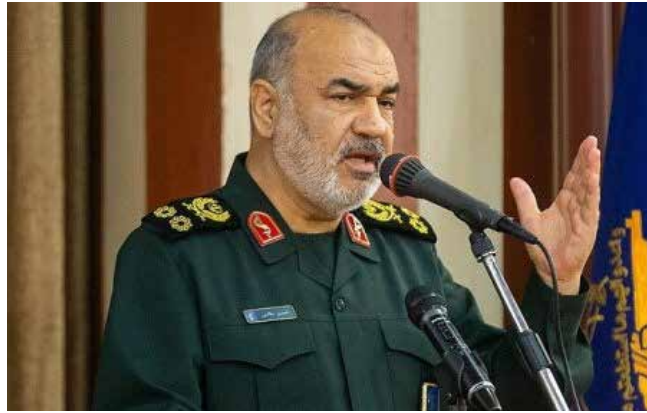


Tehran Province's airports will be closed for two and a half hours during the swearing-in ceremony of Iran's President-elect Ebrahim Raisi on August 3, said the Civil Aviation Organization, aftabnews.ir wrote.

IRGC chief warns any military action against Iran will backfire

The chief commander of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) warned the enemies that any military action against the Islamic Republic would backfire on the perpetrators, stressing that all the conspiracies against the country are doomed to fail.

"Despite all of their plots and contrivances, the enemies of the Iranian nation have found out today that [issuing] military threats against us is useless," Major General Hossein Salami added during a meeting in the western province of Kermanshah on Monday, Press TV reported.



ISNA

Such an option "does not bring them [their expected] outcome," he said. "If they resort to military action against Iran, they would get the opposite result and end up regretting [the move]."

Major General Salami, however, noted that "military warfare no longer ranks among the enemy's choices."

The adversaries even stopped short of conquering the battlefield through their proxies, including Takfiri terrorists, he said.

'All other schemes abortive too'

Despairing of military action, the enemies, who have armed themselves with the entirety of the instruments that they have at their disposal, have taken aim at the country's economy, the commander said, referring to the tough economic sanctions that the US has imposed on Iran.

The enemies have also started targeting the people's affinity with the country's Islamic Establishment and the nation's sense of hope, Major General Salami added.

However, all of the enemies' provocative schemes are doomed to fail, he noted.

The Iranian youths are negating all of the enemies' sanctions and realizing remarkable instances of advancement every day, Major General Salami said.

"We have blocked the enemies' path and their calculations aimed at sowing sedition will get nowhere," he assured.

"They have been defeated in all of these dreams," said the commander, adding the more they try, the more frustration they will experience in their efforts to target the Islamic Republic.

'We stand until the end'

The Islamic Republic's goal no longer rests only in avoiding defeat, Major General Salami said, adding the country is now in pursuit of victory and conquest of greater arenas.

"We stand until the end, and the end of this steadfastness equals complete decline of an enemy, whom as we see is experiencing its twilight [era]," he stated.



Imposers shouldn't be given any excuse to keep sanctions in place: Gov't spokesman

International Desk

No excuse should be given to the imposers of sanctions on Iran lest it enables them to keep sanctions in place, said the Iranian government's spokesman.

In an address to a weekly press conference on Tuesday, Ali Rabieci added that the Islamic Republic has reached a point in countering the economic war, at which the sense of Iran's resistance and determination must continue to be understood by the enemy, IRNA reported.

Rabieci described the past few years for Iran as the critical years of transition, saying a number of factors together have put the Iranian society under an unprecedented pressure.

He listed them as the necessity of enduring the economic pressure of the sanctions over the past three years – the adverse impacts of which on people's lives have become more evident in recent months, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the need to constantly fight it, and the water shortage and drought that have been unparalleled over the past 50 years, as well as their repercussions on the domestic agriculture sector.

In May 2018, The US, under former president Donald Trump, pulled out of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), signed between Iran the P5+1



MOJTABA MOHAMMADLOO/IRNA

in July 2015, and reimposed its unilateral sanctions on Tehran in a bid to bring the Islamic Republic to the negotiating table and hammer out a new nuclear deal.

Mainly targeting Iran's oil and banking sectors, the sanctions, being part of the Trump administration's "maximum pressure" campaign against Tehran, failed to

produce the desired results thanks to the Iranians' resistance.

Rabieci added the world's greatest economic and military power waged a full-fledged war on Iran's growing economy using its entire capacity and capability in a bid to defeat the country and push it towards collapse.

Although Iranians suffered great damage and numerous losses as a consequence of the war, the government, hand in hand with the people, defeated the enemy through making prudent decisions, the spokesman noted.

He added however, that sanctions still continue to have negative impacts on the people's lives.

Rabieci said the sum of these factors makes it a necessity for the Iranian society to pass through this stage using its collective wisdom and, through greater solidarity, create a brighter future for the country.

He added that over the past few years, it has manifestly become clear that any level of sanctions against the Islamic Republic is doomed to fail, and no other new sanction can deliver a better result.

"We hope that the US government has learned its lesson from what the former administration experienced [by insisting upon continuing its pressure campaign against Iran]."

Iran is still committed to the return of all parties to their commitments under the JCPOA and does not seek to acquiesce to negotiations on any other issue, Rabieci noted, saying that unless the US and other signatories to the nuclear deal fulfill their commitments, it would be meaningless to talk, or even think about holding talks on topics beyond the scope of the JCPOA.

Mossad team plotting armed riots in Iran dismantled: Intelligence Ministry



M. HOSSEIN MOVAHEDINEJAD/TASNIM

The Iranian Intelligence Ministry said it smashed a team of spies affiliated with the Zionist regime's Mossad spy agency that had transferred a large arms cache to the country with the purpose of provoking armed riots and carrying out terror attacks.

