

## Maximum Preparedness of Armed Forces Must Be Maintained



### Iran says no direct talks while threats persist, US discussions 'positive so far'

TEHRAN – Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman said Iran did not reject direct negotiations with the U.S. so it could skirt such engagement based on ideology. Rather, it made no sense for it to talk face-to-face while Washington continues to sanction, threaten, and try to intimidate Iran.

Esmail Baghaei made the remarks during an interview with Iranian TV, where he described indirect Saturday talks between Iran and the United States as "positive".

"We believe indirect negotiations offer the most effective path to resolving the sanctions issue," Baghaei explained, adding, "Direct negotiation is unproductive in the face of threats, sanctions, and intimidation. There is no ideological basis for this position." ▶ Page 2

### Regional countries endorse diplomatic path as Iran, US engage in indirect talks in Muscat

TEHRAN – The launch of indirect nuclear negotiations between Iran and the United States in the Omani capital has drawn widespread praise from regional powers, who hailed the diplomatic initiative as a constructive step toward de-escalation and long-term regional stability.

The first round of high-stakes talks took place on Saturday in Muscat, facilitated by Omani Foreign Minister Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi, with Iran's delegation led by Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and the United States represented by special regional envoy Steve Witkoff. After four rounds of message exchanges in what participants described as a "calm and respectful environment," both sides agreed to reconvene next Saturday, calling the initial discussions "constructive."

### Persian Gulf Cooperation Council welcomes talks

Jassim Mohammed al-Budaiwi, Secretary-General of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), commended Oman's hosting of the dialogue, calling it a "wise approach" to fostering regional peace. In a statement published on the GCC's official website, Budaiwi said the move reflects Muscat's longstanding role in promoting dialogue and building bridges between nations. ▶ Page 2

### UN human rights mandates are politically motivated: Iranian expert

TEHRAN – In an interview with the Tehran Times, Dr. Hesamuddin Boroumand, a human rights expert and scholar, challenged the legitimacy of the UN's Special Rapporteur and fact-finding mission on Iran, noting their politicized agendas and Western bias.

The full text of the interview is as follows:  
**The UN Human Rights Council has once again extended the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on human rights in Iran, along with the so-called fact-finding mission, despite repeated objections from Iran. What do you believe is the real purpose behind this continuation?**

The very basis for appointing a Special Rapporteur on human rights for Iran—something that started in 2011—lacks legal and legitimate standing. Iran had already been cooperating positively on human rights issues through the UPR (Universal Periodic Review) mechanism, and had provided documented responses to questions and doubts. Therefore, the appointment of the Special Rapporteur was entirely political and biased. From 2011 until now, ▶ Page 3

### Protestors across the world demand arms embargo on Israel, end to Gaza blockade

TEHRAN – People in major cities across the world organized demonstrations to demand an immediate arms embargo against Israel and termination of the blockade on the Gaza Strip.

The demonstrators brought attention to the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Protesters also demanded international intervention to safeguard Palestinian civilians.

In Ottawa, Canada, demonstrators gathered in a show of solidarity with the Gazans, urging world leaders to impose a swift arms embargo on Israel and lift the food blockade strangling Gaza. The rally was part of a larger global movement to highlight the dire situation faced by Palestinians and to pressure governments for change.

Demonstrators opposing Israeli policies assembled in Times Square in New York City to demand the release of Mahmoud Khalil, a Columbia University graduate student who has been detained. Supporters of Khalil showed up despite rainy weather, chanting slogans and holding signs such as "Free Mahmoud Khalil Now!" and "Hands Off Our Students," among others.

### AUB hosts companies funding Israel

By Sondoss Al

BEIRUT — The American University of Beirut (ABU) transformed its Career Fair 2025 (held from April 7–11) into an event promoting normalization with the Israeli occupation regime by hosting companies that support the enemy, while it is supposed to enhance its students' job prospects.

Among these companies is Deloitte that has an active branch in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Deloitte provides cybersecurity services to several Israeli companies, such as the NSO Group, the developer of the Pegasus spyware. It also provides consulting services to the Israeli war ministry.

Another company is Transmed, the exclusive distributor of PepsiCo products in West Asia, which makes it a party in supporting the Israeli economy.

Transmed also distributes products such as those of Nestlé, which operates a factory in the Sderot settlement established in 1951 on the ruins of the Palestinian village of Najd.

### Israelis bomb critical Gaza hospital

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – Israeli military bombs a hospital in Gaza, marking another war crime in the ongoing assault on the besieged territory.

Warplanes launched an attack on al-Ahli Hospital in Gaza City, striking the emergency building with two missiles.

The assault caused severe damage to several key sections of the hospital, including the reception area, laboratory, and pharmacy.

Footage from the scene showed the chaotic evacuation of wounded patients following a second alert issued after the missile strike.

Images circulating on social media also showed traumatized Palestinians fleeing the hospital. Some were seen dragging sick or injured relatives on hospital beds.

Reports indicate that many patients and injured individuals, some in critical condition, are now lying on the streets around the hospital and receive no care.

### Iran to implement 26 economic growth packages in 2025

TEHRAN – Iran plans to implement 26 executive packages aimed at boosting economic growth in the current Iranian year (ending March 2026), following their development in 2024, a senior official at the Planning and Budget Organization (PBO) said.

Alaeddin Azvaji, Head of Macroeconomic Affairs at the PBO, said the initiative is part of the government's broader plan to revitalize the economy under the "Iran Economic Reconstruction Program." He noted that the strategies were shaped around five key pillars outlined in Article 119 of the Seventh National Development Plan: inflation control, improving living standards, reducing economic imbalances, promoting growth, and advancing key economic projects. ▶ Page 4



### Iran's ground force reinvented for modern warfare, says top commander

TEHRAN – Brigadier General Kioumars Heidari, Commander of the Iranian Army's Ground Force, unveiled a comprehensive update on the Army's modernization efforts and defense posture during a press conference on Sunday, describing the force's transformation into a "mobile, offensive, and rapid reaction force."

"There's no trace of old, immobilized units anymore," Heidari stated, highlighting extensive structural reforms aimed at boosting operational agility and deterrence. ▶ Page 2

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