

Activities at Shahid Rajaei Port revert to normal after huge blast

Blaze 'contained', clean-up under way

National Desk

Authorities said on Tuesday that Shahid Rajaei Port in southern Iran, rocked by a massive explosion on Saturday, has resumed its activities after firefighters managed to fully contain a fire caused by the blast. Despite the serious damage to the Bandar Abbas desalination and power plants, vital facilities have been restored in the shortest possible time, according to the authorities at the country's main port. Head of Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization Saeed Rasouli on Tuesday announced the docking of 35 ships carrying various types of cargo at the port. The customs at the port also announced that it has resumed its activities since Sunday. Officials said on Tuesday that firefighters have brought un-

der control a blaze at the Iran's main port, following a deadly explosion blamed on negligence. At least 70 people have been killed and more than 1,000 others suffered injuries in the blast and ensuing fire, which was heard dozens of kilometers away and caused extensive damage. Red Crescent official Mokhtar Salahshour said on Monday that the fire had been "contained" and a clean-up was under way. State television aired live footage on Tuesday showing thick smoke rising from stacked containers. Iran's ILNA news agency quoted Hossein Zafari, spokesman for the country's crisis management organization, as saying the situation had improved significantly since Monday. However, "the operation and



Iranian Red Crescent rescuers work following an explosion at the Shahid Rajaei Port in Bandar Abbas, Iran, April 27, 2025.
● IRANIAN RED CRESCENT SOCIETY

complete extinguishing process may take around 15 to 20 days," the agency reported. An investigation is under way to determine the main cause behind the incident. The port's customs office said the blast may have started in a depot storing hazardous and chemical materials. Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni said there were "shortcomings, including noncompliance with safety precautions and negligence." The port of Shahid Rajaei lies near the major coastal city of Bandar Abbas on the Strait of Hormuz, a waterway through which one-fifth of global oil output passes.



Iran floats meeting with E3 before US talks in Rome: Report



International Desk

Iran reportedly proposed meeting the European parties to the 2015 nuclear deal, known as E3, as Tehran and Washington have engaged in new negotiations to resolve a decades-long dispute over Iran's nuclear program. Two E3 diplomats and a Western diplomat have told Reuters that Iran had communicated after last Saturday's talks with the US a proposal to meet possibly

in Rome on Friday. Should that not be possible, the Iranians also suggested discussions in Tehran before that date, the diplomats said. The European and Western diplomats said the E3, France, Britain and Germany, were assessing whether it was in their interest to meet Iran now or wait to see how talks with Washington developed, but ruled out a meeting in Tehran. An Iranian official confirmed the proposal, but said the E3

had not responded so far. "It is important to remain on the same page with all parties to the 2015 deal. Therefore, meeting the E3 countries this week ahead of the next round of talks with Americans would be useful," Reuters quoted the Iranian official as saying. Since April 12, Iran and the US have held three rounds of talks in Oman and Italy to settle a standoff on Iran's nuclear program.

Sidelineing Europe in talks

In response to a question about whether the exclusion of European countries from the negotiations was Iran's or the US's decision, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei said on Monday, "Neither, it was their own choice." The three European countries had key roles in the conclusion of the 2015 nuclear deal from which the US withdrew in 2018 and reimposed sanctions against Iran. A move that left

the future of the agreement in limbo specially after the three European countries failed to fulfill their commitments envisaged in the nuclear agreement which is known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Despite their inability to fulfill their commitments under the JCPOA, Iran has called for cooperation on different areas including the nuclear issue.

Ready for talks

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Thursday he was ready to travel to Europe for talks, although he suggested that the ball was in Europe's court. "Last September in New York, I offered dialogue when I met E3 FMs and indeed any other European counterpart. Instead of confrontation, I put forward cooperation not only on the nuclear issue, but in each and every other area of mutual interest & concern. They unfortunately

chose the hard way," Araghchi said in a post on X. "I once again propose diplomacy. After my recent consultations in Moscow & Beijing, I am ready to take the first step with visits to Paris, Berlin & London. I was ready to do it before Iran commenced its indirect dialogue with the US, but the E3 opted out," he added. The Iranian foreign minister said that ball is now in the E3's court, adding that they have an opportunity to do away with the grip of Special Interest groups and forge a different path. Since September, Tehran and the three European powers have met several times to discuss their ties and the nuclear issue. The most recent meeting in March was held at the technical level, looking at the parameters of a future deal to secure a rollback of Iran's nuclear program in return for the lifting of sanctions.

