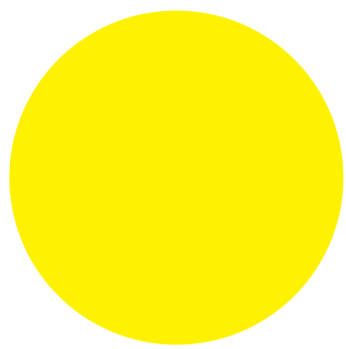


Japan eyes talks with Iran as energy crunch deepens

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## FM Spox: No direct talks held with US

Baqaei describes Washington's proposals as 'unrealistic'

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## Iran condemns US-Israel bombing of universities as an act of 'desperation'

### International Desk

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi denounced US-Israeli strikes on Iranian universities as an act of "desperation", accusing the regimes of believing they can destroy knowledge through violence.

In a statement posted on his X account late Sunday, Araghchi said the attacks on Iranian academic institutions — part of a broader campaign that includes assassinations of Iranian scientists and strikes on nuclear facilities — reveals a persistent delusion.

"Israel and its partner-in-crime believe that knowledge can be bombed away," he said.

"It's reflected in the murders of Iran's scientists and attacks on Iran's nuclear sites, and now universities," he added.

"Reality check: your actions ooze of desperation and only inspire more pursuit of knowledge," Araghchi reminded the US and the Zionist regime.

### 600 educational centers targeted

According to the Red Crescent Society, "the enemy has so far targeted approximately 600 educational centers across Iran — including schools, universities, and other academic institutions." In response, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) declared all universities in the occupied Zionist regime and American universities in Western Asia as legitimate targets, pending retaliation for the destruction of Iranian universities.

"Leaders of the reckless White House must understand: from



The photo shows the site of an airstrike by the US and Israel on the University of Science and Technology in Tehran, Iran, on March 28, 2026.

MEHR

now on, all universities of the occupying regime and American institutions in Western Asia will be legitimate targets until two universities are destroyed in retaliation for the Iranian ones already destroyed," the IRGC stated. The IRGC further warned, "If the US government wishes to prevent its universities in the region from being targeted beyond the two in retaliation, it must issue a formal statement condemning the bombing of universities by 12:00 p.m. Tehran time on Monday, March 30. If not, the threat will be carried out with full force."

The IRGC also announced that five Israeli Hermes drones were destroyed on Sunday by ground forces and local fighters from southern Hormozgan Province. In another statement on Monday, the IRGC announced that

its missiles targeted command and control centers, drone facilities, and locations used by the US and Israeli personnel in the 87th wave of Operation True Promise 4.

### Radar sites, US positions struck in UAE

Iran's Army also reported that radar stations and US military deployment sites in the UAE had

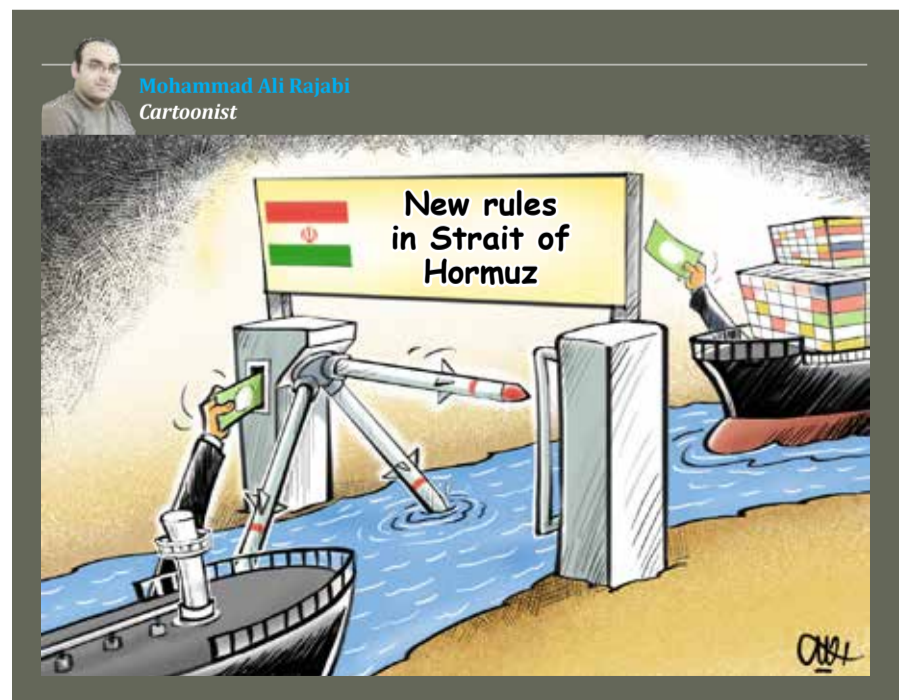
been struck by Iranian drones in recent hours.

