

Armed Forces escalate retaliatory campaign against US regional bases

CENTCOM: Two soldiers killed in Iranian strikes on Jordan

International Desk

In the latest bout of reprisal strikes on Sunday, Iran's Armed Forces downed another American advanced drone over the southern part of the country and targeted US military's ammunition depot and Patriot and air surveillance radars in Kuwait as they continued to respond to US attacks with full force. The Army said in a statement on Sunday that it targeted two key US bases in Kuwait in response to deadly American aerial assaults on civilian infrastructure, including bridges in Iran.

It said that the large-scale attack involved launching explosive drones at the US army's ammunition depot in Al-Adiri Camp, as well as Patriot and air surveillance radars belonging to the US military in Ali Al Salem Air Base.

Located approximately 104 kilometers from Iran's borders, Al-Adiri Camp serves as a major logistical support and force-reconstitution center for American forces, it added, saying disruptions at the base would have a

significant impact on the US Army's logistical support operations throughout the region. Ali Al Salem Air Base serves as the principal airlift hub and a primary gateway for the deployment of military forces into West Asia, the Army said. The base also plays a central role in the US military and logistical strategy in the region. Kuwait claimed on Sunday that Iran hit a power and water plant causing a fire, while Bahrain also accused Tehran of targeting civilian infrastructure.

The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) also said on Sunday its forces intercepted and shot down an American MQ-9 Reaper drone over the skies of the southwestern Iranian city of Ahvaz. This is the fourth American MQ-9 drone shot down by Iran in the last eight days, according to Iranian authorities. These are expensive and sophisticated drones used for both surveillance and attack. Iran says it has downed more than 150 US drones since the beginning of the war, with about 30 of them being MQ-9s.

Iran's attacks came after the US military said it had completed an eighth straight night of

attacks against Iran after earlier announcing that two US military personnel were killed in Jordan and another was missing following an Iranian attack.

US Central Command (CENTCOM) said the two deaths occurred on Friday and that a third US service member was missing in action. The announcement brought the number of American soldiers killed since the war began to 16, while more than 420 have been wounded.

Iran's Mehr news agency said the US carried out an attack near Sirik in southern Iran, adding that no casualties or damage to infrastructure have been reported. The Tasnim news agency said the US military also targeted a location near Shadegan, a city close to the border with Iraq.

The new flare-up came after the US violated the Pakistan-brokered Memorandum of Understanding of June 18 by attempting unauthorized naval movements through the Strait of Hormuz, with the Iranian Navy intercepting the vessels to enforce the agreement. Since then, the US military has launched new



The screen grab taken from video footage released on July 16, 2026 by Iran's Sepah News website shows a missile being launched from an undisclosed location towards US targets in Jordan, Kuwait and Bahrain.

aggression against Iran by targeting military sites, infrastructure civilian facilities. Iran's Health Ministry said on Friday that at

least 50 people have been killed and more than 500 injured since the renewed US strikes.

Unity cast as pillar of Iran's defense strategy after Leader's call for cohesion

National Desk

The Iranian Parliament speaker and top military commander described national unity as a central pillar of the country's defense strategy and a key for success in confronting the enemies a day after Iran's Leader said that preserving national unity is among the country's "most fundamental priorities at the current juncture."

Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf called for greater national unity, saying adherence to Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei's call for "sacred unity" is key for Iran's success in confronting the enemies.

In a post published on his X account on Sunday, Qalibaf said unity should be regarded not only as a moral or social principle but also as a strategic requirement for the country's security and resilience. "Insistence on sacred unity is not merely a moral or social recommendation; it is a necessary condition for victory in the struggle against the enemy," Qalibaf wrote.

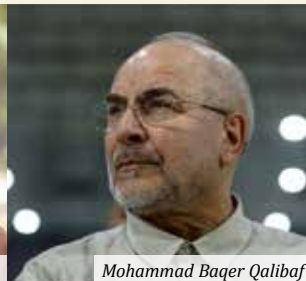
Qalibaf's remarks came a day after Ayatollah Khamenei, in a statement, stressed that maintaining "sacred unity" at



Ali Abdollahi



Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei



Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf

all levels of society and government is essential to realizing the lofty ideals of the Islamic Revolution and safeguarding Iran's dignity and independence, particularly in the face of the "criminal and deceitful American enemy." Ayatollah Khamenei said the United States' repeated violations of the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) have once again proven that the American president's signature is "utterly worthless and invalid."

The Leader emphasized that US actions have exposed that "bullying, hegemony, and savagery" are inseparable components of American behavior and conduct.

"Today, the Great Satan has once again revealed its true and unmasked face," Ayatollah Khamenei said. "This dark experience of crime and broken promises serves as

yet another solid document of America's dishonesty, irrationality, untrustworthiness, and vileness."

Ayatollah Khamenei stressed that preserving national unity is among the country's "most fundamental priorities at the current juncture."

