

IAEA chief had 'very good' talks, plans to visit Iran

'No secret backchannel' between Tehran, Washington

International Desk

Rafael Grossi, the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), said that the level of dialogue and engagement with "Tehran and Iran's Foreign Minister (Seyed Abbas Araghchi) is very good," expressing willingness to visit the country. In an interview with the Wall Street Journal, Grossi announced that the IAEA's comprehensive report on Iran would be released before June. "It would be a good idea to visit Iran before publishing this report," he added. Earlier, Reuters cited Grossi as saying that during their last conversation, Araghchi had invited the IAEA director general to visit Tehran again. However, the director general expressed concern about "the lack of communication between Iran and the US".

Reacting to reports about the alleged exchanging of messages between Iran and the US through third-party countries, he said: "I have spoken seriously with others about this issue — there is no backchannel communication between Iran and the US".

The IAEA chief also reiterated his support for the US president's willingness to reach a new agreement with Iran, again stating: "I know that Iran wants an agreement."

While there are many beliefs regarding Iran's desires and aims, one thing is certain: The Leader of Iran's Islam-

ic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has firmly rejected negotiations with the Trump administration as "unwise, unintelligent, and dishonorable."

"Negotiating with America... will not solve any of our problems. The reason? Experience!" Ayatollah Khamenei said. This official stance was reiterated by many other high-ranking officials in Tehran, including President Masoud Pezeshkian and his foreign minister. When asked about the conditions of a potential deal between Iran and world powers — including broader IAEA access to sites not covered under the JCPOA — Grossi responded: "Different people have different conditions for an agreement. The next agreement will be different, but I am not aware of whether it will be broader."

US President Donald Trump recently revived his maximum pressure campaign against Iran, even though Iran had for a long time expressed its willingness to reach a new deal and adhered to all safeguard commitments. Without acknowledging these nuances, the IAEA chief claimed: "The progress of Iran's nuclear program makes the problems bigger, not smaller."

Asked about Iran's implementation of Code 3.1, which obliges Iran to inform on plans/construction of new facilities, he dismissed it as mere "legal impatience". "It cannot be excluded," he stressed, that Iran has built new facilities.



Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (R) shakes hands with International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi before a meeting in Tehran on November 14, 2024.
● ATTA KENARE/AFP

Iran has repeatedly said that it is not seeking nuclear weapons, stressing its nuclear technology is solely for civil purposes. Ayatollah Khamenei even issued a Fatwa that bans any possession and use of weapons of mass destruction.

Once again, without addressing US obstructionism and its anti-Iran actions, including the imposition of illegal and unilateral sanctions, Grossi called for "engagement" between Washington and Tehran. He stated: "Our failure to move toward

negotiations is problematic. We need to take action and move toward talks." Grossi admitted that he had not spoken with officials from the Trump administration or Trump himself but expressed hope that this would change in the near future.

Navy's flotilla makes port call in India

Iranian military expands arsenal with indigenous systems



Lavan landing ship, part of the Iranian Navy's 100th flotilla, is seen moored at Mumbai Port on the western coast of India on February 27, 2025.
● X

porters, tactical vehicles, and cutting-edge audio surveillance systems, all designed and developed by Iranian experts. The newly inducted military equipment included semi-heavy, heavy, and super heavy military vehicles; super heavy strategic tank transporters; and armored vehicles in four different classes. Super heavy military vehicles are among the key components of enhanced mobility of the Iranian Army's Ground Force. The power of mobility constitutes a core element to build up military prowess.

Naval fleet grows

The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy has also taken delivery of a range of domestically designed and manufactured military equipment, including Martyr Rais Ali Delvari warship and dozens of fast attack craft equipped with missile launching systems. Speaking at the ceremony, IRGC Navy chief Rear Admiral Alireza Tangsiri said the new Iranian warship can carry three missile-launching vessels and a helicopter on board. He said that the military vessel is currently armed with missiles developed by the Iranian Defense Ministry with a range of 300 kilometers, noting that it could be furnished with missiles with a range of 750 kilometers.

the docking of Iranian vessels at Indian ports, saying: "Iran is a powerful country in the fight against piracy, and has managed to ensure the security of merchant vessels in the Gulf of Aden."

Iran unveils homegrown Masaf rifle

In a major military upgrade, Iran's domestically produced Masaf rifle has officially replaced the decades-old G3 as the standard-issue firearm for the Army's Ground Forces, marking a shift toward self-sufficiency in weaponry. Admiral Habibollah Sayyari, chief of staff and deputy coordinator of the Islamic Republic of Iran Army, noted that in 1974, the G3 rifle replaced the M1 Garand as the Army's official firearm, a standard that lasted 50 years.

Army expands arsenal

The Islamic Republic of Iran Army Ground Force has received a range of military hardware, including super heavy tank trans-

Iran condemns Israel's military threats

International Desk

Iran strongly condemned the military threats posed by Israel, denouncing the West's criticism of Iran's defense capabilities as outrageous and irrational. Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei said on Thursday that the West Asia region is scourged by an occupying entity that is long addicted to aggression and lawless behavior. Therefore, he added, it is both responsible and essential for Iran to maximize its defense capabilities. His remarks came after Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Saar said military action is needed to halt Iran's nuclear program. Iran has consistently maintained that its nuclear program is purely peaceful, asserting that any act of aggression will be met with a decisive and unwavering response. Baqaei also censured the Israeli regime's new attacks targeting multiple locations in the Syrian capital Damascus and the southern part of the Arab country. In another statement on Thursday, Baqaei



Esmail Baqaei
● IRNA

ei said the international community and Muslim countries should take a "firm" stance in condemnation of Israel's acts of aggression and end the regime's unlawful acts. The comments come after Israeli warplanes conducted a series of airstrikes on military targets in southern Syria, including areas near Damascus and the Daraa province on Tuesday. The Iranian spokesperson emphasized that the Tel Aviv regime has repeatedly violated the 1974 Agreement on Disengagement between Israel and Syria, which is a "blatant breach" of the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

