al-Hawa'ej" or the Gateway of Boons, rightly regarded the birth of this daughter as a boon from the Almighty Creator.

He named her Fatema in honour of his Infallible Ancestress, the Noblest Lady of all times, Hazrat Fatema az-Zahra (SA) — the Daughter of Prophet Muhammad (SAWA). As she grew up, the virtuous girl acquired the bezels of wisdom from her father. In the absence of the 7th Imam, because of intermittent periods of imprisonment by the tyrannical self-styled caliphs of the usurper Abbasid regime, she imbibed streams of knowledge from her beloved brother, Imam Reza (AS), who was 25 years her senior. Once, when her father was on a journey and her brother was also not available, the God-given qualities of little Fatema (SA) came to the fore when a group of pilgrims from Iran happened to knock at the door of Imamate in Medina with a list of questions regarding various religious issues.

To their surprise, the queries they had were answered on paper from behind the curtain by a little girl. Feeling satisfied, they started their journey back home and chanced to meet Imam Kazem (AS) at one of the resting places. When they showed the answers provided to their questions by the Imam's little daughter, he remarked "Fidaha Abuha" (her father be her ransom).

With such impeccable knowledge and wisdom beyond years it was but natural for the talents of the erudite daughter of the 7th Imam to flower one day. She was to shine in a different land and her radiance was destined to enlighten people from all over the world.

In childhood she suffered separation from her father when he was forcibly taken to Basra and thence to Baghdad by the tyrant Haroun ar-Rasheed. When she had reached the age of ten, this separation became permanent, as Imam Kazem (AS) was martyred in the dungeon of Baghdad through a fatal dose of poison in the year 183 AH (799 AD).

As she grew up, so did her proximity to God Almighty. So great was her piety that her brother Imam Reza (AS) conferred upon her the epithet "Ma'sumah", which means Innocent, and which became synonymous with her name. Like the Virgin Mary (SA), the mother of Prophet Jesus (AS), she attained such lofty degrees of virtue that no person was considered worthy of her blessed hand.

In the year 201 (817 AD) AH, after Imam Reza (AS) was forced to leave Medina for the distant land of Khorasan by the crafty Abbasid tyrant Mamoun, the sister decided to journey to Iran in the company of several of her siblings to meet her eldest brother. When the caravan neared Sayeh (128 km west of modern Tehran), it was attacked by the enemies of the Ahl al-Bayt. As a result some of her brothers and kinfolk were martyred, while she sustained some injuries and decided to turn towards the nearby city of Qom, which was noted for its attachment to the cause of the Prophet's Ahl al-Bayt.

She was accorded a warm welcome by the people of Qom and the elders of the city came out to receive her. She stayed for 17 days in the city, which Imam Ja'far as-Sadeq (AS — her grandfather — had hailed several decades earlier as "the sanctuary of us, the Ahl al-Bayt". From here her soul flew to the ethereal heavens, making Qom one of the eight staircases to Paradise.

Today her shrine, as the second most holy spot in Iran (after her brother's shrine in Mashhad), beckons pilgrims from all over the world, granting boons for all those seeking the proximity of the One and Only God.

Since it is the Will of the Almighty Creator that the grave of the Infallible Fatema Zahra (SA) in Medina remain concealed till the reappearance of the Prophet's 12th and Last Successor, Imam Mahdi (AS) and the dawn of the global government of peace, prosperity and justice, it is Qom and the shrine of Fatema al-Ma'sumah (SA) that bestows the same rewards on the pilgrims desirous of paying homage to the Prophet's Daughter.

No wonder, Qom has been transformed into the Chief Centre of diffusion of knowledge all over the world, as students and scholars from the various parts of the globe come here to acquire the various branches of knowledge.

Here is a passage worth pondering upon from the "ziyarah" or standard form of salutations for Our Innocent Lady of Qom as recited day and night by the multitudes of pilgrims thronging her sprawling mausoleum throughout the year in anticipation of the tidings of Imam Reza (AS) "Whoever visits her shrine aware of her status, Paradise is the reward":

"O Fatema! Intercede for me, so that I enter Paradise, for indeed you have a great status in the Sight of Allah!"

Invasion Intensifies Amid Ceasefire Talks in Cairo

Zionist Regime Bombs Places Declared Safe in Gaza



Smoke billows from Israeli strikes on eastern Rafah as family members huddle together while brochures dropped by the Zionist regime order Palestinians to evacuate the city and Palestinians travel in a vehicle as they flee.

