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Trump says he is losing patience with Iran after talks with China's Xi

By Reuters

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[1/6] People walk past a mural depicting the late leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, and the late Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, in Tehran, Iran, May 12, 2026... [Purchase Licensing Rights](#) [Read more](#)



Summary

Trump says Iran has to 'make a deal'

White House says Trump, Xi agree on need to open strait and prevent Iran gaining nuclear weapons

Indian cargo vessel sunk by attack off Oman

Another vessel seized off UAE coast, steered towards Iran

May 14 (Reuters) - U.S. President Donald Trump said his patience with Iran was running out after he discussed the costly and unpopular war with Chinese President Xi Jinping on Thursday and a ship was reported seized by Iranian personnel off the United Arab Emirates.

The White House said Trump and Xi had agreed during talks in Beijing on the need to [keep the Strait of Hormuz shipping lane open](#). Iran effectively shut the waterway in response to [U.S.-Israeli attacks](#) which began on February 28, causing an unprecedented disruption to global energy supplies. China is

close to Iran and the main buyer of its oil.

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The U.S. paused its attacks on Iran last month but began a blockade of the country's ports. Talks aimed at ending the conflict have stalled with Iran refusing to end its nuclear program or relinquish its stockpile of enriched uranium.

"I am not going to be much more patient," Trump said in an interview aired on Thursday night on Fox News' "Hannity" program. "They should make a deal."

On the key issue of Iran's hidden stockpile of enriched uranium, Trump suggested it only needed to be secured by the U.S. for public relations purposes.

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"I don't think it's necessary except from a public relations standpoint," Trump said in the interview.

"I just feel better if I got it, actually. But it's, I think, it's more for public relations than it is for anything else."

In the latest incidents on the trade route, an Indian cargo vessel carrying livestock from Africa to the UAE was sunk on Wednesday in waters off the coast of Oman.

India condemned the attack and said all 14 crew members had been rescued by the Omani coast guard. Vanguard, a British maritime security advisory firm, said the vessel was believed to have been hit by a missile or drone which caused an explosion.

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Separately, British maritime security agency [UKMTO reported](#) on Thursday that "unauthorised personnel" had boarded a ship anchored off the coast of the UAE port of Fujairah, and were steering it towards Iran.

Vanguard said a company security officer had reported that "the vessel was taken by Iranian personnel while at anchor."

After [talks](#) between Trump and Xi on Thursday, the White House said the leaders had agreed that the strait should be open and that Xi made clear China's opposition to the militarisation of the strait and any effort to charge a toll for its use.

Trump said Xi also promised not to send Iran military equipment. "He said he's not going to give military equipment, that's a big statement," Trump said on "Hannity".

Xi also expressed interest in purchasing more American oil to reduce China's future dependence on the strait and the leaders agreed that Iran should never obtain nuclear weapons, the White House readout said. Tehran has denied seeking such weapons.

DIPLOMACY ON HOLD

Trump is keen to elicit Chinese support to end a war that has become an electoral liability as it drags on towards key U.S. midterm elections in November. But [analysts](#) doubt Xi will be willing to push Iran hard or end support for its military, given its value as a strategic counterweight to the U.S.

In an interview with CNBC from Beijing, U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said he believed China would "do what they can" to help open the strait, something "very much in their interest." Before the war, about a fifth of global oil and liquefied natural gas supplies passed through the waterway.

But diplomacy has been on hold since last week when Iran and the U.S. each rejected the other's most recent proposals.

Fujairah is the UAE's sole oil port, on the Gulf of Oman just outside the Strait of Hormuz, and enables some shipments to reach markets without passing through the chokepoint.

Iran appears to be making more deals with countries to allow some ships to pass through the strait - if they accept Tehran's terms.

A [Japanese](#) tanker crossed on Wednesday after Japan's prime minister announced that she had requested help from the Iranian president. A huge [Chinese tanker](#) also crossed on Wednesday, and Iran's Fars news agency reported on Thursday that an agreement had been reached to let some Chinese ships pass.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards said 30 vessels had passed through the strait since Wednesday evening, still far short of the 140 on a typical day before the war, but a substantial increase if confirmed.

According to shipping analytics firm Kpler, some 10 ships had sailed through the strait in the past 24 hours, against five to seven that have crossed daily in recent weeks.

IRAN'S THREAT 'SIGNIFICANTLY DEGRADED'

Thousands of Iranians were killed in the U.S. and Israeli airstrikes in the first weeks of the war, and thousands more have been killed in Lebanon since the war reignited fighting between Israel and the Iran-backed group Hezbollah.

[Talks between Lebanese and Israeli officials](#) on Thursday in Washington were productive and positive, according to a senior State Department official, who said they were set to continue on Friday.

Trump said his aims in starting the war were to destroy Iran's nuclear program, end its ability to attack neighbours and make it easier for Iranians to overthrow their government.

A senior U.S. admiral told a U.S. Senate committee on Thursday Iran's ability to threaten its neighbours and U.S. regional interests had been "significantly degraded".

"They no longer threaten regional partners, or the United States, in ways that they were able to do before, across every domain," [Admiral Brad Cooper](#) said.

But Cooper declined to directly address reports by Reuters and other news organisations that Iran had retained significant missile and drone capabilities.

Iran's rulers, who used force to put down anti-government protests at the start of the year, have faced no organised opposition since the war began. And their closure of the strait has given them additional leverage in negotiations.