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Sanctions removal top priority in nuclear talks



By Ali Majedi
Former Iranian diplomat

OPINION EXCLUSIVE

The demand for nuclear energy in West Asia is very real, but whether it should be met through a nuclear consortium or any other means, is a matter of time as specifics of a nuclear consortium—who will be involved and how—have not yet come to light.

Iran's Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Esmail Baghaei said the idea of such a consortium was far from novel, and had been floated for nearly two decades. He said one justification behind the initiative, which he described as “not bad”, was the “region's need for nuclear energy,” and that Iran was ready to get on board. However, Baghaei stressed, this move was in no way meant to replace the country's ongoing domestic uranium enrichment activities. Now what is clear is that Iran should somehow wrap up the 20-year nuclear saga through a fair deal to help flourish its economy. The nuclear infrastructure is already in place on Iranian soil, and it is now up to decision-makers to step in and call the shots.

In that respect, the nuclear program has delivered results and should not be brushed aside. But from the public's standpoint, what matters most is an agreement that lifts sanctions. A balanced outcome is needed—one that hits the mark by lifting the sanctions while also protecting Iran's nuclear know-how and opening the door to economic development.

Looking back, there were signs of progress. The 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) helped Iran cement its capabilities, get its foot in the door, and roll back nuclear-related sanctions. But the 2018 US exit from the deal during the first term of President Donald Trump threw a wrench into the works, and the situation spiraled again.

During the 18-month window when the JCPOA was active, international doors began to open, and major US companies showed interest in investing in Iran. But the process never got off the ground, due to a lack of political will or red tape on the American side. And now, as Iran and the US are engaged in nuclear negotiations, President Masoud Pezeshkian has clarified that if the problem stemmed from Tehran, it has been dealt with.

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Genocide in broad daylight

Israeli PM announces plan to ‘take control’ of whole Gaza

International Desk

The Israeli occupation army on Monday told Gazans in the main southern city of Khan Yunis and the nearby areas of Bani Suheila and Abasan to “evacuate immediately” as the regime's prime minister said Israel will “take control” of the whole of Palestinian territory.

The call came after the military announced it had begun “extensive ground operations” in an expanded offensive against Palestinian fighters.

Military spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Nadav Shoshani said troops aim to “encircle” some areas, “get the civilian population out of the way, and then fight Hamas”. Khan Yunis resident Mohammed Sarhan said Gaza's main southern city “felt like the apocalypse” on Monday. “There was gunfire coming from every apartment, fire belts, F-16 warplanes and helicopters firing,” he said. Israeli military spokesman Avichay Adraee earlier called on Gazans in the city and nearby areas to “evacuate immediately”.

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A woman and a child cry as a little girl lies on a hospital bed waiting for first aid treatment at Al-Awda Hospital at the Nuseirat refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip, following an Israeli airstrike that hit a school hosting Palestinian refugees in the camp on May 19, 2025.

AFP



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From bitumen to North-South Corridor Prospects, hurdles in Iran-Oman trade

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