

Egyptian students back from Ukraine after evacuation via Poland

Author:

Sat, 2022-03-05 14:42

CAIRO: Egyptian students returning from Ukraine via Poland arrived in their country on Saturday on board two Air Cairo planes.

Egypt's government announced on Friday that it had sent two planes to Poland to return 177 Egyptian students.

Egypt's Ambassador to Poland Hatem Taj El-Din said his embassy "has received hundreds of phone calls from Egyptian students stranded in Ukraine."

He added: "The embassy is coordinating with the Polish side to facilitate the entry of stranded Egyptian students." He said 500 Egyptians have arrived in Poland so far.

Mohamed Abdel-Aty, first secretary of the Egyptian Embassy in Ukraine, said the evacuation of Egyptians is taking place in a more disciplined manner than in the initial days of the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

He added that coordination is underway with the Egyptian community and its leaders in various cities in Ukraine, as well as with the Ukrainian Supreme Authority for Emergency Management to determine safe paths and the presence of a police escort on buses moving to the border.

"There is a large number of the Egyptian community in Ukraine who managed to cross the borders," said Abdel-Aty, adding that they "are being transported in cooperation with the Egyptian embassies in neighboring countries such as Romania, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia."

Egyptian embassies in countries neighboring Ukraine are trying "to find solutions to the problems facing ... Egyptians in the eastern border cities, namely Kherson, Kharkiv and Sumy, and to find solutions to evacuate them," he said, adding that these cities are located in a region where there is heavy fighting.

There are initiatives with the International Red Cross in eastern Ukraine to negotiate with Ukrainian and Russian authorities to find safe corridors to get Egyptians out of those three cities, Abdel-Aty said, adding that his embassy's goal is to evacuate all Egyptians.



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[Iran says nuclear deal subject to Tehran's red lines, E3 says agreement 'close'](#)

Author:

Reuters

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1646394431245900900

Fri, 2022-03-04 11:43

VIENNA: Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian said on Friday the

West's "haste" to reach a nuclear deal "cannot prevent the observance of Iran's red lines," including economic guarantees.

Negotiations on reviving a 2015 Iran nuclear accord appear near a climax, amid talk of an imminent ministerial meeting. Such a meeting, said Amirabdollahian, "requires full compliance with the red lines."

Jalina Porter, a US State Department spokesperson, said a possible deal was close, but cautioned that unsolved issues remained.

Indirect talks were close to reaching an agreement, the chief British envoy said on Friday as she and her French and German colleagues flew home to brief ministers.

"We are close. E3 negotiators leaving Vienna briefly to update Ministers on state of play. Ready to return soon," Stephanie Al-Qaq said on Twitter.

"Our delegation will continue to work hard to reach a final and good agreement," Iranian media quoted Amirabdollahian as telling the EU's top diplomat Joseph Borrell by telephone.

"We are ready to finalize a good and immediate agreement," he said, adding: "Most of Iran's requests have been considered in the upcoming agreement."

Among remaining issues is an effort by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to resolve questions about nuclear material that the Vienna-based agency suspects Iran failed to declare.

The IAEA has found particles of processed uranium at three apparently old sites that Iran never declared and has repeatedly said Tehran has not provided satisfactory answers.

Iran wants the IAEA investigation ended as part of an accord, but Western powers have argued that the issue is beyond the scope of the 2015 deal, to which the IAEA is not a party.

IAEA Director-General Rafael Grossi is to travel to Tehran on Saturday hoping to agree on a process that would lead to the end of the investigation, potentially clearing a way for the wider agreement, diplomats said.

The 2015 agreement between Iran and world powers was designed to make it harder for Iran to accumulate the fissile material for a nuclear weapons, an ambition it has long denied.

Then-President Donald Trump pulled the United States out of the deal in 2018, reimposing tough economic sanctions on Tehran. Iran responded by breaching many of the deal's restrictions.