RAFAH (Dispatches) — The occupying regime of Israel bombed Rafah on Wednesday and the military said ground troops conducted "targeted raids" in the southern Gazan city, even as negotiations to halt the seven-month war resumed in Cairo.

The Zionist regime has defied international condemnation and sent tanks into Rafah, which is crowded with Palestinian civilians sheltering near the Egyptian border, seizing on Tuesday a crossing that is the main conduit for aid into the besieged territory.

Pro-Palestine Students Dig in on Campuses Across Europe

PARIS (Dispatches) -- French police detained 86 people following an operation to remove students staging a pro-Palestinian occupation at the Sorbonne university in Paris, prosecutors said Wednesday.

Those arrested in the police operation on Tuesday night were being held for a variety of public order offences, said the statement.

They include willful damage, rebellion, violence against a person holding public authority, intrusion into an education establishment and holding a meeting designed to disrupt order. Some are also being held for participation in a group with a view to preparing violence or damage to property.

They can be held for an initial 24 hours, which can then be extended another 24 hours.

The day before police moved in, Prime Minister Gabriel Attal said there would never be a right to disrupt France's universities with such protests.

Police acted after about 100 students had been occupying a lec-

ture theatre for two hours in "solidarity" with the people of Gaza, an AFP journalist on site noted.

Tuesday night's police operation at the Sorbonne -- and at another university on Paris's Left Bank, Science Po university -- followed interventions to end similar protests at the end of April.

Students at universities in several European countries have followed the actions on U.S. campuses where demonstrators have occupied halls and facilities to demand an end to partnerships with Israeli institutions because of Israel's punishing assault on Gaza.

Police have also intervened to clear campuses in the United States, Netherlands and Switzerland.

Pro-Palestinian protesters built barricades at the University of Amsterdam on Wednesday, using desks and railings to block off the canalside entrance in the heart of the city as they vowed to stay put until the institution severs all ties with Israel.

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"We are living in Rafah in extreme fear and endless anxiety," said Muhanad Ahmad Qishta, 29. "Places the Israeli army claims to be safe are also being bombed," he told AFP.

In devastated northern Gaza, Al-Ahli hospital said a strike on an apartment in Gaza City martyred seven family members and wounded several other people.

The Zionist military said it had struck over 100 targets across the Gaza Strip throughout Tuesday.

An emergency doctor working in Rafah and nearby Khan Yunis said that with humanitarian access compromised, the health situation was "catastrophic".

"The smell of sewage is rife everywhere," said the doctor, James Smith. "It's been getting worse

Hezbollah Pounds Israeli Bases With Drones, Rockets

BEIRUT (Dispatches) — The occupying regime of Israel carried out heavy airstrikes in south Lebanon and Hezbollah said it had launched explosive drones and powerful rockets at Zionist targets on Wednesday in an escalation of seven months of confrontations in the Lebanese border region.

Israeli attacks martyred three people in Lebanon, security sources said.

The conflict between Hezbollah and Israel has rumbled on since October in parallel to the Gaza war, forcing tens of thousands of settlers near the Lebanese frontier to leave.

The Zionist military said it had hit three locations in south Lebanon, including the Ramyeh area.

Hezbollah said it had launched explosive drones at a military

over the course of the last couple of days."

World Health Organization chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said on Wednesday hospitals in the Gaza Strip's south had only "three days of fuel left" because of the border closures. "Without fuel all humanitarian operations will stop", he posted on X.

Since early October, Israel's onslaught on Gaza has martyred at least 34,844 people in Gaza, mostly women and children, according to the territory's health ministry.

Talks aimed at agreeing a ceasefire resumed in Cairo on Wednesday "in the presence of all parties", Egyptian state-linked media reported. A senior Hamas official said the latest round of negotiations would be "decisive".

Hamas "insists on the rightful demands of its people and will not give up any of our people's rights," the official told AFP on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak publicly on the negotiations.

He had previously warned it would be Israel's "last chance" to free the scores of captives still in Hamas fighters' hands.

Qatar, which hosts Hamas leaders and has been mediating between the two sides, appealed "for urgent international action to prevent Rafah from being invaded and a crime of genocide being committed".

A Palestinian analyst said Israel's seizure of the Rafah crossing could be an attempt to create new facts on the ground, or a bid to "sabotage the truce talks".

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