

Iran reviewing US proposal

Iran foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei said a US proposal to end the war is still "under review" by Tehran, local media reported.

Tehran will convey its views to key mediator Pakistan after "finalising its views", Baqaei told the ISNA news agency.

Israel vows to 'dismantle' Hezbollah

Israel's army chief Lieutenant General Eyal Zamir vowed to dismantle Hezbollah and said the military was prepared to launch a new offensive against Iran if needed.

"We will seize every opportunity to deepen the dismantling of Hezbollah and continue weakening it," Zamir said while visiting soldiers near the Lebanese town of Khiam.

Senior Hezbollah commander killed by Israel in Beirut suburbs: source from group

AFP | Beirut, Lebanon

A senior Hezbollah commander from the group's elite Radwan force was killed in Israel's strike on Beirut's southern suburbs on Wednesday evening, a source close to the group said.

"Malek Ballout, the operations commander in the Radwan force" was killed, the source told AFP on condition of anonymity.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said his military had targeted "the commander of Hezbollah's Radwan force".

Israel resumes Lebanon strikes

Israel's army said yesterday it had begun striking Hezbollah infrastructure in several areas of Lebanon.

The army had reported "several incidents" during which drones had exploded near Israeli soldiers operating in Lebanon's south. Earlier, it had issued an evacuation warning for a dozen villages in south Lebanon.

Oil prices slide

Oil prices fell yesterday, with oil benchmark Brent North Sea making a double-digit plunge to under \$100 a barrel, before climbing back after Trump's threat to start bombing Iran again.

The main US contract, West Texas Intermediate, dived more than 12 percent to under \$90 a barrel before paring losses.

US wants 'concrete actions' on Iran from next Iraqi PM

AFP | Washington, United States

The United States is looking for "concrete actions" by Iraq's next prime minister to distance the state from pro-Iran armed groups before resuming financial shipments and security aid, a senior official said Tuesday.

Iraq's ruling coalition has put forward Ali al-Zaidi as the next leader and he quickly received



Washington suspended cash payments for oil revenue, which have been handled from the Federal Reserve Bank of New York in an arrangement dating to the aftermath of the 2003 US invasion of Iraq, as well as security assistance over a spate of attacks on US interests.

a congratulatory call from President Donald Trump, who had threatened to end all US sup-

port if former frontrunner Nouri al-Maliki took office.

But a senior US State Depart-

ment official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Zaidi must address the "blurry line" between pro-Iran armed groups in the Shia-majority country and the state.

Resuming full support "would start with expelling terrorist militias from any state institution, cutting off their support from the Iraqi budget (and) de-

nying salary payments to these militia fighters," the official said. "Those are the type of concrete actions that would give us confidence and say that there's a new mindset." The official said US facilities in Iraq suffered more than 600 attacks after February 28, when the United States and Israel launched their war on Iran.

Israeli court rejects flotilla activists' appeal challenging detention

AFP | Beersheva, Israel

An Israeli court yesterday rejected an appeal contesting the detention of two foreign activists seized by Israeli forces from a Gaza-bound flotilla, with the rights group representing them denouncing the ruling as "unlawful."

Saif Abu Keshek, a Spanish national of Palestinian origin, and Brazilian Thiago Avila were among dozens of activists aboard a flotilla intercepted



Brazil's activist Thiago Avila is escorted into court in the Israeli coastal city of Ashkelon

in international waters off the coast of Greece on Thursday.

The two were seized by Israeli forces and brought to Israel for questioning, while the others were taken to the Greek island of Crete and released.

On Tuesday, an Israeli court extended their detention until Sunday to allow police more time to interrogate them, according to their lawyers.

The lawyers then filed an appeal at the Beersheva district

court against the detention, but it was rejected.

"Today, the district court of Beersheva denied our appeal and basically accepted all of the arguments that the state or the police have represented before the court and kept the previous decision," lawyer Hadeel Abu Salih said.

The two activists, who are on a hunger strike, had appeared in the district court with their feet shackled, an AFP journalist saw.

Abu Keshek looked exhausted and sat with his hands clasped in his lap, while Avila appeared calm.

Abu Salih said her clients had been subjected to "an illegal arrest that took place in international waters where the activists were kidnapped by the Israeli navy without any authority".

She went on to accuse the courts of "giving a free hand for the Israeli forces... to do it again and again".

Reports say both sides are close to agreeing on a "one-page memorandum of understanding to end the war" and start a 30-day period of talks that could take place in Geneva or Islamabad.

Ultimatum for Iran

US warns diplomacy window narrowing as military threat loom

● **Despite Rubio's announcement of the end of "Operation Epic Fury", the standoff in the vital waterway has led to claims of attacks by both sides**

● **A container ship owned by major French shipping company CMA CGM was also the "target of an attack" in the Strait of Hormuz on Tuesday, the firm said.**

AFP | Washington, United States

President Donald Trump issued an ultimatum yesterday for Iran to accept a deal to end the war or face renewed, more intense US bombing, in

Assuming Iran agrees to give what has been agreed to, which is perhaps a big assumption, the already legendary Epic Fury will be at an end. If they don't agree, the bombing starts, and it will be, sadly, at a much higher level and intensity than it was before

DONALD TRUMP

the latest of a series of abrupt policy shifts.