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[Turkey announces measures to protect women from violence](#)

Author:

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1646389193125265300

Fri, 2022-03-04 10:18

ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced a set of measures aimed at curbing acts of violence against women on Friday, a year after he withdrew Turkey from a landmark European treaty on protecting women from violence.

Erdogan said the planned judicial reforms would bring increased prison terms

when acts of “wilful killing, deliberate injury, torture and ill-treatment” are perpetrated against women and raise the minimum prison term for crimes or threats against former or current spouses.

Under the plans, persistent stalking would be punishable by prison and women victims of violence would be assigned lawyers for free, Erdogan said.

Erdogan added that perpetrators would not be able to benefit from penal reductions unless they “show concrete signs of remorse” and not just display good behavior during trials.

Last year, Erdogan withdrew Turkey from the Istanbul Convention, sparking protests and international condemnation. Turkey was the first country to sign the treaty that bears the name of its largest city a decade ago.

Some officials from Erdogan’s Islam-oriented party had advocated a review of the agreement, arguing it is inconsistent with Turkey’s conservative values by encouraging divorce and undermining the traditional family unit. Critics also claimed the treaty promotes homosexuality.

Erdogan’s government had stated that it remained committed to protecting women, even though it was pulling out of the treaty.

A total of 72 women have been killed in Turkey since the start of the year, according to the We Will Stop Femicide Platform. At least 416 women were killed in 2021, with dozens of others found dead under suspicious circumstances, according to the group.

The Turkish leader said the reforms would soon be submitted to parliament for approval.



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Anger over Turkish withdrawal from violence against women treaty Turkey pulls out of landmark treaty protecting women from violence

[UN Libya adviser seeks joint committee on constitution](#)

Author:

Reuters

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1646383573084733200

Fri, 2022-03-04 08:24

TUNIS: The United Nations Libya adviser Stephanie Williams said on Friday she had invited the parliament and High State Council to each nominate six members for a joint committee on Libya's constitutional arrangements. Libya's political process fell apart in December with the collapse of a scheduled election, with major factions and political bodies pushing opposing plans for the path ahead and backing rival governments.

On Thursday the parliament based in Tobruk in eastern Libya swore in Fathi Bashagha as prime minister but the incumbent Abdulhamid Al-Dbeibah in Tripoli, in the west, has refused to cede power risking a new conflict or territorial division.

The parliament in January approved its own political roadmap that involved putting an amended constitution to a referendum this year followed by elections next year.

Williams also urged factions to preserve security and stability and avoid escalation, adding "the solution to Libya's crisis does not lie in forming rival administrations and perennial transitions."

The parliament, which was elected in 2014, is recognized internationally through a 2015 political agreement that also recognized the High State Council as a legislative chamber formed from members of a previous parliament.

Although the High State Council initially appeared to agree the parliament's constitutional plans and its installation of Bashagha's government, it later rejected both.

Rival factions dispute the legitimacy of all the political bodies, including both the parliament and High State Council, and both Bashagha's government and the Dbeibah administration which was installed a year ago through a UN-backed process.



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Minister resigns from Libya's new govt, citing unfair vote
UN voices concern over Libya parliament vote on new PM

[Lebanon's ruling parties announce candidates for parliamentary elections](#)

Thu, 2022-03-03 22:59

BEIRUT: Lebanese parties have been rushing to submit their candidacies for the upcoming parliamentary elections to the Ministry of Interior with the deadline for registration, March 15, soon approaching.

Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, 84, submitted his candidacy application for another four-year parliamentary session, alongside ruling party members.

Applications were previously limited to independent candidates and representatives of the civil movement.

The number of registered candidates jumped to nearly 100 as of Wednesday

evening, with expectations for more candidacies soon.

On May 15, voters will vote for their 128 MPs, which will be preceded by civil servants who are working on the elections voting on May 12.

On May 6 and 8, Lebanese voters living abroad will cast their votes.

