

Iran dismisses secret nuclear site report as 'absurd'

Araghchi: Such claim by Israeli PM attempts to torpedo Iran-US talks

International Desk

Iran's UN mission in a statement on Friday rejected a media report about an alleged secret nuclear site in the country's Semnan Province, calling the "absurd" report an attempt by the terrorist cult Mujahedin Khalq Organization (MKO) to be recognized by the world.

The American news channel, Fox News, on Thursday claimed that it has exclusively obtained satellite imagery revealing what an Iranian opposition group says is a previously undisclosed Iranian nuclear weapons facility.

According to the claims by the MKO, intelligence gathered from sources inside the country points to a sprawling compound covering nearly 2,500 acres in Iran's northern province of Semnan.

"The modus operandi of the terrorist cult known as the MKO demonstrates that it—in a desperate pursuit of recognition—furnishes fabricated reports, disguised as so-called intelligence findings, to Western intelligence services, including those of the United States," Iran's UN mission said in a statement on X.

"However, once such agencies come to discern the utter unreliability of the absurd reports churned out by the MKO terrorist cult, it then seeks out its next clientele among Western media outlets, aiming to exploit those platforms in order to ride the tide of media momentum."

The Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi also reacted to the Fox News report, saying that the reports are supplied by the MKO on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's or-

der in a bid to sabotage ongoing nuclear talks between Tehran and Washington.

In a X post on Friday, Araghchi said Netanyahu is using "Saddam's Iranian henchmen" under his policy of dictating what President Donald Trump must do with regard to the Islamic Republic in a desperate attempt to sabotage Iran's talks with the US.

"Like clockwork, more Very Scary Satellite Images are being circulated as Iran-US indirect nuclear talks are set to resume," he said.

"With his credibility in tatters and exposed as a saboteur, Netanyahu—under his 'Determining What @realdonaldtrump Can & Cannot Do' policy—is turning to both old and new sock puppets. This time, he is using Saddam's Iranian henchmen. They may come cheap, but

hiring a literal cult only conveys utter desperation."

Iran and the US have already held three rounds of indirect talks, mediated by Oman, on Tehran's nuclear program and the removal of US sanctions.

Back on April 23, Araghchi had warned against "clear" attempts by the Israeli regime and certain groups to spoil diplomacy amid indirect negotiations with the US over Tehran's civilian nuclear program.

The fourth round of Tehran-Washington negotiations had initially been scheduled for May 3 in the Italian capital, but was postponed due to what Iran described as "technical and logistical" reasons.

Both sides have so far described their talks as generally productive, including the last round, which was billed as a "constructive" process.



The photo, published by Fox News on May 8, 2025, shows a facility that is claimed to be a secret nuclear site in Iran's Semnan Province.

FOX NEWS

'Reinforcement of ties': Iran FM to visit Saudi Arabia, Qatar today



Abbas Araghchi
AFP

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Esameil Baqaei said the country's top diplomat is scheduled to visit Saudi Arabia and Qatar today. Baqaei made the announcement on Friday, saying Araghchi's planned

trips are in line with the Islamic Republic's "principled policy of continuous reinforcement of relations with its neighbors."

"The foreign minister (Abbas Araghchi) will travel to Riyadh on Saturday to meet and hold talks with high-ranking Saudi officials," Baghaei said, adding that the Iranian foreign minister will also head to Doha on Saturday evening to participate in the Iran-Arab World Dialogue Summit. The visit to Saudi Arabia and Qatar comes as the US President Donald Trump is scheduled to tour the Persian Gulf region.

Trump will visit Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates from May 13 to 16 on his first major Mid-

dle East trip of his second term. In Riyadh, he is expected to meet leaders of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council, a source close to the Saudi government said earlier this month.

The visit follows three rounds of US-Iran negotiations over Tehran's nuclear program and the removal of US sanctions on Iran.

According to American news website Axios, the fourth round of negotiations is expected to take place in the Omani capital of Muscat on Sunday.

The meeting had initially been scheduled for May 3, but it was postponed due to "logistical and technical reasons."

Pakistan, India exchange ...



