



Iran War Update: July 21, 2026

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President Donald Trump and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on June 17, outlining terms to end the war and reopen the Strait of Hormuz over a 60-day period of further negotiations. However, on July 8, President Trump [declared](#) the MOU to be “over,” and both sides have resumed exchanging fire. JINSA continues to re-release regular updates about the conflict. The update below includes information since [JINSA's last update](#) as of July 21 at 10:00 am ET.

Iranian missiles and drones launched since June 14 U.S.-Iran MOU announcement: **At least 326** (19 between July 20–21)

Ships that have seemingly breached the U.S. blockade: **2**

Ships transiting Strait of Hormuz since June 14 MOU announcement: **At least 673** (at least 9 between July 20–July 21)

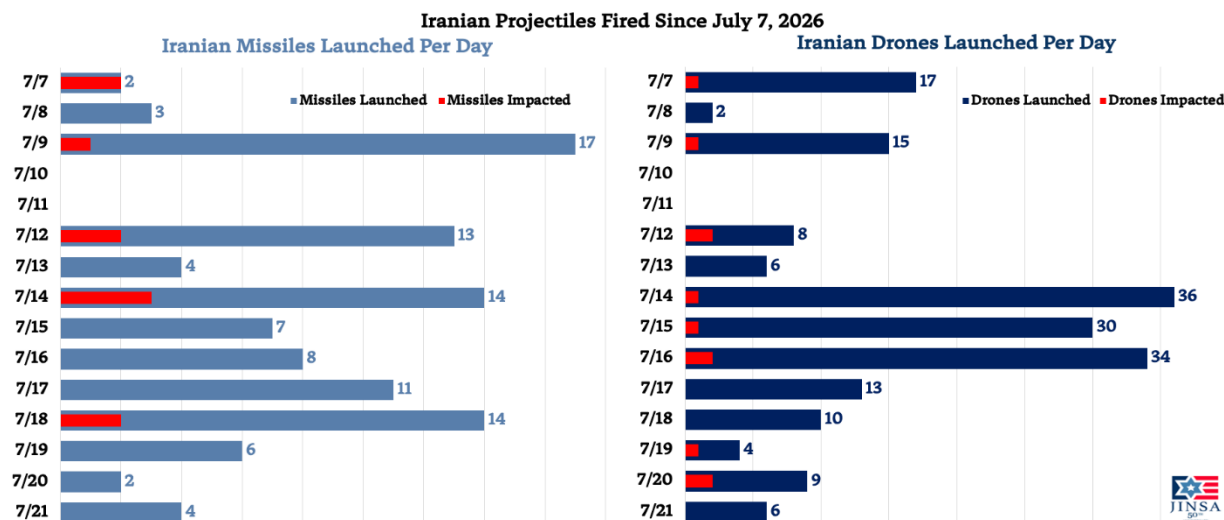
Daily average of ships transiting Strait of Hormuz since June 14 MOU announcement: **17.6**

Daily average of ships transiting Strait of Hormuz prior to the Iran war: **138**

1. Overview

- On July 20, “U.S. forces struck Iranian military command centers, maritime capabilities, missile and drone launch sites, and air defense systems to degrade Iran's ability to continue attacking commercial vessels flowing through the Strait of Hormuz,” according to a [statement](#) from U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM).
- On July 20–21, Iran conducted at least 13 missile and drone attacks against Kuwait, Bahrain, and commercial vessels, including a hit against a [desalination plant](#) in Kuwait and two [projectiles](#) that [struck](#) ships.
- On July 20, President Trump [threatened](#) on Truth Social that “Every time Iran kills an American Soldier they will pay for that killing many times over! This directive has been passed on to Secretary of War, Pete Hegseth, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Daniel Caine, and every Leader in the Military.”
- On July 20, *The Washington Post* [reported](#) that a new American intelligence assessment has concluded that Iran is unlikely to be greatly impacted by current U.S. strikes.
 - » The *Post* reported, “Iran’s government is unlikely to feel significant impact or soften its negotiating position as a result of new rounds of U.S. military strikes like those now underway, according to [the] intelligence assessment.”

