

U.S. & WORLD

Classifieds

World races to protect oil flows as Trump hints at war's end

BY ARSALAN SHAHLA, NAYLA RAZZOUK AND ELLEN MILLIGAN
Bloomberg News
(TNS)

The U.S. and Israel's war on Iran forced world governments to intervene to shore up energy supplies, even as President Donald Trump once again said fighting will end soon.

The International Energy Agency approved its largest-ever release of emergency oil reserves on Wednesday, a move to curb surging oil prices while a critical waterway remains effectively closed.

The Strait of Hormuz has been all but impassable since the opening salvos of the war, which continued for a 12th day with missiles and drones fired from both sides. Several energy giants have curbed production.

Trump told Axios the war would end soon because there is "practically nothing left to target" in Iran, the latest indication he's keen to wrap up the campaign. He made similar comments on Monday, however, before Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said there was no timeline in the pursuit of the Islamic Republic's total defeat.

The IEA agreed to discharge 400 million barrels from emergency oil reserves, more than double the 182 million barrels member countries released after Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022. Global crude consumption is slightly more than 100 million barrels a day and Gulf producers have had to cut roughly 6% of that so far.

The move came after the U.K. Navy said three vessels were hit with suspected projectiles in the Strait of Hormuz and the Persian Gulf, underlining the ongoing threat to shipping from the conflict. Oman reported that a Thai-flagged cargo vessel was also targeted.

Brent soared to almost \$120 a barrel at the start of the week, though has since pared gains to around \$90. It remains around 50% higher year-to-date.

Iran staged more strikes against Israel, the United Arab Emirates, and other Gulf countries on Wednesday.

Dubai International Airport briefly halted operations after drones struck the facility, resulting in four injuries at the world's busiest international hub.

"The policy of reciprocal strikes has ended; from now on, our policy will be strike after strike," Iran's semi-official Fars news agency cited a military spokesman as saying.

The U.S. and Israel continued to hit targets in the Islamic Republic. Israel's defense minister, Israel Katz, said the campaign will continue until "victory is achieved." While the U.S. and Israel remain publicly united and their militaries are working in tandem, officials have acknowledged that a prolonged campaign may start to drive a wedge between Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

The total number of deaths reported since the war began has exceeded 2,380, with Iran and Lebanon accounting for the vast majority of fatalities. The U.S. was responsible for a deadly missile strike on an Iranian school in the first days of the war, the New York Times reported, citing preliminary findings on an ongoing military investigation. Iran has said 175 people were killed in the attack.

U.S. officials say Iran's attacks are down more than 80%, though Washington's own war effort is showing unexpected signs of strain because of the Iranian resilience. Tehran is still hitting valuable military installations and energy infrastructure daily, while its ability to block the Strait of Hormuz remains a key advantage.

Iran's regime is showing little sign of collapse and isn't yet willing to engage in diplomatic talks, according to a senior European official.

Trump's administration on Tuesday delivered a series of rapidly shifting comments over the direction of the war, causing energy prices to whipsaw. That included various messages from the U.S. leader about the possibility of Iran placing mines in the Strait of Hormuz.

Saudi Arabia, Iraq, the UAE and Kuwait have all cut production because of Hormuz's de facto closure.

Saudi Aramco Chief Executive Officer Amin Nasser warned the impact on global petroleum markets could be "catastrophic."

Group of Seven leaders were scheduled to convene Wednesday to discuss the crisis in Iran and its ramifications for the world economy, with traders now widely expecting central banks to have to slow their pace of interest-rate cuts.

Any attempt by the U.S. and Israel to dislodge Iran's conservative clerics and the well armed and funded Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps will be a formidable task. The Guards — which are separate from the regular military — has around 200,000 active troops and another 600,000 volunteers, including the Basij paramilitary militia, U.S. assessments show.

At least 1,787 Iranians have been killed in the war so far, according to the Human Rights Activists News Agency.

