

Iran vows to use all means to defend rights, national security amid US aggression

The Iranian Foreign Ministry vowed that Iran will use all means at its disposal to exercise its inherent right of self-defense in the face of the United States' ongoing violations against the country. In a statement issued on Saturday, the ministry said Iran's Armed Forces would continue their defensive operations "with full force," while reaffirming the Islamic Republic's determination to resist ongoing US aggression against the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity, Press TV reported. The ministry expressed its "profound admiration for and appreciation" of the sacrifices and efforts made by the Armed Forces and paid tribute to those martyred in the defense of the nation's independence and territorial integrity. The United States has perpetrated numerous violations against Iranian territory since April 7, when US President Donald Trump announced a unilateral ceasefire

in the latest bout of unprovoked American-Israeli aggression targeting the Islamic Republic. The violations continued even after Washington and Tehran signed a Pakistan-mediated memorandum of understanding in June, whose first clause clearly mandated cessation of aggression on all fronts. The US has also been trying to help vessels evade the maritime route designated by the Islamic Republic for safe and legal passage through the Strait of Hormuz by seeking to escort trespassing vessels through an illegal passageway. Iran's Armed Forces have staged uncompromising retaliation in the face of each instance of violation, including those taking place in support of illegal vessel movement in the Strait of Hormuz. The Foreign Ministry likewise noted how the US had failed to honor its commitments under the memorandum.

It cited those breaches as well as Washington's maintaining a naval blockade against Iranian ports and commercial shipping, intensifying economic pressure, and issuing unlawful threats against the nation as other instances of American hostility towards the Islamic Republic. The acts of aggression had featured attacks on civilian targets, civilian infrastructure, and Iranian citizens inside and outside Iran, the statement reminded, describing such atrocities as a violation of Article 2(4) of the UN Charter. The blockade, it added, constitutes an act of aggression under the United Nations Definition of Aggression, the statement read, citing UN General Assembly Resolution 3314 of December 14, 1974. The ministry pointed to statements by the US president concerning the termination of the MoU, the cancellation of authorization for Iranian oil sales, and the restoration of the naval blockade.

According to the statement, these developments constituted "clear and incontrovertible indications" that the US administration had already planned to violate the understanding, challenge Iran's sovereign rights in the Strait of Hormuz, and escalate tensions. The statement placed the latest confrontation within a much longer history of US hostility towards Iran. According to the Foreign Ministry, Washington has pursued expansionist and colonial ambitions in the region and has used its so-called goal of preventing Iran from obtaining a "nuclear weapon," an allegation the Islamic Republic has invariably rejected, countering an "imminent Iranian threat," and "preemptive action in defense of Israel" as justifications for military aggression targeting the Iranian soil. The ministry rejected those explanations, arguing instead that the underlying cause of such ag-



Iranian Foreign Ministry Building
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gression was Iran's insistence on independence and national sovereignty and its resistance to the US's demands and pressure. The Foreign Ministry argued that these circumstances required the UN Security Council to intervene to halt the aggression and hold those

responsible accountable. However, it criticized the council for failing to take effective action against the aggressors, comparing the situation with its conduct during the Western-backed 1980-88 war waged by Iraq's former dictator Saddam Hussein against Iran.

Iranian pilgrims flood Iraq for Arba'een pilgrimage

International Desk

Under a blazing sun, clad in black and clutching portraits of their martyred Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, Iranian pilgrims streamed across the border into Iraq to observe the Arba'een. Arba'een, which means forty in Arabic, marks the 40th day of mourning for the martyrdom of Imam Hussein, the third Shia imam and the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Amir, a 55-year-old pick-up driver, has been attending the Arba'een ceremonies in Iraq for years, but said that this time is different. "The difference is that we are at war. Now, the United States is attacking us... yet this crowd that you see has left everything behind" to attend, the father-of-three added, at Iraq's Al-Zubatiyah border crossing. It is one of the world's



Pilgrims walk toward Karbala to participate in the Arba'een pilgrimage after crossing through the Iraq-Iran border at Zurbatiyah, south of Baghdad on July 29, 2026.
● AFP

largest religious gatherings, with millions flocking each year to Iraq to visit the city of Karbala, where Imam Hussein is buried. This year's pilgrimage comes amid an aggression launched by the US and Israel against Iran on February 28, which has not left Iraq unscathed. Pilgrim Fatemeh Moradi, 52, has been to the Arba'een at least five times before, but said that this year is for "our martyred Leader, on his behalf and on the behalf of all the

martyrs". Ayatollah Khamenei was assassinated by the US and Israel on the first day of their aggression against Iran on February 28. Moradi lost many relatives during the war, but for her "martyrdom is a sense of pride". At the Zurbatiyah crossing, large fans sprayed mist to cool the heat as pilgrims passed portraits of Khamenei, his son and successor Mojtaba, and other slain commanders from "axis of resistance."

