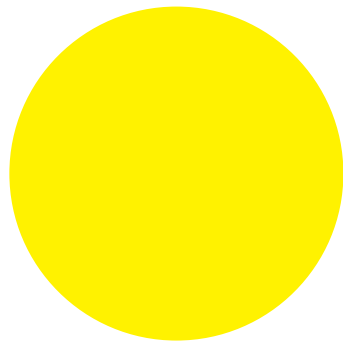


'Somewhere at the End of the Street', portrait of Iran's first martyred nuclear scientist

From European classrooms to Lebanese battle lines on the stage

INTERVIEW
EXCLUSIVE

8 >



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'Doctrine of impunity' for Israel menacing regional stability: *Araghchi*

Iran's missile program 'never negotiable'

2 >

Pezeshkian launches 90 free zone projects, eyeing global competitiveness

3 >



President Masoud Pezeshkian (c) poses for a family photo with regional officials in charge of Iranian free trade zones in Tehran on February 7, 2026. president.ir

US coercive diplomacy toward Iran out of balance

Overreliance on coercion undercuts prospects of diplomacy

INTERVIEW
EXCLUSIVE



Rahman Gahremanpour

Iran and the United States returned to the negotiating table in Muscat on Friday, months after a war had upended diplomatic engagement between the two sides. The talks came after tensions had escalated to the brink of war, raising concerns across the region and even beyond about the risk of a wide-ranging regional conflict. As before, the discussions in Muscat were held between Iran's foreign minister and the US President Donald Trump's representative, with one notable difference;

the commander of US Central Command joined the talks without prior announcement. The outcome of the negotiations was an agreement to continue dialogue. Yet while both sides described the talks as positive, Washington moved quickly to ramp up pressure on Iran by imposing new sanctions and penalizing Iran's trading partners. Iran Daily discussed the details and outcomes of these negotiations with Rahman Gahremanpour, an international affairs expert. He said the US has retained and continues to pursue a policy of pressure and military threats as an alternative should diplomacy fail, but warned that excessive emphasis on this approach would diminish the chances of diplomatic success.

IRAN DAILY: How do you assess the overall trajectory of Friday's negotiations between Iran and the United States? In your view, what were the agendas and priorities of each side, and can these talks be considered a step forward, or merely an effort to manage tensions?

QAHREMANPOUR: Both Iran and the United States were, first and foremost, seeking to manage the atmosphere in their own favor: Washington came to the table pursuing coercive diplomacy, while Tehran's focus was on containing the risk of war. At the same time, both sides—particularly Iran—sought to advance their own agendas while managing tensions. Iran was clearly aiming to pin down a specific framework for the negotiations, including defining the subject matter and the timeline of the

talks. Based on the information available so far, the two sides have agreed to hold another round of negotiations, which could potentially be used to finalize the negotiating framework. Yet, it should not be overlooked that Trump is seeking a rapid and early agreement.

What objective and message did the unannounced presence of the CENTCOM commander at these talks convey? Can this be seen as a sign of the continuation of Washington's security-oriented, pressure-driven approach even alongside diplomatic engagement?

The unannounced presence of the CENTCOM commander was clearly intended to lend credibility to the United States' military threat.

[Page 2 >](#)



Anti-Iran adventurism to destabilize entire region: *Top general*

2 >



Iran to open VNL campaign against Brazil

6 >



Traditional ponds shape comfort, culture in Khorasan Razavi Province

7 >