Mojtaba Khamenei was named Iran's supreme leader after his father, Ali Khamenei, was killed in the initial wave of strikes. Iranian state television has reported that the younger Khamenei had been injured, but the semi-official Iranian Students' News Agency cited Yousef Pezeshkian, a son and adviser of Iran's president, as saying he'd been told he was in good health.

At least seven U.S. service members have died, most of them in the first two days of fighting. There have been several deaths in Gulf countries and Israel.

Israeli forces maintained attacks on southern Lebanon, aiming to degrade Iran-aligned Hezbollah. Some 570 people have been killed in Lebanon and 1,444 injured, according to the nation's health ministry. Two Israeli soldiers were killed in the Lebanese operations.

Trump pledged during his election campaign not to allow the U.S. to become embroiled in protracted foreign wars, and there's a risk that more American casualties and sustained high gasoline prices will weigh on Republicans' chances in November midterm elections.

Missouri House passes new bill that mirrors struck-down 'Let Politicians Lie Act'

BY JACK HARVEL
The Kansas City Star
(TNS)

The Missouri House passed a bill on Wednesday giving top state officials more power to rewrite ballot measures less than two months after the Missouri Supreme Court struck down a similar law.

The bill is essentially a copy of last year's Senate Bill 22, which critics dubbed the "let politicians lie act." It will now head to the Senate.

The two notable differences between the two pieces of legislation are the removal of a section of the bill allowing the Attorney General to appeal preliminary injunctions issued by the court and a shortened time frame for the Secretary of State to submit revised ballot language on even-numbered election years.

The section that gave the Attorney General the ability to appeal preliminary injunctions was struck down by the courts as unconstitutional.

"The rest of the language that was in Senate Bill 22 is exactly what is in House Bill 3146," Rep. Josh Simmons, a Washington Republican.

The Missouri Supreme Court struck down the whole law, finding the final legislation changed the original purpose of the bill, making it procedurally unconstitutional. But removing the

only materially unconstitutional piece could make a court challenge more difficult.

"It appears to me that Senate Bill 3146 solves the problems that Senate Bill 22 had," said Chuck Hatfield, an attorney who argued against the law in court.

The bill would strip power away from the Missouri Supreme Court to write ballot summaries if it finds the proposed wording is inaccurate or unfair. Under the bill, a Missouri Circuit Court would assume that authority if the Secretary of State's third proposed summary remains unfair or prejudicial.

The Missouri Supreme Court's decision to strike down Senate Bill 22 in January was condemned by many Missouri Republicans. In response, Senate Republicans boycotted the annual State of the Judiciary address, which led to its cancellation.

The language of ballot measures has been hotly contested for several key issues in the state. In several instances, courts have rewritten summaries after finding Secretary of State Denny Hoskins's proposed language was unfair or prejudicial.

"The last five of five ballot summaries written by the Secretary of State were struck down by courts for being insufficient or unfair. He's batting 1.000 on being unfair," Rep. Eric Woods, a Kansas City Democrat, said.

Woods said he believes the legislature is getting in the middle of a separation of powers issue by relegating the authority to rewrite ballot language away from the highest court in the state. He also said that, despite requiring a timeframe on the Secretary of State's responses, the process could be abused to eat away at time while the courts make their judgments.

"You could run into a situation where these challenges are brought at the very last minute, the clock gets run out and then, according to the text and the language of the bill, if the clock runs out while the challenge is still in play, that challenge is extinguished," Woods said.

Hatfield said he believes Hoskins is seeing what he can get away with in the first submitted ballot summary. In the new bill, he said the unspecified amount of time given to a court could pose an issue.

"It says the Secretary of State's got to send in a new statement in seven days, but what if the court takes another 30 days to look at that?" Hatfield said. "It's a little bit of a flaw in the bill."

The bill will now head to the Senate, where it could face further changes. When asked if he expects another court challenge, Hatfield said he would need to wait to see if the bill gets amended by the Senate before it reaches the Governor's desk.

• The 3 Big Lies

Con't from Page 4

and personal legitimacy within the system.

