



Massive numbers of completely empty oil tankers ... are heading to the US to load up with the best and "sweetest" oil (and gas!)... We are waiting for you.  
Donald Trump

# The Daily Star

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## US, Iran hold direct peace negotiations

Sources say 'serious disagreement' over Hormuz remains; dialogue in Islamabad may continue today

**US denies report that it agreed to unfreeze Iran assets**

**Talks mark highest-level US-Iran contact since 1979**

**Israel says Hezbollah ceasefire won't be on the talks' agenda**



Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi looks at photos and schoolbags of children killed in a school in Minab while aboard a plane on his way to Pakistan for talks with the United States yesterday. A reported US strike killed at least 168 people, mostly students, when it hit the school in southern Iran on February 28.

PHOTO: AFP

## First tankers exit Gulf thru Hormuz since ceasefire

Reports say US warships cross strait; Trump says mines being cleared

AGENCIES

Three supertankers passed through the Strait of Hormuz yesterday, shipping data showed, marking what appeared to be the first vessels to exit the Gulf since the US-Iran ceasefire deal.

The Wall Street Journal reported that US Navy guided missile destroyers also passed through the strait without incidents. The operation was not coordinated with authorities in Tehran, US media outlet Axios said.

A senior Iranian military official, however, denied the reports.

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AGENCIES

The face-to-face talks between the American and Iranian delegations in Pakistan continued till early today, the most significant engagement since the 1979 Islamic revolution, to end a war that plunged the Middle East into violence and rocked the world economy.

The trilateral talks, with host Pakistan acting as mediator, were ongoing in Islamabad, a senior White House official said -- a departure from past practice in which the two sides negotiated indirectly from separate rooms.

However, no side made any official statement about the talks' progress. According to Iranian state television, two rounds of talks have been held between the two sides in Pakistan, with a third expected later yesterday or today.

Al Jazeera also reported that Pakistan was pushing to extend the talks by at least another day.

Iranian Fars News Agency said the US was making "excessive demands" over the Strait of Hormuz during the talks.

"The US is making excessive demands regarding the strait... the US has also made unacceptable demands on several other issues".

Iranian news agency Tasnim reported that the issue of the strategic strait was "one of the topics that faces serious disagreement" among the negotiators.

Meanwhile, the White House said high-level in-person trilateral talks with Iran and Pakistan were "ongoing" in Islamabad, without saying if they will continue today.

"There were mood swings from the two sides and the temperature went up and down during the meeting," a Pakistani source said.

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## BANK RESOLUTION ACT, 2026 Doors open for ex-owners to reclaim banks

MD MEHEDI HASAN

The newly enacted Bank Resolution Act, 2026, paves the way for former owners to regain control of merging banks under relatively easy terms, a move seen as a reversal of the interim government's banking reform.

Under the act, former directors or owners of banks, merging or listed for mergers, can pay 7.5 percent upfront of the amount injected by the government or the Bangladesh Bank to reclaim the banks. The remaining 92.5 percent is to be repaid within two years at 10 percent simple interest.

As part of its reform drive, in May 2025,

**"The law appears to reward those responsible for the crisis rather than holding them accountable."**

Zahid Hussain, former lead economist, WB, Dhaka office

the interim administration had approved the Bank Resolution Ordinance, 2025, to merge five troubled Shariah-based private banks into a state-run entity titled Somnilito Islami Bank.

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## Mob hacks pir to death in Kushtia

STAR REPORT

A pir was beaten and hacked to death by a mob at his darbar in Daulatpur upazila of Kushtia yesterday over allegations of hurting religious sentiments.

Abdur Rahman, alias Shamim al-Jahangir, was about 52. His darbar in Philipnagar of the upazila was vandalised and torched during the attack around 2:30pm, Kushtia Additional Superintendent of Police Faisal Mahmud told The Daily Star.

The slain man bore injury marks from sharp and blunt weapons, said Dr Touhidul Hasan Tuhin, health and family planning officer of Daulatpur Upazila Health Complex.

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