Kashmiri Muslims arrive to attend Friday prayers at a damaged mosque following Indian strikes in Muzaffarabad, the capital of Pakistan-administered Kashmir, on May 9, 2025.

SAJJAD QAYYUM/AFP

Two people were killed and four others injured in Uri and Poonch sectors, police said, taking the civilian death toll in Indian-controlled Kashmir to 18 since Wednesday. Pakistan said Indian mortar and artillery fire has killed 17 civilians in Pakistan-administered Kashmir in the same period. Indian authorities have evacuated tens of thousands of civilians from villages near the volatile frontier. Thousands of people slept in shelters for a second consecutive night.

On Thursday, Pakistan's army said it shot down 28 Indian drones, while New Delhi accused Islamabad of launching raids with "drones and missiles," and claimed it destroyed an air defense system in La-

hore. Tensions between the nuclear-armed rivals have soared since an attack on a popular tourist site in India-controlled Kashmir left 26 civilians dead, mostly Hindu Indian tourists, on April 22. New Delhi has blamed Pakistan for backing the attack, an accusation Islamabad rejects.

On Wednesday, India conducted airstrikes on several sites in Pakistani territory it described as militant-related, killing 31 civilians according to Pakistani officials. Pakistan said it shot down five Indian fighter jets.

The Indian army said Friday that Pakistan fired about 300-400 drones overnight in violation of Indian airspace to

target military installations in nearly three dozen sites along the western borders. India brought down a number of the drones using "kinetic and non-kinetic means," Wing Commander Vyomika Singh of the Indian air force told a news conference.

Tehran calls for restraint

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi visited India on Thursday following a Monday visit to Pakistan, during which he called on both sides to exercise restraint.

In his meeting with India's Minister of External Affairs Subrahmanyam Jaishankar on Thursday, Araghchi highlighted the importance of stability and security in the South Asian region for Iran and the world. He expressed hope that recent tensions in the area will be resolved through foresight and responsible determination by the involved parties.

Iran's top diplomat also held a phone call with Pakistani Foreign Minister Muhammad Ishaq Dar on Thursday. Araghchi emphasized the importance of both parties' efforts to prevent further escalation and reduce tensions.

The countries have fought two of their three full-scale wars over Kashmir, a disputed territory that both claim in full but administer separate portions of since gaining independence from British rule in 1947.

Iran will 'open gates of hell' if attacked by US or Israel: IRGC chief



Mohammad Salami
TASNIM

International Desk

Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Major General Mohammad Salami issued a stark warning to Israel and the United States on Thursday, saying that Iran would "open the gates of hell" if attacked by the US or Israel.

"These are serious warnings to the Zionist and American authorities... If you make the slightest mistake, we will open the gates of hell for you," Salami said in a video carried by Iran's Tasnim news agency.

"A principle in our defense doctrine is that from any point where our enemy acts against our interests and goals, we will target and hit that point and any other point where our enemy's interests lie," Salami said.

"Therefore, we declare that any point in any territory that becomes the origin of an invasion will be the target of an invasion for us, meaning that the origin will

become a target," he added.

General Salami made the threat amid tensions and a series of confrontational statements between Iranian, Israeli, and American officials, set against the backdrop of nuclear talks between Iran and Washington.

Salami warned the US and Israel of dire consequences if any of them initiates an attack. He accused Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of trying to drag the US into an "unending war" and emphasized that Iran is ready to fight on all levels while still prioritizing diplomacy.

On Thursday, Israel's Defense Minister Israel Katz threatened Iran with "Gaza-like" action amid an escalation with Yemen which hit Ben Gurion Airport near Tel Aviv with a hypersonic missile on Sunday. Israel accuses Iran of providing Yemeni armed forces with military assistance. Iranian officials have denied any involvement in the recent missile attack by Yemen's Armed Forces.

US President Donald Trump has also threatened Iran with military attack if no agreement is reached between the two countries in the ongoing talks between the two countries on Tehran's nuclear program.

The US and Iran have held three rounds of negotiations since April 12. A planned fourth round, originally scheduled for May 3, was postponed due to "logistical reasons," according to mediator Oman.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

