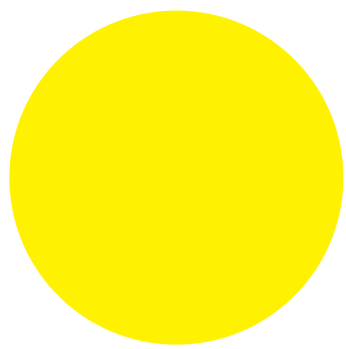


Mobarakeh Steel granted hot-roll import permit to ease post-war shortages

Smart overhaul of damaged production lines, power units under review

3 >



Iran Daily

Vol. 8097 • Tuesday, April 21, 2026 • Ordibehesht 01, 1405 • Dhu al-Qadah 03, 1447 • 100,000 rials • 8 pages

irandaily.ir | newspaper.irandaily.ir | IranDailyWeb

Iran reviewing US proposals for possible Islamabad talks

2 >



INTERVIEW

Passive defense during attack barrages
Advantages, deficiencies, and structural scars of Iran's energy sector

4 >



Iranian women aiming for clean sweep of karate golds at Asian Games

6 >



Government moves to protect handicraft sector

7 >



ICOM expresses readiness to help Iran's museum recovery

8 >

President stresses power diplomacy while voicing skepticism about US

2 >

Pezeshkian vows 'targeted' aid for Iran tourism business after strikes

8 >



President Masoud Pezeshkian (l.) shakes hands with a firefighter during a surprise visit to a fire station in Tehran, Iran on April 20, 2026.

president.ir

Naval blockade of Iran & China's high-stakes test against US

By Sadeq Dehqan
Staff writer

INTERVIEW

Following a sharp escalation in tensions and direct confrontation between Iran and the United States, one of the region's most critical geopolitical chokepoints—the Strait of Hormuz—has once again moved to the forefront of global security and economic developments. This vital passage, through which a significant share of the world's energy flows, holds the power to reshape not only regional equations but also global balances if disrupted. Against this backdrop, Iran's move to restrict or control maritime traffic, alongside Washington's efforts to impose a form of naval block-



Mohammadreza Elhami

ade on Tehran, has given rise to a complex and multilayered situation, forcing international actors—particularly major powers—to respond and reassess their positions. In this environment, China—one of Iran's key economic and energy partners, while also maintaining extensive ties with Persian Gulf states and engaging in structural rivalry with the United States—has found itself in a sensitive and decisive position. On the one hand, Beijing depends on the steady flow of energy from the region and the security of its trade routes; on the other, it seeks to avoid direct confrontation with Washington. These considerations have gradually pushed China's stance from initial neutrality and calls for restraint toward a more cautious role and even indirect involvement in certain areas, particularly regarding the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran Daily spoke with Mohammadreza Elhami, Vice Chairman of the Iran-China Friendship Association (ICFA) and a China affairs expert, to unpack various dimensions of this approach—from Beijing's political and diplomatic positions to its role in field and economic developments.

IRAN DAILY: How would China's stance—as Iran's economic and political partner—be assessed during the military offensive against Iran and afterward?

ELHAMI: In the early stages of the war, China largely acted in a neutral manner, limiting itself to calling on the parties involved to cease hostilities and exercise restraint. This continued until a resolution was proposed to condemn Iran's attack on Persian Gulf countries. At that point, due to lobbying by Saudi Arabia and the UAE, as well as China's desire to preserve relations with these

states, no reference was made to the role of the United States and Israel, and China abstained from voting on the resolution. Subsequently, in the five-point proposal by China and Pakistan to end the war, there was no mention of condemning the United States or Israel, nor was there any discussion of compensation for Iran by China. However, as the war progressed, China gradually—and albeit indirectly—became more involved in war-related issues. This was particularly evident regarding the Strait of Hormuz, when a resolution introduced by Bahrain against Iran, in support of reopening the strait and stating that Iran had no right to close it, was vetoed by China alongside Russia. As the war continued, the importance of the Strait of Hormuz for China—as one of the largest buyers of oil from the region—became more pronounced, prompting Beijing to move away from

strict neutrality.

Why did China not demonstrate stronger support for Iran from the outset?

It appears that China prefers US engagements in West Asia to remain confined there, rather than spilling over into more sensitive areas such as the South China Sea or the Taiwan issue. At the same time, China did not want to be accused of providing military support to Iran. Even if assistance was provided, China typically carries out such actions quietly. Another key factor is China's extensive economic and political ties with Persian Gulf countries such as the UAE and Saudi Arabia, which it was unwilling to jeopardize. As a result, it adopted a cautious approach until the Hormuz crisis and the threat to its energy interests became more serious.

Page 3 >