

Ship seized off UAE coast heading toward Iran: UK

■ **By Adam Schreck**
DUBAI, May 14 (AP)

A SHIP anchored off the east coast of the United Arab Emirates has been seized and is heading toward Iranian territorial waters, the British military said on Thursday.

The United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations center said it received reports that the vessel was taken by unauthorised personnel while anchored 38 nautical miles (70 kilometers, 44 miles) northeast of the UAE port

It happened hours after Israel said Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had quietly visited the United Arab Emirates during the Israeli-US war with Iran, though the UAE swiftly denied that any secret visit had occurred. **IRAN ALLOWS CHINESE SHIPS:** Iran has allowed dozens of Chinese ships to pass through the Strait of Hormuz as China toughened its stance against the militarisation of the key waterway during talks between US President Donald Trump and President Xi Jinping.



An Iran-flagged tugboat sails near a ship anchored in the Strait of Hormuz in this picture obtained from Iran's ISNA news agency last week. (AP)

of Fujairah, near the Strait of Hormuz.

The seizure comes as US President Donald Trump is meeting with Chinese leader Xi Jinping on a much-anticipated visit to Beijing. The leaders' talks are expected to focus on the war with Iran, which has seriously disrupted trade in oil, gas and other products and rattled the global economy.

Since Wednesday night, Iran permitted 30 Chinese ships to pass through the Strait of Hormuz in compliance with Iranian management protocols.

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi on Thursday said that the Strait of Hormuz is open to all commercial vessels, provided they cooperate with Iranian naval forces to pass through the waterway.

Abbas Araghchi seeks BRICS condemnation of Israel, US

NEW DELHI, May 14 (PTI)

IRAN is a victim of “illegal expansionism and warmongering”, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Thursday urging the BRICS nations to “explicitly condemn” what he described as violations of international law by the US and Israel.

Araghchi delivered the remarks on the opening day of a two-day BRICS conclave in New Delhi, chaired by External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and attended by foreign ministers from Russia, Brazil and other member states of the bloc.

“The truth is that Iran, like many other independent nations, is the victim of illegal expansionism and warmongering. These are ugly things which have no place in today’s world,” he said.

The India-hosted meet assumed greater significance as



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, right, with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi ahead of the BRICS Foreign Ministers’ Meeting, at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi on Thursday. (PTI)

the influential bloc grapples with

the economic fallout of the West Asia crisis, particularly the severe energy supply disruptions caused by the ongoing war involving the US, Israel, and Iran.

“In the face of horrific violence, the Iranian people have firmly and proudly stood up for themselves. Did we retreat from our ideal of independence? Did we surrender to the will and whims of imperial power? The answer is clear: we did not, and never will,” he said.

Araghchi was severely critical of the US and Israel for targeting Iran and asserted that his country is “unbreakable and only emerges stronger and more united”.

“As I have repeatedly stated, there is no such thing as a military solution to anything related to Iran. We Iranians never bow to any pressure or threat, but we reciprocate the language of respect,” he said.

Rajnath to inaugurate defence factory in Shirdi on May 23

MUMBAI, May 14 (PTI)

DEFENCE Minister Rajnath Singh will inaugurate an ammunition manufacturing unit at Shirdi in Maharashtra on May 23.

Ganesh Nibe, chairman and managing director of Nibe Group, said the unit in Ahilyanagar district will manufacture artillery bombshells and also support the aerospace segment.

There was also a plan to establish a 25,000 tonne ammunition manufacturing factory at Srigonda in the district, he said at a press conference in the presence of state minister Radhakrishna Vikhe-Patil.

The factory at Shirdi is built on 200 acres of land, and is expected to generate direct and indirect employment for 2,000 people and also support Medium

Small and Micro Industries, Nibe said. The unit will also export defence equipment to other countries, he added.

Chief of Defence Staff Gen Anil Chauhan is also expected to attend the event besides Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, Nibe said. Vikhe-Patil said the Government wanted to develop the area into a major defence hub.

Peace cannot be piecemeal: EAM

Safe and unimpeded maritime flows through international waterways, including the Strait of Hormuz and Red Sea, remain vital for global economic well-being, says Jaishankar



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and Foreign Ministers of other BRICS countries during Foreign Ministers' meeting, at Bharat Mandapam on Thursday. (PTI)

India flags serious concerns over West Asia crisis during BRICS conclave

NEW DELHI, May 14 (PTI)

INDIA on Thursday flagged grave concerns over the West Asia crisis and its impact on energy supplies and maritime stability in the Strait of Hormuz and urged BRICS nations to develop "practical ways" to navigate geopolitical upheavals as well as "unilateral coercive" sanctions.

In his address at the opening day of a two-day BRICS conclave here, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar asserted, without naming specific nations, that respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity must anchor international relations, maintaining that "dialogue and diplomacy" offer the only sustainable path to conflict resolution.

Jaishankar said India stands ready to contribute constructively towards de-escalation efforts and to support initiatives aimed at restoring stability while



noting that "peace cannot be piecemeal" and "it is essential to uphold international law, protect civilians, and avoid targeting public infrastructure."

The External Affairs Minister also strongly pitched for ensuring safe and unimpeded maritime flows through the Strait of Hormuz and Red Sea, and voiced concerns over the "grave humanitarian implications" of the conflict in Gaza.

