



Operations Epic Fury and Roaring Lion: 4/25/26 – 4/26/26 Update

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The United States, Israel, and Iran reached a two-week ceasefire agreement on April 7, which President Donald Trump extended indefinitely on April 21. JINSA continues to release regular updates about the conflict. The update below includes information since [JINSA's last update](#) as of April 26 at 11:00 am ET.

Days left in U.S.-Israel-Iran ceasefire: **Extended indefinitely**

Days left in Israel-Lebanon ceasefire: **18**, following April 23 three-week extension

Iranian missiles and drones launched since ceasefire: **205** (none on April 25–26)

Hezbollah attacks since ceasefire: At least **24** (at least 6 on April 25–26)

Ships transiting the Strait of Hormuz since ceasefire: **At least 225** (at least 23 on April 25–26)

- Note: The blockade line that the Pentagon announced crosses where the Gulf of Oman opens into the Arabian Sea, beyond the Strait of Hormuz itself.

1. Overview

- President Donald Trump [told](#) Fox News on April 25 that he decided to cancel a scheduled meeting of U.S. and Iranian negotiators in Pakistan over the weekend.
 - » President Trump, in the Fox News interview, [stated](#) that the United States has “all the cards,” and that Iran’s leaders “can call us anytime they want, but [we’re] not going to be making any more 18-hour flights to sit around talking about nothing.”
 - » In a Truth Social [post](#) that day, the president also cited “tremendous infighting and confusion within [Iran’s] ‘leadership.’ Nobody knows who is in charge, including them.”
- A total of 37 vessels have been redirected away from the U.S. blockade line since it went into effect on April 13, U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) [announced](#) on April 25.
- On April 25, U.S. forces [intercepted](#) the M/V *Sevan* ship, involved in transporting Iranian energy products, in the Arabian Sea. The U.S. Treasury Department had sanctioned the *Sevan* on April 24.
- International shipping through the Strait of Hormuz has increased steadily in recent days, according to JINSA-reviewed data from the Kpler analytics firm.
 - » However, according to JINSA’s analysis of Kpler shipping data, at least one vessel that left an Iranian port this week crossed the blockade line on April 26.

- » That ship, the Marshall Islands-flagged bulk carrier *Ascanio*, is seemingly en route to South America.
- On April 24, the Treasury Department [sanctioned](#) a Chinese oil refinery and around 40 shipping companies and vessels for supporting Iranian shadow fleets and transporting Iranian oil. According to a [press release](#), “since February 2025, [the Treasury Department] has sanctioned over 1,000 Iran-related persons, vessels, and aircraft.”
- On April 26, *Axios* [reported](#), citing U.S. and Israeli officials, that early in the Iran war, Israel provided the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.) with an Iron Dome battery and Israeli troops to help operate the air defense system.
- 11-year-old Israeli girl Nesiah Karadi [passed away](#) on April 24, succumbing to wounds she sustained in an April 3 Iranian ballistic missile attack. Karadi’s death marks the youngest Israeli fatality thus far in the war.
- Hezbollah conducted several attacks against Israel over the past 48 hours, including at least [three](#) drone launches and [two](#) rocket launches. In addition, Hezbollah [launched](#) drones at Israeli forces stationed inside Israel’s security perimeter in southern Lebanon.
- In response, on April 25, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu [ordered](#) Israel’s military to strike Hezbollah, according to a statement from his office.

