

***Pezeshkian:* Iran ready to ease maritime transit, safeguard shipping in Hormuz**

'Diplomacy as the most effective way to settle outstanding issues'

International Desk

President Masoud Pezeshkian emphasized Iran's readiness to facilitate maritime transit and ensure shipping security in the Strait of Hormuz which has been mostly closed by Iran following the US-Israeli aggression in February. "The Islamic Republic of Iran is fully prepared to facilitate maritime passage. The main problem stems from restrictions and obstacles imposed by the United States on Iran's shipping and trade," Pezeshkian told Japan's Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi in a phone conversation on Monday. Pezeshkian also told the Japanese premier he will try to enable "a smooth and easy passage" of Japanese ships through the Strait of Hormuz. Pezeshkian also thanked Japan for its humanitarian assistance to Iran during the recent aggression, expressing hope that a return to normal conditions in the strategic waterway would allow greater use of Japanese technical and engineering capabilities in projects to

rebuild and develop Iranian refineries, ports, and damaged economic infrastructure.

Iran shut down the corridor to enemies and their allies following the launch of the latest bout of American-Israeli aggression targeting the Islamic Republic.

The Islamic Republic began applying far stricter controls after US President Donald Trump announced continuation of a naval blockade of Iranian vessels and ports on April 13.

Pursuing diplomacy

Referring to the regional tensions caused by the US-Israeli aggression, Pezeshkian stressed Iran's determination to resolve the problems through dialogue and diplomacy.

"Iran has always seen diplomacy as the most effective way to settle outstanding issues, but unfortunately some parties, including the United States through its withdrawal from commitments, as well as the destabilizing actions of the Israeli regime, have

complicated diplomatic processes," Pezeshkian said.

The Iranian president described as concerning the repeated ceasefire violations by Israel in Lebanon, the continued displacement of Lebanese civilians, and US political and military support for Israeli actions, and called on the international community to play an effective role in this regard.

The Iranian president also called on the Japanese government to help facilitate Iran's access to its financial resources and assets in Japan for the procurement of essential goods, medical equipment, and medicine.

The Japanese prime minister, for her part, reaffirmed Japan's support for diplomatic approaches, stressing the need to continue diplomatic dialogue to reduce tensions and resolve differences.

Takaichi also thanked the Islamic Republic for ensuring the safety of maritime routes and welcomed the successful passage of Japanese ships through the Strait of Hormuz.



Sanae Takaichi



Masoud Pezeshkian

Some Japan-connected vessels have passed through the strait since the conflict began in February.

Many resource-poor Asian countries including Japan are facing economic challenges from rising crude oil costs and shortages of key commodities due to their dependence on West Asia for imports that largely pass through the

strait, a critical energy chokepoint. Amid uncertainty regarding the progress of peace talks between Iran and the US, the Japanese prime minister later told reporters that she expressed "strong hope" that the Iranian side "will show the greatest possible flexibility and that an agreement can be reached as soon as possible."

***Qalibaf:* Lebanon attacks, Iran blockade expose US breaches of ceasefire**

Araghchi says Iran-US truce unequivocally applies across all fronts

International Desk

Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf warned that the US naval blockade of Iran's ports and Israel's actions in Lebanon will come at a price for Washington and Tel Aviv.

In a post on his X account on Monday, Qalibaf said the US naval blockade imposed on Iranian ships and ports and the escalation of "war crimes" by the "genocidal Zionist regime" in Lebanon clearly show the US's lack of compliance with a Pakistan-mediated ceasefire agreement with Iran.

The top Iranian negotiator in talks with the US further warned against the consequences of continued violent acts, which would ultimately come at a cost.

"Every choice has a price, and the bill comes due," Qalibaf said, adding, "It will all fall into place." Iran and the US agreed with a ceasefire deal on April 8 to give a chance



Smoke rises in Lebanon following an air strike on June 1, 2026, as seen from the Israeli side of the Israel-Lebanon border. **REUTERS**

to diplomacy to end the US-Israeli aggression against Iran. However, the US imposed a naval blockade on Iranian ports on April 13 after Pakistan-mediated talks to end the US-Israeli aggression against Iran failed to produce an agreement.