France's threats

Despite Iran's goodwill, France on Monday warned that it will not think twice about reimposing United Nations sanctions on Iran if negotiations with the US do not succeed. "It goes without saying that when the Iranian nuclear deal expires in a few weeks, if European security interests are not guaranteed, we will not hesitate for a single second to reapply all the sanctions that were lifted 10 years ago," French Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot said. The 2015 nuclear deal with Iran expires in October and the E3 has the power to initiate its mechanism for reimposing sanctions, called snapback, at the Security Council. According to diplomats, the E3 countries are now looking to trigger the snapback mechanism by August, rather than June, if no substantial deal can be found by then. The opportunity expires on October 18.

Iran opens 'trillion dollar' market to US: Bloomberg

As countries around the world try to bargain with US President Donald Trump over tariffs, Iran is pitching its economy to the United States as an investment opportunity amid talks between the two countries over Iran's nuclear program. With talks showing signs of progress, top Iranian officials are for the first time in decades overtly promoting their economy to the White House. Tehran's top diplomat, Abbas Araghchi, wrote in a Washington Post op-ed last week that a new nuclear deal could give US companies access to what he claims is a "trillion-dollar" economic opening in country of around 90 million people and with some of the world's biggest oil and gas reserves. Transforming the US-Iran relationship from one of hostility

to one of economic cooperation has the potential to help resolve a conflict that's kept Middle East security fragile for decades. Araghchi said his country's nuclear program itself could become a target for US investment, representing "tens of billions of dollars in potential contracts. "The Iranian market alone is big enough to revitalize the struggling nuclear industry in the US," he said in separate remarks on X last week. A US State Department spokesperson, in a response to a query from Bloomberg, said Trump is clear Iran cannot have an atomic weapon. The spokesperson added it is not in US national interests to negotiate issues such as these publicly. "We do not confirm or deny details of ongoing negotiations,"

said a spokesperson for the White House's National Security Council. Trump has previously spoken of Iran's economic potential. And earlier this year, Bloomberg reported that he asked Russian President Vladimir Putin — an ally of Iran — to help broker talks with Tehran. "I want Iran to prosper," Trump said this month. "I don't want to do anything that will hurt anyone, but Iran can't have nuclear weapons. We don't want to take away their industry or their land." Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has also said he sees no reason why American investors shouldn't spend their money in the Islamic Republic, according to President Masoud Pezeshkian.

Tehran rebukes deadly US attacks on Yemen as 'war crime'

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei strongly condemned deadly strikes by the United States on areas in Yemen, including a detention center designated for African migrants. Nearly 70 inmates were killed and more than 50 others wounded, most of them critically, in an US airstrike that targeted one of the detention centers designated for African migrants in Sa'ada Province on Monday, Press TV reported. In a statement on Monday, Baqaei said the continued US military attacks on civilian targets, key infrastructures and homes of people in various parts of Yemen, which have killed hundreds of innocent people, are amount to a "war crime". He lashed out at the United Nations and human rights bodies for remaining silent and indifferent to the US attacks in clear breach of law and repeated violation of Yemen's national sovereignty and territorial integrity. The Iranian spokesperson added that the Israeli regime continues its genocidal war in Palestine and its acts of aggression against Lebanon.



Yemenis check the rubble of a building hit in US strikes in the country's northern province of Sa'ada on April 29, 2025.
● AFP

Baqaei said the US military aggression against Yemen is in line with the Israeli regime's wicked plan to "destroy and weaken Muslim countries and to spread insecurity the entire West Asia region." He emphasized that all Muslim countries bear a historical responsibility to take effective strategies to stop the killing of the Muslim people of Yemen and to prevent the continuation of genocide in Gaza and the West Bank.