Iraqis greeted them with gifts of drinks and food, continuing the tradition of offering refreshments to pilgrims. Iraqi authorities said Friday that so far around 3.5 million foreign pilgrims have entered Iraq to attend the Arba'een. Each year, pilgrims from different countries travel on foot to get to Imam Hussein's holy shrine, in the Iraqi city of Karbala, to commemorate the event, which falls on Tuesday this year. The third Shia Imam and his 72 companions were martyred in the Battle of Karbala in southern Iraq in 680 AD while resisting the much larger army of the despot Umayyad ruler of the time, Yazid.

Iran warns of firm response to any hostile action by US, Israel



International Desk

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi warned of Iran's firm response to any hostile action by the United States or Israel, or any support for such measures by regional countries amid US military threats against the Islamic Republic. The top diplomat made the remarks during a phone conversation with his Saudi counterpart. Araghchi emphasized that any aggression or hostile action by the United States or the Israeli regime, or any participation in or support for such measures by regional countries "would be met with a firm and proportionate response from Iran's capable Armed Forces." "The Islamic Republic is fully prepared to safeguard its sovereignty, territorial integrity, and national security," Araghchi added. "The perpetrators of any such adventurism would bear full responsibility for all consequences arising from it," Araghchi told Saudi Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan. Also on Saturday, the Iranian foreign minister held separate phone calls with his Turkish counterpart Hakan Fidan and Pakistani Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir. During the calls, Araghchi likewise warned against any adventurist action by the US military and stressed the Islamic Republic's full

readiness to safeguard its national sovereignty and territorial integrity, and to respond decisively to any act of aggression. Many regional countries would lend their territories to aggressors targeting the Iranian soil throughout the latest bout of wholesale unprovoked aggression that the United States and the Israeli regime waged against the Islamic Republic from February 28 until April 7. The United States continued to launch attacks on Iranian targets following the aggression in violation of a unilateral ceasefire and later in breach of a Pakistan-mediated memorandum of understanding signed between Tehran and Washington. The violations would similarly benefit from regional states' assistance. Iran's Armed Forces have been responding uncompromisingly by targeting hostile objects across those states. The phone calls came as Washington continues to insist on its intention to keep up its violations, besides attempting to expand the scope of war in cooperation with regional actors. However, US President Donald Trump said he canceled declared attacks on Iran after regional countries sought a pause amid efforts to reach a possible agreement, and following warnings from Tehran that any new US or Israeli aggression would face strong retaliation.

Claims of Iran agreeing to reopen Strait of Hormuz are 'false'

Media reports claiming that Iran has agreed to a plan to reopen the Strait of Hormuz are false, and no change has been made to the country's policy regarding the strategic waterway, according to a report. Foreign media outlets, citing Israeli journalist Barak Ravid, have claimed earlier that Iran had accepted a proposal under which ships would enter the Persian Gulf through Iranian territorial waters and leave through Omani territorial waters. Fars News Agency, citing a source close to Iran's negotiating team, rejected those claims, with the source saying, "The Islamic Republic of Iran has reached no agreement on reopening the Strait of Hormuz, and the reports published in this regard are false." According to Fars, a military source also dismissed the claims, saying they were en-

tirely unfounded. "As long as the hostile actions and acts of malice by the United States continue, the Strait of Hormuz will remain closed," the military source was quoted as saying. "Passage will only be possible through the designated route, in coordination with the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Navy and after obtaining permission to transit the Strait of Hormuz. Otherwise, other routes are unsafe, and vessels attempting to use them will certainly encounter incidents." The source further emphasized that reports claiming that Iran had agreed to any plan to reopen the Strait of Hormuz were "baseless" and that no decision or policy change had been made regarding the strategic waterway. It came after US President Donald Trump said he had canceled declared attacks on

Iran, following warnings from Tehran that any new US or Israeli aggression would face strong retaliation. The latest round of war against Iran began on February 28, when US and Israeli forces launched large-scale strikes on Iranian territory. Iran responded with daily waves of missiles and drones targeting US and Israeli assets across the region, while closing the Strait of Hormuz. Iran and the US later signed the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on June 17 in an effort to end the war across all fronts. However, renewed US military aggression against Iran in recent weeks has prompted Tehran to resume missile and drone strikes against US assets in the region and close the Strait of Hormuz once again.



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