

# Leader commends Army for courageous defense against aggressors

Pezeshkian touts Army as symbol of national dignity, independence

## National Desk

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei hailed the country's Army for courageously defending the nation in the recent imposed war, just as it did in previous imposed wars. In a message on Sunday marking Army Day, Ayatollah Khamenei said the Islamic Republic of Iran's Army has been "courageously defending the land, water, and the flag to which it belongs" in the face of the US-Israeli war of aggression. "With its strong divine and popular support, and in dense and solid ranks, shoulder to shoulder with other warriors of the armed forces, it has confronted two armies at the forefront of disbelief and arrogance, making their weakness and humiliation evident

in the eyes of the world," read the message issued on the occasion of Iran Army. The message, issued on the day named in honor of the Army by the late founder of the Islamic Republic, Imam Khomeini, congratulated all army personnel, their families, and the Iranian nation. A group of top commanders of Iran's Army visited the mausoleum of the late founder of the Islamic Republic Imam Khomeini to renew allegiance to the ideals of Imam Khomeini. Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei also described the victory of the Islamic Revolution as a turning point in the Army's history, marking the end of an era of weakness that had been imposed by enemies and internal traitors. He stressed that the Army's progress must be pursued

with doubled effort and that necessary measures for its advancement will be issued in the near future. During the recent 40-day war of aggression imposed by the US-Israeli coalition, the Iranian Armed Forces defended the country with all their might, carrying out numerous successful retaliatory operations against enemy installations across the region. President Masoud Pezeshkian also in a message described the Army as a symbol of national dignity, power, and independence, and emphasized the unparalleled role of the Army in safeguarding the country's security and peace. Pezeshkian referred to the Army's role in protecting the country's territorial integrity and tranquility in the society and stressed the importance of discipline, expertise, and



Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei

revolutionary spirit in advancing the missions of the force. He also pointed to the coun-

try's critical situation and existing threats facing the country and emphasized the

synergy and readiness of the armed forces in defending the country.

## Iran will shelve limited opening of Hormuz if US disrupts shipping: SNSC

Naval blockade constitutes 'violation of ceasefire'

### International Desk

Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) said the Islamic Republic will prevent the conditional and limited opening of the Strait of Hormuz if the United States tries to disrupt shipping or impose measures such as a naval blockade.

"Should the enemy attempt to disrupt shipping or impose measures such as a naval blockade, the Islamic Republic of Iran will consider that a violation of the ceasefire and will prevent the conditional and limited opening of the Strait of Hormuz," the SNSC said in a statement on Saturday. The statement was issued regarding the state of play in negotiations with the United States, mediated by Pakistan, to end the ongoing war, which has temporarily been halted after a ceasefire was announced on April 8. The ceasefire will lapse on Wednesday. A first round of talks in Islamabad failed to produce an agreement, with Iranian officials blaming the US side for putting forward excessive demands and shifting its position at the negotiating table.

### US military logistics

Noting that most US military logistics in the Persian Gulf pass through the Strait of Hormuz, which Iran considers a threat to its national security and regional stability, the SNSC said Iran will continue to maintain oversight



Tankers are anchored in the Strait of Hormuz near Qeshm Island, Iran, on April 18, 2026. ASGHAR BESHARATI/AP

and control of all traffic through the waterway until the war permanently comes to an end. The SNSC noted that Iran had conditionally reopened the Strait of Hormuz to commercial shipping on Friday after the US and the Israeli regime accepted to cease hostilities on all fronts, including a halt to Israeli attacks on Lebanon, which was a key Iranian precondition for accepting the temporary ceasefire.

