

US resumes strikes on Iran, as Trump threatens further escalation

Andre Damon
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US forces struck Iranian military targets on Thursday after sending three US Navy destroyers through the Strait of Hormuz, which Iran has effectively closed since February. Iranian forces fired missiles, drones and small boats at the warships as they transited; the destroyers evaded the attacks. U.S. Central Command then ordered strikes on Iranian military sites.

US President Donald Trump issued what was widely read as a nuclear threat against Iran later Thursday, telling reporters at the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool: 'You're just going to have to look at one big glow coming out of Iran, and they better sign their agreement fast.'

The strikes were the first the United States has carried out on Iran since the April 8 truce. The renewed military action is a measure of the depth of the strategic crisis the Trump administration faces. The war, launched on February 28 by the United States and Israel, has entered its 69th day. The United States has failed to carry out its stated objectives of militarily crippling Iran and overthrowing its government.

CENTCOM said the strikes hit "Iranian military facilities responsible for attacking U.S. forces, including missile and drone launch sites, command and control locations, and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance nodes."

The destroyers were the USS Truxtun, the USS Rafael Peralta and the USS Mason. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) claimed to have inflicted significant damage on the US ships, an account CENTCOM disputed.

US President Donald Trump posted on his Truth Social platform: "Three World Class American Destroyers just transited, very successfully, out of the Strait of Hormuz, under fire. There was no damage done to the three Destroyers, but great damage done to

the Iranian attackers." He paired the announcement with a direct threat: "Just like we knocked them out again today, we'll knock them out a lot harder, and a lot more violently, in the future, if they don't get their Deal signed, FAST!"

General Dan Caine, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said this week that Iranian forces had attacked US forces more than 10 times since the truce took effect and had fired on commercial vessels nine times.

A Reuters investigation by Gram Slattery, Jonathan Landay and Erin Banco published May 4 reported that US intelligence assessments find Iran's nuclear timeline unchanged: Tehran would still need approximately one year to build a weapon, the same estimate produced after the June 2025 strikes on Natanz, Fordow and Isfahan. The current war has produced "limited new damage," three sources told Reuters. Iran's stockpile of approximately 440 kilograms of highly enriched uranium—enough for an estimated 10 weapons—remains intact in deeply buried sites that US munitions cannot penetrate.

The same intelligence assessments place Iran's surviving conventional missile force at roughly half its prewar inventory, with about 60 percent of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy intact. Damage to US bases in the region runs into the billions: Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar lost a \$1.1 billion radar system; Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia was struck on March 27, leaving 15 US soldiers wounded and an AWACS aircraft destroyed; the Fifth Fleet headquarters in Bahrain was hit on the war's first day; 16 US bases in the region took fire.

Pentagon figures put US military deaths at 13, with more than 400 wounded. The Intercept has reported the actual toll is at least 15. Nearly half of US Patriot interceptor stocks have been expended, and more than

half of THAAD interceptor stocks have been expended, with replacement timelines of three to four years.

The Iranian Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA) documented 3,636 Iranian deaths through April 7, including 1,701 civilians. Iran has reported 81,000 civilian structures damaged, including 275 medical facilities. Israel has reported 24 killed and 7,791 wounded by Iranian missile attacks; at least nine Gulf state nationals have been killed in Iranian strikes.

Trump has set Iran a deadline of 48 hours to accept terms, including a one-page memorandum requiring Iran to halt uranium enrichment for 12 years and a 30-day negotiation period during which restrictions on the Strait of Hormuz would be gradually lifted. The deadline comes in advance of Trump's planned arrival in Beijing on May 14 to meet Chinese President Xi Jinping. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said this week that Iran will be "high on the president's agenda" at the summit.

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi traveled to Beijing on May 6 to brief Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi. China takes 80 percent or more of Iran's oil exports and has refused a US request to send Chinese warships to escort commercial shipping through the strait. Russia has supplied Iran with real-time intelligence on US warship positions during the war and has seen its own oil revenues double from the Hormuz closure, without committing troops.

The economic cost of the war is being borne by the working class. Gasoline crossed \$4.50 a gallon last week, the first time since July 2022. The International Energy Agency (IEA) has called the disruption the largest in the history of the oil market.

Spirit Airlines liquidated on May 2, throwing 17,000 workers out of jobs. Frontier, Avelo, Sun Country and Allegiant have jointly requested \$2.5 billion in emergency federal fuel assistance, which Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy publicly rejected. JetBlue has shown signs of acute financial strain.

The March consumer price index rose 0.9 percent in a single month, the largest jump in four years, with gasoline up 21.2 percent. Real hourly earnings fell roughly 0.6 percent that month. The personal consumption expenditures index, the Federal Reserve's preferred inflation measure, is running at 4.5 percent annualized—more than double the central bank's target. The personal savings rate has fallen to 3.6 percent. US

credit card debt has reached a record \$1.28 trillion at an average annual percentage rate above 21 percent.

The political crisis at home is deepening. Trump's approval has fallen to 34 percent in the Reuters/Ipsos poll, the lowest of his presidency. Sixty-one percent of Americans, including 25 percent of Republicans, say the war has done more harm than good. The Senate has voted down War Powers resolutions to halt the war five times. On May 1, Trump declared hostilities formally "terminated" to evade the 60-day War Powers Resolution clock, a position rejected by senior Democrats and constitutional scholars across the political spectrum.

Whatever temporary accommodation the Trump administration may extract from Tehran, it is only the prelude to new and ever more violent eruptions as US imperialism attempts to extricate itself from its crisis through military force.



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