



## Operations Epic Fury and Roaring Lion: 5/12/26 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 May 12 at 10:00 am ET.

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

Days left in Israel-Lebanon ceasefire: **2**, following April 23 three-week extension

Iranian missiles and drones launched since ceasefire: **270** (0 on May 12)

Hezbollah attacks since ceasefire: **At least 87** (at least 4 on May 11–12)

Ships transiting Strait of Hormuz since ceasefire: **At least 325** (at least 3 on May 11–12)

- Note: Many of these ships are local fast boats, tugboats, or landing craft, not commercial vessels. Numerous ships in the area are also transmitting false locations.

Total blockade-eligible ships disabled or rerouted by U.S. forces: **At least 69** (At least 4 on May 11–12)

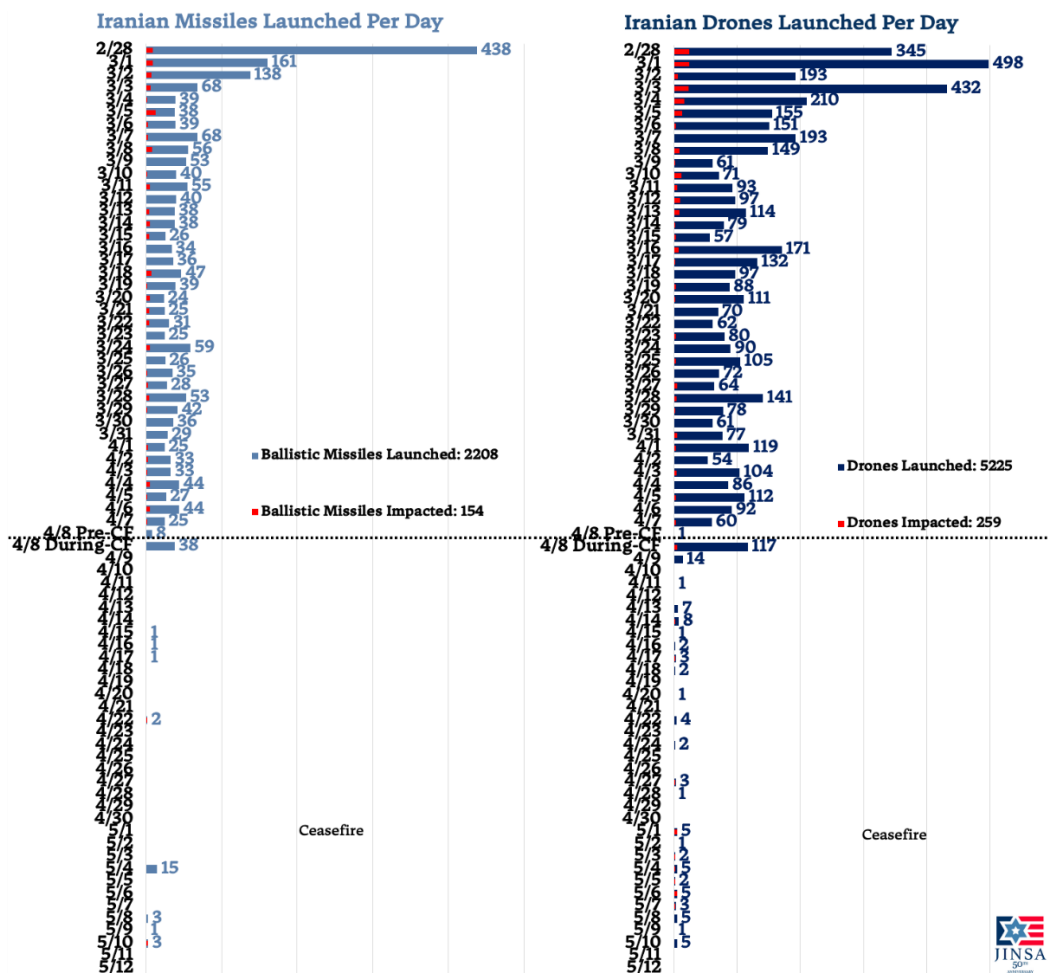
Total blockade-eligible ships that [evaded the blockade](#): **At least 23** (None between May 11-12)

- 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. Some of the ships that evaded the blockade are small vessels with limited utility to the Iranian regime.