In other words, the Iranian regime is not projecting strength. It is scrambling to maintain control.

LIE NO. 3: THE OIL SHOCK WILL BREAK THE UNITED STATES.

The final warning is economic: Iran, critics say, will simply shut down the Strait of Hormuz, sending global oil prices skyrocketing and bringing the American economy to its knees.

For a brief moment earlier this week, markets reacted to that fear. Oil prices jumped sharply

amid speculation that the strait could be disrupted.

But the panic faded almost as quickly as it began. Within days, crude prices had fallen back below \$90 a barrel.

Markets, unlike pundits, respond to reality. And the reality is that Iran faces enormous consequences if it attempts to choke off one of the world's most vital shipping lanes.

President Donald Trump has made that point unmistakably clear. In a statement posted online, he warned that any Iranian attempt to block the flow of oil through the Strait of Hormuz would trigger an overwhelming American response.

The message was aimed not only at Tehran but also at Beijing and other

major energy consumers: The United States intends to keep global energy flowing -- and anyone who interferes will pay a heavy price.

There are legitimate questions to ask about any military action. Democracies require scrutiny, debate and skepticism.

But skepticism should not be confused with hysteria.

Right now, critics are spinning worst-case scenarios while ignoring the basic facts on the ground: Iran's military is under severe pressure, its leadership structure is unstable, and the economic fallout that many predicted has yet to materialize.

None of this guarantees the conflict will end quickly or cleanly. War

rarely works that way.

But it does suggest that the narrative of inevitable American failure -- so loudly promoted by the administration's opponents -- is far removed from the reality unfolding in the Middle East.

And that reality matters far more than the talking points.

[Ben Shapiro is a graduate of UCLA and Harvard Law School, host of "The Ben Shapiro Show," and co-founder of Daily Wire+. He is a three-time New York Times bestselling author. To find out more about Ben Shapiro and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate website at www.creators.com.]

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200 Public Notice

(First published in the Independence Daily Reporter March 13, 2026)

City of Independence, Kansas

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

The Independence, Kansas, Planning and Zoning Commission will conduct a public hearing on:

Tuesday, April 7, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.

To receive comments on a proposed text amendment to the Code of the City of Independence, specifically Appendix B - Zoning, to consider the addition of Article XIX - Landscaping Requirements, establishing landscaping standards and requirements for development within the city.

The hearing will be conducted in the Commission Room, City Hall, 120 North Sixth Street, Independence, Kansas, and will begin at 5:30 p.m. All interested persons should attend, and they will be heard. You may also participate via conference call: +1 785-289-4727 Conference ID: 820 754 218# Persons wishing to comment, but who cannot attend this hearing, should provide their written comments to: Kayla Schabel, Zoning Administrator, 120 North Sixth Street, Independence, KS 67301 (620) 301-0266

If special accommodation is required, please inform the Zoning Administrator. A copy of the proposed amendment(s) are available in the Zoning Administrator's office during regular business hours and may also be available at the City's website at www.independencenceks.gov. Kayla Schabel, Zoning Administrator

March 13, 2026

200 Public Notice

(First published in the Independence Daily Reporter March 13, 2026)

City of Independence, Kansas

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

The Independence, Kansas, Board of Zoning Appeals will conduct a public hearing on:

Tuesday, April 7, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.

To receive comments on a variance request to reduce the setback(s) of a single family dwelling in a R-4, medium density multifamily dwelling district. Common Address: 401 North 10th Street

Legal Description: Block 10, Lot 5, Original Plat to the City of Independence, Montgomery County, Kansas.