A halt to Israel's attacks on Lebanon has also been one of Iran's conditions in the ceasefire deal. The Israeli regime not only did not stop its aggression against Lebanon but it intensified its attacks and occupied more Lebanon's territories during its recent incursion. In recent weeks, the

Israeli regime has launched deadly strikes on civilian areas and issued evacuation orders targeting southern Lebanese communities. Israel's acts of aggression have caused significant civilian casualties and widespread destruction of infrastructure in Lebanon.

On Monday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also ordered attacks on the Hezbollah-controlled southern suburbs of Beirut - a day after the regime's military took over the medieval castle of Beaufort. Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi also reacted to the recent Isra-

el's actions, saying that the ceasefire between Iran and the US is unequivocally a ceasefire on all fronts, including in Lebanon.

"Its violation on one front is a violation of the ceasefire on all fronts. The US and Israel are responsible for the consequences of any violation," Araghchi said.

The conflict between Israel and Hezbollah began in March after the Lebanese resistance group Hezbollah launched military operations against the Israeli regime in response to its aggression against Iran. A truce to halt the fighting began on April 17, but has never been observed.

The Lebanese Health Ministry says Israeli attacks have killed more than 3,371 people since early March.

***FM spox:* Contradictory US demands behind protracted negotiations**

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei said on Monday that new or contradictory US demands have prolonged peace negotiations between Tehran and Washington.

"In a situation where the other side constantly changes its views, raises new or contradictory demands, and sends different and inconsistent media messages, it is natural that this situation prolongs the negotiation process," Baqaei said at his weekly press conference.

Talks between Iran and the US, mediated by Pakistan and facilitated by Qatar, are continuing based on Iran's 14-point proposal. The discus-

sions aim to produce a memorandum to end the joint US-Israeli aggression against Iran, end a blockade on Iran's ports, and secure the release of frozen Iranian assets.

When asked about US President Donald Trump's recent claim that Iran's enriched uranium must be removed and destroyed, and whether Iran needs foreign technology to access the Fordow site, Baqaei responded, "Whenever we need to take action on nuclear issues, we know very well how to proceed."

"Regarding the details of nuclear-related discussions, no negotiations have taken place at this stage. I repeat once again that at this stage,

our focus is on ending the war," he added.

Iran was already in negotiations with the United States about the fate of its nuclear program in February, when the US and Israel launched air and missile strikes on the country.

And, while Tehran has long insisted that its nuclear program is for purely civilian ends, the US and its Western allies have long claimed that it aims to develop a weapon.

On Sunday, Iran's chief negotiator Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf reiterated Tehran's distrust in Washington's "words and promises," stressing that Iran would not agree to any deal with the US unless it fully secures Iranian rights.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

CARTOON



IRGC blitzes US base linked to telecom tower attack in south

International Desk

The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) said on Monday it has carried out another retaliatory strike against an air base used by the United States to launch a military attack on a telecommunications tower in southern Iran. The IRGC said its Aerospace Force struck and destroyed the air base from which the "aggressor US military" launched an attack on the telecom tower on Sirik Island in Iran's southern province of Hormozgan. It did not specify which US base was targeted in the attack.

However, Kuwait's military said air defenses intercepted missile and drone attacks on Monday, while Washington claimed it had downed two Iranian missiles targeting US forces in the country. The developments came after the United States Central Command (CENTCOM) said late Sunday that it conducted "self-defense strikes" over the weekend against Iranian radar and drone command-and-control facilities in the city of Goruk and on Qeshm Island.

"The measured and deliberate strikes occurred on Saturday and Sunday," CENTCOM said in response to what it called "aggressive Iranian actions that

included the shootdown of a US MQ-1 drone that was operating over international waters."

The IRGC announced in a statement on Sunday that the elite force's air defense units detected and successfully shot down an intruding MQ-1 Predator drone belonging to the "aggressor US military" shortly after it encroached upon Iranian airspace over the Persian Gulf.

The statement added that the multi-mission and long-endurance remotely piloted aircraft was intercepted and destroyed as it entered the Iranian skies in the early hours of Sunday.