

Middle East Update

Information Cut-Off: 1245h (BST), 17 July 2026

Executive Summary

The US has conducted its sixth consecutive night of strikes on Iran. Iranian state media reported that civilian infrastructure, including bridges, a railway station and an airport have been hit.

The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) has responded by once again targeting US facilities in Gulf states, this time including Oman, as well as some civilian infrastructure. It also claimed to have attacked a US special operations command centre in Syria.

Tehran has reportedly asked the Houthis in Yemen to be prepared to close the Bab al-Mandeb Strait in response to US attacks on Iranian power infrastructure.

Latest Exchanges

Yesterday evening (16 July), US forces attacked Iranian territory, using fighter jets, drones and warships, launching precision munitions. The US military claimed to have targeted military facilities including coastal surveillance, military logistics and air defence sites, although it has emerged that civilian targets were also hit. The reported targets in Iran were:

- Southern coastal cities and islands: Kish Island, Ahvaz, Qeshm, Bushehr, Dashti, Bostan, Sirik, Chabahar and Bandar-e Lengeh (attacks caused more extensive damage to infrastructure than in previous nights, including the Chabahar maritime control tower).
- Bandar e-Khamir: two key civilian bridges near the city were struck.
- Bandar Abbas: Tapeh Allah Akbar neighbourhood was hit; several other explosions were reported across the city. Civilian road and railway infrastructure was targeted, including five bridges in the wider area.
- Iranshahr: The city airport was attacked, causing damage to the facility and leading to power outages.

Eight people were reportedly killed and 20 injured in the overnight attacks. The Iranian government has said that, since the resumption of US attacks, 38 people have been killed and more than 400 injured. The government has called on citizens to reduce electricity use as the grid is coming under stress.

The IRGC responded by attacking US military targets in the Gulf with missiles and drones early this morning (17 July):

- The Bahraini military confirmed that it had intercepted several Iranian projectiles over Bahraini territory. Iranian media also reported that the Iranian army had launched missiles and drones at US aircraft based at the Sakhir airbase in Bahrain.
- An electricity generation and water desalination plant in Kuwait were targeted in Iranian attacks.
- The Qatari military reported that it had intercepted several missiles over Qatari territory, and the IRGC claimed to have destroyed equipment at the Al Udeid airbase.
- The IRGC claimed to have attacked US fighter jets stationed in Jordan, and the Jordanian army reportedly shot down three Iranian missiles.
- The IRGC claimed to have destroyed a US air control radar in the Ghanim region of Oman and a maritime control radar on the edge of the Strait of Hormuz.

Regional

Yemen

According to international media, Tehran has reportedly asked the Houthi rebels in western Yemen to be prepared to close the Bab al-Mandeb Strait (the only route for vessels moving south out of the Red Sea) if the US attacks Iranian power infrastructure. Analysts have warned of the impact that the closure of this strait would have on regional and global economies.

Iraq

Explosions were reported last night (16 July) in Sulaimaniyah in Kurdistan. Early this morning (17 July), US forces reportedly intercepted eight drones over Erbil in Kurdistan.

The Khor Mor gas field in Kurdistan has been closed down due to security threats and increasing regional tensions.

Bahrain

The Bahraini coastguard has imposed new restrictions on the movement of ships in Bahraini waters between 1830h and 0400h local time.

Lebanon

Israeli artillery fire has continued to be reported in southern Lebanon.

Syria

The IRGC yesterday claimed to have attacked a US special operations command centre at the al-Tanf military base in Syria, according to Iranian media. Syria has denied that there was an attack on al-Tanf, or that there is a US presence there.

Diplomacy

The US administration has told the media that Tehran is in talks with Washington and is keen to make a deal. This remains unconfirmed by the Iranian government.

Strait of Hormuz

The US military said yesterday evening (16 July) that it had redirected three commercial vessels attempting to break through the US blockade of Iranian ports, one of which was disabled, and another was reportedly boarded by US soldiers.

Shipping data has reported that only three vessels crossed the Strait of Hormuz yesterday, the lowest number since May.

Advice

- Reconsider all travel to Israel, Iran and Lebanon (especially south of the Litani River, Dahiyeh in Beirut, and in the Beqaa Valley).
- Be aware that US facilities throughout the Gulf are potential targets for Iranian attacks, and avoid all such sites whenever possible.
- Monitor international media and relevant embassy/diplomatic advisories to remain aware of any fresh developments and to ensure receipt of all attack warnings, and follow all guidelines.
- Ensure awareness of the nearest shelter in the event of air sirens.
- Avoid any demonstrations or gatherings in the region that appears to be linked to the US/Israel – Iran conflict.
- Globally, reconsider travel to any locations with links to Israel or Judaism.
- Aviation travellers should anticipate schedule changes and limited seat availability, should allow additional connection time and should confirm flight status directly with the operating airline before travelling to the airport.
- If you need further support, or wish to discuss options for evacuation, call NGS.

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