

Iran FM rejects reports it fired missiles at Turkey, offers probe

AFP | Tehran, Iran

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi yesterday rejected as "completely baseless" reports that the Islamic republic had fired missiles at Turkey and offered to jointly investigate the issue.

In a phone call with his Turkish counterpart Hakan Fidan, Araghchi warned against "false-flag operations by enemies" and said Iran was "ready for joint technical cooperation to examine any possible claim", according to a statement by the Iranian foreign ministry.

On Monday, Turkey's defence ministry said NATO forces had intercepted a new missile fired from Iran -- the fourth since the start of the Middle East war.



UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan (L) receiving Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates

Trump says other countries should 'just take' the Strait of Hormuz

AFP | Washington, United States

US President Donald Trump said Tuesday the countries that have not joined the Middle East war but are struggling with fuel shortages should "go get your own oil" in the Strait of Hormuz.

In a Truth Social post, Trump said countries "that refused

to get involved" should "build up some delayed courage, go to the Strait, and just TAKE IT," adding that the United States would not help them.

"The U.S.A. won't be there to help you anymore, just like you weren't there for us. Iran has been, essentially, decimated. The hard part is done. Go get your own oil!"



Indonesia civil servants to work from home one day per week to save fuel: minister

France 'very unhelpful on Iran,' Trump says

AFP | Washington, United States

President Donald Trump lashed out at France yesterday, saying it had been 'very unhelpful' in the US-Israel war on Iran.

"The Country of France wouldn't let planes headed to Israel, loaded up with military supplies, fly over French territory. France has been VERY UNHELPFUL with respect to the 'Butcher of Iran, who has been successfully eliminated!" Trump posted on his Truth Social platform.

France 'surprised' by Trump criticism

AFP | Paris, France

French President Emmanuel Macron's office said yesterday it was "surprised" by US President Donald Trump's criticism of France, stressing the country's position on US military overflights had not changed.

"France has not changed its position since day one," the presidency said.

"We are surprised by this tweet," it said, referring to Trump's social media post in which he accused France of being "very unhelpful" in the US-Israeli war on Iran and not allowing planes carrying military supplies to "fly over French territory".

Two Chinese container ships were able to pass the strait, and Beijing expressed gratitude to "the relevant parties", a Foreign Ministry spokeswoman told reporters.

Next days will be 'decisive': Pentagon chief

Reuters | Tehran

US Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth said yesterday that the next days of the Iran war would be "decisive", while refusing to rule out US ground forces playing a role in the conflict.

Mr Hegseth conceded that Iran retained the ability to retaliate after a month-long US-Israeli bombing campaign.

"They will shoot some missiles; we will shoot them down," he told reporters at the Pentagon alongside General Dan Caine, chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

But Mr Hegseth repeated claims that Iran's military capabilities have been crippled.

"The upcoming days will be decisive. Iran knows that, and there's almost nothing they can militarily do about it," he said.

Mr Hegseth said he paid an unannounced visit to the Middle East over the weekend to visit troops at bases around the region. "I witnessed urgency to finish the job," he said.

Iran has 'necessary will' to end war, but seeking guarantees: president

AFP | Tehran, Iran

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian has said Tehran has the "necessary will" to end the ongoing war with the United States, but only if its security is guaranteed and future attacks are prevented, reported news agency AFP.

Speaking amid escalating tensions, Pezeshkian stressed that Iran does not seek continued conflict but will not accept a settlement without firm assurances. He said any decision to end the war must "guarantee the security and interests of the Iranian people."

He said the US was "closer than ever before to winning". "We have more and more options, and they have less."

Asked about concerns among some of US President Donald Trump's base over the possible

use of ground troops in Iran, Mr Hegseth declined to tip his hand. "You can't fight and win a war if you tell your adversary what you are willing to do, or what you are not willing to do, to include boots on the ground," he said.

"We possess the necessary will to end this conflict, provided that essential conditions are met -- especially the guarantees required to prevent repetition of the aggression," Pezeshkian said in a phone conversation with the president of the European Council, according to a statement from his office, reiterating a key demand of Tehran's.

"If we needed to, we could execute those options on behalf of the President of the United States and this department. Or maybe we don't have to use them at all, maybe negotiations work," Mr Hegseth said.

"They are very real. They are ongoing, they are active and, I think, gaining strength," he said of the negotiations.

A wave of US-Israeli strikes hit military bases, a cancer drug plant and a religious site in Iran on March 31, after Mr Trump threatened to destroy the country's oil wells and power grid.

Video footage verified by AFP news agency showed at least two massive explosions and columns of smoke in Isfahan, central Iran. State media reported that the Grand Husseiniya, a Shi'ite religious centre, was damaged in Zanjan in the country's northwest.

The Iranian government also said air strikes hit a pharmaceutical plant producing cancer drugs and anaesthetics, while a Health Ministry official told

ISNA news agency that a bombing left a desalination plant on Qeshm Island in the Strait of Hormuz "completely out of service".

Trump warned in a post on his social media site that if Iran does not strike a deal and reopen the Strait of Hormuz to sea traffic, the US would respond by "blowing up and completely obliterating all of their electric generating plants, oil wells and Kharg Island (and possibly all desalination plants)".



Desalinated water provides 42 per cent of drinking water in the United Arab Emirates, 70 per cent in Saudi Arabia, 86 per cent in Oman, and 90 per cent in Kuwait.

Kuwait's state oil company reported that one of its giant crude oil tankers was on fire in Dubai Port after a "direct and malicious Iranian attack while in the anchorage area".

Iranian attack sparks fire on Kuwaiti oil tanker at Dubai Port

AFP | Kuwait City, Kuwait

An apparent Iranian drone attack on a fully loaded Kuwaiti crude oil tanker at Dubai Port sparked a fire that was later extinguished, authorities said.

Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said early yesterday that the Al-Salmi tanker was

The tanker was loaded with two million barrels of oil from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, according to data from Lloyd's and TankerTrackers. Lloyd's listed the destination as Qingdao, China.

struck in an Iranian attack while anchored at the port in the United Arab Emirates, causing damage to the vessel and a fire on board.

KPC warned of a possible oil spill in surrounding waters, Ku-

waiti state news agency KUNA reported.

Authorities in Dubai said there was a drone attack on the Kuwaiti oil tanker overnight, and response teams had contained the incident. They added that

no oil leakage or injuries were reported, according to the Dubai Media Office.

Work is now under way to assess damage to the tanker, said KPC, which, according to Lloyd's List Intelligence data, is the par-

ent company of Al Salmi's registered owner and commercial operator.

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