2. Diplomatic Engagement

Iran

- On April 25, President Trump [cancelled](#) U.S. Special Envoy Steve Witkoff and White House advisor Jared Kushner’s planned trip to Islamabad, Pakistan, later that day, where they planned to meet with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi. President Trump cited Tehran’s negotiating posture as the cause for the cancellation.
 - » Araghchi had [visited](#) Islamabad earlier that day, with the Iranian negotiating team meeting with Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir.
 - Iran’s Foreign Ministry Spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei [posted](#) on X that “No meeting is planned to take place between Iran and the U.S.,” adding that “Iran’s observations would be conveyed to Pakistan.”
 - White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt previously [noted](#) on April 24, “The Iranians want to talk. They want to talk in person.”
 - At the end of the visit, Araghchi [posted](#) on X that he had “Shared Iran’s position concerning workable framework to permanently end the war on Iran.” Araghchi added that he has “yet to see if the U.S. is truly serious about diplomacy.”
 - A spokesman for Iran’s defense ministry [stated](#) that Washington “is looking for a face-saving way to escape the war quagmire it has become trapped in.”
 - » Regarding his decision to cancel the trip, President Trump [told](#) *Axios*, “I see no point of sending them on an 18-hour flight in the current situation [of the negotiations]. It’s too long. We can do it just as well by telephone. The Iranians can call us if they want.”
 - » He also [remarked](#) that “We have all the cards. We are not going to go there to sit around talking about nothing.”
 - » In a Truth Social post in which President Trump announced that the trip had been cancelled, he [added](#) that “there is tremendous infighting and confusion within their ‘leadership’. Nobody knows who is in charge, including them.”
 - » Responding to a question about whether the cancellation of Witkoff and Kushner’s visit means that the war will restart, President Trump [stated](#), “No. It doesn’t mean that. We haven’t thought about it yet.”

- » President Trump later [shared](#) that Witkoff and Kushner would not have met with Araghchi until Tuesday, April 28. He added, the Iranians “gave us a paper that should have been better and interestingly the minute I cancelled [Kushner and Witkoff’s trip], within 10 minutes, we got a new paper that was much better ... they offered a lot but not enough.”
- Iran’s state-run news agency IRNA shared on April 25 that Araghchi will [return](#) to Islamabad after a brief trip to Oman. He is expected to [arrive](#) in Pakistan later today.
 - » Two Pakistani officials [told](#) the Associated Press on April 26 that indirect U.S.-Iran talks mediated by Pakistan are ongoing.
- In a call on April 26 with Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian [remarked](#) that Iran will not participate in “imposed negotiations” under the U.S. naval blockade or threats.
 - » He [added](#), “Our clear recommendation to the United States is that, in order to create the conditions for resolving issues, it must first remove operational obstacles, including the blockade.”

Lebanon

- On April 24, in his first public remarks following President Trump’s announcement of a three-week ceasefire extension in Lebanon, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu [stated](#), “We have begun a process to achieve a historic peace between Israel and Lebanon, and it is clear to us that Hezbollah is trying to sabotage this.”
 - » He added, “We are maintaining full freedom of action against any threat, including emerging threats. We struck yesterday and we struck today. We are determined to restore security to the residents of the north.”

3. U.S. and Israeli Operations

- On April 24, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent [announced](#) on X that the United States sanctioned “multiple wallets tied to Iran—resulting in the freeze of \$344 million in cryptocurrency.”
 - » That same day, the United States [sanctioned](#) approximately 40 shipping companies and tankers, as well as an oil refinery based in China, for smuggling Iranian oil.
 - » Additionally, Secretary Bessent [stated](#) on April 24 that the United States will not renew the one-time waiver on Iranian oil currently at sea, stating that “We have the blockade, and there’s no oil coming out,” and that “we think in the next two, three days, they’re going to have to start shuttering production, which will be very bad for their wells.”
- Barak Ravid of *Axios* [reported](#) on April 26 that the U.A.E. received an Iron Dome battery with Israeli troops to operate the system early on in the Iran war, marking the first time that the air defense system has been deployed outside the United States and Israel.
 - » According to *Axios*, “the military, security and intelligence cooperation between Israel and the U.A.E. has reached new heights during the war.”
 - » JINSA Distinguished Fellow Gen Charles Wald, USAF (ret.), recently [told](#) Fox News the war could yield a “grand alliance in the region with the [Gulf countries] and Israel, not just politically, but militarily. I think we’re going to go down that path.”
- On April 25, Israel’s *Channel 12* [reported](#) that the Israeli government rejected multiple opportunities to bolster funding to acquire interceptor missiles despite several Iranian missile attacks in recent years.
- Prime Minister Netanyahu [remarked](#) on April 24 that President Trump “is putting very strong pressure on Iran, both economically and militarily,” adding that “We are operating in full cooperation.”

