



The United States and Israel attacked Iran yesterday in a major assault that threatened a broader regional conflict, with President Trump vowing to devastate the country's military, eliminate its nuclear programme and bring about a change in its government. Large explosions shook the Iranian capital, Tehran, where people reported seeing smoke rising from the district that includes the presidential palace. Witnesses described chaos in the streets as Iranians rushed to seek shelter, find loved ones or flee the city.

CLOCKWISE FROM CENTRE: Satellite imagery from an alleged Israeli strike on the bunker where Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei was reportedly being guarded. A video grab taken from UGC images posted on social media and verified by AFP teams in Paris shows an explosion in Tehran. Smoke rises following an explosion in Tehran. Vehicles burn in Tehran in this screengrab obtained from a social media video. Vehicles line up during a traffic block. People run for cover following an explosion in Tehran.



PHOTOS: REUTERS/AFP/AGENCIES

'Iran attack is high risk, high reward'

Trump told ahead of strikes: US official

REUTERS, Washington

Ahead of the US attack on Iran, President Donald Trump received briefings that not only delivered blunt assessments about the risk of major US casualties but also touted the prospect of a generational shift in the Middle East in favour of US interests, a US official told Reuters.

The launch of what the Pentagon called "Operation Epic Fury" yesterday plunged the Middle East into a new and unpredictable conflict. The US and Israeli militaries struck sites across Iran, triggering retaliatory Iranian attacks against Israel and nearby Gulf Arab countries.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the briefers described the operation to the president as a high-risk, high-reward scenario.

Trump himself appeared to echo that sentiment when he acknowledged the stakes at the onset of the operation, saying "the lives of courageous American heroes may be lost."

World warns against Mideast war as US-Iran conflict flares

AFP, Paris

Countries around the world voiced fear of a Middle East conflagration after the United States and Israel carried out strikes on Iran yesterday, triggering retaliation from Tehran, which targeted US bases in the region.

UN: 'SEE REASON'

The United Nations' human rights chief condemned the US-Israeli strikes and Iran's response, warning further attacks "would only result in death, destruction and human misery".

"I call for restraint and implore all parties to see reason," Volker Turk said in a statement.

RUSSIA: NUCLEAR 'CATASTROPHE'

Russia slammed the US and Israeli strikes on Iran and argued they were "bringing the region to the brink of a humanitarian, economic, and -- this cannot be ruled out -- radiological catastrophe".

CHINA: 'IMMEDIATE HALT'

China urged "an immediate halt to military actions", with Beijing's foreign ministry insisting that "Iran's national sovereignty, security and territorial integrity should be respected".

QATAR: 'RIGHT TO RESPOND'

Qatar, which hosts a US military base, condemned an Iranian missile attack on its territory and warned it "reserves its full right to respond to this attack".

EU: 'ENSURE NUCLEAR SAFETY'

European Union chief Ursula von der Leyen stressed it was "critical" to "ensure nuclear safety" after the US indicated Iran's atomic sites were in its crosshairs.

NORWAY: 'ISRAEL BROKE INT'L LAW'



I call for restraint and implore all parties to see reason

VOLKER TURK
UN human rights chief

Norway's foreign minister argued that Israel's strikes on Iran broke international law, noting that "a pre-emptive attack would require the existence of an imminent threat".

INDIA: 'DIALOGUE AND DIPLOMACY'

India's foreign ministry insisted that "dialogue and diplomacy should be pursued" while the "sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states must be respected".

UK-FRANCE-GERMANY SLAM IRAN

Britain, France and Germany jointly condemned Iran's retaliatory strikes, with the UK government also expressing fears the situation could escalate "into a wider regional conflict".

The countries said that none of them had taken part in the US-Israeli operation.

Urging a halt to the "dangerous" escalation,

French President Emmanuel Macron also called for an urgent meeting of the UN Security Council.

LEBANON: 'WON'T BE DRAGGED IN'

Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam vowed his country would not be dragged into war after Israel announced it was carrying out strikes targeting Iran proxy Hezbollah in south Lebanon amid the Iran operation.

SHAH'S SON: 'FINAL VICTORY NEAR'

Reza Pahlavi, the son of Iran's last shah and a leading critic of Tehran, claimed "final victory" was near following the strikes. "Together we can take back and rebuild Iran," said Pahlavi -- who lives in exile in the United States.