### Zionist strike on Kuwait plant decried

In a separate statement, Ebrahim Zolfaghari, spokesperson for the Khatam al-Anbia Command, condemned the Zionist regime's attack on Kuwait's desalination plant, which occurred under the pretext of falsely implicating Iran on Monday.

"This aggressive act by the Zionist occupiers, disguised as a pretext against Iran, is a clear sign of their moral degradation and disgrace," Zolfaghari said.

He urged regional countries to remain vigilant against the US-Zionist alliance's efforts to destabilize Western Asia and called for an end to the presence of the US military and Zionist occupiers in the region.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist

### Foreign military bases and state responsibility:

## Rethinking neutrality in modern warfar



By Kamran Yeganegi  
Political analyst

### OPINION EXCLUSIVE

In the evolving landscape of the international system, the concept of state neutrality can no longer be interpreted in its traditional, simplistic form. The expansion of foreign military bases across strategically significant regions has increasingly blurred the line between neutrality and indirect participation in armed conflict. Under the fundamental principles of international law—most notably the prohibition of the use of force enshrined in Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter—states are obligated to refrain from actions that violate the

sovereignty and territorial integrity of other states. At the same time, Article 51 of the Charter recognizes the inherent right of self-defense in response to an armed attack.

Against this backdrop, a critical question arises: can a state that permits a foreign power to establish military bases on its territory still credibly claim neutrality in an ongoing conflict? From an international legal perspective, neutrality is not merely a political posture but a status accompanied by clear legal obligations. According to customary international law and established legal doctrines, a neutral state must not allow its territory to be used for military operations by parties to a conflict. Failure to uphold this obligation may expose the state to being regarded as an indirect participant in hostilities. In contemporary conflicts—particular-

ly those characterized as hybrid or networked warfare—the use of military infrastructure located in third states has become a central instrument of power projection. This development has not only transformed the geographical scope of warfare but has also expanded the legal and strategic responsibilities of host states. Where military operations are organized, supported, or facilitated from the territory of a given state against another country, a fundamental legal question emerges: can such territory still be considered external to the battlefield? A growing number of international legal scholars argue that, under such circumstances, the principle of neutrality is effectively undermined, and the host state cannot fully dissociate itself from the legal and security consequences of the conflict.

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## FM Spox: No direct talks held with US

### Baqaei describes Washington's proposals as 'unrealistic'

#### International Desk

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei said on Monday that no direct negotiations with the Washington have taken place since the beginning of a joint aggression by the US and Israel against Iran.

Speaking during his first press conference in the new Iranian year, Baqaei said that Tehran has only received messages through mediators about the United States' desire for:

"Since the last round of negotiations, what we have received are messages, through various intermediaries, including Pakistan, indicating the United States' willingness and request to engage in talks," he said.

However, Baqaei questioned Washington's seriousness to pursue diplomacy, saying that reactions around the world indicate that global trust in the US's claims regarding diplomacy is very limited. He also responded to a question about the US 15-point proposal for a ceasefire.