- In a public statement released on April 21, Reed Rubinstein, the State Department’s Legal Advisor, [shared](#) a legal justification for Operation Epic Fury, noting that “the United States is acting well within the recognized contours of international law relating to the use of force and self-defense.”
 - » He added, “This legal assessment is grounded in facts demonstrating Iran’s malign aggression over decades, particularly in Iran’s escalatory attacks against the United States, Israel, and others in the region for years, which precipitated an international armed conflict that predated U.S. combat operations on February 28 and that continues to this day.”
 - » Rubinstein also stated that the United States “is engaged in this conflict at the request of and in the collective self-defense of its Israeli ally, as well as in the exercise of the United States’ own inherent right of self-defense.”

Lebanon

- On April 26, addressing recent Hezbollah action, Prime Minister Netanyahu [stated](#) that “It must be understood that Hezbollah’s violations are, in practice, dismantling the ceasefire,” and that Israel is “acting vigorously in accordance with arrangements agreed with the United States and, incidentally, also with Lebanon.”
 - » He added that “This means freedom of action not only to respond to attacks, which is obvious, but also to preempt immediate threats and even emerging threats.”
- On April 26, soon after the Israeli military [issued](#) evacuation warnings for the towns of Mayfadoun, Shoukine, Yohmar, Arnoun, Zawtar al-Sharqiyah, and Kfar Tebnit in southern Lebanon, Lebanese media reported strikes in the region.
- On April 25, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) [bombed](#) several Hezbollah buildings in southern Lebanon after the group launched attacks on Israeli targets.
 - » In some incidents, the IDF [struck](#) buildings in the Israeli-held security zone, including Radwan Force strongholds and weapons storage sites.
- In the April 25 strikes on southern Lebanon, the Israeli military also [killed](#) several Hezbollah fighters.
 - » North of the Israeli-held security zone in the town of Yohmor, the IDF eliminated three armed operatives inside a pickup truck.
 - » Inside the security zone, the IDF struck a Hezbollah motorcyclist.
 - » Inside the security zone, Israeli forces carried out an airstrike on two armed Hezbollah fighters.
- According to Lebanese media, the IDF also [struck](#) a target in Haddatha in southern Lebanon, which is outside the security zone, on April 25.
- On April 25, the IDF [launched](#) an investigation after videos emerged of Israeli forces damaging solar panels in Debel in southern Lebanon.
 - » The IDF, responding to questions from *The Times of Israel*, stated that “The actions seen in the video do not align with the values of the IDF and the conduct expected of its soldiers.”
- Overnight between April 24 and 25, the Israeli Air Force (IAF) [bombed](#) rocket launchers used by Hezbollah operatives in the towns of Deir ez-Zahrani, Kfar Reman, and Sammaaiyeh north of the security zone in southern Lebanon.
- On April 24, the Israeli military [bombed](#) several buildings in the area of Deir Aames in southern Lebanon after Hezbollah fired rockets from the facilities at Shtula in northern Israel.

- On April 24, Israeli forces [killed](#) six Hezbollah operatives in Bint Jbeil, including two in a fire-fight and four others in a building strike.
- On April 24, IDF Chief of Staff Lt Gen Eyal Zamir [called](#) for Israel's military police to investigate IDF looting accusations and to reinforce troops along the border to inspect vehicles traveling back into northern Israel from Lebanon for stolen goods.

