

Germany FM says 'encouraging' if US speaking directly to Iran

AFP | Cernay-la-Ville

Germany's foreign minister yesterday said it was encouraging if the United States was talking directly to Iran to end the war in the Middle East, but Washington should make its intentions clear.

"I hear that there are signs that the US is speaking directly to Iran. I think that this is encouraging and this is welcome," Johann Wadepuhl told reporters before heading into the meeting of G7 foreign ministers outside Paris.

With US Secretary of State Marco Rubio set to join the discussions from Friday, he added: "For the German government it is of great importance to know precisely what our American partners are intending."

Zelensky arrives in Saudi Arabia on surprise visit

AFP | Kyiv

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky arrived in Saudi Arabia yesterday for an unannounced visit, as the war in Iran spurs interest among Gulf countries in Ukrainian arms technology.

"Arrived in Saudi Arabia. Important meetings are scheduled," Zelensky wrote on social media.

"We appreciate the support and support those who are ready to work with us to ensure security."

Kyiv has sought to leverage its expertise in downing Russian drones to help Gulf nations, which are being attacked with the same Iranian-designed Shahed drones that Russia fires on Ukraine.



Palestinian residents inspect the remnants of an missile that landed in the Israeli-occupied West Bank village of Beitin, northeast of the city of Ramallah

Pakistan says 'US-Iran indirect talks taking place'

Pakistan confirms it is relaying messages between Washington and Tehran to end war

AFP | Washington

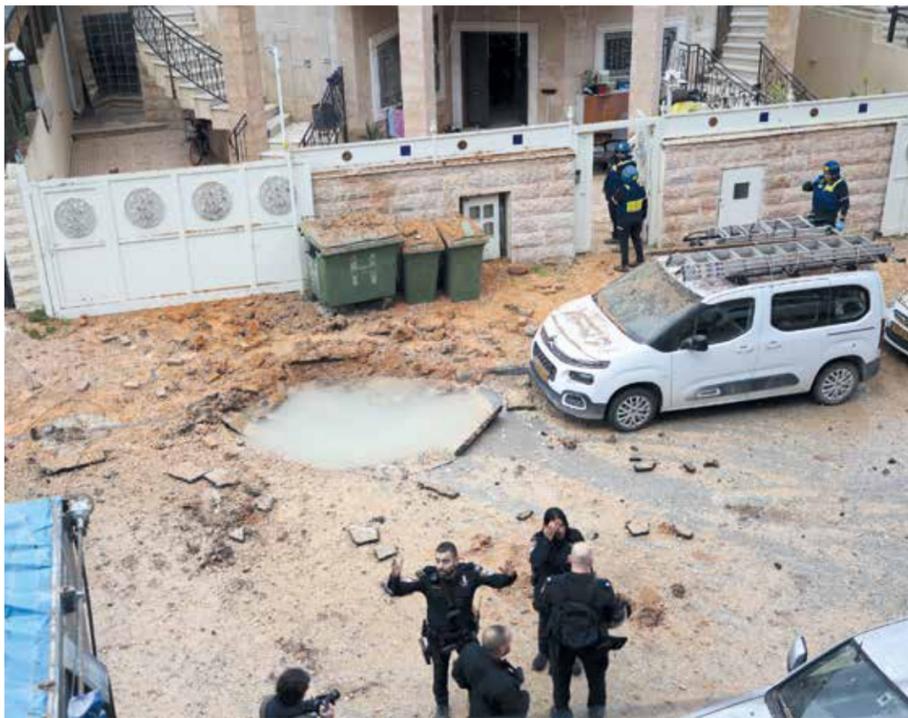
Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar confirmed yesterday that indirect negotiations between the United States and Iran were being held to end their war, using Islamabad as an intermediary.

Dar, who is also deputy prime minister, described speculation about "peace talks" as "unnecessary", adding: "In reality, US-Iran indirect talks are taking place through messages being relayed by Pakistan."

"In this context, the United States has shared 15 points, being deliberated upon by Iran. Brotherly countries of Turkiye and Egypt, among others, are also extending their support to this initiative," he wrote on X, using Turkey's official name.

Dar's comments are the first on-the-record confirmation from Islamabad that Pakistan is playing a facilitating role.

Two senior officials said on Wednesday that the US plan had been "conveyed to Iran via Pakistan", but spoke anonymously



Israeli rescuers and security personnel survey the site struck by a projectile in the Arab-Israeli city of Kfar Qassem

as they were not authorised to speak to the media.

Islamabad has been touted as a go-between given its longstanding ties with both neighbouring Iran and the United States, as well as its network of regional contacts.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Dar have both been in regular contact with senior Iranian government officials, as well as their Gulf allies, notably Saudi Arabia.

The powerful head of the Pakistan army, Field Marshal Asim Munir, has equally been involved in the diplomatic efforts, and spoke to US President Donald Trump last Sunday, officials said.

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has denied any "negotiations" with the administration in Washington but conceded that messages were being exchanged through "friendly countries".

"At present, our policy is the continuation of resistance," he said on state television late on Wednesday. "We do not intend to negotiate -- so far, no negotiations have taken place."

Israel defence minister says Iran Guards navy commander killed in strike

AFP | Tel Aviv

Defence Minister Israel Katz announced yesterday that an Israeli airstrike had killed Alireza Tangsiri, commander of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards' navy.

"Last night, in a precise

and lethal operation, the IDF eliminated the commander of the Revolutionary Guards' navy, Tangsiri, along with senior officers of the naval command," Katz said in a video statement.

"The man who was directly responsible for the terrorist op-

eration of mining and blocking the Strait of Hormuz to shipping was blown up and eliminated."

Since the start of the joint US-Israeli attacks on Iran on February 28, Israel has announced the killing of several top Iranian officials.

Two dead, three wounded as missile intercepted in Abu Dhabi: government media office

AFP | Abu Dhabi

Two people were killed and three were wounded by falling debris after air defences

intercepted a ballistic missile on the outskirts of Abu Dhabi, the government media office said yesterday.

"The incident resulted in the

deaths of two unidentified individuals, three injuries, and damage to a number of cars," the Abu Dhabi Media Office said in a post on X.