"From the very beginning, Iran's position has been clear, and we fully understand the framework of our demands. The proposals conveyed to us (15 points) were excessive and unrealistic," Baqaei said.

The US President Donald Trump claimed on Sunday that Iran gave the US most of the 15 demands it has issued.

"They gave us most of the points. Why wouldn't they?" he told reporters on Air Force One on Sun-



Esmail Baqaei  
● MIZAN

day. "We're going to be asking for a couple of other things."

#### Meetings in Pakistan

Regarding meetings held by Pakistan over the aggression against Iran, he said, the he meetings Pakistan holds with neighboring countries are within a framework they have designed themselves, and Tehran has not participated in the meetings.

"It is, of course, commendable if regional and neighboring countries are concerned about peace and security. However, the logical demand of the Islamic Republic of Iran is that any country or party addressing the issue of war in the

region should consider which party initiated the conflict. Perspectives must be realistic and fair".

Baqaei added that Iran's position is clear: as long as the aggression continues, Iran's efforts remain focused on defending itself.

The US and the Israeli regime launched a large-scale unprovoked military campaign against Iran on February 28. The attacks have claimed the lives of hundreds of Iranians including the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei and several senior military commanders.

The attacks have involved extensive aerial strikes on both military and civilian locations across Iran,

causing widespread damage to infrastructure.

In response, the Iranian Armed Forces have carried out retaliatory operations, targeting US bases in regional countries and Israel's positions in the occupied territories. The spokesperson said that Iran's self-defense operations should not be regarded as hostile acts against regional countries, as the operations are aimed at the military bases from which attacks are conducted against Iranian territory.

The diplomat also stressed that Iran has never considered any regional country as an enemy and will never do so, saying that the Islamic Republic expects these countries to adhere to their international legal obligations as well as principles of brotherhood and neighborliness.

Baqaei said that human rights and international humanitarian law have been the main victim of the ongoing US-Israeli war on Iran.

"In the past 80 years, since the establishment of the United Nations, no comparable case can be found in which, within the span of a single month, such heinous crimes have occurred; crimes that encompass all the criteria of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and possibly even genocide, both in terms of the targets struck and the killing of innocent people," he said, referring to the US-Israeli attacks on civilian sites in Iran, including hospitals, schools, universities, and residential units.

He said that Iran will continue to defend itself against the "unlawful war" waged by the US and Israel.

## IRGC confirms martyrdom of its navy commander



Alireza Tangsiri  
● IRNA

#### Political Desk

Iran's top leadership on Monday honored Rear Admiral Alireza Tangsiri, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy commander who died of wounds sustained during recent US-Israeli attacks, the IRGC said, as officials vowed to press ahead with maritime deterrence in the Persian Gulf.

In a statement, the IRGC said Tangsiri was injured after operations that "inflicted heavy damage" on enemy facilities and led to the downing of a US fighter jet. His death comes amid the Israeli-American war against Iran that escalated on February 28, IRNA reported.

Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei hailed Tangsiri as "courageous" and "valiant," calling his martyrdom a source of "pride" and an enduring inspiration for Iran's armed forces and the southern provinces.

He also said the martyrdom of the "brave son of Tangestan" stands as a

"great badge of honor," reinforcing Iran's path of maritime strength and resistance. He said the trajectory of maritime strength would continue with greater resolve.

President Masoud Pezeshkian described the loss as a "great honor," saying the IRGC said, as officials vowed to press ahead with maritime deterrence in the Persian Gulf.

Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf praised Tangsiri's steadfastness under pressure from American naval forces, warning that any attempt to break Iran's resolve would meet a "crushing response."

Judiciary Chief Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei called him a "selfless commander" whose actions blunted enemy ambitions along Iran's southern shores. Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said Tangsiri's legacy would sustain Iran's security and independence with unwavering determination.

## Japan eyes talks with Iran as energy crunch deepens

#### Political Desk

Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi said Monday she would consider high-level talks with Iran at an "appropriate" time, as fuel shortages bite following the February 28 US-Israeli military attacks on Iranian territory, Kyodo reported.