### US naval blockade

However, it said that Iran views a continued US naval blockade as a violation of the ceasefire and will not allow conditional and restricted passage through the Strait of Hormuz if the blockade remains in place. The statement said that Iran's decision to reopen the Strait in a limited way, which was announced by Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi on Friday, also came after the US submitted new proposals for a peace deal through a Pakistani delegation, led by Army

chief Field Marshal Asim Munir, which traveled to Tehran earlier this week. The spokesperson for the Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters Ebrahim Zolfaghari also said on Saturday that Iran, in line with previous agreements and with good faith during negotiations, had agreed to a managed passage of a limited number of oil tankers and commercial ships through the Strait of Hormuz. However, he said the Americans, with their track record of repeated breaches of faith, continue to engage in banditry and piracy under the guise of a so-called blockade that the US has imposed on the Strait of Hormuz to force Iran to reopen the waterway. "For this reason, control of the Strait of Hormuz has returned to its previous state, and this strategic strait is under the intense management and control of the armed forces," the spokesperson stated. On Friday, Abbas Araghchi announced the reopening of the strait following the implementation of a ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon. Reacting to the announcement, US President Donald Trump took to his Truth Social platform, alleging that Iran had "agreed to never close the Strait of Hormuz again." He also claimed that the United States' "naval blockade will remain in full force and effect as it pertains to Iran, only, until such time as our transaction with Iran is 100% complete."

## FM spox: Enriched uranium not to be transferred 'anywhere'

### International Desk

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman said the country's stockpile of enriched uranium would not be transferred "anywhere," dismissing an earlier claim by US President Donald Trump that Tehran had agreed to hand it over to Washington. Esmail Baqaei in an interview with Iran's state TV on Friday said that the transfer of Iran's enriched uranium to the US has never been raised in negotiations in Pakistan.

Baqaei's remarks came after the US president claimed in a post on social media that the US would receive Iran's enriched uranium.

"The U.S.A. will get all Nuclear 'Dust,' created by our great B2 Bombers," Trump claimed.

On Friday, Pakistan hosted negotiations between Iran and the US to put an end to a US-Israeli aggression against Iran. However, the negotiations in Islamabad failed to produce an agreement due to the American delegation's excessive demands.

The talks followed a Pakistan-brokered ceasefire agreement which temporarily ended the aggression which began on February 28.

Baqaei said recent talks in Pakistan centered on solving the ongoing conflict and



Esmail Baqaei  
IRNA

not on recovering Iran's uranium. "The previous negotiations focused on the nuclear issue, but now the negotiations are focused on ending the war, and naturally, the range of topics discussed has become wider and more diverse," he said.

He also rejected the idea of the suspension of uranium enrichment by Iran, describing it a media campaign to influence the negotiations.

Iran possessed around 400 kilograms of highly enriched uranium before the US-Israeli strikes on Iran's nuclear facilities in June, and the fate of the stockpile has been a central focus of discussions since then.

Before the strikes, Iran had enriched uranium to 60 percent, exceeding the 3.67% limit set under the now-defunct 2015 nuclear agreement with the United States and other countries.

## Iran, Lebanon ceasefires ...

A highly cautious approach is therefore required.

Indeed, Shiite leaders, including Sheikh Naim Qassem, have stressed that residents of southern Lebanon should refrain, for now, from returning to their villages and homes, given the risk that Israel could again breach the agreement and resume attacks. Reports also indicate that the ceasefire has already been intermittently violated. It is important to note, however, that since the Iran and Lebanon files are closely intertwined, disruptions in one track can directly affect the other. As

long as Iran-US negotiations continue to move forward, the Lebanon ceasefire can play a positive role and potentially yield favorable outcomes, with similar conditions taking shape in southern Lebanon. For instance, the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz is a result of the ceasefire taking hold in southern Lebanon—something that had been a key demand of Iran.

At present, Israel is under pressure from the United States and appears unlikely to take steps that would derail the progress of ongoing tracks. While a ceasefire holds on the Iran front and negotiations continue, any Israeli devi-

ation could provide Iran with leverage to reengage in actions that would once again increase pressure on Israel. Specifically, pressure could be reapplied via the Strait of Hormuz by disrupting maritime traffic, or Iran could signal a potential withdrawal from negotiations. Whether acknowledged or not, the Islamic Resistance in southern Lebanon is aligned with Iran in this conflict, and it is unlikely that Iran would abandon its regional ally under difficult circumstances. Conversely, if the Iran negotiations fail to reach a conclusion, the Lebanon ceasefire would inevitably be affected as well.



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