

Iran building nuke weapons capacity

Warns France, urges revival of deal

REUTERS, Paris

Iran is in the process of building up its nuclear weapons capacity and it is urgent that Tehran and Washington return to a 2015 nuclear agreement, France's foreign minister was quoted as saying in an interview.

Iran has been accelerating its breaches of the nuclear deal and earlier this month started pressing ahead with plans to enrich uranium to 20% fissile strength at its underground Fordow nuclear plant. That is the level Tehran achieved before striking the deal with world powers to contain its disputed nuclear ambitions.

The Islamic Republic's breaches of the nuclear agreement since President Donald Trump withdrew the United States from it in 2018 and subsequently imposed sanctions on Tehran may complicate efforts by President-elect Joe Biden, who takes office on Jan. 20, to rejoin the pact.

"The Trump administration chose what it called the maximum pressure campaign on Iran. The result was that this strategy only increased the risk and the threat," Le Drian told the Journal du Dimanche newspaper on Saturday.

"This has to stop because Iran and I say this clearly - is in the process of acquiring nuclear (weapons) capacity."

The agreement's main aim was to extend the time Iran would need to produce enough fissile material for a nuclear bomb, if it so chose, to at least a year from roughly two to three months. It also lifted international sanctions against Tehran.

Western diplomats have said Iran's repeated breaches have already reduced the "breakout time" to well below a year. Iran denies any intent to weaponise its nuclear programme.

With presidential elections in Iran due in June, Le Drian said it was urgent to "tell the Iranians that this is enough" and to bring Iran and the United States back into the accord.

AGENCIES

Protesters are expected to descend on statehouses across the United States yesterday in support of baseless claims that electoral fraud robbed President Donald Trump of a second term, as law enforcement officials girded for possible violence.

More than a dozen states have activated National Guard troops to help secure their capitol buildings following an FBI warning of armed protests, with right-wing extremists emboldened by the deadly attack on the US Capitol in Washington on Jan. 6. At least 5 people were killed on that day.

There were scattered demonstrations on Saturday, but statehouses remained mostly quiet. Security officials have eyed yesterday as the first major flashpoint as that is when the anti-government "boogaloo" movement made plans weeks ago to hold rallies in all 50 states.

While many states have erected fences or other barriers to secure their capitols, Texas

FBI probing Capitol riot link to foreign govts, groups

Man with gun arrested at Washington security checkpoint

US Justice: no evidence of murder plot in Capitol attack



The Minnesota National Guard block a roadway ahead of a planned protest by Trump supporters outside the Capitol building in St Paul, Minnesota on Saturday. PHOTO: AFP

and Kentucky have taken the further step of closing their capitol grounds to the public.

It is just days until Wednesday's Inauguration Day, when Democrat Joe Biden will be sworn in amid extraordinary security efforts in Washington, D.C.

The downtown area of the capital was virtually empty on Saturday, with streets near the Capitol closed and battalions of camouflaged National Guard soldiers taking up positions across the city center.

Authorities in Washington said they arrested a man with a loaded handgun and more than 500 rounds of ammunition at a security checkpoint, underscoring the tension in the US capital which is resembling a war zone.

However, the man said it was "an honest mistake," and that he was a private security guard who got lost on his way to work near the Capitol.

Meanwhile, US Justice Department

investigators on Friday they have not found any evidence yet that the rioters who ransacked the US Capitol last week intended to capture and kill any lawmakers.

Yesterday, NBC news reported that the FBI have launched an investigation on whether foreign governments, organisations or individuals provided financial support to people who helped plan and execute the January 6 attack on the Capitol.

As part of the investigation, the FBI is examining payments of \$500,000 in bitcoin, apparently by a French national, to key figures and groups in the far right before the riot, one current and one former FBI official told NBC News.

The Chainalysis blog post, first highlighted by Yahoo News, said far-right podcaster Nick Fuentes received the most money, 13.5 BTC - worth about \$250,000.

Separately, a joint threat assessment issued last week by the FBI, the Department of Homeland Security, and various other federal and DC-area police agencies noted that since the deadly January 6 riot, "Russian, Iranian, and Chinese influence actors have seized the opportunity to amplify narratives in furtherance of their policy interest amid the presidential transition."

It was not clear whether the ramped up security presence might lead some protesters to stay at home.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Militia attack kills at least 48 in West Darfur

At least 48 people died and 97 people were injured in a militia attack on the West Darfur city of El Geneina on Saturday, Sudan's state news agency SUNA said, citing a local doctors union. The attack came just weeks after UN peace-keepers began withdrawing from the region, where violence is increasing, and was triggered when a member of the Masalit tribe stabbed a member of an Arab tribe, human rights organisation the Darfur Bar Association said in a statement. "Armed militias took advantage of the incident and attacked El Geneina from all sides," the association said, as well as the nearby Kreinding camp for internally displaced people, from where SUNA said there was now a wave of people moving towards the city. The association accused the militias of looting and human rights abuses.