### 1. Overview

- President Donald Trump will [travel](#) to Beijing, China, on May 12 for talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping. The two leaders are expected to discuss Iran and the situation in the Strait of Hormuz, among other topics.
- The war in Iran has [cost](#) the United States \$29 billion to date—a \$4 billion increase from the \$25 billion estimate provided on April 29—Pentagon Comptroller Jules Hurst testified before Congress on May 12.
- On May 11, President Trump [told](#) reporters that the U.S.-Iran ceasefire is “unbelievably weak” and on “life support.”
  - » He also [claimed](#) in a Fox News interview that the regime in Tehran is “going to fold” in negotiations.
- President Trump also [told](#) Fox News on May 11 that he is contemplating resuming Project Freedom, the U.S. effort to ensure freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz—though he added that a renewal of Project Freedom would “only be a piece” of a larger operation.

- A total of 65 ships have been [rerouted](#), and four others have been disabled as part of U.S. blockade enforcement since it went into effect on April 13, U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) announced on May 12.
- Commercial shipping activity in the Strait of Hormuz remains minimal. No commercial vessels have crossed the waterway so far on May 12, according to JINSA-reviewed Kpler shipping data.
- The United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.) has secretly conducted strikes against Iran, according to a [report](#) in *The Wall Street Journal* on May 11. While the U.A.E. has not publicly acknowledged striking Iran, the action would mark the first known Arab country participating in offensive combat operations against Iran during the war.
  - » The targets that the U.A.E. struck reportedly included a refinery on Lavan Island in April before the ceasefire.
- CBS News [reported](#) on May 12 that Pakistan has sheltered Iranian military aircraft during the U.S.-Iran ceasefire, citing American officials familiar with the issue.
  - » Just days after the launch of the ceasefire last month, Iran transferred several aircraft to Pakistan's Nur Khan Air Force Base, including the Iranian RC-130 intelligence and reconnaissance aircraft.
- Kuwait indicated that it had [apprehended](#) four people affiliated with the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) who attempted to infiltrate the country by sea.
- Iran has not launched any known projectile attacks over the last 24 hours, but the Houthis were likely responsible for a drone attack against Israel—its first since the ceasefire began—and Israel and Hezbollah continued to exchange fire.



## 2. Diplomatic Engagement

### *Iran*

- President Trump [claimed](#) on May 11 that the Iranians expressed willingness to transfer their highly enriched uranium to the United States—but left this out of their proposal sent on May 10.
  - » He added that Iranian negotiators had shared that only Washington and Beijing have the capabilities to retrieve the uranium stockpile, after it was buried deep underground by U.S. strikes during the 12-Day War.
  - » President Trump noted that the Iranian negotiating team had offered assurances that Tehran would not obtain a nuclear weapon “for a very long period of time,” which was also left out of their proposal submitted over the weekend.

### *Lebanon*

- On May 11, Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam [requested](#) U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon Michel Issa “exert pressure on Israel to stop the ongoing attacks and violations, in order to consolidate the ceasefire.”

## 3. U.S. and Israeli Operations

- On May 12, U.S. Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee [confirmed](#) that Israel sent the U.A.E. batteries for the Iron Dome system and operators, noting that this occurred “Because there’s an extraordinary relationship between the U.A.E. and Israel based on the Abraham Accords.”
- On May 11, the U.S. Treasury Department [sanctioned](#) three individuals and nine companies—including four based in Hong Kong, four in the U.A.E., and one in Oman—for facilitating Iranian oil shipments to China.

### *Iran*

- On May 11, President Trump publicly [blamed](#) Kurdish groups for allegedly keeping weapons the United States had intended for Iranian protesters, saying he was “very disappointed” and that the “Kurds take, take, take,” despite Kurdish political armed forces collectively denying having received any weapons.
  - » Sources [confirmed](#) to *The Jerusalem Post* in a May 11 article that President Trump himself ultimately vetoed a Mossad-proposed plan to facilitate a Kurdish-led uprising against the Iranian regime.
  - » According to the article, top U.S. defense officials opposed the idea from the outset, and Turkey pressed Trump not to proceed.
- The Justice Department [launched](#) investigations into national security leaks related to the Iran war after President Trump privately complained to acting Attorney General Todd Blanche, according to administration officials cited by *The Wall Street Journal* in a March 11 report.
- Blanche vowed to pursue subpoenas targeting reporters’ records, with *The Wall Street Journal* itself among the outlets that received grand jury subpoenas related to its coverage of the war.

