

Iran not currently engaged in talks with US, FM spox says

Efforts underway for Tehran-Washington diplomatic solution: **Qatar**

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Ministry said negotiations with Oman is about the Strait of Hormuz and there are currently no talks with the United States while Qatar said efforts are underway for a diplomatic solution between Tehran and Washington. "We are not currently negotiating with the United States. Our negotiations are with Oman to secure passage through the Strait of Hormuz," said ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei during a weekly press briefing on Monday. Baqaei described the talks with Oman as "constructive," saying they were aimed at reaching an agreement on a new route. He added that no significant change in the status of the strategic waterway should be expected as long as, US military actions and a naval blockade continue. "As long as US hostile actions continue, a naval blockade against Iran remains in place, US military aggression against Iran and its interests persists, and the United States continues to violate its commitments, there will naturally be no significant change in the situation in the Strait of Hormuz," he said. "The Strait was not closed because of disagreements between Iran and Oman. It has faced disruption since last March due to the military aggression of the United States and the Zionist regime," he added.

Talks on reopening Strait of Hormuz

US Treasury Secretary Scott Bes-



Esmail Baqaei
IRNA

sent claimed on Tuesday that a deal with Iran could be reached on Tuesday or Wednesday to reopen the Strait of Hormuz.

"We are in talks with the Iranians, and I think there is a chance we may have a deal today or tomorrow to open the strait and move towards a more normalized position in this conflict," Bessent said in an interview with CNBC.

Iran closed the Strait of Hormuz to hostile states and their allies in response to the US-Israeli aggression in February and then began asserting more control in retaliation for the US sustaining an illegal naval blockade of Iranian ports and vessels despite a standing ceasefire mediated by Pakistan.

Remarks by the American official came after US President Donald Trump announced on Saturday that he had agreed to cancel a

planned attack on Iran, claiming that Tehran and other regional countries had requested a pause after "the perimeters of a deal" had been reached.

The reported plans emerged amid continued tensions following Iran's resistance to US pressure tactics and military aggression, with Iranian officials repeatedly warning that any new attack by Washington or Tel Aviv would trigger a strong response.

During a phone conversation on Saturday, Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi told his Saudi counterpart Faisal bin Farhan that Tehran remained prepared to defend its sovereignty, territorial integrity and national security.

"Any hostile action by the US or Israel, or participation or cooperation by regional countries in such actions, would be met with a deci-

sive and proportionate response from Iran's powerful armed forces," Araghchi said.

Responding to a question about efforts to bring the US back into compliance with the Pakistan-mediated Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and the status of indirect message exchanges, Baqaei said Iran had never been the first party to violate any understanding. "The ball has been in the US court for quite some time," he said, adding that Washington announced on July 7 that it would no longer honor all of its commitments under the agreement.

Diplomatic efforts underway

Qatar said on Tuesday that efforts for a diplomatic solution between the United States and Iran were ongoing but that there were no direct talks between the sides planned.

"We can confirm that the efforts are still ongoing with all parties," Foreign Ministry spokesman Majed Al-Ansari told reporters at a regular briefing.

He said that negotiations were focused on "a short-term resolution that would help us reignite the talks and go back to the mediation efforts in its totality".

"Our focus right now is on lowering escalation, reopening the strait, and reopening the door for diplomacy between the parties" Al-Ansari said.

"We are hopeful that if we can get a resumption of the talks anytime soon, we'll be able to push forward towards a major deal," he added.

Pezeshkian denies resignation rumors; says he will stand firm

Leader's office rejects 'false' remarks attributed to Ayatollah Khamenei

National Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said he would not resign and would stand firm, rejecting recent speculation about his future and accusing unnamed figures of trying to drive a wedge between the country's leadership. In a televised interview with the public scheduled to air on Tuesday evening, Pezeshkian pushed back against rumors that he planned to step down from the presidency. "If I wanted to resign, I would officially announce that I had resigned. I will not resign. I will stand firm," he added.

Pezeshkian said those spreading the claims were seeking to create divisions, adding that "the Leader says one thing and they say something else." Mehdi Tabatabaei, deputy for communications and information at Pezeshkian's office, in a post on X also dismissed the rumors as "baseless and an outright lie."

The comments came after Mohammad-Baqer Kharrazi, a cleric whose sister is married to the Leader's brother, claimed that Pezeshkian had threatened to resign "28 times" but stopped after being warned that his next resignation would be accepted by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei.