The Leader said maintaining "sacred unity" at all levels of society and government is essential to realizing the lofty ideals of the Islamic Revolution and safeguarding Iran's dignity and independence, particularly in the face of the "criminal and deceitful American enemy."

The commander of the Khatam al-Anbiya Headquarters, Iran's top military command unit, also reaffirmed allegiance to Leader of the Islamic Revolution and emphasized national unity as a central pillar of the country's defense strategy.

Major General Ali Abdollahi asserted that the Armed Forces would continue to follow the guidance of the Leader while dedicating all available capabilities to strengthening cohesion among the military, the Iranian people, and state institutions.

The statement also addressed the United States, describing Washington as "the Great Satan" and warning against any hostile action towards Iran.

"Acting in accordance with the directives and guidance of our Leader, we also remind the Great Satan and the criminal, duplicitous, and deceitful American enemy that any act of covetousness, coercion, hegemonic ambition, or brutality will be met with a decisive and devastating response from the faithful, courageous, and powerful servicemen of the Armed Forces," he added.

Iran's reprisals reshape West Asia security structure: *Araghchi*

International Desk

Iran's retaliatory strikes against regional US bases during the 40-day war with the United States and Israel "transformed" the security architecture of West Asia, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said in remarks published on Sunday.

"[Countries in] the region could not believe that we would strike across the region and they would not be able to respond. This was a major development that transformed the region's security structure," Araghchi said in a lengthy video interview released online under the title "The Story of the War." The hostilities broke out on February 28 when the United States and Israel launched attacks on Iran, prompting the Islamic Republic to strike back in "two hours" according to the top diplomat by firing barrages of missiles and drones at US military bases in Arab countries that had served as launch points for the offensive, as well as at Israel. US media later reported that the Iranian attacks, which continued for the whole wartime, inflicted significant damage.

Araghchi said Iran's Armed Forces carried out retaliatory strikes in "the whole region" and spared no country, including Oman, which he described as "a friend of Iran," because an Omani company supplied fuel to US naval vessels from one of the country's ports. He said Omani authorities later halted that company's activities.

"The fact that not even one country in the region could respond shows that

the regional security structure can no longer remain as it was before," Araghchi said, describing the outcome as "a strategic achievement."

He also said that on the third day of the war he held a telephone conversation with an unnamed Arab foreign minister who threatened an independent military attack on Iran.

Araghchi said he warned that if that country bombed Iran, Iranian forces would strike the country itself rather than only US military bases located there. "The war will begin between us and you," he quoted himself as saying. According to Araghchi, Iran kept up strikes against that country until the ceasefire in early April because it continued to allow the United States to use its bases for operations against Iran. He said the country "never repeated its threat" to attack Iran for the remainder of the war.

Elsewhere in the interview, Araghchi accused the United States of deliberately bombing a primary school in the southern city of Minab on the first day of the conflict, which left 156 people dead, including 120 schoolchildren.

"The enemy's plan was to dishearten and terrorize the people. They deliberately hit the Minab school, and one of their objectives was to frighten people and show them the full scale of the disaster," he said. Araghchi added that the United States repeatedly targeted infrastructure during the conflict to test whether Iran would back down and to push the country to the point of surrender. He said those efforts failed to achieve their objective.

US war on infrastructure ...

If bridges, rail lines, coastal routes, electricity, telecommunications, fuel depots and island support networks in southern Iran are targeted, the issue moves beyond the military sphere and spills over into domestic resilience, everyday life and the capacity to govern. In this context, even traditional boats, fishing vessels, small jetties and vessel-repair workshops could come under fire, because they are not just means of livelihood; in wartime, they are also part of the flexible logistics network supporting the coast and islands.

At the same time, water, electricity, telecommunications towers and control towers in the hot southern climate are not simply urban services; they are part of the capacity to sustain operations. Cutting off fresh water, electricity and communications can disable ports,

bases and coastal cities without any ground occupation.

On the other hand, if this pressure disrupts Kharg, Hormuz or Chabahar and consequently drives up oil prices and energy insecurity, the cost for the United States and its allies will also rise rapidly. Therefore, this phase is likely to end when both sides conclude that continuing to strike at each other is generating more instability, economic costs and regional risks than actual gains.

When the United States began attacking Iran's infrastructure, did it factor in Tehran's potential retaliation and the possibility of damage to the infrastructure of regional countries?

These risks were most likely part of the US calculations, but Washington appears to have assessed them as "manageable." The United States seems to be

acting on the assumption that, without launching a classic invasion on the scale of Iraq in 2003, it can shift the balance through the operational detachment of the south, the isolation of the islands, disruption in Chabahar and Kharg and, if necessary, the use of special forces and air assault operations to temporarily control sensitive points.

Under this model, the objective is not necessarily to occupy Bandar Abbas or Hormozgan, but to create a situation in which Iran is forced into a costly battle to retain or retake operational control of its coastline and islands.

So, yes, the United States has probably factored in these costs from the outset. But the central issue is that in the Persian Gulf and eastern Iran, the distance between a "manageable cost" and the regional spillover of the crisis is very short.

