

Trump shares divine-style AI image amid fresh swipe at Pope

TDI | agencies

US President Donald Trump has stirred fresh controversy after sharing an AI-generated image of himself depicted in a Christ-like form on his Truth Social platform.

The image shows Trump draped in flowing robes, surrounded by a radiant glow, appearing to 'heal' a man, while being flanked by figures resembling angels or soldiers. Fighter jets streak across the sky overhead, leaving trails, as fireworks light up the scene.

The Statue of Liberty stands in the background, reinforcing a strong American motif.

The post comes shortly after Trump publicly criticised Pope Leo XIV, calling him "weak" and questioning his stance on key



Trump deletes Jesus post

Washington, United States

US President Donald Trump yesterday deleted a social media image apparently depicting him as Jesus after an outcry from religious leaders that he was being blasphemous.

Asked about the post, Trump denied that he was trying to look like Jesus Christ. "I did post it, and I thought

it was me as a doctor and had to do Red Cross," he told journalists. "It's supposed to be me as a doctor, making people better. And I do make people better. I make people a lot better." The post generated an outcry from several prominent conservative Christians who are among Trump's biggest backers. The AI picture was posted late Sunday and removed Monday.

global issues.

Speaking to reporters at Joint Base Andrews in Maryland on Sunday, Trump said he was "not a big fan" of the pontiff, describing him as "a very liberal person" and

accusing him of failing to take a firm stand on crime.

Trump also alleged that the Pope was "toying with a country that wants a nuclear weapon," further escalating his criticism.

Israel military says struck 150 Hezbollah targets in past 24 hours

Blockade clock ticks



Last Wednesday, the US and Iran agreed a two-week truce to allow the negotiations to go ahead, and mediator Pakistan and Gulf state Qatar were still calling on Monday for it to be respected as diplomatic efforts continue.



the Natanz nuclear complex in Iran

Russia offers to take in Iran's enriched uranium

AFP | Moscow, Russia

Russia is ready to take in Iran's enriched uranium as part of a future peace deal with the United States, the Kremlin said yesterday.

Failed talks between Iran and the United States over the weekend dashed hopes of a swift deal to permanently end the war that has killed thousands and thrown the global economy into turmoil since it began in late February.

Russia, which possesses the world's largest stockpile of nuclear weapons, has repeatedly offered to host Iran's enriched

uranium as part of any peace deal.

"This proposal was voiced by President Putin in contacts with both the United States and regional states. The offer still stands, but has not been acted upon," the Kremlin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters on Monday in response to a question by AFP.

The Kremlin also criticised Trump's threat to blockade the Strait of Hormuz, a key waterway that has been at a standstill since the US and Israel began striking Iran in late February.

Trump vows US will sink any Iran boats that challenge blockade

AFP | Washington, United States

US President Donald Trump warned yesterday that any Iranian attack boats that approach the naval blockade he has ordered around the country's ports will be destroyed, despite international calls for a ceasefire to be re-

spected and negotiations to resume.

The US military said the blockade would begin at 1400 GMT and apply to all ships leaving or seeking to dock at Iranian harbours, but as the deadline passed there was no announcement that the measure had come into effect, nor sign of

any interceptions.

In a social media post, Trump said the bulk of Iran's navy had already been destroyed during the war, but that if any of what he said were Tehran's few remaining "fast attack ships" approach the blockade "they will be immediately ELIMINATED".

Trump announced the blockade on Sunday after a delegation led by Vice President JD Vance returned from a meeting with Iranian officials in Pakistan without having secured a deal to end the war launched on February 28 with deadly US and Israeli strikes on Tehran.

"The blockade will be enforced impartially against vessels of all nations entering or departing Iranian ports and coastal areas, including all Iranian ports on the Arabian Gulf and Gulf of Oman," US Central Command said, adding it would begin at 1400 GMT on Monday.

China, Washington's great power rival and a big importer of Iranian oil, criticised the plan.

"The Strait of Hormuz is an important international trade route for goods and energy, and maintaining its security, stability, and unimpeded flow is in the common interest of

the international community," foreign ministry spokesman Guo Jiakun said, urging Iran and the US not to reignite the war.

Among Washington's NATO allies, much criticised by Trump for their reluctance to follow him to war, Spain's Defence Minister Margarita Robles said the

planned naval blockade "makes no sense".

"It's one more episode in this whole downward spiral into which we've been dragged," she said.

And in a BBC radio interview, UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer said Britain would not join the blockade, adding the UK "is not

getting dragged in".

French President Emmanuel Macron said that France and Britain would host a conference with countries prepared to join a "peaceful multinational mission" to secure the strait, but it would be "strictly defensive" and only operational once circumstances permit.

The head of the International Maritime Organization, Secretary General Arsenio Dominguez, said no country could "prohibit the right of innocent passage or the freedom of navigation through international straits that are used for international transit".

Turkey says Hormuz strait should open 'as soon as possible'

Istanbul, Turkey

The strategic Strait of Hormuz trade route should open "as

soon as possible", Turkey's foreign minister said yesterday.

"Negotiations with Iran

should be conducted, persuasion methods should be used, and the strait should be opened as

soon as possible," Hakan Fidan told the official Anadolu news agency.