

TEHRAN – Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi on Wednesday denied reports by Kuwaiti newspaper Al-Jarida claiming he had held recent talks with U.S. envoy Steve Witkoff regarding the resumption of nuclear negotiations.

Speaking to reporters after a cabinet meeting, Araghchi said no contact had taken place between him and Witkoff. Al-Jarida had reported that discussions were held in recent days between the two officials, with both sides agreeing on the need to return to the negotiating table.

NEW DELHI (Dispatches) – Indian Oil Corporation has begun paying for Russian oil in Chinese yuan, Reuters reported, marking a shift toward de-dollarization among BRICS+ nations.

Previously, traders converted payments into yuan to access rubles, but direct yuan payments now streamline the process. Russian oil remains priced in U.S. dollars to meet EU price cap rules, with yuan used for final settlements. The move comes amid deepening India-China ties and rising U.S. pressure.

Viewpoint

Faithful Friends and Iniquitous Enemies

Iran Among Elite 10% of Nations Capable of Satellite Launch

TEHRAN – Iran is among the select group of countries capable of fully building and launching satellites, according to Hassan Salarieh, head of Iran's Space Agency.

Speaking in an interview with Tasnim News Agency, Salarieh said only about 10 percent of the world's more than 200 countries have the technological capacity to produce both satellites and launch vehicles.

Salarieh listed countries such as Russia, China, the United States, Japan, and some European nations among this exclusive group, describing them as long-standing leaders in the space industry.

He said Iran has made significant strides by relying on domestic expertise to develop both satellites and launchers, despite the technical complexities involved.

"We started with relatively simple satellites, although even those involve highly detailed designs and unknown factors," Salarieh said. He noted that replicating the exact conditions of space on Earth remains a challenge, complicating satellite testing and design.

Iran's satellite capabilities have improved steadily over the years. Salarieh outlined a progression from low-resolution imaging satellites capable of capturing images at about 1,000 meters resolution to more advanced satellites with resolutions in the range of a few meters.

These satellites have been developed by specialized teams in government research centers, universities, and some state-owned companies.

Salarieh recounted that at the beginning of the 2000s, Iran had limited expertise in space technologies. However, from the mid-2000s onward, universities such as Sharif, Amirkabir, Science and Technology, and Malek

Ashtar began launching satellite development projects that trained a generation of engineers and scientists.

Many of these professionals are self-taught, learning through research, design, laboratory construction, and space-like testing to prepare Iran's first satellites for orbit.

"The construction of each satellite typically takes two to four years, depending on technological complexity," Salarieh explained.

He identified the successful launch of the Omid satellite in 2008 as a turning point for Iran's confidence in placing objects into orbit. Since then, Iran has built and launched other satellites, though early models often had shorter lifespans due to the learning nature of the projects.

Salarieh addressed misconceptions about Iran's satellite production scale, noting that Iran's satellite manufacturing has largely been a one-off process.

"Contrary to some beliefs that we have produced hundreds or thousands of satellites, only in recent years with the Martyr Soleimani satellite constellation project have we adopted a limited production approach," he said.

Comparing Iran's capabilities with international private sector efforts like SpaceX's Starlink, Salarieh acknowledged the vast difference in scale and resources.

While Starlink might produce 30 satellites every few months, Iran is still consolidating its technological base and moving from research and development to initial batch manufacturing.

"This level of production belongs to the most advanced private space companies globally," he said. "We are currently stabilizing our technology and moving towards the stage of producing several units."

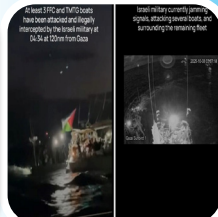
Shiraz Gears Up as Cultural Capital for Hafez Week



Iran's NOC President Meets World Rowing Chief



Israel Attacks Another Gaza-Bound Aid Flotilla



Resistance: Surrender Not an Option for Gazans Israel's Desperate Diplomacy After Military Failure Hamas Seeks Real Guarantees for Lasting Ceasefire



Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty, left, has said that members of the U.S. delegation would join the talks in Sharm el-Sheikh on Wednesday.

CAIRO (Dispatches) -- Negotiations for a ceasefire in Gaza entered their third day on Wednesday in the Egyptian resort city of Sharm el-Sheikh, where key regional and international actors have been involved in efforts to halt Israeli atrocities.

Despite significant obstacles, including disagreements over the withdrawal of Israeli forces and the release of high-profile Palestinian prisoners, the talks are marked by cautious optimism, particularly from Hamas, which has expressed a constructive approach amid the difficult circumstances.

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi described the atmosphere in Sharm el-Sheikh as "very encouraging," noting the arrival of delegations from Qatar, Egypt, Turkey, and the United States.

The negotiations bring together influential figures such as Qatar's prime minister and foreign min-

ister, Turkish and Egyptian intelligence chiefs, and U.S. representatives including envoy Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, President Donald Trump's son-in-law.

The Israeli delegation is led by so-called strategic affairs minister Ron Dermer. Egyptian officials emphasized their commitment to intensifying efforts to create the necessary conditions for a durable ceasefire.

Central to the negotiations is the question of prisoner exchanges, which Hamas has approached with a sense of responsibility and pragmatism.

According to Taher al-Nono, a senior Hamas official, the two sides have already exchanged lists of prisoners, following agreed-upon standards and numbers.