### *Lebanon*

- On May 12, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) [announced](#) that the Golani Brigade’s Reconnaissance Unit and other troops recently carried out a week-long operation on the outer edge of Zawtar al-Sharqiyah in southern Lebanon, achieving “operational control.”

- » Crossing the Litani River but staying within the IDF's "Yellow Line," Israeli forces eliminated several Hezbollah fighters in the area and discovered several rocket launchers, tunnels, and weapon depots.
- » Supporting the ground troops, the Israeli Air Force (IAF) bombed more than 100 sites in the region.
- » Israeli troops were lightly wounded during the operation, and a military dog in Israel's Oketz canine unit died after Hezbollah fighters attempted to ambush the soldiers.
- On May 12, the IDF [assessed](#) that a Hezbollah drone likely crashed after Israeli forces fired an interceptor at it as the vehicle flew near troops operating in southern Lebanon.
- On May 11, the IDF [bombed](#) at least 45 Hezbollah sites in southern Lebanon, targeting 10 weapon depots, surveillance positions, command posts, and other staging facilities.
- On May 11, Israeli forces [killed](#) a Hezbollah cell responsible for launching rockets at Israeli troops in southern Lebanon while the fighters were transporting a rocket launcher on a truck.

#### 4. Strait of Hormuz Shipping and Blockade Status

- CENTCOM [announced](#) on May 12 that 65 vessels in total—an increase of four vessels from JINSA's last update—have complied with U.S. orders to turn back toward Iranian ports since the U.S. naval blockade took effect, and that another four vessels have been disabled as part of CENTCOM blockade enforcement operations.

#### 5. Iranian and Proxy Operations

##### *Lebanon*

- On May 12, Hezbollah [targeted](#) an Israeli military drone in southern Lebanon with a surface-to-air missile.
  - » Hezbollah's attempted interception failed without casualties or damage to the drone, with the IAF subsequently striking a person who drove off from the launch site on a motorcycle.
- On May 12, Hezbollah [fired](#) several explosive-laden drones at Israeli soldiers without causing injuries.
  - » In another incident, the IAF intercepted numerous Hezbollah drones flying near Israeli troops in southern Lebanon.
- Overnight on May 12, Hezbollah [launched](#) a rocket attack on Israeli troops operating in southern Lebanon, with the rockets crashing into open areas without causing injuries.

##### *Kuwait*

- On May 12, the Kuwaiti Ministry of Interior [announced](#) the arrest of four IRGC-affiliated individuals who attempted to enter the country by sea, with one Kuwaiti soldier wounded during the apprehension.

##### *Yemen*

- On May 12, the IAF [intercepted](#) a drone near Eilat that appeared to come from the direction of Yemen, with the IDF investigating whether the Iran-backed Houthis fired the projectile.

##### *Internal Repression and Repression*

- On May 12, Iranian authorities [executed](#) Abdoljalil Shahbakhsh, a suspected member of the armed Ansar al-Furqan Baloch group, charging him with rebelling against Iranian security forces and participating in a terrorist organization.

## 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 48 people have been killed in Israel](#), while over 7,795 have been [injured](#). At least 18 of these [casualties](#) include Israeli soldiers who have been killed while fighting Hezbollah in southern Lebanon.
- Since the war's outbreak, numerous other casualties have been reported:
  - » Iran: 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 2,869 people have been [killed](#), and nearly 8,693 have been wounded—figures that do not distinguish between Hezbollah operatives and civilians.
  - » Oman: At least [three people](#) have been killed, and at least 17 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 230 have been injured.

