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Trump says US does not need Iran deal, directs Vance to focus on domestic corruption

By **Bo Erickson**

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[1/3] US President Donald Trump and Vice President JD Vance arrive for a Veterans Day ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia, US, November 11, 2026. REUTERS/Kylie Cooper Purchase Licensing Rights

Summary

- Trump tells Vance to focus on alleged fraud in Democratic-run cities and states
- Vance led April talks in Pakistan that produced June truce memorandum
- Wall Street Journal says Vance considered meeting senior Iranian security official

WASHINGTON, Nov 12 (Reuters) - President Donald Trump said on Thursday the US does not need a deal with Iran and directed Vice President JD Vance, who has played a role in efforts to resolve the war, to focus "his complete and total attention" on alleged crime and corruption in Democratic-run cities and states.

Trump's directive came a day after the Wall Street Journal reported that Vance was considering face-to-face peace talks with a hard-line Iranian security official and a week after the vice president blamed the costly war with Iran for Republicans' midterm elections drubbing.

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"We don't need a deal with Iran. Those days have long since passed. We've got their money, Hundreds of Billions of Dollars, and we've got their Strait!" Trump wrote on social media, referring to the Strait of Hormuz.

Trump had suggested in recent weeks that Iran would be more willing to strike a deal in the eight-month conflict after the US elections, but his administration this week signaled it believes its blockade and economic sanctions against Iran are working, meaning neither a military escalation nor diplomacy is needed.

The US military is imposing a blockade on Iranian ports, while attempting to secure safe passage for international shipping through the vital Strait of Hormuz. Iran's military said on Thursday four oil tankers were hit by explosions after they ignored Iranian warnings.

Vance's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

VANCE HAD LED IRAN DIPLOMACY

Vance, long seen as skeptical of the war the US and Israel launched on Iran in February, led talks with Iranian officials in Pakistan in April that produced a June memorandum of understanding that paused the war but broke down within weeks.

Iranian state media said late last month Tehran had received a letter from Vance seeking renewed talks with Washington. Trump said he had not directed his vice president to make the outreach.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio said on Tuesday after talks with US allies in Paris that Iran's demands for a potential deal were "absurd," citing its demand for reparations for the war, and said Trump would not sign a bad deal.

The Wall Street Journal reported on Wednesday that Vance was considering meeting with a senior Iranian security official, a move that would have put Vance at the center of peace negotiations. Reuters has not confirmed the potential talks.

Vance, who is viewed as a leading contender for the 2028 Republican presidential nomination, distanced himself from the war last week after Republicans' midterm election rout by Democrats.

The vice president blamed the costs of the Iran war in part for the party's losses. He also said an earlier recommendation to end the war was "sound advice."

Trump responded to Vance's position by defending the war as necessary to stop Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon.

In his social media post, Trump said he had asked Vance to focus instead on a domestic issue the president previously put in his portfolio: leading an effort targeting alleged fraud in Democratic-run cities and states throughout the US.

"Our Budget could be quickly BALANCED with the correction of this large-scale criminal activity. CORRUPTION is in the Democrat Leadership's blood!" Trump wrote on Thursday.

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