Iran Projectile and Malign Activity Tracker Update

The Jewish Institute for National Security of America’s (JINSA) Iran Projectile Tracker presents regularly updated charts and graphs on missiles, rockets, drones, and mortars that Iran and its regional proxies have fired at U.S. personnel, partners, and interests in the Middle East. JINSA regularly updates the data for JINSA’s Iran Projectile Tracker and other Iran-linked malign activity. Below is an update reflecting the major trends from the last month.

1. Iran-linked Projectile Attacks Against U.S. and Maritime Targets

- Iran-backed proxies launched more attacks against U.S. personnel in January (56) than during any other month on record.
  - To date in 2024, Iran-backed proxies have attacked U.S. personnel 17 times in Iraq and 36 times in Syria, including an attack on January 28 that killed three U.S. service members and injured at least 40 others in Jordan.
  - Iran-backed groups in Iraq and Syria launched at least 169 attacks on U.S. personnel since Hamas’s October 7 attack, beginning on October 17.

- In 2024, the United States increased the frequency of its attacks against Iran-backed militia but none of its efforts have deterred Tehran or its proxies from conducting further attacks.
  - U.S. forces continued targeting Iran-backed groups in Iraq and Syria with 25 attacks against Iran-backed groups in just over a month, which included six rounds of airstrikes and beginning to target the Houthis by launching 19 rounds of airstrikes in Yemen.
Following the deadly Iran-backed attack on January 28, the United States struck 85 targets at seven locations in Syria and Iraq on February 2, but Iran-backed militia have since conducted at least three attacks against U.S. personnel.

- So far in 2024, the Houthis have conducted almost as many attacks as in the previous three months combined.
  - The Houthis have conducted 28 drone and missile attacks to date in 2024 and over 67 projectile attacks since the start of the Israel-Hamas war.
  - So far this year, the Houthis launched roughly one-third of the projectiles that they have fired since the Israel-Hamas war began.
    - In January and February 2024, the Houthis launched approximately 60 drones and missiles and have fired over 160 projectiles since the war began.
    - These attacks included the second-largest Houthi strike since the war began. On January 9, the terrorist group launched 18 drones, two anti-ship cruise missiles, and one anti-ship ballistic missile that U.S. and U.K. air and naval assets later intercepted.

2. Total Iran-linked Maritime Aggression

- Once the Israel-Hamas war started, Iranian-linked maritime aggression switched from mostly ship seizures to predominantly Houthi projectile attacks. But Tehran also showed in January 2024 that it maintains the ability to seize commercial vessels.
  - In a direct challenge to U.S. sanctions enforcement, Iran reseized an oil tanker that the United States had previously confiscated for shipping illicit Iranian oil.
  - With 18 Houthi attacks against ships in January and 9 attacks in February, the terrorist group in Yemen conducted the vast majority of Iran-backed maritime aggression this year.
• In 2024, Iran-backed groups have launched larger and more dangerous munitions at U.S. personnel, partner nations, and interests in the Middle East than in previous years.
  » Tehran’s proxies launched more ballistic missiles in January 2024 (52) than the entirety of 2023 (28).
  » Large payload-capable ballistic missiles also represent a far greater portion of the projectiles fired by Iranian proxies in 2024 (38%) compared to 2023 (7%). Conversely, Iran-backed militia have launched a smaller percentage of smaller payload-carrying drones (44%) this year compared to 2023 (51%) and similarly fired a smaller percentage of short- and medium-ranged rockets in 2024 (14%) compared to 2023 (36%).

4. Iran-linked Malign Activity Against the United States
• There have already been nearly half as many incidents of Iran-linked malign activity that targeted the United States or U.S. personnel abroad during 2024 (72) as the entirety of 2023 (150).
  » This was largely due to the 56 attacks against U.S. personnel during January 2024.
While Iran-linked malign activity against the United States has been unprecedentedly high throughout the Biden administration, it has skyrocketed approximately 1,750% since the October 7, 2023 attack.

Malign activity includes incidents of projectile strikes, maritime aggression, major cyber intrusions and hacking, kidnappings/wrongful detentions, terrorist attacks, and weapons tests/production/reveals.