## 7. Threats, Condemnations, and Statements from Iranian Officials

- Ahead of the diplomatic talks set to take place between Israeli and Lebanese representatives later this week, Hezbollah Secretary General Naim Qassem [wrote](#) in a May 12 statement that, “Nobody outside Lebanon has anything to do with the weapons, the resistance ... this is an internal Lebanese matter and not part of negotiations with the enemy.”
  - » He added, “We will not surrender and we will continue to defend Lebanon and its people, however long it takes and however great the sacrifices ... we will not abandon the battlefield and we will turn it into hell for Israel.”
- On May 12, the Iranian Parliament’s spokesperson for the National Security and Foreign Policy Commission, Ebrahim Rezaei, [wrote](#) of Iran’s uranium enrichment capacity on X, threatening, “One of Iran’s options in the event of another attack could be 90 percent enrichment.”
- On May 12, Deputy Political Director of the IRGC Navy Mohammad Akbarzadeh [noted](#) that Iran has adopted an expanded definition of the Strait of Hormuz that encompasses a “vast operational area.”
  - » Akbarzadeh noted, “In the past, the Strait of Hormuz was defined as a limited area around islands such as Hormuz and Hengam, but today this view has changed.”
- Ahead of diplomatic talks between Presidents Trump and Xi later this week, Iranian Ambassador to China Rahmani Fazli [posted](#) on X, “The ties between Iran and China ... are stronger than that for America to be able to change Beijing’s positions toward Tehran by pressuring China.”
- In a May 11 post on X, Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf [threatened](#), “Our armed forces are ready to deliver a well-deserved response to any aggression.” He added, “We are prepared for all options; they will be surprised.”
  - » In a separate post on X, Ghalibaf [wrote](#), “There is no alternative but to accept the rights of the Iranian people as laid out in the 14-point proposal. Any other approach will be completely inconclusive; nothing but one failure after another.”

## 8. International Response

- Following reports that Pakistan has sheltered Iranian military aircraft, the Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs [confirmed](#) on May 12 that Iranian aircraft had been transported to Pakistan during the ceasefire but noted that they “bear no linkage whatsoever to any military contingency or preservation arrangement.”
  - » The Ministry of Foreign Affairs claimed that the Iranian aircraft were moved to Pakistan to assist with transporting diplomatic and security personnel should negotiations resume.
- On May 12, a court in Bahrain [handed a woman a life sentence](#) for maintaining contact with the IRGC and seeking to help Iranian forces attack Bahrain.
  - » According to the prosecution, the woman posted photos and coordinates of Bahraini sites on her social media as potential attack targets.
- Ukrainian ambassador to Israel Yevgen Korniychuk [noted](#) on May 11 in an interview with Israel’s Ynet news outlet that “We don’t see much interest or appetite from the Israeli leadership” on taking advantage of Ukraine’s experience in drone warfare.
  - » He noted, “I often hear frustration about the fact that Israel is missing an opportunity to save more lives of its soldiers.”

## 9. JINSA Resources

- Gen Charles Wald, USAF (ret.), VADM Mark Fox, USN (ret.), VADM Robert Harward, USN (ret.), LTG Karen Gibson, USA (ret.), VADM John Miller, USN (ret.), VADM John Bird, USN (ret.), Blaise Misztal, Jonathan Ruhe, and Ari Cicurel, [Epic Fury II: Securing U.S. Objectives in Iran](#), May 8, 2026
- Michael Makovsky, PhD, and Blaise Misztal, "[The U.S. Blockade of Iran Is a Means, Not an End](#)," *The National Interest*, May 8, 2026
- Yoni Tobin, [Blockade Evasion Update - 5/8](#), May 8, 2026
- Giran Ozcan, [Iranian Attacks on Iraqi Kurdistan Threaten a Vital U.S. Partnership](#), May 7, 2026
- Yoni Tobin, [Turning Tides: U.S. Blockade Enforcement Exceeds Iranian Evasion](#), May 1, 2026
- Hussein Aboubakr Mansour, [The UAE's OPEC Exit: Strategic Implications for the Gulf Order](#), April 29, 2026
- Ari Cicurel, [Iron Dome Deployment to U.A.E. Showed Abraham Accords Defense Potential](#), April 28, 2026
- Michael Makovsky, PhD, and Blaise Misztal, [The Iranian People: America's Most Powerful Weapon](#), April 26, 2026
- 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