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Trump: U.S. 'on top of' possible sleeper cells



As the U.S.-Israeli war with Iran continues, President Donald Trump says the United States is watching potential sleeper cells working for Iran closely. MAJID ASGARIPOUR/ WEST ASIA NEWS AGENCY VIA REUTERS

Offers little detail on level of potential threat

Kathryn Palmer
USA TODAY

President Donald Trump said the administration is "on top of" possible Iranian sleeper cells operating inside the United States, offering few details about their existence and level of potential threat.

At a press conference on March 9, Trump responded to a question about

whether the Iranian government had activated undercover groups, or cells, located within the country.

"They've been trying for a long time, and we've been very much on top of it," Trump said.

"We're watching every single one of them, yeah. We know a lot about them," the president added. He alleged the Democrat-led shutdown of the Department of Homeland Security was imped-

ing his administration's efforts to address such concerns.

The FBI is the lead agency for investigating and preventing acts of domestic and international terrorism. The funding lapse for the Department of Homeland Security has primarily affected FEMA, the Transportation Security Administration and Customs

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Voting tech firm claims vindictive prosecution

Smartmatic has ongoing defamation suit against Fox News

Aysha Bagchi
USA TODAY

Smartmatic, a voting technology company that supplied machines in the 2020 election, said in a new court filing that it is being unlawfully targeted by the Justice Department under President Donald Trump for undermining the president's untrue attacks on the integrity of the race.

Smartmatic's parent company was charged in a Florida federal court in October with conspiring to violate the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act by bribing a Philippine government official to get business, and with conspiring to launder money.

Those charges were added to a case initially brought against some of the company's former executives in 2024, during President Joe Biden's term.

That timeline is a key part of the argument Smartmatic laid out in its March 10 filing, which is asking the court to dismiss the charges as amounting to unlawfully vindictive.

"Trump has openly waged a campaign of retribution against his perceived enemies - chief among them those who undermine his mantra that the 2020 election was rigged - and demanded the Department of Justice ("DOJ") take up the sword," the company said in its filing.

"The only consequential changes in this case since 2024 were the President, his DOJ, and their well-documented crusade to unconstitutionally target their perceived political enemies, like Smartmatic," the company added.

The Justice Department told USA TODAY it will "rest on its filings" in the

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Inflation holds steady in February ahead of war with Iran

Rachel Barber
USA TODAY

U.S. consumer prices rose 2.4% in February from a year earlier, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported March 11, in line with forecasters' expectations.

The February figure means the rate of annual inflation held steady after falling from 2.7% in December 2025 to 2.4% in

January. Normally, that reading might suggest inflation is stabilizing, but the data may reveal less about inflation's trajectory than usual, as it does not account for gas and oil price surges sparked by the Iran war in early March.

"These inflation numbers provide some comfort, but this month's spike in energy prices make them a relic of the past," David Russell, global head of mar-

ket strategy at TradeStation, an online brokerage firm, said in a note to USA TODAY. "Investors and the Fed are in uncharted territory right now, taking their cues from crude oil and tanker traffic in the Strait of Hormuz."

From January to February, prices rose by 0.3%, up from a 0.2% increase in the first month of the year. The cost of shelter, food and energy increased over

the month, while there were declines in the prices of used cars and trucks, as well as motor vehicle insurance, the BLS said.

Core inflation, the BLS metric excluding volatile food and energy prices, rose 0.2% in February, down from a 0.3% increase in January. Over the last 12

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