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Tehran Times

Iran denies supporting Syria in dealing with protesters

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TEHRAN – An informed source at the Iranian Foreign Ministry has rejected claims by the U.S. that Tehran is supporting the Syrian government in dealing with the protesters, saying the U.S. deceitful approach toward the regional developments is “extremely noticeable.”

“We deny these claims and we are sure that the Syrian government is able to resolve the internal problems and respond appropriately to people’s demands,” the Foreign Ministry official said.

He also reminded U.S. officials of their “hideous record” in supporting despotic rulers in cracking down on the pro-democracy protesters and advised them to stop adopting deceitful and double-standard approaches toward the ongoing developments in the Middle East and North Africa.

The United States has accused Iran of secretly helping Syria in its efforts to quell the protests.

“We believe that there is credible information that Iran is assisting Syria. I’m not going to get into details about that material assistance, but it’s of real concern to us,” U.S. State Department spokesman Mark Toner has said.

The Wall Street Journal has also claimed that Iran is providing Damascus technical assistance to monitor online communications between opposition groups to organize protests.

“We believe that Iran is materially assisting the Syrian government in its efforts to suppress their own people,” the paper quoted an Obama administration official as saying.

In Syria, President Bashar al-Assad on Saturday introduced a new package of reforms which he said would meet the demands of anti-government protesters.

The Syrian president also called on the new government to engage in a national dialogue with people and respect their aspirations for freedom.

However, Assad stressed that the Syrian people should be patient because reforms will not produce instant results.

On Saturday, demonstrations were reported in several cities, including the capital Damascus and the northwestern city of Baniyas.