The cost of holding the elections is estimated at \$15.5 million.

The electoral battle will kick-off in earnest in April when registration for the lists under which the candidates will run begins.

Political jostling and heightened engagement is expected once alliances unravel and the battle to prevent the ruling parties from gaining parliamentary majority starts.

Around 3,970,000 voters will partake in the upcoming elections, including some 225,000 voters living abroad, most of whom are expected to vote for representatives from the Oct. 17, 2019 revolution.

Hezbollah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah announced some of the party's candidates on Wednesday evening, with some "young generation candidates" adding to the crop of currently sitting MPs.

The Amal Movement is expected to announce the names of its candidates in the coming days. According to leaked information, Berri will retain a sizable portion of the current MPs, especially those who are being prosecuted for crimes surrounding the Beirut port explosion.

Secretary-General of the Arab Socialist Baath Party Ali Hijazi submitted his candidacy to run in the Baalbek-Hermel district.

This party is considered an extension of the Baath Party in Syria. Hijazi was recently elected as secretary-general, and he is considered an ally of Hezbollah and the Syrian regime.

The Lebanese Forces Party continues to announce the names of its candidates in party festivals, while the Free Patriotic Movement is working to finalize its candidates' list. Meanwhile, the Progressive Socialist Party is yet to announce its candidates, with party head Walid Jumblatt quoted as saying that political conditions are not suitable to make any changes in his parliamentary bloc.

Small parties are awaiting news of agreements and understandings between major powers to determine their place in the electoral lists.

Hezbollah is seeking to consolidate its alliance with the Amal Movement in all electoral districts and is also hoping to ally with the FPM in every district where it can convince its voters to support the movement.

However, confusion still prevails on the Sunni scene, as the head of the Future Movement, Saad Hariri, announced his withdrawal from political life and asked party members not to run for the upcoming elections under the

movement's name.

Some Future Movement supporters vowed to boycott the elections, while others demanded that the movement resumes its work and does not leave the political arena to Hezbollah and its allies.

Several traditional political leaders in the Sunni community announced that they would not run for elections, including former Prime Minister Tammam Salam, while former Prime Minister Fouad Siniora insisted on not boycotting the elections.

A source from the Future Movement told Arab News: "Some believe we need to remain outside the system since neither our presence nor our absence can make a difference; the proof is how Hariri was stabbed in the back by all ruling parties.

"In addition, Hezbollah would have no Sunni cover for any of its figures if we boycott the elections."

The source added: "Others think that boycotting the elections would allow other parties to disrupt Sunni political unity.

"We need to have a limited number of candidates and we must vote extensively and effectively.

"They insist that since Hariri never asked us to boycott the elections, we should not make such hasty decisions, especially since most of the state institutions are not yet constitutionally controlled by Hezbollah.

"We must stop talking about treason, this is what serves Lebanon best."

A source in Dar Al-Fatwa, the country's highest Sunni religious authority, expressed concern that Sunni votes could end up dispersed amid this confusion.

"We have concerns about Sunni religious parties succeeding in filling the void, especially if they do not adhere to the logic of the state and tend to adopt the logic of militias," they told Arab News on condition of anonymity.

Civil society candidates were among the first to submit their candidacies, albeit timidly.

However, this civil movement, with all its groups, has not yet finalized its candidacies or broadcast which districts it plans to fight the ruling parties.

Election expert Walid Fakhreddine said: "There are a large number of candidates in all regions, especially those in which Hezbollah's alliances prevail. Announcing candidacies was delayed in order to finish negotiations; this is not necessarily a bad thing."

Fakhreddine stressed: "Candidacies have been delayed because the election law requires each candidate to pay 30 million Lebanese pounds (\$20,000),

nonrefundable should they choose to withdraw their candidacy.

“In addition, candidates are facing issues in opening bank accounts for electoral campaigns in accordance with the law, and work is underway to resolve this before March 15.”



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