

# US launches missile strikes on Iran in advance of talks in Qatar

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25 May 2026

The US military launched new strikes on southern Iran late Monday as Iranian officials arrived in Doha for negotiations involving Qatari intermediaries acting under the direction of the Trump administration.

The attacks were described by US Central Command (CENTCOM) as “defensive” to “protect our troops from threats posed by Iranian forces.” The US strikes reportedly targeted missile launch sites and mine-laying boats in the Strait of Hormuz.

According to NBC News, the US military said the strikes hit locations in Bandar Abbas, the major Iranian port and naval base close to the strait.

Al Jazeera also reported that the strikes hit southern Iran as top Iranian negotiators arrived in Qatar for talks. Quoting Navy Captain Tim Hawkins, the report said the targets were facilities and boats connected to mine-laying operations. The Hill also reported that explosions were heard in Bandar Abbas and coastal areas near the strait.

The new strikes were announced by CENTCOM spokesman Hawkins, who said they were defensive, although he did not provide details or evidence of any alleged Iranian threats. Hawkins said, “US Central Command continues to defend our forces while using restraint during the ongoing ceasefire.”

The strikes were no doubt timed with the arrival of Iranian negotiators in Doha. Multiple reports said Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi, Parliament Speaker Mohammad-Bagher Ghalibaf and Central Bank Governor Abdolnaser were part of the Iranian delegation.

The reports said they were there for talks with Qatari officials tied to a potential US-Iran deal and the unfreezing of Iranian assets and the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz.

On Monday morning, Trump posted on Truth Social

that negotiations were “proceeding nicely,” but then added a threat: “It will only be a Great Deal for all or, no Deal at all — Back to the Battlefield and shooting, but bigger and stronger than ever before — And nobody wants that!”

This sequence follows a repeated pattern used by the Trump White House to carry out illegal military aggression while publicly talking about negotiations.

The justifications for the strikes also expose the claims by Trump, Secretary of War Pete Hegseth and other officials that the 38-day US-Israeli air campaign had degraded or destroyed Iran’s military power. How can Iran threaten US forces in the region if, as Hegseth has repeatedly asserted, Iran’s missile capability has been rapidly crushed, “functionally defeated” and “destroyed”?

CNN reported earlier this spring that US intelligence assessed roughly half of Iran’s missile launchers were still intact, with thousands of drones remaining and significant coastal-defense cruise missile capabilities still functional. The New York Times later reported that Iran had regained access to most of its missile sites, launchers and underground facilities, including 30 of 33 sites along the Strait of Hormuz.

The New York Times also reported that an unnamed US military official said Iranian surface-to-air missiles threaten nearly two dozen US Navy warships—including two aircraft carriers and their escort vessels—in the Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea involved in enforcing the blockade on Iranian ports.

These accounts show that Washington is treating the Iranian military as a force with real anti-ship and air-defense capability, despite months of propaganda claiming the opposite.

Qatar has been mediating the current round of talks with Tehran over reopening the Strait of Hormuz in

exchange for sanctions relief and a halt to hostilities. The talks have been presented by the White House as moving toward an agreement.

The Trump administration faces both a military and political crisis over its inability to achieve its goal of regime change when it launched the war on February 28 and, with the assistance of Israel, killed the entire political leadership of Iran. After first claiming the war would be over within days, Trump later shifted to saying it would end “pretty quickly” in four-to-six weeks. None of this has come to pass.

In a massive miscalculation, the failure of the US-Israeli war to break Iranian resistance led to the shutdown of the Strait of Hormuz. The consequences for the world economy from the shutdown are severe since roughly one-fifth of global oil flows through the strait.

The renewed bombing in southern Iran shows that the Trump administration’s propaganda about negotiations is inseparable from the use of military violence. Washington continues to demand surrender while it prepares the next stage of a region-wide imperialist war.



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