

Swift end to war still unlikely

Analysts say small window remains for US-Iran talks after attacks eroded fragile trust

AGENCIES

US President Donald Trump's dramatic description of "very strong talks" with Iran suggested the door to diplomacy has been flung open for what he said could be "a complete and total resolution of our hostilities in the Middle East".

But Iran almost immediately denied that talks had begun - and so far, there are only signs of small windows being opened - by a crack. One is the same window that was shattered during previous rounds of diplomacy, in February and in June last year, by US-backed Israeli attacks on Iran which destroyed the little trust that existed.

There's said to be some communication between lead negotiators in previous discussions - Iranian FM Abbas Araghchi and US envoy Steve Witkoff. But these conversations are described as very preliminary. And Tehran now sees the Witkoff track as subterfuge. "The statements of the US president are part of efforts to reduce energy prices and buy time for the implementation of his military plans," was the retort of Iran's foreign ministry, says an analyst.

Trump now says they're dealing with a "top person" in Iran. The unnamed individual being widely cited is Mohammad-Bagher Ghalibaf. He failed four times in presidential runs and described Iranians who took to the streets nationwide in February calling for change as "enemies and terrorists."

But in Trump's world, Ghalibaf is a strongman who could possibly bridge the divides between Iran's security and political establishments, reports BBC. "He's the last man standing who's seen as more ideologically flexible," said one source with knowledge of the various mediation efforts. "But even Trump said if he named him, they'd kill him, and then Israel immediately named him." This time, new countries are engaging in this age-old crisis including Pakistan, Egypt, and Turkey which have not been on the front lines of the war itself.

Trump likely believes this war has granted him additional leverage to get Iran to accept his conditions, and Iran senses it has not only fortified its position but has additional bargaining chips in the Strait of Hormuz," remarked Mohammad Ali Shabani, editor of Amwaj, media. In his post announcing the talks, Trump said he was postponing his threat to strike Iran's power plants for five days - meaning all eyes are on his new deadline - Friday, when the markets close.



PHOTO: AFP

A first responder surveys damage after Iranian missile strikes in central Israel, early yesterday. At least two Israelis, both men in their 50s, have been injured in a Hezbollah missile attack on the northern city of Karmiel.



Iranian strikes pose 'existential threat'

Gulf states tell UN, denounce attacks on energy, airports

AGENCIES

Gulf Arab states told the UN Human Rights Council yesterday they face an existential threat from Iran as they condemned Iranian attacks on their infrastructure, which the UN rights chief said might constitute war crimes.

The nearly month-long US-Israeli war on Iran has sparked large-scale Iranian retaliation in the form of drone and missile strikes on energy and civilian infrastructure in Gulf countries, killing civilians and driving up oil prices.

"We are seeing an existential threat to international and regional



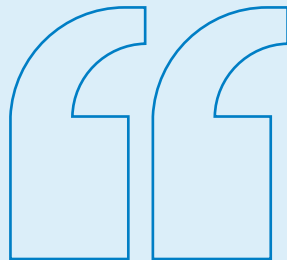
security. This aggressive approach is undermining international law and sovereignty," Kuwait's ambassador Naser Abdullah H. M. Alhayen told the Geneva-based council.

Other Gulf states also denounced Iran's actions which they said were designed to spread terror.

Countries at the 47-member council will vote on a motion condemning Iran's strikes, asking Iran for reparation and asking the UN rights chief to monitor the situation.

Iran defended its actions, saying more than 1,500 civilians had been killed in the US-Israeli strikes so far.

"We fight on behalf of all of you against an enemy that, if not restrained today, will be beyond containment tomorrow," said Iran's ambassador to the UN in Geneva Ali Bahreini, referring to Israel.



"This conflict has an unprecedented power to ensnare countries across borders and around the world."

UN rights chief Volker Turk on Middle East war

এক সাগর রক্তের বিনিময়ে
বাংলার স্বাধীনতা আনলে যারা
সম্রা তাগাদের ভুলবো না
মহান স্বাধীনতা ও জাতীয় দিবসে প্রাণঢালা শুভেচ্ছা

মার্চ

মার্কেটাইল ব্যাংক পিএলসি.
Mercantile Bank PLC.
সম্মতিই আমাদের শক্তি

JERUSALEM Israeli police kill Palestinian man

AFP, Jerusalem

Israeli police officers killed a Palestinian man who tried to seize a weapon from an undercover security agent during an overnight operation in east Jerusalem, police said yesterday.

Officers from the Jerusalem district police and undercover border police carried out a raid in Jabal Mukaber neighbourhood, "targeting two suspects involved in terrorist activity," a police statement said.

"During the operation, one of the suspects attempted to grab a weapon from an undercover officer, who responded quickly and neutralised him," according to the statement.

The man's death was confirmed shortly after the incident. Palestinian official news agency Wafa identified the man as 21-year-old Qassem Shqairat.

Three other suspects were arrested and handed over to security authorities for further questioning, police added.

Jabal Mukaber is a Palestinian neighbourhood in east Jerusalem.

Eastern Bank PLC.

মাথা তুলে দাঁড়ানোর
দুর্জয় এই প্রত্যয়ে
চির অবিনাশী হোক
আত্ম পরিচয়ের গৌরব

সবাইকে মহান
স্বাধীনতা দিবসের শুভেচ্ছা