

US begins B-52 bombing flights over Iran after Trump threatens to “completely obliterate” civilian infrastructure

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The United States has begun bombing Iran with B-52 bombers, setting the stage for a massive increase in the saturation bombing of the country of 90 million as the US-Israeli war of aggression against Iran intensifies. “We’ve successfully started to conduct the first overland B-52 missions,” Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Dan Caine announced Tuesday at a Pentagon briefing.

The B-52 is capable of carrying 70,000 pounds of gravity bombs and nuclear weapons. It is the aircraft at the center of a US bombing campaign that dropped more tonnage on Indochina than was used by all sides in World War II combined, that carpet-bombed Cambodia in a secret campaign that killed an estimated 100,000 civilians, and that leveled entire cities in North Korea—where US bombing destroyed 85 percent of all buildings and killed roughly 20 percent of the population.

The United States, having failed to achieve its war aims through a month of airstrikes, is massively escalating the war. The administration is now turning to the methods it used in Gaza: mass murder and the deliberate destruction of civilian infrastructure.

The B-52 flights follow one day after President Donald Trump threatened to “blow up and completely obliterate” Iran’s power plants, oil wells and “possibly all desalinization plants.” The Trump administration declared from the start that the war would be waged without restraint. On March 2, War Secretary Pete Hegseth announced there would be “no stupid rules of engagement, no nation-building quagmire, no politically correct wars.” He has since vowed “no quarter, no mercy for our enemies” and prayed at a Pentagon Christian service on March 26 for

“overwhelming violence of action against those who deserve no mercy.”

On Monday, Trump shared a 31-second video on Truth Social showing the bombing of Isfahan, Iran’s third-largest city and one of the supreme cultural monuments of human civilization. The footage showed 2,000-pound bunker-buster bombs striking targets south of the city, producing chains of secondary detonations and fireballs detected by weather satellites. Trump offered no caption—just the footage of a great city burning, posted for consumption like any other content on the scroll.

Isfahan is home to the Naqsh-e Jahan Square—one of the largest public squares ever constructed—Imam Mosque, Ali Qapu Palace, Chehel Sotoun Palace and Masjed-e Jameh, the oldest Friday mosque in Iran, a structure in continuous use for nearly a thousand years. All are UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

The city was the capital of the Safavid Empire, a center of Persian science, where Omar Khayyam reformed the calendar and Ibn Sina—Avicenna—worked and wrote. Earlier strikes had already cracked a 17th century Safavid fresco in Chehel Sotoun, sent turquoise tiles from the Friday Mosque crashing to the ground, and shattered calligraphic panels. UNESCO had transmitted the exact coordinates of every protected site to both the United States and Israel. Both governments confirmed receipt. The bombing continued. Iranian officials report that at least 120 cultural and historic sites across the country have been damaged.

The Pentagon said the target was an ammunition depot. But Isfahan also houses the Isfahan Nuclear Technology Centre, Iran’s primary nuclear research facility, and the Isfahan Missile Complex, described as

the country's largest missile assembly and production site. The enriched uranium Washington claims to be destroying now lies beneath the rubble of repeated bombardments in a city of 2.3 million, under conditions that no international inspector can evaluate. Russia's Foreign Ministry warned of "a real risk of catastrophic disaster throughout the Middle East."

At Monday's briefing, Hegseth raised the question of ground troops directly. "You can't fight and win a war if you tell your adversary what you are willing to do or what you are not willing to do, to include boots on the ground," he said. "Our adversary right now thinks there are 15 different ways we could come at them with boots on the ground. And guess what? There are. So if we needed to, we could execute those options on behalf of the president of the United States and this department."

Troops are arriving. Reuters reported Monday that thousands of paratroopers from the 82nd Airborne Division—including a brigade combat team and the division headquarters—have begun deploying to the Middle East. The 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), carrying roughly 2,200 Marines, arrived in the Persian Gulf over the weekend. The 11th MEU is en route aboard the USS Boxer. The USS George H.W. Bush, a nuclear powered aircraft carrier, departed Norfolk on Tuesday with Carrier Air Wing 7 and more than 5,000 sailors—the third carrier strike group committed to the war, making this the largest US naval concentration in the Middle East since 2003.

According to the *Washington Post* Friday, the Pentagon has drawn up plans for ground operations lasting "weeks" and is preparing to deploy 10,000 additional troops. The *Wall Street Journal* reported Sunday that the administration is actively planning a special operations mission to extract nearly 1,000 pounds of enriched uranium from deep underground in Iran.

Despite the overwhelming support within the US political establishment for the Iran war, there is growing recognition among sections of the US media that Trump's war is creating a rapidly spiraling disaster for US imperialism. On Sunday, the *New York Times* published a column by Thomas Friedman, its main foreign policy columnist, who wrote:

President Trump and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel started a war with Iran assuming that they would trigger quick and easy regime change. They vastly underestimated the staying power of Iran's surviving leadership and its military capacity not only to inflict damage on Israel and America's Arab allies but also to close off the most important oil and gas shipping lane in the world.

While Friedman makes this critique as a defender of US imperialism, it captures the recklessness and desperation of the Trump administration, which sees no way out of the deepening crisis triggered by the war except further escalation.

One month of war has produced a catastrophe. The human rights group Hengaw reported at least 6,900 killed in Iran through Day 29, including 720 civilians and 150 children. Iran's Red Crescent reported more than 85,000 civilian structures damaged, including 64,000 homes and 600 schools.

Between 3.2 and 4 million Iranians have been internally displaced. In Lebanon, according to the Health Ministry, more than 1,247 have been killed and 3,600 wounded since Israel launched its assault on March 2. The Pentagon reports that 15 American service members have been killed and more than 300 wounded.



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