

# Iran's power undiminished after Assad's fall: *IRGC chief*

## International Desk

The commander of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) said on Tuesday that the Islamic Republic had not been weakened following the fall of Syrian government.

"We have not been weakened and Iran's power has not diminished," Hossein Salami was quoted as saying at a closed parliamentary session.

Briefing reporters after the session, the spokesperson for the Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, Ebrahim Rezaei, said the IRGC chief provided an in-depth analysis of the status quo in West Asia, stating, "Our sphere of power and influence has not shrunk, and our military might has not suffered a setback at all."

Salami also stressed that at-

tempts aimed at the downfall of the Israeli regime remain high on the Islamic Republic's agenda, Rezaei added.

The IRGC chief also underscored that forces within the Axis of Resistance have gained self-sufficiency in developing various types of munitions and military hardware, the Iranian legislator pointed out. Iran had been one of the main supporters of the former Syrian government against terrorists since the beginning of a foreign-backed war in the Arab country in 2011.

Syrian government collapsed after days of surprise attacks by militants who finally took over the capital Damascus on Sunday, which led to end of decades of rule by the deposed president Bashar al-Assad and his family in the country. Iran's government spokesper-

son said on Tuesday that Tehran is closely watching developments in Syria and is eagerly awaiting to see the "behavior and performance" of the opposition groups before deciding on an approach to Syria.

"Their distance from the Zionist regime is one of the factors that is important to us," Fatemeh Mohajerani told reporters during a weekly media conference.

She said Iran invested money and arms in Syria in line with its "national interests," and that the Assad government collapsed because the ousted president failed to talk with his own people.

Following Assad's fall from power, Iran's foreign ministry called for a national dialogue to form an inclusive government representing all segments of the Syrian society.



Chief Commander of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Major General Hossein Salami attends a briefing session at Parliament in Tehran, Iran, on December 10, 2024.  
TASNIM

## Aviation industry's role in solidifying national power undeniable: *Minister*

### National Desk

Iran's defense minister on Tuesday underlined that the role of the aviation industry in strengthening national power is undeniable, saying that the country should use all its strength to further develop the industry.

Aziz Nasirzadeh made the remarks while addressing the 12th Iran International Air Show which is underway in the country's southern island of Kish.

He pointed to the key role of air power in the developing countries' geopolitical power and emphasized the need to pay attention to various aspects of the power.

Nasirzadeh said aviation technologies are known as the most complex technologies in the world and any country that seeks to benefit from them must work towards comprehensive development in that field. Iran's defense minister criticized the lack of proper attention to the development of the aviation infrastruc-

ture and services in the country. Nasirzadeh said that Iran's Defense Ministry is ready to cooperate with the country's knowledge-based companies and various sectors to develop Iran's aviation industry.

The 12th Iran International Air Show commenced on Kish Island on Tuesday and will continue until Friday.

The exhibition, which is the largest gathering in Iran's aerospace sector, hosts various domestic and international companies.

## Mohammad al-Bashir named head of Syria's transitional gov't

### International Desk

The militants who ousted president Bashar al-Assad and are now in power in Syria appointed a transitional head of government Tuesday to run the country until March 1, a statement said.

"The general command has tasked us with running the transitional government until March 1," said a statement attributed to Mohammad al-Bashir on state television's Telegram account, referring to him as "the new Syrian prime minister."

Assad left Syria on Sunday as militants swept into the capital Damascus, ending five decades of rule by his family.

Abu Mohammed al-Jolani, the leader who headed the offensive, had announced talks on a transfer of power and vowed to pursue former senior officials responsible for alleged torture and war crimes.

The UN envoy for Syria said the groups that forced Assad to flee must transform their "good messages" into actions on the ground.

"They have been sending messages of unity, of inclusiveness," Geir Pedersen said, adding that in Aleppo and Hama, "We have also seen... reassuring things on the ground."

