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Holds 90-minute call with Putin on Iran conflict & Ukraine, as Moscow warns of wider fallout

TEHRAN

Trump warned Tehran on Wednesday that it should "get smart soon" and capitulate to Washington's demands for tight controls on its nuclear programme.

we face" as he parried questioning from lawmakers on Wednesday for the first time since the launch of the war against Iran. The Pentagon's chief financial officer also said the war has cost an estimated \$25 billion and counting.

crude for June delivery was up 5.16 per cent at \$117, its highest level since the fragile ceasefire between the United States and Iran came into effect on April 8. According to *The Wall Street Journal*, Trump intends to pursue the blockade of Iranian ports until Tehran is forced to dismantle its nuclear programme. "Iran can't get their act together... They better get

US may extend Iran blockade

The US could keep the naval blockade in place for months, officials were told in a meeting with Trump, as Washington weighs ways to sustain pressure while limiting impact on consumers. Participants at a White House meeting on Wednesday said the administration would not discuss "the steps President Trump has taken to alleviate global oil markets and steps we could take to continue the current blockade for months if needed and minimise impact on American consumers," said the official, speaking on condition of anonymity in Washington. He says the Iranian rift fell in historic lows against the dollar while Tehran residents speak to AFP journalists in Paris reported a sense of despair.

LONDON



Britain's King Charles III toasts with President Donald Trump | AP

"We're doing a little West Asia work right now ... and we're doing very well," Trump told the audience. "We have militarily defeated that particular opponent, and we're never going to let that opponent ever — Charles agrees with me, even more than I do — we're never going to let that opponent have a nuclear weapon." While many Britons would agree with the president's sentiment, the comment triggered mild consternation among pundits in the UK.

In Britain, you see, this just isn't done. By convention, people aren't supposed to relay

private conversations with the monarch. That is partly because the king has to remain above the political fray, but also because the sovereign doesn't have the ability to wade into a public debate and correct the record if he's misquoted.

"Generally, as a matter of protocol, I think I would expect discussions between heads of state to be sort of behind the scenes, in those closed meetings, for those to be sort of kept private," said Craig Prescott, an expert on constitutional law and the monarchy at Royal Holloway, University of London.

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