



Iran demands crypto fees for ships passing Hormuz during ceasefire

April 8, 2026 *Financial Times* reported: Iran will demand that shipping companies pay tolls in cryptocurrency for oil tankers passing through the Strait of Hormuz, as it seeks to retain control over passage through the key waterway during the two-week ceasefire.

Hamid Hosseini, a spokesperson for Iran's Oil, Gas and Petrochemical Products Exporters' Union, told the FT on Wednesday that Iran wanted to collect tolling fees from any tanker passing and to assess each ship.

"Iran needs to monitor what goes in and out of the strait to ensure these two weeks aren't used for transferring weapons," said Hosseini, whose industry association works closely with the state.

"Everything can pass through, but the procedure will take time for each vessel, and Iran is not in a rush," he added.

Decisions on the conditions for passing the strait are taken by Iran's Supreme National Security Council. Hosseini's remarks suggest Iran will require any tankers to use the northerly route close to its coastline, raising questions over whether western or Gulf state-linked vessels will be willing to risk transit.

Later on Wednesday Iran said it was halting the passage of oil tankers through the Strait of Hormuz in response to Israeli strikes on Lebanon.

Before the halt Hosseini said that any tanker passing must email authorities about its cargo, after which Iran will inform them of the toll to be paid in digital currencies.

He said that the tariff is \$1 per barrel of oil, adding that empty tankers can pass freely.

"Once the email arrives and Iran completes its assessment, vessels are given a few seconds to pay in bitcoin, ensuring they can't be traced or confiscated due to sanctions," Hosseini added...

North Korea fires multiple ballistic missiles towards East Sea: Seoul

April 8, 2026 *spacewar.com* reported: "North Korea fired "multiple unidentified ballistic missiles" on Wednesday, South Korea's military said, shortly after reporting a similar launch from the North's capital area the previous day. The launches followed Seoul's expression of regret on Monday over civilian drone incursions into the North in January, with South Korean President Lee Jae Myung calling it "irresponsible" and noting that government officials had been involved in the operation.

The missile launches are seen as North Korea's latest rebuff of South Korea's peace overtures, according to analysts. Seoul's military initially said on Wednesday morning it had detected "an unidentified projectile launched from the Pyongyang area on Tuesday."

Around an hour later the military said it also detected "multiple unidentified ballistic missiles fired from the Wonsan area of North Korea towards the East Sea" on Wednesday morning, referring to the body of water also known as the Sea of Japan. The missiles flew around 240 kilometres (149 miles), they added.

South Korean President Lee has sought to repair ties with North Korea since taking office last year, criticizing his predecessor for allegedly sending drones to scatter propaganda over Pyongyang. Following Lee's expression of regret over the drones on Monday, the powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said Lee's regret was "wise behaviour"...

Why EU foreign policy keeps getting stuck

April 7, 2026 *euobserve.com* reported: "EU foreign policy runs on unanimity — and it's starting to break down. Zoya Sheftalovich and Ian Wishart unpack growing frustration with how the EU makes foreign policy, as divisions over Ukraine funding, Russia sanctions and the war in Iran expose the pitfalls of the veto. With calls — led by Germany and Sweden — mounting to scrap unanimity in foreign and security policy, the question is becoming harder to avoid: Can the EU still act together when it matters most?---"

Pakistan seeks two-week ceasefire, extension to Trump's deadline on Iran

April 7, 2026 *reuters.com* reported: Pakistan, a mediator between the U.S. and Iran, on Wednesday requested that U.S.



President Donald Trump grant a two-week ceasefire and extension to a deadline he imposed on Iran to end its blockade of Gulf oil, while U.S. and Israeli strikes on Iran intensified during the sixth week of the war.

A senior Iranian official told Reuters Tehran is positively reviewing Pakistan's request for a two-week ceasefire. The White House said Trump is aware of Pakistan's proposal, saying a response will come.

"To allow diplomacy to run its course, I earnestly request President Trump to extend the deadline for two weeks. Pakistan, in all sincerity, requests the Iranian brothers to open Strait of Hormuz for a corresponding period of two weeks as a goodwill gesture," Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said in a post on X.

The war has killed thousands across the region and resulted in the worst-ever energy supply disruption due to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, the artery used to transit one-fifth of the world's oil and gas.

Sharif's comments come after Trump, in a social media post that shocked world leaders, said "a whole civilization will die tonight" if an agreement is not reached to end the conflict.

Trump has given Iran until 8 p.m. EDT (0000 GMT) in Washington - 3:30 a.m. on Wednesday in Tehran - to end its blockade of Gulf oil or see the U.S. destroy every bridge and power plant in Iran. Sharif urged "all warring parties" to observe a ceasefire for two weeks "to allow diplomacy to achieve conclusive termination of war..."

[Germany preparing for all-out war by rehearsing mass evacuations](#)

April 4, 2026 the-express.com reported: "This week, for the first time in decades, Germany carried out its largest medical exercise in decades as Russia's threat to Europe increases the possibility of large-scale war.

The NATO "Quadriga 2026" exercise took place in Lithuania and simulated evacuating wounded soldiers from the country and transporting them to hospitals across Germany. Over in Lithuania, Germany is rehearsing mass evacuations in preparation for what experts warn could be a Russian invasion by 2029.

This week, for the first time in decades, Germany carried out its largest medical exercise in decades as Russia's threat to Europe increases the possibility of large-scale war.

The NATO "Quadriga 2026" exercise took place in Lithuania and simulated evacuating wounded soldiers from the country and transporting them to hospitals across Germany. In a worst-case scenario of full-scale war, experts believe the system could face up to 1,000 casualties a day. Meanwhile, new drone-related injuries and attacks on medics add further risks. By performing this exercise, the army can identify gaps in the plan and prepare for the real deal.

These gaps have already been detected. A report from the German Hospital Association last year concluded, "Hospitals are poorly equipped for a crisis such as a NATO alliance or defense emergency," based on a survey of 165 hospitals across Germany.

The full-scale training exercise is designed to be as realistic as possible. Since Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022, the security situation in Europe has become less secure..."

[German men must ask army for permission to leave country](#)

April 4, 2026 telegraph.co.uk reported: "German men of fighting age must ask the army for permission to leave the country for more than three months, under new rules on military service.

The government has introduced a new military service scheme this year that stops short of conscription but requires men born from 2008 onwards to take a medical exam and fill in a survey about their fitness for service.

It has emerged that a clause in the law also requires men aged between 17 and 45 to obtain a permit from the Bundeswehr, the German armed forces, before leaving the country for extended periods. Germany is rapidly remobilizing and rearming, with plans to expand its conventional army in the face of threats from Russia and a possible break-up of Nato. The purpose of the new rule in Germany is to restrict the movements of men of fighting age in the event of a national crisis such as a war, which may require emergency conscription.

The rule says: "Male persons who have reached the age of 17 must obtain permission from the responsible career centre of the German armed forces if they wish to leave the Federal Republic of Germany for more than three months..."