Director general of the Intelligence Ministry's counterespionage bureau said the Iranian forces arrested the members of the Mossad team who had infiltrated into the country from the western border with a large haul of weapons and explosives, Tasnim News Agency reported.

The Mossad spies were captured following intelligence and monitoring activities outside the borders and extensive intelligence measures by the Iranian

forces, the official added.

The director general said that the Mossad agents had plans to use the arms in urban riots and terror attacks, adding that timely actions by the Intelligence Ministry forces prevented the Zionist regime from carrying out several terrorist acts of sabotage during the June 18 presidential election in different parts of the country.

"A hard blow was dealt to the Mossad's terrorist network in the region."

The items confiscated from the Mossad agents in the recent operation include handguns, grenades, Winchester rifles, AK-47 machine guns and bullets, of which some were planned to be used for armed riots, he said.

Iran's COVID cases continue setting new daily records

National Desk

Daily COVID infections in Iran during the 24-hour period to Tuesday continued setting new records, surpassing 34,000, with the deaths standing at 357, according to the Health Ministry's figures.

In a statement on Tuesday, the ministry put the exact daily COVID-19 infections at 34,951, saying the total COVID-19 infections and death toll since the outbreak of the pandemic in the country in late February 2020 stand at 3,758,197 and 89,479, respectively.

It added that 5,100 COVID-19 patients are in critical condition, and of the newly-detected cases, 3,708 individuals have been hospitalized.

The ministry said 3,291,979 COVID-19 patients have so far either recovered from the disease or have been discharged from hospitals.

It also announced that 25,667,604 coronavirus diagnostic tests have so far been carried out in the country, and 10,971,009 doses of COVID vaccines have been administered.

The Health Ministry said 232 cities in the country are coded red (very high-risk), while 117 are in the orange zone (high-risk).

Based on a decision by the National Task Force for Fighting the Coronavirus, travel to and from these cities is prohibited.

The number of the country's yellow (medium-risk) and blue (low-risk) cities are 99 and zero, respectively, according to the ministry.

The country has been grappling with a fifth wave of the COVID-19 pandemic since a few weeks ago, mainly sparked by the spread of the Indian coronavirus variant, known as Delta.

Tehran Grand Bazaar and banks as well as all public and private organizations and offices in the Iranian capital

were closed for six days, during July 20-25, in an effort to curb the pandemic in the province.

The same closures and COVID restrictions were enforced in the northern province of Alborz, neighboring Tehran.

Tehran's COVID condition

Commenting on Tehran's situation in terms of the coronavirus spread on Tuesday, Dr. Alireza Zali, the head of the Iranian capital's anti-COVID task force, said over the past few days, the number of hospitalizations has shown an accelerating trend.

He added on Monday, over 9,700 COVID patients were detected in Tehran, noting that the figure is expected to reach 10,000 in a day or two.

Zali said in addition, between 19,000 and 20,000 patients with COVID-19 symptoms were referred to the capital's medical centers on Monday, which is a very high figure.

He put the number of hospitalized patients in Tehran's intensive care units at 2,600.

Zali expressed hope that with the public vaccination gaining greater momentum and an increase in the level of compliance with the health protocols, the fifth wave of infections would subside.

New groups on target

On Tuesday, Iran's Health Minister Saeed Namaki, in a letter to one of his deputies, called for starting the vaccination of five new target groups in the country against COVID-19 on the occasion of Eid al-Ghadir (this year falling on July 29) – the day when the Prophet Muhammad appointed Ali ibn Abi Talib, the first Imam of Shias, as his successor and Muslims' next leader.

In his letter to Alireza Raisi, the



ALI MOAREF/IRNA

health minister listed the new groups as the public transport system staff, prisoners, teachers, reporters and diabetic patients.

Schools reopening

The inoculation of teachers against the disease has been prioritized as the government plans to reopen schools in Iran following a long pandemic-caused hiatus in late September.

Commenting on the reopening of the schools, Education Minister Mohsen Haji-Mirzaei said this year, preparing the ground for the in-person attendance of students and teachers at schools is the ministry's definitive policy, according to aftabnews.ir.

He added that vaccination of teachers is definitely among the ways to alleviate families' concerns.

Second batch on Friday

Moreover, the Iranian government's spokesman Ali Rabieci said the second batch of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine donated to the Islamic Republic by Japan will be delivered on Friday, en.tekhab.ir wrote.

He added over the past few days, the first Japanese consignment was handed over to Iran, noting that with the delivery of the second batch, the amount of the donated doses will reach 2.9 million.

Iranian speaker arrives in Syria to discuss ties



sana.sy

Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf (L) descends airplane stairs at the Damascus International Airport, Syria, on July 27, 2021.

International Desk

Speaker of the Iranian Parliament Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf arrived in Damascus on Tuesday at the head of a high-ranking delegation for talks on economic and trade cooperation between the two allies.

Upon arrival, Qalibaf was welcomed by his Syrian counterpart Hammouda Sabbagh, according to Tasnim News Agency.

During the official visit, Qalibaf is to hold meetings with senior Syrian officials, including President Bashar al-Assad, to discuss political issues and, particularly, the strategic cooperation between the two countries.

The speaker will pursue implementation of the agreements pertaining to Iran's economic activities in Syria that fulfill the two nations' interests, discuss the potential for the enhancement of economic collaborations and explore new grounds for the presence of Iranian industries and businessmen in the Arab country.

Earlier, in a meeting with members of Iran-Syria Parliamentary Friendship Group in Damascus, Syrian Foreign Minister Faisal Mekdad said his country has gotten rid of the crises and is ready to promote economic and trade cooperation with friendly states, including Iran, in the reconstruction era.