4. Strait of Hormuz Shipping and Blockade Status

- CENTCOM [stated](#) on April 25 that 37 vessels in total—an increase of three vessels from JINSA's last update on April 24—had complied with U.S. orders to turn back toward Iranian ports since the U.S. blockade took effect.
- On April 25, a U.S. Navy helicopter [intercepted](#) the M/V *Sevan*, a vessel the United States [sanctioned](#) the day prior for carrying Iranian energy products, in the Arabian Sea.
- The Marshall Islands-flagged bulk carrier vessel *Ascanio*, which left Iran's port of Bandar Imam Khomeini on April 20, appeared to bypass the U.S. blockade line on April 26, JINSA-reviewed data from the Kpler analytics firm indicated.
 - » The *Ascanio* did not log its exact destination, but the ship's Automatic Identification System indicated that it is en route to South America. It was last tracked heading south in the Arabian Sea.
- German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius [stated](#) on April 25 that Germany is sending a mine-sweeper to the Mediterranean Sea, in advance of potentially sending it to clear mines in the Strait of Hormuz.
 - » However, Pistorius noted that deploying the ship in the Strait of Hormuz requires a vote by the German parliament, which has not yet taken place.
- Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan [said](#) on April 25 that Turkey is open to contributing to mine-clearance efforts in the Strait of Hormuz once a U.S.-Iran agreement is in effect.

5. Iranian and Proxy Operations

Lebanon

- On April 26, the IAF [intercepted](#) an alleged Hezbollah drone flying near troops in southern Lebanon.
- On April 26, Hezbollah [claimed](#) responsibility for two attacks on Israeli soldiers stationed in Taybeh.
- On April 25, Hezbollah fired a number of rockets and drones from Lebanon toward Israel.
 - » Hezbollah [launched](#) three drones toward the Western Galilee region that were intercepted by the IAF before crossing into Israel.
 - » Hezbollah [fired](#) two rockets into northern Israel, with one rocket intercepted by the IDF and the second hitting an open area. No casualties were reported.
 - » A suspected Hezbollah drone was [intercepted](#) by the IDF over the Western Galilee region. No casualties were reported.
 - » A second suspected Hezbollah drone, which activated sirens in the northern Israel community of Malkia, [crashed](#) in an unspecified location without causing injuries.
- Also on April 25, Hezbollah launched projectiles at IDF troops in southern Lebanon.
 - » Hezbollah [fired](#) two explosive-laden drones at IDF positions that landed in open areas and did not cause any casualties.

- » In a separate incident, a suspected Hezbollah drone was [shot down](#) by the IDF while flying near a position held by Israeli troops.
- On April 24, Hezbollah [deployed](#) an unspecified number of explosive-laden drones against IDF positions in southern Lebanon, with the IDF stating the drones landed near troop positions but did not cause casualties.
- On April 24, Hezbollah [stated](#) it hit an IDF vehicle in Qantara, with the IDF not immediately addressing the claim.
- On April 24, Hezbollah [shot down](#) an IDF drone with a surface-to-air missile in southern Lebanon.

Iraq

- The Kurdistan Regional Government [reported](#) on April 26 that the region sustained 809 drone and missile attacks between February 28 and April 20, resulting in the deaths of 20 civilians.

Internal Dynamics and Repression

- On April 25, Iranian President Pezeshkian [urged](#) Iran's citizens to use less electricity, stating that the regime is seeking to "control consumption." Pezeshkian said, "Instead of turning on 10 lights at home, turn on two lights. What is wrong with that?"
- The Iranian regime [executed](#) Erfan Kiani on April 25, accusing him of violence and vandalism during January's anti-regime protests. Iran's state-run Tasnim News Agency alleged that Kiani was working on behalf of Israel's Mossad intelligence agency.
- On April 25, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) [claimed](#) to have broken up several Kurdish opposition networks near Iran's western border that it said were laying the groundwork for a foreign-backed military incursion, according to Iran's Tasnim news agency.
 - » Operations in Iran's Kurdistan and Kermanshah provinces resulted in the arrest of more than 380 individuals, the killing of one person, and the seizure of weapons caches.