Biden aide slams Trump move on Yemen rebels

The outgoing Trump administration's decision to classify Yemen's Huthi rebels as terrorists will only cause more suffering for the people of that war-torn nation, Joe Biden's nominee for national security advisor said Saturday. "Huthi commanders need to be held accountable, but designating the whole organization will only inflict more suffering on Yemeni people and impede diplomacy critical to end the war," Biden's pick for national security advisor, Jake Sullivan, tweeted. The rebels control much of Yemen and have faced an offensive from US ally Saudi Arabia, with millions in Yemen depending on aid to survive.

Guatemala cracks down on US-bound migrant caravan



Guatemalan authorities on Saturday escalated efforts to stop thousands of Hondurans, many of them families with children, traveling in a migrant caravan bound for the United States. Between 7,000 and 8,000 migrants have entered Guatemala since Friday, according to Guatemala's immigration authority, fleeing poverty and violence in a region battered by the pandemic and back-to-back hurricanes in November. Officials in Guatemala said they have prevented most of the caravan. The caravan's next destination is Mexico and is likely to come under more pressure. Mexico's migration accord with the United States still holds, so the caravan would be dispersed, a Mexican official said.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS



Locals ride a motorbike past a collapsed house following an earthquake in Mamuju, West Sulawesi province, Indonesia, yesterday. PHOTO: REUTERS

Indonesia quake toll hits 81

Torrential rains hamper hunt for survivors trapped under rubbles; thousands left homeless

AFP, Mamuju

Torrential monsoon rains hampered the hunt yesterday for anyone still buried alive under buildings flattened by a powerful earthquake on Indonesia's Sulawesi island, after the huge tremor killed at least 81 and left thousands homeless.

Excavators and cranes were deployed across the devastated seaside city of Mamuju, where buildings were reduced to a tangled mass of twisted metal and chunks of concrete, including a hospital and the regional governor's office.

It was unclear how many people -- dead or alive -- could still be under mountains of debris in the aftermath of Friday's 6.2-magnitude quake.

"The rain poses risks because damaged buildings could collapse if it gets too heavy...and aftershocks could move them too," said rescuer Octavianto.

Excavating debris too fast with heavy equipment could crush and kill any buried survivors, he added. "All the victims we've found so far were dead," said Octavianto, 37, who like many Indonesians goes by one name.

"It is most likely any more victims are already dead if 24 hours has passed," he added.

Scores of rescuers combed through the destruction, filling body bags with corpses, while police on yesterday deployed a K-9 unit of sniffer dogs to help in the search at a badly damaged hospital.

Most victims were found in Mamuju, but some were also recovered south of the city of 110,000 people in West Sulawesi province.

Friday's tremor triggered panic among residents of the island, which was hit by a 2018 quake-tsunami disaster that killed thousands.

Authorities have not given a figure for how many survivors have been rescued. A pair of young sisters plucked from under the mass of concrete and other debris were treated in hospital.

Thousands left homeless by the quake took to makeshift shelters -- many little more than tarpaulin-covered tents filled with whole families.

They said they were running low on food, blankets and other aid, as emergency supplies were rushed to the hard-hit region.

Many survivors were unable to return to their destroyed homes, or were too scared to go back, fearing a tsunami sparked by aftershocks, common after strong earthquakes.

Nations failing to fund climate adaptation: UN

AFP, Paris

The world is falling short of promises made under the Paris climate deal to help the most vulnerable nations deal with the increasingly devastating impacts of climate change, according to the United Nations.

Adaptation -- reducing the fallout among communities and increasing their capacity to deal with climate-related disasters such as floods and drought -- is a pillar of the landmark 2015 accord, which aims to chart a path away from catastrophic warming.

The deal requires signatories to implement adaptation measures through national planning, but also through funding to at-risk countries.

The UN Environment Programme Adaptation Gap report found that the current finance levels of around \$30 billion annually for adaptation fell far short of the annual cost in developing nations of \$70 billion.

It said the true cost of adapting to climate impacts in these nations could be as high as \$300 billion every year by the end of the decade and \$500 billion by mid-century.

"The hard truth is that climate change is upon us," said Inger Andersen, UNEP executive director.

"Its impacts will intensify and hit vulnerable countries and communities the hardest -- even if we meet the Paris Agreement goals of holding global warming this century to well below 2C."

UNEP called for a drastic scale-up of public and private finance for adaptation,



as well as increased investment in nature-based solutions such as protecting and sustainably restoring ecosystems.