Applicant/Owners: 3D Homes Inc., Applicant The City of Independence, Owner Case Number: 2026/VAR/02

The hearing will be conducted in the Commission Room, City Hall, 120 North Sixth Street, Independence, Kansas, and will begin at 5:30 p.m. All interested persons should attend, and they will be heard. You may also participate via conference call: +1 785-289-4727 Conference ID: 820 754 218# Persons wishing to comment, but who cannot attend this hearing, should provide their written comments to:

Kayla Schabel, Zoning Administrator, 120 North Sixth Street, Independence, KS 67301 (620) 301-0266 Information regarding this application is available in the Zoning Administrator's office. If special accommodation is required, please inform the Zoning Administrator. Kayla Schabel, Zoning Administrator

March 13, 2026

(First published in the Independence Daily Reporter March 13, 2026)

City of Independence, Kansas

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

The Independence, Kansas, Planning and Zoning Commission will conduct a public hearing on:

Tuesday, April 7, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.

To receive comments on a request for a conditional use permit for multi-family dwellings (apartments) located on the ground floor and upper stories, in a nonresidential structure in a C-3, Central Business District. Common Address:

201 North Pennsylvania Avenue

Legal Description: Lot 11-13, Block 31, Original Plat to the City of Independence, Montgomery County, Kansas.

Applicant/Owners: 203 Investors, LLC Case Number: 2026/CUP/02

The hearing will be conducted in the Commission Room, City Hall, 120 North Sixth Street, Independence, Kansas, and will begin at 5:30 p.m. All interested persons should attend, and they will be heard. You may also participate via conference call: +1 785-289-4727 Conference ID: 820 754 218# Persons wishing to comment, but who cannot attend this hearing, should provide their written comments to:

Kayla Schabel, Zoning Administrator, 120 North Sixth Street, Independence, KS 67301 (620) 301-0266

Information regarding this application is available in the Zoning Administrator's office. If special accommodation is required, please inform the Zoning Administrator. Kayla Schabel, Zoning Administrator

March 13, 2026

Helpful Tips

Easter egg coloring tips

Many families will soon be partaking in a springtime tradition that has spanned generations: coloring Easter eggs.

While eggs once symbolized fertility and rebirth in Pagan celebrations, they have since come to be associated with Christianity. History.com says eggs historically were not allowed to be eaten during the 40 days of Lent. Subsequently, they were painted and decorated to mark the end of penance and enjoyed as a treat on Easter Sunday. Britannica also notes that the egg has come to represent the tomb Christ escaped, much like a chick breaks out of its shell.

Although it may seem like coloring Easter eggs already is a relatively simple project, there are steps that can simplify the process and make eggs more unique.

- Remove eggs from the refrigerator. Prior to dyeing eggs, bring them to room temperature by removing them from the fridge about 20 minutes before it's time to start boiling. This minimizes the chances that the egg shells will crack.
- Use a pin. Poking a tiny hole into the large ends of the eggs before boiling can release the air pressure inside and prevent the eggs from bursting during boiling.
- Keep vinegar on hand. Vinegar is the key to vibrant eggs because it acts as a mordant, which helps the dye bond to the shell. Without vinegar, the egg colors will be pale.
- Use a whisk. Instead of potentially breaking eggs when dropping them into dye with fingers or spoons, place the egg inside the wires of a kitchen whisk.
- Use protective gear. Children tend to get messy when coloring eggs. Make sure they are dressed in clothes that can get splattered. Also, wearing kitchen dishwashing gloves or latex gloves will keep hands from being stained by dye.

- Cover tables or counters with a water-resistant sheet or tablecloth to further prevent staining.
- Experiment with different dyeing methods. Wrap rubber bands or string around the eggs before dipping to create geometric shapes and white lines. For a soft, marbled look, mix dye in a tray with shaving cream and roll the egg through. For a speckled appearance, place eggs in a container with dry rice and drops of dye and then shake.
- Create a drying station. Letting eggs dry on a paper towel or newspaper can contribute to smears and white spots. Instead, poke flat-head pins into a foam board. Rest the eggs on the pins while they dry.
- Create some sheen. When the eggs are completely dry, rubbing them with a drop of vegetable oil on a cloth will shine them up nicely. Eggs are a traditional component of Easter festivities and decor. A few easy tweaks can make the process go more smoothly and result in vivid and creative eggs.

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