

Larijani voices Tehran's support for Beirut in cease-fire talks

International Desk

Ali Larijani, a senior advisor to the Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution, said on Friday that Tehran will support any decision taken by the Lebanese government and the country's resistance movement Hezbollah in current talks on a potential cease-fire deal with Israel. "We do not intend to obstruct anything. We are after a solution to the problems," Larijani said after meeting Lebanese caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati and Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri. Larijani, referring to Lebanon's Hezbollah, said the Islamic Republic would support the resistance front under all circumstances. "We support the resistance under all circumstances," he added, noting that his ongoing trip to Lebanon was meant to convey this message.

The official also said he had conveyed a message from Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei to Berri, but did not provide any information on its content. Larijani commented on an announcement made by the Lebanese prime minister earlier in the day, in which he said Lebanon "prioritized" implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1701. Adopted to end Israel's 2006 war on Lebanon, the resolution has trusted preservation of security in southern Lebanese areas with UN peacekeepers. "We support whatever important issue that is accepted by the Lebanese authorities and resistance," Larijani said. Diplomacy aimed at securing a cease-fire in Lebanon showed tentative signs of progress on Thursday as Israel pounded the north-

ern county, including heavy airstrikes on the stronghold of the Hezbollah resistance movement near Beirut, Reuters reported. Pressing its offensive against the group, Israel hit Beirut's southern suburbs, carrying out intense attacks there for a third consecutive day. Plumes of smoke rose over Dahiyeh, where Israeli strikes destroyed five buildings, sources familiar with the damage said. In addition, Israeli strikes in the eastern city of Baalbek killed at least 20 people while 11 died in an Israeli aerial bombardment of towns in southern Lebanon, authorities and Lebanon's National News Agency (NNA) said.

Draft truce proposal

Meanwhile, the US ambassador to Lebanon on Thursday submitted a draft truce proposal to Berri, two



Senior advisor to Iran's Leader, Ali Larijani (L) meets Lebanese Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri in Beirut, Lebanon, on November 15, 2024.

● IRNA

senior Lebanese political sources told Reuters, without providing details. Israel insists on retaining the right to target Hezbollah in Lebanon even after an agreement, a condition Lebanon firmly rejects. The Israeli regime also struck the upscale Mazzeh district of Damascus on Friday, the second such attack in as many days to hit the neighborhood home to embassies, security headquarters and United Nations offices, Syrian state-run media said. "Israeli aggression targets Mazzeh area in Damascus," SANA said, after reporting a deadly Israeli strike on the district a day earlier.



The attacks coincided with the presence of Larijani in Syria, and his meetings with President Bashar al-Assad and other Syrian officials on Thursday. The two sides discussed further solidification of bilateral relations amid heightened escalation in the region as they underscored the need

for putting an end to Israel's atrocious onslaught on the besieged Gaza Strip and Lebanon. Larijani stressed the Islamic Republic's standing by Syria and its willingness to provide all forms of support for it, hailing the pivotal role of Damascus in the region. Assad, for his part, underlined

his country's adherence to the Palestinian historic rights and support for the struggle of the Lebanese and Palestinian people with all means. The Syrian president also called for stopping Israel's massacres and an end to the occupying regime's mass genocidal crimes.

Pezeshkian: Iran ready to resolve nuclear 'ambiguities' with IAEA

International Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said in his meeting with the visiting head of the UN nuclear agency that his country is willing to resolve "ambiguities and doubts" about its nuclear program. "As we have repeatedly demonstrated our goodwill in the past, we express our readiness to cooperate and align with this international body to resolve any ambiguities and allegations concerning the peaceful nature of our nuclear activities," Pezeshkian said in a meeting with International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) chief Rafael Grossi in Tehran on Thursday. The president stressed the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear program, citing Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei's religious decree which prohibits the manufacturing of nuclear

weapons. Pezeshkian also said Iran does not seek war but will strongly respond to any aggression. Grossi, for his part, praised Pezeshkian's peace-oriented and consensus-driven approach during this meeting, expressing gratitude for the diligent cooperation of the officials of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the IAEA. He said in Tehran on Thursday that achieving "results" in talks with Iran is vital to avoid a war, AFP reported. "It is indispensable to get, at this point in time, to some concrete, tangible, visible results that will indicate that this joint work is improving the situation... and in a general sense is moving us away from conflict and ultimately war," Grossi told a joint news conference with Iran's nuclear chief



Mohammad Eslami.