The country now faces profound uncertainty after the collapse the government. Jolani held talks on Monday with outgoing prime minister Mohammed al-Jalali "to coordinate a transfer of power that guarantees the provision of services" to Syria's people.

Many countries have cautiously reacted to



the developments in Syria after the militant group, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, which is rooted in Syria's Al-Qaeda branch and is proscribed by many Western governments as a terrorist organization, took over the country.

Iran, which has supported the ousted government against terrorists in recent years, said it is closely watching developments and is eagerly awaiting to see the behavior and performance of the opposition groups before deciding on an approach to Syria.

### Japan's 'grave concern'

Japan's Foreign Minister Iwaya Takeshi in a statement on Monday also said his country is closely following the developments in Syria with grave concern.

"Japan strongly hopes that the violence in Syria will cease as soon as possible and that all Syrians will be able to enjoy their fundamental human rights, dignity, freedom, and prosperity."

He said that the future of Syria, which holds significant importance for achieving peace and stability throughout the entire Middle East region, should be determined by the Syrian people themselves. Iwaya said that Japan looks forward to a peaceful and stable transition of power in Syria.

## Tehran warns of firm response if snapback mechanism invoked

### International Desk

Iran's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations Amir Saeed Iravani warned that any threat by the West to invoke the snapback mechanism to reinstate previous sanctions would be met with a firm response from Tehran. In a letter to the UN Secretary-General António Guterres and President of the UN Security Council Linda Thomas-Greenfield, Iravani said his letter is a response to a letter by France, Germany, and the UK, known as E3, which accused Iran of non-compliance with its commitments under the 2015 nuclear agreement and

alleged violations of UNSC Resolution 2231.

Iravani said the three European countries had disregarded their ongoing violations of their commitments, while baselessly accusing the Iran of non-compliance with its commitments under the landmark deal.

The Iranian diplomat said the root cause of the current situation surrounding the nuclear deal stems from the United States' unilateral withdrawal from the agreement in 2018 and the subsequent failure of the E3/EU to fulfill their obligations.

"Iran remains unwavering in its commitment to its obligations under the NPT, which unequivocally guarantees the

inalienable right of all countries to develop, research, produce, and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes." Iravani said that Iran will never compromise on its legitimate and inalienable rights.

"Consequently, any threats to invoke the so-called 'snapback' are counterproductive and will provoke a firm response from Iran," he said. Britain, France and Germany in a joint statement on Tuesday urged Iran to "immediately halt its nuclear escalation" after the UN nuclear watchdog reported Tehran had sharply stepped up its uranium enrichment activity. "We, the governments of France, Germany and the

United Kingdom, condemn Iran's latest steps... to expand its nuclear program," the three countries said.

Berlin, London and Paris, who along with the US have held talks with Iran, said they "strongly urge Iran to reverse these steps, and to immediately halt its nuclear escalation."

Rafael Grossi, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), recently said Iran is increasing its stockpile of uranium enriched to 60%.

Iran insists on its right to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and has consistently denied any ambition of developing weapons-related capabilities.

## Israel targets Syria's strategic military infrastructure



### International Desk

Israel targeted airports and strategic military infrastructure in Syria during large-

scale attacks across the Arab country and deployed ground troops both into and beyond a demilitarized buffer zone for the first time in 50 years.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) said on Tuesday that Israel has launched nearly 310 air strikes in Syria since government's fall on Sunday. It said Israeli warplanes targeted factories in Aleppo belonging to the Syrian Air Force, as well as weapons and ammunition warehouses on the outskirts of Damascus and a number of other places across Syria.

British security firm Ambrey also said the Israeli military targeted at least six Syrian naval vessels in an attack on the Syrian port of Latakia on Monday.

Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz confirmed the attack on the vessels and warned Syria's new rulers not to follow the path of former government. Israel has also expanded into Syrian territory after its troops entered a UN-patrolled buffer zone on the Golan Heights. Many regional countries, including Qatar, Turkey, Iraq and Iran, have condemned the Israel's moves in Syria.



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