US NAVAL BLOCKADE 'DOOMED TO FAIL' – IRAN LEADER

TEHRAN

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian says a US naval blockade on Iranian ports would deepen disruptions in the Gulf and would fail to achieve its targets.

"Any attempt to impose a maritime blockade or restrictions is contrary to international law... and is doomed to fail," Pezeshkian said in a statement on Thursday.

He added that such measures would "not only fail to enhance regional security but are in fact a source of tension and a disruption to lasting stability in the Persian Gulf".

The US imposed a naval blockade on Iran's ports and coasts on April 13, days after a ceasefire paused the war with Iran.

Iran's military has kept shut the strategic Strait of Hormuz, a vital conduit for global oil and gas shipments, and recently threatened to "respond" if the US blockade continued.

On Wednesday, the military adviser to Iran's supreme leader, Mojtaba Khamenei, reiterated the warning, without elaborating.

"We will not tolerate the naval blockade. If it continues, Iran will respond," Mohsen Rezaei, a former commander-in-chief of Iran's Revolutionary Guards who was named as a military adviser by Khamenei in March, told state TV.



Iranian President Pezeshkian

He also warned against a new round of fighting between the US and Iran, saying it could see US ships sunk and "its soldiers will be killed".

"If the US starts another war, it should expect that we take a large number of them prisoner," he added.

Oil minister Mohsen Paknejad said the US "will not gain any results" from its blockade, dismissing any concerns over oil supply and distribution.

"Oil industry employees are working around the clock to ensure that there is no problem in providing services," he told state TV.

Also on Wednesday, Iran's army navy commander, Shahram Irani, signalled that Iran will deploy naval weaponry which it has recently developed "in the very near future".

Pezeshkian's statement came a day after reports indicated that US President Donald Trump is eyeing an Iran blockade to last "months if needed".

Trump, speaking to US news website Axios, said the "blockade is somewhat more effective than the bombing".

"They are choking like a stuffed pig. And it is going to be worse for them. They can't have a nuclear weapon," he told the digital news outlet.

The US and Israel launched a massive air campaign against Iran's military and leadership on February 28. Trump has indefinitely extended what was an initial two-week ceasefire that brought a halt to the fighting, but the conflict — and its widespread economic fallout — remains unresolved.

AFP

SH93 TRILLION SPENT SO FAR

The war against Iran has cost the US military $25b (about sh93 trillion) since it was launched in late February, a senior Pentagon official said on Wednesday.

"We're spending about $25b on Operation Epic Fury. Most of that is in munitions," acting Pentagon comptroller Jules Hurst told lawmakers, using the official name for the US operation.

US defence secretary Pete Hegseth later told the same congressional hearing that the estimated figure was less than $25b.

The Pentagon chief pushed back against questions about the war's cost, saying: "The question I would ask this committee is: What is it worth to ensure that Iran never gets a nuclear weapon?"



US secretary of defence Hegseth



US President Trump