6. Estimated Casualties of Iranian Operations

- Thirteen U.S. service members have died during Operation Epic Fury.
 - » An Iranian drone attack [killed](#) six U.S. servicemembers at Port Shuaiba in Kuwait on March 1: Maj. Jeffrey O'Brien, 45; Chief Warrant Officer 3 Robert Marzan, 54; Capt. Cody Khork, 35; Sgt. 1st Class Nicole Amor, 39; Sgt. 1st Class Noah Tietjens, 42; and Sgt. Declan Coady (posthumously promoted from specialist), 20.
 - » A U.S. servicemember, Sgt. Benjamin Pennington, 26, was [killed](#) in a March 8 Iranian attack targeting U.S. troops at the Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia.
 - » Six U.S. servicemembers were [killed](#) when a KC-135 aerial refueling aircraft crashed over western Iraq on March 12: Major John A. Klinner, 33; Captain Ariana G. Savino, 31; Technical Sergeant Ashley B. Pruitt, 34; Captain Seth R. Koval, 38; Captain Curtis J. Angst, 30; and Technical Sergeant Tyler H. Simmons, 28.
- At least 400 members of the U.S. military have been [injured](#) thus far in the war.
 - » Ten have been seriously [wounded](#), and at least 354 of the injured have reportedly returned to duty.
 - » At least 15 Americans were [hurt](#) in an Iranian drone strike on Ali Al Salem Air Base in Kuwait on April 6, most of whom were lightly injured.
 - » In the March 27 Iranian attack on a U.S. base in Saudi Arabia, at least 15 U.S. servicemembers were [injured](#), including two who were seriously wounded.

- Since the war began, [at least 47 people have been killed in Israel](#), while over 7,794 have been [injured](#). [15 of these casualties](#) include Israeli soldiers who have been killed while fighting Hezbollah in southern Lebanon.
 - » 11-year-old Nesiah Karadi, from Israel's Bnei Brak city, [died](#) on April 24 from wounds sustained in an Iranian missile attack earlier this month.
- Since the war's outbreak, numerous other casualties have been reported:
 - » Iran: Through April 7, at least 3,636 people, including at least 1,221 military personnel, have been [killed](#), with at least 26,500 [wounded](#). *Iran International* reports that over 4,700 security personnel have been [killed](#), including members of the Basij, IRGC, and police forces.
 - » Azerbaijan: Four civilians have been [injured](#).
 - » Bahrain: Three people have [been killed](#), including a [Moroccan contractor](#), and at least 46 people [have been injured](#), including five [Emirati soldiers](#).
 - » Iraq: At least 119 people have been [killed](#), including 20 [people](#) in Iraqi Kurdistan.
 - » Jordan: At least 31 people have [been injured](#).
 - » Kuwait: Two [Kuwaiti navy sailors](#), two [Kuwaiti interior ministry officers](#), two [Kuwaiti civilians](#), and an [Indian national](#) have been killed; over 90 Kuwaiti military [personnel have been injured](#), and eight [civilians](#), including two [medical staff](#), have been wounded.
 - » Lebanon: At least 2,496 people have been [killed](#), and nearly 7,725 have been [wounded](#)—figures that do not distinguish between Hezbollah operatives and civilians.
 - » Oman: At least [three people](#) have been killed, and at least 15 have been [wounded](#).
 - » Qatar: Around 20 people have been [wounded](#), and seven were [killed](#) on March 22 in a helicopter crash in Qatari territorial waters due to a technical issue.
 - » Saudi Arabia: Three people have been killed, including a Saudi [national](#) and two [foreign nationals](#), and at least 23 others [have been injured](#).
 - » Syria: At least four people have been [killed](#) in Syria, and several others have been [injured](#).
 - » U.A.E.: 13 people have been [killed](#), and at least 224 have been [injured](#).