"Assuming Iran agrees to give what has been agreed to, which is perhaps a big assumption, the already legendary Epic Fury will be at an end," Trump posted on his Truth Social platform, "using the US name for its campaign against Iran.

"If they don't agree, the bombing starts, and it will be, sadly, at a much higher level and intensity than it was before," he added.

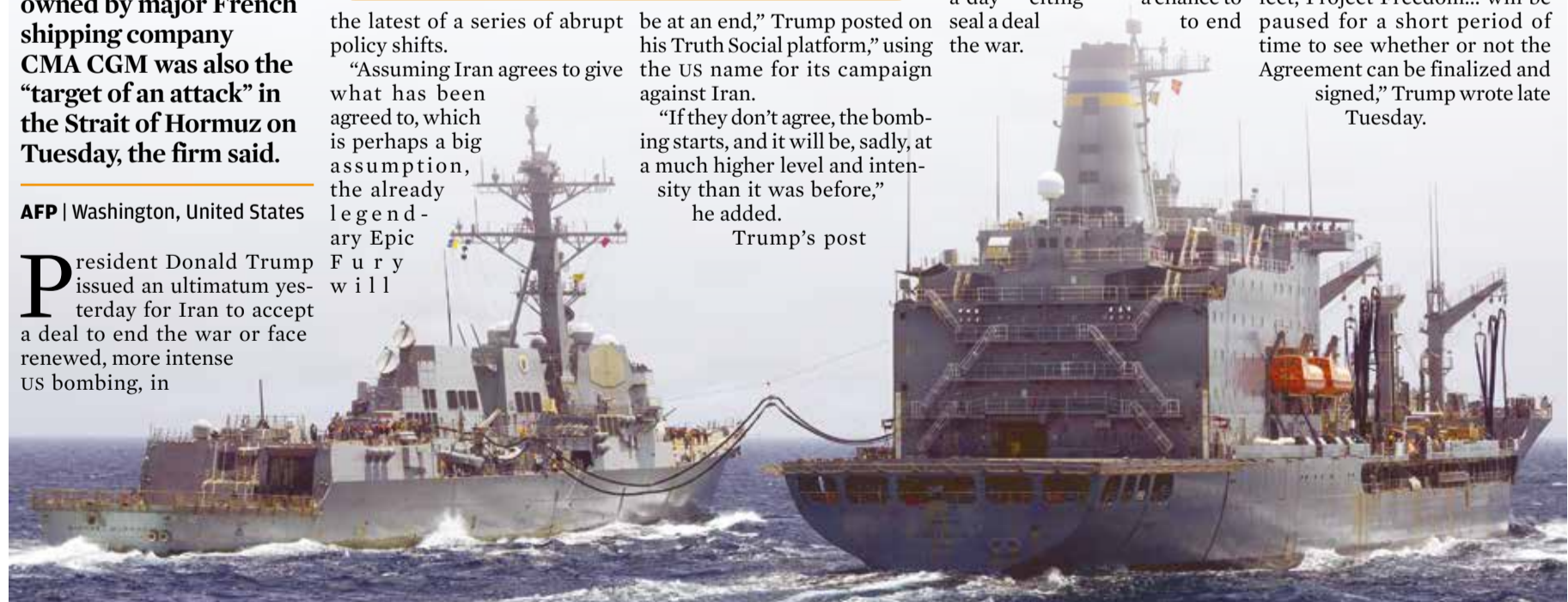
Trump's post

came after US news outlet Axios reported that Washington and Tehran were close to agreeing on a one-page memorandum of understanding to end the war and set a framework for more detailed nuclear negotiations.

Trump late Tuesday announced a pause in a US military operation to guide stranded commercial ships through the Strait of Hormuz -- after only a day -- citing a chance to seal a deal to end the war.

Trump wrote on social media that the decision to halt his so-called "Project Freedom" a day after it began came after requests from "mediator Pakistan and other countries", saying "Great Progress has been made toward a Complete and Final Agreement" with Tehran.

"We have mutually agreed that, while the Blockade will remain in full force and effect, Project Freedom... will be paused for a short period of time to see whether or not the Agreement can be finalized and signed," Trump wrote late Tuesday.



This US Navy handout photograph released on May 2, 2026 by US Central Command Public Affairs shows Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile USS Michael Murphy (DDG 112) conducting a replenishment-at-sea with fleet replenishment oiler USNS Henry J. Kaiser (T-AO-187)

Washington and Gulf countries have drafted a UN Security Council resolution demanding Tehran halt attacks, disclose mine locations and end efforts to charge tolls, Rubio said, with a vote expected in the com-

ing days. Israel's military chief of staff Eyal Zamir said the country would respond "with force" to any Iranian attack and remained "on high alert across all fronts".

On another front, Israel struck at least two villages in southern Lebanon on Wednesday, including one near a 12th-century Crusader-era castle, according to AFP images.

The Lebanese health ministry said an Israeli strike killed four people in the eastern Bekaa valley. Israel and Iran-backed Hezbollah have kept up their attacks despite a ceasefire in Lebanon.

On Iran, Israel's military chief of staff Eyal Zamir said the country would respond "with force" to any Iranian attack and remained "on high alert across all fronts".