

1513

Spaniard Juan Ponce de León and his expedition first sight Florida

1794

Naval Act of 1794 is signed by President George Washington, authorizing the building of six frigates and establishing a permanent US Navy

1958

Nikita Khrushchev becomes Soviet Premier as well as First Secretary of the Communist Party



1977

583 die in aviation's worst ever disaster when two Boeing 747s collide at Tenerife airport in Spain



Iraqi soldiers inspect the site of a destroyed healthcare center in the Habbaniyah military base, which was targeted by in an airstrike in Habbaniyah, west of Baghdad

Gulf council says members want to be involved in any Iran war talks

AFP | Riyadh

Gulf countries said yesterday that they wanted to be involved in any talks between the United States and Iran, insisting that while they had a right to self-defence they preferred diplomacy.

"We emphasize the necessity of involving the GCC countries in any talks or agreements to resolve this crisis, in a way that contributes to strengthening their security and stability," Gulf Cooperation Council Secretary General Jasem AlBudaiwi said in a televised speech. AlBudaiwi also said Iran had been asking vessels to pay sums of money to cross the Strait of Homuz.



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



The @EuroparLEN has just voted to establish the EU's first-ever directive harmonising criminal laws to fight corruption, strengthening resilience and effectiveness. Corruption has no place in our Europe. We will keep fighting against it..

@EP_President

02



@WHO CoViNet has grown from 35 labs in 28 countries in 2023 to 58 labs in 35 countries in 2026 (& is growing) supporting early & accurate detection, surveillance & monitoring, risk assessment & capacity strengthening for coronaviruses

@mvanerkhove

03



The Secretary-General @antonioguterres has made clear: The conflict has broken past the limits even leaders thought unimaginable. There is only one way forward — an immediate end to the war, full respect for international law and a return to diplomacy.

@AminaJMohammed

04



Putin is rubbing his hands at the war in the Middle East because he thinks higher oil prices will let him line his pockets. I will always defend British interests at home and abroad, which is why we are taking action against Russia's shadow fleet today.

@Keir_Starmer

Trump insists Iran operations 'extremely' ahead of schedule

US President Donald Trump warned Iran to "get serious soon" in talks to end the Middle East war, as he once again criticized NATO allies for not joining in the conflict

AFP | Washington

US President Donald Trump said yesterday that the Iran war was "extremely" ahead of schedule, as he pushed Tehran to make a deal at his first cabinet meeting since the conflict began nearly a month ago.

As Tehran publicly rebuffed negotiations, Trump again cited the original timeframe of four to six weeks that he gave early on in the joint US-Israeli military offensive.

"They're lousy fighters, but they're great negotiators, and they are begging to work out a deal," Trump said at the White House alongside top officials including Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Pentagon chief Pete Hegseth.

"We estimated it would take approximately four to six weeks to achieve our mission. Twenty-six days in we're extremely, really, a lot ahead of schedule," added Trump.

"The Iranian regime is now admitting to itself that they have been decisively defeated."

Trump has been saying for days that Iran wants to make a deal, amid growing signs he is seeking a quick end to the conflict. Iran, however, says there are no direct negotiations.

The US leader also launched a fresh attack on NATO allies after they rejected his appeals to send naval assets to secure the Strait of Hormuz, the oil chokepoint Iran has effectively closed in response to the US-Israeli attacks. "I'll say it publicly. We're very disappointed with NATO, because NATO has done absolutely nothing," Trump said.



Israeli security forces cordon off the area following a projectile strike on south Tel Aviv

Trump said that taking control of Iran's oil was an "option," comparing it to the deal Washington made with Venezuela after toppling Nicolas Maduro. "It's an option," Trump told reporters at a cabinet meeting when asked if he was looking to take control of Iran's oil, saying that the United States had done "very well" with Venezuela's reserves.

Iran allowed 10 oil tankers to pass through the strategic Strait of Hormuz as a "present" to show it was serious about negotiations to end the war, Trump said. Referring to cryptic comments earlier this week about a "gift" from Tehran, Trump said Iran allowed eight "big boats of oil" to transit the waterway earlier this week, followed by two others later on.

He particularly lambasted Britain, saying it had offered to send aircraft carriers too late and describing the UK ships as "toys" compared to their US equivalents.

'Inflection point'

During the meeting, roving US

envoy Steve Witkoff confirmed for the first time from the US side that Washington had sent a 15-point "action list" to Iran via mediator Pakistan.

Businessman Witkoff, who led failed negotiations with Iran in the weeks before the US-Israeli strikes began, said there were

indications Tehran was ready to make a deal.

"We will see where things lead, and if we can convince Iran that this is the inflection point with no good alternatives for them, other than more death and destruction," Witkoff said.

"We have strong signs that this



The Iranian negotiators are very different and 'strange.' They are 'begging' us to make a deal, which they should be doing since they have been militarily obliterated, with zero chance of a comeback, and yet they publicly state that they are only 'looking at our proposal.' WRONG!!!

DONALD TRUMP

is a possibility."

In his usual style for his lengthy cabinet meetings, Trump let officials around the table have their say.

Vice President JD Vance, previously a staunch anti-interventionist who was widely reported to be against the Iran operation, said Trump was ensuring that Iran "didn't get a nuclear weapon."

Noting that Easter is approaching, Catholic convert Vance said US forces were "fighting at a time... that celebrates the return of Jesus Christ to Jerusalem."

Top US diplomat Rubio appeared to quote rappers Public Enemy as he praised Pentagon chief Hegseth, saying that "every day, the Department of War lets the drummer get wicked over every portion of Iran."

Hegseth launched an attack on the media for failing to support Trump's war, before hailing for "doing the work of the free world."

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