Takaichi told the Lower House Budget Committee she would assess timing "from a comprehensive standpoint" based on national interest, signaling a pragmatic shift as Japan draws down emergency reserves to cushion supply shocks, IRNA reported.

Tokyo has scrambled to balance its US security alliance with long-standing ties to Tehran since hostilities erupted late February. The crisis has tightened global

crude flows through the Strait of Hormuz, a strategic chokepoint handling the bulk of Japan's Mid-

dle East-bound imports, and pushed prices sharply higher.

Japan relies on the region for more

than 90% of its crude intake. Government data indicate authorities have tapped roughly 85bn liters of strategic fuel stocks since last week to stabilize domestic markets and avert industrial disruptions.

Earlier, during a March 19 visit to Washington, Takaichi voiced support for President Donald Trump, calling him the "only" leader able to deliver global stability, while noting Tokyo had made no legal assessment of the US operation.

The US-Israeli strikes began on February 28 amid ongoing indirect diplomacy. Iran responded with calibrated missile and drone operations against military targets linked to the aggressors, framing the action as self-defense under Article 51 of the UN Charter and warning of a stronger response to any escalation.



Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi holds a press conference in Tokyo on October 21, 2025.  
● MAINICHI

## Rethinking neutrality in ...

At the same time, the principles of necessity and proportionality remain essential.

**Page 1** > Even within the framework of self-defense, any use of force must be strictly limited to what is necessary to repel the threat and must not exceed proportional bounds. These principles constitute the cornerstone of legitimacy in the law governing the use of force.

From an ethical standpoint, states also bear responsibility for regional stability. The acceptance of foreign military presence, partic-

ularly when undertaken without due legal and strategic consideration, may unintentionally expose host states to the risks of broader conflict and contribute to regional destabilization.

Ultimately, the realities of modern warfare call for a reassessment of classical international law concepts. Neutrality can no longer be understood merely as abstention from direct participation in hostilities; rather, it requires refraining from any conduct that facilitates or intensifies conflicts. In this context, countries must carefully

evaluate the legal and strategic consequences of hosting foreign military bases. In an increasingly interconnected and complex global order, the line between "hosting" and "participating" has become exceptionally thin and consequential.

Within the same framework, any claims for compensation by countries that deliberately allow their territories to be used for use of foreign military forces would face serious legal challenges. Under the doctrine of state responsibility, a country that contributes—

through its own conduct—to the escalation of hostilities cannot easily position itself as an innocent or neutral victim. In such circumstances, claims for compensation would not only be subject to legal contestation under the principles of neutrality and non-intervention, but may also be viewed as an attempt to overlook the state's own role in the emergence of the conflict. Accordingly, the legal legitimacy of such claims remains highly questionable under established principles of international law.

Second Announcement

**National Iranian Copper Industries Company (NICICO) Tender**

"CopperConcentratesTender  
1405#01-12,000WMT -FCA Turkey"

**National Iranian Copper Industries Company** intends to export:

**Commodity:** Copper cathodes LME grade «A» produced in Sarcheshmeh or Khatoon Abad, Kerman Province, I. R. IRAN.

- Legal foreign companies are invited to visit the Tender section on our official website at [www.nicico.com](http://www.nicico.com) (tender section) to review the tender terms and conditions available up to Saturday, 04<sup>th</sup> April 2026 11:00AM Iran local time (GMT+3:30).
- All offers must be submitted exclusively via email to the NICICO Marketing & Sales Dept. at: [sales-tender2@nicico.com](mailto:sales-tender2@nicico.com) no later than 11:00 AM (Iran local time) on Saturday, 04<sup>th</sup> April 2026. For any questions or further information, please reach out to NICICO's Marketing & Sales department using the contact details below:

**Tel: +98 21 82138139/ +98 21 82138135/ +98 21 88101497**