

Iran ready for 'every possible scenario'

Analyst says sense of distrust remains, talks less positive than portrayed

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Iran's nuclear ambitions were among the biggest sticking points in the negotiations between both sides in Islamabad last weekend.

A Pakistani source earlier told Al Jazeera that there seems to be a breakthrough on that front with the arrival of Pakistani army chief Asim Munir in Tehran on Wednesday.

"Iran believes that the nuclear sphere is among those areas that, if the intent is there, they can find a solution to the problem," Abbas Aslani, a senior fellow at the Centre for Middle East Strategic Studies in Tehran, told Al Jazeera.

"Tehran is open to transparency, provided that the US genuinely seeks an agreement, so it's not surprising to see if they have made ... progress," he



Smoke rises over Kyiv after a Russian strike yesterday. A drone and missile barrage killed at least 19 across Ukraine, with Moscow saying the overnight attack targeted missile and drone factories.

PHOTO: AFP

TRUMP'S WAR ON IRAN US allies avoid fight, but not fallout

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It's not their war. But it's becoming their political and economic nightmare. World leaders who opposed the US-Israeli attack on Iran are being torn between Donald Trump's ire at their failure to join the conflict and electorates who are deeply hostile to the war and America's president.

Their dilemma is shifting the dynamic between the US and its allies. Leaders who once tried to appease and flatter the world's most powerful man are now daring to criticize him and seeking distance.

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni on Monday said Trump's attacks on Pope Leo XIV were "unacceptable." British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, whose friendship with Trump shattered over the war, said last week he was "fed up" that Britons were facing higher energy bills because of Trump's actions.

Relations between Trump and Starmer took another turn for the

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worse on Wednesday. The president hinted in an interview with Sky News that he could try to change terms of a trade deal that is a huge priority for the British government.

Starmer however insisted that he would not be pushed into joining

the war on Iran.

Leaders are reacting to war consequences they can't control, epitomized by an International Monetary Fund warning Tuesday that the world is trending toward an "adverse" scenario of only 2.5 percent growth this year, down from 3.4 percent in 2025.

Countries reliant on Middle

Trump's trade wars with allied nations, on Tuesday sought to minimize the impact of the Iran war on non-combatant nations, saying that the IMF "probably overreacted."

European leaders might be becoming more overt in their criticisms of Trump. But they have only so much rope. Their positions



East gas and oil supplies could fare worse. The IMF forecasts made clear that the Iran conflict is more than a distant foreign policy crisis for allied governments. It has become a domestic and political threat. This, combined with growing antagonism between allied leaders and the US president, means that standing with him would be a liability.

Trump seems to believe he's popular abroad and argues that his displays of American power have made the United States more feared and respected than ever as the "hottest" nation on the planet.

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, the tip of the spear of

are frequently undercut by their greatest liability in relations with the US — their weakened militaries.

When Trump mulls withdrawing from Nato, he is playing a significant card: Serious rearmaments in Europe could break governments because of the unpopular cuts in health and social programs they would entail.

So even as they turn on Trump for their own political preservation, his estranged European counterparts cannot risk a total break with the United States.

But the more the president demands their entry into an unpopular war, the less political room they have to help him end it.

US Navy loses \$240m MQ-4C Triton drone in war

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The US Navy has confirmed the loss of an expensive spy drone amid the Iran war, its first known loss of this particular uncrewed aircraft.

As of last year, the Navy was operating 20 MQ-4Cs, making the loss of one significant. These drones are estimated to cost \$240 million apiece, roughly eight times more expensive than the Air Force's MQ-9 Reaper, a combat drone that has also seen losses during the US war with Iran.

Naval Safety Command revealed in a new aviation mishaps report that an MQ-4C Triton crashed on April 9, with no injury to personnel. The document did not specify where the drone went down, citing operational security, reports Business Insider.

Last week, an MQ-4C out of Naval Air Station Sigonella in Italy was flying a mission over the Persian Gulf when it suddenly and rapidly descended and disappeared from flight-tracking sites, leading to speculation that it had crashed in the Middle East.

Neither US Central Command, which oversees American operations in the Middle East, nor the Navy provided a comment on or an explanation for the MQ-4C crash. The War Zone, a military news site, first reported the drone's inclusion in the mishap report.

POLITICIANS, OFFICIALS

Nepal panel to probe property, assets

REUTERS, Kathmandu

Nepal's new government, led by rapper-turned politician Balendra Shah, has set up a panel to investigate the property and assets of past and present politicians and officials, a move aimed at controlling corruption in the Himalayan nation.

Shah, 35, became prime minister after his Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP) scored a sweeping victory in the March 5 parliamentary election — the country's first vote after the anti-graft 'Gen Z' protests last September.

During his three-year stint as mayor of Kathmandu, Nepal's capital city, Shah gained popularity for his fight against corruption and reformist credentials.

Sasmit Pokhrel, a cabinet spokesperson, said the five-member panel would be headed by Rajendra Kumar Bhandari, a retired Supreme Court judge.

"An impartial investigation will be carried out on the basis of evidence based on legal standards ... Its report and recommendations will be implemented by concerned agencies of the government," Pokhrel told reporters after a cabinet meeting late on Wednesday without mentioning the time frame given to the panel to complete work.

The probe is expected to cover hundreds of politicians and officials who held public offices after the movement that led to the abolition of the 239-year-old monarchy in 2008, analysts said.



WEST BANK SCHOOL Settlers block Palestinian pupils' path with barbed wire

REUTERS, Jerusalem

Dozens of Palestinian children have been unable to go to school in the Israeli-occupied West Bank this week because of barbed wire erected by Jewish settlers across the path they normally use.

Dozens of children tried on Monday to get to school in the small village of Umm al-Khair near Hebron for the first time since the US-Israeli war with Iran began. They found their way blocked by barbed wire which villagers said had been placed there by Israelis from the nearby Carmel settlement.

Khalil Hathaleen, head of the Umm al-Khair village council, said the barbed wire prevented children from the outskirts of the village taking their usual safe path through a valley to the school in the village centre.

Otherwise, he said, the children would have to walk along a road which he described as dangerous, because it passes closer to the settlement. "We insist on using the main path that our children have always taken," he said, accusing Jewish settlers of trying to take over the land so that they can expand their settlement.

Israeli human rights group B'Tselem said the barbed wire was part of a coordinated campaign by settlers and the Israeli military to intimidate Palestinians and drive them from their land in the West Bank, which it said amounted to "ethnic cleansing".

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(A Company of Petrobangla)
(Gas Bhaban, Mendibag, Sylhet-3100)

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