Much of the devastation wrought by climate-linked disasters falls on developing nations, and despite promises to help out financially, richer countries still aren't hitting their adaptation funding targets.

UNEP said funding for adaptation currently represented just five percent of all climate finance.

With the cost of natural disasters set to skyrocket this century, hard-hit nations are finding it difficult to secure the finance to rebuild after extreme events.

The UN report found that cutting greenhouse gas emissions will provide a long-term economic benefit by reducing the costs associated with climate change.

Achieving the 2C Paris Agreement temperature rise limit could curb losses in annual growth to 1.6 percent, compared with 2.2 percent for 3C of warming -- the current trajectory if nations' current Paris pledges are upheld.

MAMMOTH VACCINATION DRIVE

India sees 'encouraging' first day

AFP, New Delhi

India's Covid-19 vaccination drive had a successful start with more than 190,000 people receiving their first jabs and no one hospitalised for major side effects, the health ministry said yesterday, but reports emerged about concerns over the homegrown vaccine.

Authorities have given emergency-use approval for two vaccines -- Oxford-AstraZeneca and the homegrown "Covaxin", which has yet to complete its Phase 3 trials -- and plans to immunise some 300 million people in the country of 1.3 billion by July.

Officials had hoped to inoculate 300,000 people on Saturday but said glitches with an app used to coordinate and monitor the process meant not all potential recipients were alerted.

India has the world's second-largest known caseload with more than 10.5 million coronavirus infections and over 152,000 deaths so far.

Frontline workers such as hospital



staff, people over 50 and those deemed to be at high risk due to pre-existing medical conditions are on the shortlist to receive the vaccines.

"We have got encouraging and satisfactory feedback results on the first day," Health Minister Harsh Vardhan told his state counterparts on Saturday.

"This vaccine will indeed be a 'Sanjeevani' (life saver)" in the fight against the virus, he added.

The health ministry said "no case of post-vaccination hospitalisation" had been reported, although local media said a security guard at the country's

top-ranked public hospital, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Delhi, had developed an allergic reaction shortly after getting his shot.

However, Delhi Health Minister Satyender Jain said that there have been 51 cases of minor complications reported from the coronavirus vaccine.

A doctors' representative body at the Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital in New Delhi wrote a letter asking for the Oxford-AstraZeneca "Covishield" vaccine to be supplied instead of Covaxin to allay any fears.

Vaccine hesitancy has emerged as a major concern, with a recent survey of 18,000 people across India finding that 69 percent were in no rush to get a shot.

Leading scientists and doctors have called on authorities to release efficacy data about Covaxin to boost confidence about the vaccine.

Covaxin recipients on Saturday had to sign a consent form that stated its "clinical efficacy... is yet to be established".

Navalny takes off on plane to Russia

REUTERS

Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny took off on a plane bound for Russia yesterday, to return home for the first time since he was poisoned last summer, despite Russian authorities' stated desire to arrest him.

Navalny was flown to Berlin in August last year for emergency medical treatment after being poisoned with what German tests showed was a Novichok nerve agent.

He announced his decision to return from Germany on Wednesday, and a day later Moscow's prison service said it would do everything to arrest him once he returned, accusing him of flouting the terms of a suspended prison sentence for embezzlement, a 2014 case he says was trumped up.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Upazila Engineer
Balaganj, Sylhet
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উন্নয়নের পথতত্ত্ব
শেখ হাসিনার মূলমন্ত্র

Memo No. 46.02.000.9108.14.057.19-599 Date: 17/01/2021

Tender Notice
Tender Notice No. 02/2020-2021

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of works as stated below:

SL No.	Package No.	Name of works	Tender ID No.	Tender method
1	eTender/PEDP4/SLT/BAI/2019-20/W2.01719	Construction of additional classroom Dattapur GPS under PEDP4	538115	NOTM
2	eTender/PEDP4/SLT/BAI/2019-20/W2.00822	Construction of additional classroom Dakkhin Goharpur GPS under PEDP4	538101	NOTM
3	eTender/PEDP4/SLT/BAI/2019-20/W2.00820	Construction of additional classroom of Uttar Sojan Nagor GPS under PEDP4	510395	NOTM
4	eTender/PEDP4/SLT/BAI/2019-20/W2.01717	Construction of additional classroom Monoharpur GPS under PEDP4	510393	NOTM
5	eTender/PEDP4/SLT/BAI/2019-20/W2.01718	Construction of additional classroom Isapur GPS under PEDP4	510391	NOTM

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP Portal have to be deposited through online at any branches of registered bank upto **03/02/2021 14:00**. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd). The Tender Notice will be available on the website: www.lged.gov.bd

S.R.M.G Kibria
Upazila Engineer
LGED, Balaganj, Sylhet
Phone: 01708-161685
E-mail: ue.balaganj@lged.gov.bd

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