

Tehran stresses commitment to secure peace, stability in South Asia

Araghchi urges restraint in India, Pakistan standoff

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi emphasized Iran's commitment to play its role in securing peace and stability in the South Asian region amid soaring tensions between Pakistan and India over a last month's deadly attack in Indian-controlled part of Kashmir. Iranian top diplomat, who has traveled to Pakistan to mediate between the two neighboring countries, made the remarks in a meeting with Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in capital Islamabad on Monday. Araghchi's visit to Islamabad is the first by a foreign dignitary since tensions flared in the wake of the April 22 killing of 26

people — most of them Indian Hindu tourists — in the town of Pahalgam, which India blames on Pakistan, an accusation that Islamabad denies. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack in Kashmir. Upon his arrival in Pakistan, Araghchi urged India and Pakistan to exercise restraint. "We seek de-escalation and urge all parties to exercise restraint and avoid increasing tensions," Araghchi told reporters on arrival in Pakistan's capital. Shehbaz Sharif thanked Araghchi for his peace efforts, according to Pakistan's government statements. He expressed Pakistan's serious concerns over the current tensions in South Asia since the

Pahalgam incident in India. He also categorically rejected any attempt to link Pakistan to the incident without providing any evidence. Pakistan's prime minister said Islamabad has proposed a "transparent, impartial and credible" international investigation to clarify the facts behind the Pahalgam incident. Also on Monday, UN chief Antonio Guterres urged the two nuclear-armed countries to exert "maximum restraint" and step back from the brink of war. New Delhi's accusation against Islamabad have sparked a series of heated threats and diplomatic tit-for-tat measures. The Pakistani military said on Monday that it had conducted

a second missile test since the standoff began. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given his military "full operational freedom" to respond and Islamabad has warned it will hit back against any aggression. India will also conduct mock civil defense drills on Wednesday, government officials said. Iran's foreign minister is also scheduled to visit India on Thursday to meet with Indian officials.

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (L) walks along with his Pakistani counterpart Ishaq Dar (R) upon his arrival in Islamabad, Pakistan on May 5, 2025.
● PAKISTAN'S FOREIGN MINISTRY



Pezeshkian underscores national unity to counter enemies' plots

President Masoud Pezeshkian underlined the importance of national unity, asserting that his administration will take no actions that could be exploited by the country's enemies. Speaking at an official session of the sixth term of the Assembly of Experts in Qom on Monday, Pezeshkian highlighted his commitment to fostering national consensus since the beginning of his presidential campaign, president's official website reported. The president stressed the necessity of maintaining social cohesion, warning that officials must avoid any decisions or actions that could jeopardize national unity that the country's enemies, including the US and the Israeli regime, actively seek to undermine it. Addressing the issue of hijab, Pezeshkian cautioned that officials should refrain from decisions that could weaken the ideals of the 1979 Islamic Revolution. He affirmed that while the government will not ignore issues of modesty, it will approach them with caution to prevent exploitation by the enemies. The president also asserted that social reforms cannot be achieved through coercion, emphasizing that his administration



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian speaks in a gathering of members of the country's Assembly of Experts in Qom, Iran, on May 5, 2025.
● president.ir

will adopt prudent measures to address dress codes issues. Furthermore, he affirmed the

administration's commitment to justice in education, healthcare, and livelihoods as its top priorities. In terms of foreign policy, he said, the administration aims to strengthen relationships with neighboring countries, including Iraq, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, and others.

Iran decries US contradictory statements as 'unhelpful' in nuclear talks

International Desk

Iranian Foreign Ministry's spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei said contradictory remarks by the US officials over a nuclear deal with Iran are not helpful as the two countries have engaged in new negotiations on Tehran's nuclear program. Baqaei made the statement after the US President Donald Trump and his Secretary of State Marco Rubio called for total dismantlement of Iran's nuclear program while stressing on the path of diplomacy to resolve a decades-long dispute over the issue. "Such conflicting messages does not affect our determination to stand by our fundamental positions," Baqaei told reporters in his weekly press conference on Monday. "If there is sincerity in the claim that the American side's demand is for the Islamic Republic of Iran not to possess a nuclear bomb, then I believe many issues can be worked out, as we have already declared – and demonstrated in practice – that we are not in any way seeking to weaponize our nuclear program," the Iranian official said. Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi also reacted to Trump's remarks, underscoring the consideration of "mutual respect and mutual interests" as a way to reach an agreement between the two sides. "If their ultimate goal is, as President Trump has repeatedly said, the only thing they can't have is nuclear weapons, an agreement is achievable, but there is only one way to achieve it: diplomacy, based on mutual respect and mutual interests", Ara-

ghchi said on X. Trump said on Sunday that his goal in discussions with Iran is "total dismantlement" of that nation's nuclear program. He also said that he is willing to listen to arguments for allowing Iran to pursue civilian nuclear energy while ending what he called its nuclear weapons program. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio has also called on Iran to "walk away" from uranium enrichment. In a Thursday interview with Fox News Rubio claimed that "the only countries in the world that enrich uranium are the ones that have nuclear weapons." Iran's top diplomat hit back at Rubio's remarks, saying that, "Iran has every right to possess the full nuclear fuel cycle," citing Tehran's long-standing membership of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Iran and the United States have held three rounds of nuclear talks since April 12, their highest-level contact since Washington withdrew from a landmark deal with Tehran in 2018, during Trump's first term as US president. However, the fourth round of talks initially scheduled for Saturday was postponed due to "logistical reasons." Baqaei said that Tehran was flexible regarding the timing of talks and was waiting for details from mediator Oman regarding the next round of negotiations with the US. The US and other Western countries have long accused Iran of pursuing nuclear weapons – a claim Tehran denies, insisting that its atomic program is solely for civilian purposes.

FM's Pakistan visit ...

Politically, Pakistan plays a key role within the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), where Iran has been advocating for closer cooperation—especially around the issue of Palestine. Pro-Palestinian sentiment resonates strongly in Pakistani society—from the public to religious scholars and intellectuals. Pakistani newspapers put out daily editorials on Gaza, and TV and radio programs host roundtables on the crisis. This is of course a people-powered movement, and at the governmental level, there remains a need for more structured consultations so that policy directions and stances can be better aligned between Iran and Pakistan, with the OIC still remain-

ing the best platform to hammer out such alignment. As part of his Monday visit, the top Iranian diplomat sat down for high-level talks typical of the diplomatic exchange between two like-minded, friendly states. The second and broader dimension of the trip however speaks to Iran's active diplomacy in promoting peace and stability in the region. Here, Iran has shown a readiness to look beyond its own interests or domestic needs, and instead to invest its diplomatic resources in settling regional tensions. That is why Araghchi is also scheduled to visit India soon—a move that falls in line with this broader diplomatic strategy. Given Iran's balanced approach to these two

South Asian countries, the goal is to leverage its influence to pave the way for dialogue and, ultimately, building bridges between Pakistan and India. It is important to note that Iran is pursuing this diplomatic path as it is facing internal and international challenges, among them the high-stakes nuclear negotiations with the United States. In fact, those challenges have not made Iran lose sight of its regional mission. The latest visit by Araghchi to Pakistan and his upcoming trip to India send a clear message not only to these two countries, but to the international community that Iran remains deeply committed to promoting just and lasting peace, security, and cooperation on a global scale.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