Masoud Pezeshkian
president.ir

Public Relations Office of the Leader reacted to the rumors on Tuesday, saying that remarks attributed to the Leader circulating on social media in recent days were false and accused those spreading them of fueling public division.

The statement added that Ayatollah Khamenei had repeatedly stressed the need to preserve national unity and respect officials committed to serving the Islamic Republic, particularly the government.

It said content that runs counter to the Leader's recommendations serves the objectives of ill-wishers of the Iranian nation. The statement rejected as "false and contrary to reality" a social media post in which an individual makes a claim about the reaction of the Leader to a letter of president Pezeshkian.

The Leader's office underlined that the only official sources for Leader's remarks are his websites, saying that any material published outside of the websites "lacks authenticity and validity".

Iran called off strikes on Ukraine after Kiev admitted mistake: **Senior general**



Mohsen Rezaei
WANA

International Desk

Mohsen Rezaei, advisor to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, said that Iran prepared to strike three locations inside Ukraine in response

to an attack on an Iranian ship, but suspended the operation after Kiev claimed the incident was a mistake. "We were ready to attack three areas in Ukraine," Rezaei said in a televised interview on Monday, referring to the Ukrainian strike on an Iranian vessel. "But after they claimed it was a mistake, we halted our response to examine their claim. Even if it was a mistake, it still requires compensation."

The remarks came after an Iranian merchant ship Anna, which was carrying a cargo of iron from the Russian port of Astrakhan to Iran's Bandar Anzali in the Caspian Sea, came

under a Ukrainian attack on July 25. The attack killed one Iranian sailor and injured several others.

Foreign Ministry Spokesman Esmail Baqaei said on Monday that evidence and statements made by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky indicate that the attack in Russian waters was deliberate, despite assurances from the European country's officials that the incident was unintentional.

Ukrainian officials have described the incident as accidental in direct contacts with Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and in messages sent to Tehran, he said. "However, the ev-

idence and indications are very clear, including explicit statements by the president of Ukraine, indicating that the attack was deliberate," he added. Araghchi in a phone conversation with his Ukrainian counterpart Andrii Sybiha said that Kiev should compensate Tehran for the damage caused by the attack.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Rezaei said the United States was defeated midway in what he called US President Donald "Trump's third war" against Iran, as Iranian forces disrupted American plans, forced the relocation of US command centers, and inflicted heavy casualties, add-

ing another major failure to Washington's record of setbacks.

Rezaei characterized the recent American aggression as Trump's third war against Iran, coming after earlier 12-day and 40-day conflicts. He added that the US is planning for a fourth phase of war against Iran. First, they have plans to create unrest inside the country and then they are trying to involve other countries in the war. He referred to Ukraine's attack on the Iranian ship and Saudi Arabia's participation in the bombing of Iraq as examples of US's attempts to expand the war in the region.

India walks tightrope ...

Any prolonged disruption to the Strait of Hormuz therefore carries consequences far beyond the immediate conflict.

The waterway is a critical artery for global energy markets. Before the war, it handled roughly one-fifth of global oil and LNG shipments. With shipping through the Strait severely reduced, the disruption has already raised concerns about energy prices, freight costs and the reliability of supply chains. The United Nations has warned that a return to full-scale hostilities could have "catastrophic consequences" for the global economy and has repeatedly called for the restoration of freedom of navigation. For India, every additional day of disruption increases the economic risks.

Higher oil prices would widen India's import bill, increase demand for dollars and put pressure on the rupee. More expensive energy could also feed into inflation and raise transportation and production costs. But India's vulnerability goes beyond oil prices. A prolonged crisis around Hormuz could affect shipping insurance, freight rates and the availability of vessels. It could also disrupt the movement of other commodities, including LNG and petrochemicals. For an economy as dependent on imported energy as India's, the difference between a temporary disruption and a prolonged crisis could be substantial.

India also has little interest in a wider regional war that could destabilize the Persian Gulf, threaten the safety of millions of Indian workers

and push energy prices sharply higher.

India's position is therefore not simply about choosing between Washington and Tehran. It is about protecting a set of interests that sometimes overlap with both sides and sometimes do not.

For India, the stakes are therefore no longer limited to the price of oil. They extend to the safety of nearly 10 million Indians in the Persian Gulf, the security of vital trade routes, the stability of its energy supplies and its ability to maintain strategic relationships with countries on opposing sides of the conflict. New Delhi is drawing a red line around the safety of its citizens and the freedom of commercial navigation, while keeping another door open: the door to diplomacy.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

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