EGYPT: 'GRAVE RISKS'

Egypt's foreign ministry said it "strongly condemns Iran's targeting of the unity and territorial integrity of brotherly Arab states", warning of "the grave risks this poses to the security and stability of Arab states".

TURKEY: 'CEASE HOSTILITIES'

Turkey's foreign ministry urged "all parties to cease hostilities immediately" as the conflict "risks the future of our region and global stability".

JORDAN: 'WILL DEFEND ITSELF'

Jordan's government urged de-escalation while warning it will defend the kingdom's interests "with all its might". A government spokesman said the country was not part of the conflict.

HAMAS SLAMS US-ISRAEL

Palestinian militant group and Iran ally Hamas condemned the United States and Israel's "aggression" towards Tehran, calling it "a direct assault on the entire region".

Travel chaos grips ME after US strikes Iran

REUTERS, Dubai/London

Airlines suspended flights across the Middle East yesterday, including to and from the world's busiest travel hub, Dubai, after the United States and Israel launched strikes on Iran, plunging the region into a renewed military confrontation.

Flight maps showed airspace over Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Israel and Bahrain virtually empty as Israel said it struck Iran and the U.S. military initiated a series of strikes against targets in the country. Iran retaliated with a salvo of missiles.

Witnesses told Reuters about explosions across the Gulf, including in Qatar's Doha, which hosts the biggest U.S. military base in the Middle East, as well as Abu Dhabi and Dubai in the United Arab Emirates -- key regional transport hubs.

Dubai Airports said all flights at Dubai International, which handled nearly 100 million passengers last year, as well as the smaller Al Maktoum International airport, were suspended

- Airspace closures affect routes between Europe and Asia
- Lufthansa, Wizz Air, others halt flights to affected regions
- EU aviation regulator advises against flying over Middle East amid military operations

until further notice, urging passengers not to travel.

"Due to multiple regional airspace closures, Emirates has temporarily suspended operations to and from Dubai," the Dubai-based carrier said, while its sister airline flydubai said it had temporarily suspended operations.

Eithad Airways said all flights scheduled to depart Abu Dhabi were suspended until 1000 GMT on Sunday, and flights expected to arrive at the Gulf hub before that time would be cancelled. "Flights already en route to Abu Dhabi are returning to their origin airports where required," it added.

STRIKES DEEPEN REGIONAL TURMOIL

The escalation dimmed hopes for a diplomatic solution to Tehran's nuclear dispute with the West and reignited conflict after weeks of U.S. military buildup in the region.

It marks the latest upheaval for air travel in the usually busy region amid escalating tensions. Airports in the Middle East are some of the busiest in the world, covering an area stretching from Iran and Iraq to the Mediterranean and serving as a connecting hub for flights between Europe and Asia.

"Passengers and airlines can expect airspace to be shut for quite some time in the region," said Eric Schouten, head of aviation security advisory Dyami. "The impact on regional aviation is immediate and highly fluid."

FLIGHTS REROUTED, PASSENGERS STRANDED
Airlines have cancelled almost 40% of flights to Israel and 6.7% of flights to the broader region yesterday, according to preliminary Cirium data. That number seems likely to rise.

At Doha's Hamad International Airport, gates appeared almost empty, while stranded passengers queued to make hotel arrangements. There was uncertainty about when flight schedules would resume, a Reuters witness reported.

20 killed in cash-packed military plane crash in Bolivia

AFP, La Paz

At least 20 people were killed when a Bolivian military cargo plane carrying banknotes crashed while landing near the capital city, La Paz, police said Friday, as crowds attempted to loot the site.

The aircraft, a C-130 Hercules transport plane -- manufactured by Lockheed Martin -- veered off the runway at El Alto International Airport and crashed into an avenue, destroying multiple cars and damaging trucks, local media footage showed.

Mangled parts of the aircraft were seen on the road where the plane came down, and bystanders could be seen rushing to grab the scattered cash, prompting police to deploy tear gas to repel the hordes.

Authorities were later seen setting the money alight in a bonfire at the scene of the crash.

It was not immediately known what caused the crash, but witnesses told AFP that the weather had been treacherous.

"A heavy hailstorm" was falling and "there was lightning" when the plane went down, said Cristina Choque, a 60-year-old vendor whose car was struck by aircraft wreckage.



People stand at the site where a Bolivian Air Force Hercules aircraft crashed on Friday evening onto a busy avenue amid inclement weather in the city of El Alto, Bolivia, February 27, 2026.

PHOTO: REUTERS