7. Threats and Condemnation from Iranian Officials

- In a statement shared by Iran's state-run broadcaster IRIB on April 25, the Khatam Al-Anbiya Central Headquarters [remarked](#) that if "the invading US military continues blockading, banditry, and piracy in the region, they should be certain that they will face a response from Iran's powerful armed forces."

8. International Response

- Following a leadership meeting of the European Union (EU) on April 24, António Costa, President of the European Council, [remarked](#) that it is too soon to discuss lifting sanctions on Tehran.
 - » German Chancellor Friedrich Merz noted that EU leaders were amenable to gradual sanctions relief provided that a comprehensive agreement is achieved.
- On April 24, an official from the U.S. Department of State [confirmed](#) the release and departure of American-Kuwaiti journalist Ahmed Shihab-Eldin, who was detained by Kuwaiti authorities due to his online posts depicting the war.

9. JINSA Resources

- Hussein Mansour, [The Emirati Moment: The U.A.E.'s Strategic Cycle and the Iran War](#), April 24, 2026
- Michael Makovsky, PhD, and Blaise Misztal, [In Defense of the War, And How to Finish It](#), April 17, 2026
- Blaise Misztal and Yoni Tobin, [Lebanon Ceasefire Cannot Become Iranian Leverage](#), April 17, 2026
- Rena Gabber and Jonah Brody, [Epic Fury Reveals Vulnerabilities in the Axis Behind Iran](#), April 16, 2026
- Jonathan Ruhe and Yoni Tobin, [Blockade Iran's Military, Not Just Its Export Revenue](#), April 15, 2026
- Jonathan Ruhe and Ari Cicurel, [Operation Epic Fury: A Work in Progress](#), April 10, 2026
- Michael Makovsky, PhD, and Jonathan Ruhe, [Iran's Next Move Is the Bomb—If the Regime Survives](#), *RealClearDefense*, April 9, 2026
- Jonathan Ruhe, [Trump Risks Losing the Plot—and the War—in Iran](#), *The Dispatch*, April 7, 2026
- Ari Cicurel, [Finishing the Job: Targeting Iran's Repression Machine](#), April 7, 2026
- Jonah Brody, [Greece and Cyprus in the War Against Iran](#), April 6, 2026
- JINSA Iran Policy Project, [End States, Not End Dates: Defining Success for Operation Epic Fury](#), April 1, 2026
- Blaise Misztal, [How This War Will End, If It Ends Now](#), April 1, 2026
- Meriem Mokhtari, [The Triple Betrayal: Operation Epic Fury, The Gulf's Public Discourse, and U.S. Stakes](#), March 31
- Jonathan Ruhe, [Strengthening U.S. Force Posture at Israeli Bases](#), March 31, 2026
- Yoni Tobin and Sarah Havdala, [From the Ceasefire's Ashes: War Returns to Israel's Northern Front](#), March 30, 2026
- Svante E. Cornell, [Turkey on Iran: Gains, Risks, and Strategic Restraint](#), March 30, 2026
- Hussein Aboubakr Mansour, [If Tehran Survives](#), March 27, 2026
- Ari Cicurel, [The Eroding Shield: Air Defense Against Iran](#), March 26, 2026
- Jonah Brody and Rena Gabber, [The Axis Behind Iran: How China, Russia, and North Korea Sustain Tehran's Military Threat](#), March 25, 2026
- Jonathan Ruhe, [Scared Strait: Ending Iran's Threat to Hormuz and the Gulf](#), March 19, 2026
- VADM Herman Shelanski, USN (ret.), IDF MG (ret.) Yaakov Amidror, and Blaise Misztal, [Webinar - Iran's Threat to Global Shipping: What Can Be Done?](#) March 19, 2026
- Giran Ozcan and Jonah Brody, [Iran's Kurdish Coalition and the Future of the Opposition](#), March 18, 2026
- Hussein Mansour, [If Tehran Falls: How Iran's Collapse Reshuffles Arab Gulf Relations](#), March 16
- Infographic: [Operation Epic Fury—What is the Aim Point?](#), March 13, 2026