The India-hosted meet assumed greater significance as

the influential bloc grapples with the economic consequences of the West Asia crisis, particularly the severe energy supply disruptions, and Washington's policy on trade and tariffs.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, Brazil's Mauro Vieira, Indonesian Foreign Minister Sugiono and South Africa's Minister for International Relations Ronald Lamola are among the senior leaders attending the meeting.

"The conflict in West Asia merits particular attention. Continuing tensions, risks to maritime traffic, and disruptions to energy infrastructure highlight the fragility of the situation," Jaishankar said.

The External Affairs Minister said safe and unimpeded maritime flows through international waterways, including the Strait of Hormuz and Red Sea, remain

vital for global economic well-being. "The wider region also gives rise to serious concern. The conflict in Gaza has grave humanitarian implications.

"A sustained ceasefire, humanitarian access, and a credible pathway towards a durable and peaceful resolution remain essential. India supports a two-state solution where the Palestine issue is concerned," he said.

Jaishankar also made a mention of challenges facing Lebanon and Syria as well as prevailing situation in Sudan, Yemen and Libya while calling for sustained international engagement and coordinated diplomatic efforts to address them.

"Taken together, they underline a clear reality: stability cannot be selective, and peace cannot be piecemeal. It is essential to uphold international law, protect civilians, and avoid targeting public infrastructure."

Pakistan test fires Fatah-4 cruise missile

ISLAMABAD, May 14 (PTI)

PAKISTAN on Thursday successfully test-fired indigenously developed Fatah-4 ground-launched cruise missile capable of engaging long-range targets with high precision, the army said.

The launch was organised by the Rocket Force Command, according to a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the media wing of the military.

“Equipped with advanced avionics and state-of-the-art navigational aids, the weapon system is capable of engaging long-range targets with high precision,” the army said.

The missile was test-fired to enhance operational efficiency of the troops and validate technical parameters of various sub-systems incorporated for improved accuracy and enhanced survivability, it said.

President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir and other services chiefs commended the successful training fire of the missile.

SIR phase-3 in 16 States, three UTs from May 30

■ **Delhi Bureau and Agencies**

NEW DELHI, May 14

THE Election Commission on Thursday announced the rollout of phase-3 of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in 16 States and three Union Territories involving 36.73 crore voters in a phased manner beginning May 30.

The States and UTs where the SIR will be carried out are Delhi, Odisha, Mizoram, Sikkim, Manipur, Uttarakhand, Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Haryana, Chandigarh, Telangana, Punjab, Karnataka, Meghalaya, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Nagaland, Tripura,

Dadar and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu.

Punjab, Jharkhand, Karnataka and Telangana are Opposition-ruled among the States where the SIR exercise will be held.

Over 3.94 lakh booth level officers (BLOs) will go house-to-house of 36.73 crore electors during the latest poll roll revision exercise. They will be assisted by 3.42 lakh booth level agents (BLAs) appointed by political parties during the enumeration phase. The schedule for the SIR in Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh will be announced later keeping in view weather conditions in
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PM meets BRICS Foreign Ministers



Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on the sidelines of the BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting, in New Delhi. (PTI)

NEW DELHI, May 14 (PTI)

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday hosted top diplomats from the BRICS nations as New Delhi kicked off a high-

stakes conclave of the Foreign Ministers of the influential bloc. The visiting dignitaries, who made a joint call on the Prime Minister, included Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov,

Iran's Abbas Araghchi, Brazil's Mauro Vieira, Indonesia's Sugiono, and South Africa's Ronald Lamola.

The India-hosted meet assumed greater significance as the influential bloc grapples with the economic consequences of the West Asia crisis, particularly the severe energy supply disruptions, and Washington's policy on trade and tariffs.

India, as the chair of the BRICS, is hosting the two-day conclave from Thursday ahead of the annual summit of the grouping in September.

BRICS, originally comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, expanded in 2024 to include Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the United Arab Emirates, with Indonesia joining in 2025. It has emerged as an influential grouping as it brings together 11 major emerging economies of the world.

Xi warns US on Taiwan

■ US policy toward Taiwan is unchanged: Rubio ■

BEIJING, May 14 (PTI)

CHINESE President Xi Jinping warned his US counterpart Donald Trump that mishandling the Taiwan issue could trigger “clashes and even conflicts” between the two countries, as the leaders held wide-ranging talks on the Iran war, energy security and trade on Thursday.

However, Secretary of State Marco Rubio said US policy toward Taiwan is “unchanged” after President Donald Trump’s meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping but warned it would be “a terrible mistake” for China

to take Taiwan by force.

Rubio made the remarks in an interview with NBC News while travelling with the President on his trip to China.

He side-stepped Xi’s warning that differences over the self-governing island could lead to a clash, and said that China always raises the issue of Taiwan in talks.

Trump calls the meeting with Xi as “maybe the biggest summit ever”, saying the two countries will have a “fantastic future together.” Trump invites Xi on Sept 24

“US policy on the issue of Taiwan is unchanged as of today and as of the meeting that we had here today. It was raised. They always raise it on their side. We always make clear our position, and we move on to the other topics,” Rubio said.

After concluding the first round of talks in Beijing, which lasted for around two hours, Trump invited Xi and his

wife to the White House on September 24, even as both leaders were in agreement that the Strait of Hormuz needs to be opened to support global energy needs.

China and the US have agreed on a “new vision” for building constructive bilateral ties, Xi said. “I have agreed with President Trump on a new vision of building a constructive China-US relationship of strategic stability.” Xi said the “new vision” would provide strategic guidance for bilateral relations over the next three years and beyond,

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