Discussions are focused on ending hostilities, the withdrawal of Israeli occupation forces from Gaza, and the specifics of the prisoner swap. Nono highlighted an "optimistic spirit" among all par-

ties involved, reflecting a shared desire to reach an agreement that ends the Israeli genocide.

Hamas's demands include the release of long-imprisoned Palestinian leaders such as Fatah's Marwan Barghouti, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine's Secretary-General Ahmad Saadat, and senior figures within Hamas's own ranks, including Abbas al-Sayed and engineer Abdullah Barghouti.

The movement has also requested the return of the bodies of Hamas leaders Yahya Sinwar and his brother Muhammad. These demands represent not only humanitarian concerns but also the recognition of these prisoners' symbolic and political importance to Palestinians.

Meanwhile, Trump's 20-point proposal calls for the release of all Israeli captives within 72 hours, followed by the freeing of 250 Palestinian prisoners serving life sentences, alongside ap-

proximately 1,700 Palestinians detained since the war escalated in October 2023. Israel reportedly resists fully accepting Hamas's list, though Turkish mediation has sought to prevent Israel from vetoing any names.

The issue of Israeli military occupation of Gaza remains a major sticking point. Israel has refused to withdraw its forces from the enclave, despite the ceasefire talks.

The Trump plan envisions an eventual Israeli withdrawal but allows for a buffer zone along Gaza's perimeter, where Israeli forces could remain until the territory is deemed "secure".

Hamas has dismissed these proposals as insufficient, with official Mousa Abu Marzouk criticizing the proposed withdrawal maps as vague and unprofessional, warning that Israel might use such ambiguities to stall or sabotage the negotiations. Hamas insists on a full Israeli withdrawal as a non-negotiable condition for peace.

On the ground, despite ongoing ceasefire talks, Israeli atrocities have continued with deadly force across Gaza, including ground invasions, exacerbating civilian suffering and undermining confidence in the peace process.

Islamic Jihad's Secretary-General Ziad al-Nakhala underscored this dynamic, emphasizing the Palestinian resolve to resist Israel's attempts to achieve through negotiations what it could not accomplish militarily.

"We are the rightful owners," he stated, affirming that surrender is not an option for the people of Gaza.

Hamas leader Khalil al-Hayya echoed these sentiments in a recent interview, stressing Hamas's readiness to reach a deal that would end the war, secure an Israeli withdrawal, and facilitate a

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From Mustafa Prize to Nobel: Palestinian Wins Top Chemistry Award

STOCKHOLM (Dispatches) -- Omar Yaghi's journey began in a one-room shelter in a Palestinian refugee camp on the edge of Amman, Jordan, where he was born in 1965.

The small space, shared with dozens of family members and even livestock, offered little privacy, let alone opportunity.

His parents, displaced and impoverished, could neither read nor write. Yet the boy who emerged from those modest beginnings would grow into a scientist whose work could help reshape the planet's future.

In October 2025, Yaghi was awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his co-develop-

ment of metal-organic frameworks—crystalline structures with immense potential for capturing carbon, storing energy, purifying water, and addressing some of humanity's most pressing environmental and technological challenges.

Metal-organic frameworks, or MOFs, are porous materials made by linking metal atoms with organic molecules in precise geometric patterns.

Though they are solid to the touch, MOFs are filled with microscopic cavities—like molecular-scale sponge—work—that can trap gases, separate chemicals, or act as vessels for reactions.

A tiny fragment of a MOF can

contain an internal surface area equivalent to a football field. The Nobel Committee compared them to Hermione Granger's handbag in the Harry Potter series—deceptively small, but able to contain much more than meets the eye.

Yaghi's scientific vision goes beyond MOFs. He is the founder of a new discipline in chemistry: reticular chemistry, the science of designing crystalline structures by linking molecular building blocks.

His work also led to the development of covalent organic frameworks (COFs), expanding the toolkit available for creating "designer materials" with highly tunable properties.

These innovations have broad applications in clean energy, medicine, and environmental technologies—from capturing greenhouse gases to delivering drugs within the human body.

But Yaghi's story is not only one of scientific achievement—it is also one of extraordinary personal ascent.

He moved to the United States at the age of 15, alone, speaking little English. He worked his way through school, eventually earning a Ph.D. in chemistry from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

His academic path took him to Harvard, the University of Michigan, UCLA, and finally the Uni-

versity of California, Berkeley, where he now leads one of the world's foremost labs in materials chemistry.

Today, he ranks among the five most-cited chemists in the world, with over 200 published papers and a legacy that spans both theory and application.

Among the many awards Yaghi has received throughout his career, one stands out for its cultural and geopolitical resonance: the Mustafa Prize, which he was awarded in 2015.

The prize, established by the Islamic Republic of Iran, is one of the most prestigious scientific honors in the Muslim world. It aims to celebrate and empower

scientists of Islamic heritage who have made groundbreaking contributions to science and technology.

Yaghi received the prize in recognition of his pioneering work in nanotechnology and molecular materials, particularly the development of MOFs.

For Yaghi, a Palestinian-born American scientist, the award symbolized more than a personal accolade. It underscored the idea that talent can come from any corner of the world, and that the Islamic world, too often excluded from global scientific narratives, is home to researchers pushing the frontiers of knowledge.

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