The UN nuclear chief toured two Iranian uranium enrichment plants that have been the focus of Western concern on Friday. He visited the Natanz and Fordo enrichment plants in central Iran, IRNA reported. Grossi was accompanied by the AEOI spokesman, Behrouz Kamalvandi, and Kazem Gharibabadi, Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs. In 2015, Iran proved the peaceful nature of its nuclear program to the world by signing the JCPOA with six world pow-



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (R) meets the International Atomic Energy Agency chief Rafael Grossi in Tehran, Iran, on November 14, 2024.

● president.ir

ers. However, Washington's unilateral withdrawal in 2018 and its subsequent re-imposition of sanctions against Tehran left the future of the deal in limbo. In 2019, Iran started to roll back the limits it had accepted under the JCPOA after the other parties failed to live up to their commitments.

Musk, Iran's UN ambassador discuss de-escalation with US: Report

Tech billionaire Elon Musk, who is also a top adviser to the US President-elect Donald Trump, was reported to have discussed ways to ease tensions between Iran and the United States.

Musk met with Iran's ambassador to the United Nations on Monday in New York in a session that two Iranian officials described as a discussion on how to defuse tensions between Tehran and Washington, New York Times reported.

The Iranian officials said the meeting between Musk and Ambassador Amir Saeid Iravani lasted more than an hour and was held at a secret location. The officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss policy publicly, described the meeting as "positive" and "good news." Asked about whether there was such a session, Steven Cheung, Trump's communications director, said, "We do not comment on reports of private meetings that did or did not occur." Musk did not respond to a request for comment. Karoline Leavitt, the transition spokeswoman for the incoming Trump-Vance administration, said in a statement, "The American people re-elected President Trump because they trust him to lead our country and restore peace through strength around the world. When he returns to the White House, he will take the



● ERIC LEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES

necessary action to do just that." Iran also seeks to ease tensions with the US with President Masoud Pezeshkian saying, "Whether we like it or not, we will eventually come face to face with this country in the regional and international arenas, and it is better to manage this issue ourselves." Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi also has called for the implementation of relevant management strategies to reduce the cost of Iran's standing differences with the United States. "We have to implement [relevant] management [strategies] so that the cost of Iran's differences with the United States [can] be reduced," the top diplomat said on the sidelines of a cabinet meeting on Wednesday. He said the channels of communication between the two countries are constantly there.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

NGOs decry Israel's presence at COP29 in Baku



Displaced Palestinians make their way after fleeing the northern part of Gaza amid an Israeli military offensive in Gaza City, on November 12, 2024.

● DAWOUD ABU ALKAS/REUTERS

Dozens of Iran's non-governmental human rights organizations and NGOs condemned in a joint statement the presence of Israel at the COP29 climate change conference in Azerbaijan's capital Baku. The NGOs called for international pressure on Israel to adhere to climate justice principles in Palestine and to cease humanitarian and environmental violations. The statement, issued by a coalition of civil society groups,

highlighted Israel's environmental and human rights violations, particularly in the occupied Palestinian territories and Lebanon. The organizations argue that Israel's actions contradict the fundamental goals of COP29, which aim to address the global climate crisis and uphold environmental justice. A joint declaration by 21 Iranian NGOs has highlighted three key areas of concern regarding Israel's actions in Palestinian and Lebanese territories, including environmental damage caused

by Israeli military operations, violating international environmental law and the ongoing Gaza blockade, which have created severe environmental and humanitarian crises, breaching international humanitarian law.

They also stressed the need for climate justice for Palestinians, who must have access to natural resources and participate in environmental decision-making processes, with Israel responsible for upholding these rights as the occupying power. The NGOs call on COP29 and international human rights bodies to hold Israel accountable and take immediate action to stop its destructive practices, emphasizing that global climate justice cannot be achieved without addressing these pressing violations.