- On July 20, *The Wall Street Journal* [reported](#) that Israeli intelligence believes Iran moved centrifuges to the deeply buried Pickaxe Mountain facility last fall after the 12-Day War.
 - » President Trump had suggested on July 13 that the United States could strike the location soon but added “we see no activity there. They’re not doing well with their nuclear situation.”
- The Pentagon [confirmed](#) on July 20 that nearly 100 U.S. servicemembers have been wounded since major hostilities with Iran resumed early this month. The vast majority have returned to duty after suffering minor concussions, according to the Pentagon.



2. Diplomatic Engagement

Iran

- On July 21, Iranian Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni [met](#) with mediators in Pakistan to discuss the collapsed U.S.-Iran MOU despite the continued strike exchanges between American and Iranian forces.
- On July 20, a U.S. official [told](#) Axios's Barak Ravid that negotiations with Iran over the Strait of Hormuz were continuing despite President Trump vowing to make Tehran “pay” for violating the U.S.-Iran memorandum of understanding, continuing attacks in the Strait, and the deaths of U.S. service members.

Lebanon

- On July 20, the Israel Defense Forces [announced](#) that the “Safe Zone” pilot program in southern Lebanon had begun, with Israeli, U.S., and Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) personnel coordinating and planning the agreement’s implementation.
- On July 20, the LAF [announced](#) that they were coordinating with the U.S.-led Military Coordination Group for Lebanon (MCG4L) to deploy to Zawtar al-Gharbiya following Israel’s withdrawal from the town.
 - » The LAF also said it was continuing patrols in Froun and Srifa, two towns within one of the pilot zones established under the U.S.-brokered framework agreement.

3. U.S. and Israeli Operations

Iran

- On the evening of July 20, CENTCOM [posted](#) to X, writing, “U.S. forces struck Iranian military command centers, maritime capabilities, missile and drone launch sites, and air defense

systems to degrade Iran's ability to continue attacking commercial vessels flowing through the Strait of Hormuz."

- » Overnight, *Iran International*, citing Iranian media, [reported](#) that several cities throughout Iran were targeted in the attacks, including Abadan, Bandar Abbas, Bandar Lengeh, Bushehr, Chabahar, Konarak, Qeshm Island, Shiraz, and Sirik.

Lebanon

- The LAF [claimed](#) on July 21 that Israeli forces opened fire in the vicinity of Lebanese troops in the pilot zone area of Zawtar al-Gharbiya. Israel transferred operational control of Zawtar al-Gharbiya to Lebanon's military in recent days.

4. Iranian and Proxy Operations

Lebanon

- On July 21, Syrian authorities announced that they had intercepted 226 grenades that were concealed inside a vehicle traveling towards Lebanon—a shipment likely intended for Hezbollah.

Bahrain

- On July 21, Bahrain's military [announced](#) on X that its air defenses shot down "a number of Iranian aerial aggressions" targeting the Gulf nation.
- On July 20–21, Iran conducted at least seven separate [attacks](#) against Bahrain.

Iraq

- On the evening of July 20, informed security sources [claimed](#) that a drone fitted with explosives was intercepted near the al-Harir air base in Iraq where American troops are housed.

Jordan

- On the morning of July 21, Jordan's military [announced](#) that its forces "neutralized" five Iranian drones targeting the Kingdom.
- On the evening of July 20, Jordan's air defenses [intercepted](#) three Iranian ballistic missiles. The attack did not cause any casualties or damage.

Kuwait

- On July 21, Kuwait's Ministry of Electricity [announced](#) that the day prior, Iranian forces struck numerous water desalination and power plants for a fourth day in a row, igniting fires at the facilities.
- In the early morning hours of July 21, Iran's state news agency [claimed](#) that it "targeted the HIMARS missile systems of the US terrorist army stationed at the Arifjan base in Kuwait with surface-to-surface missiles."
- On July 20–21, Iran conducted at least five separate [attacks](#) against Kuwait.

Maritime

- On July 20, the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) Center [reported](#) that a vessel was struck by an unknown projectile in the Arabian Sea off the coast of Dibba, United Arab Emirates.
- On July 20, the UKMTO [updated](#) its July 19 report, reclassifying the vessel fire that JINSA reported in yesterday's update as an attack by an unknown projectile.

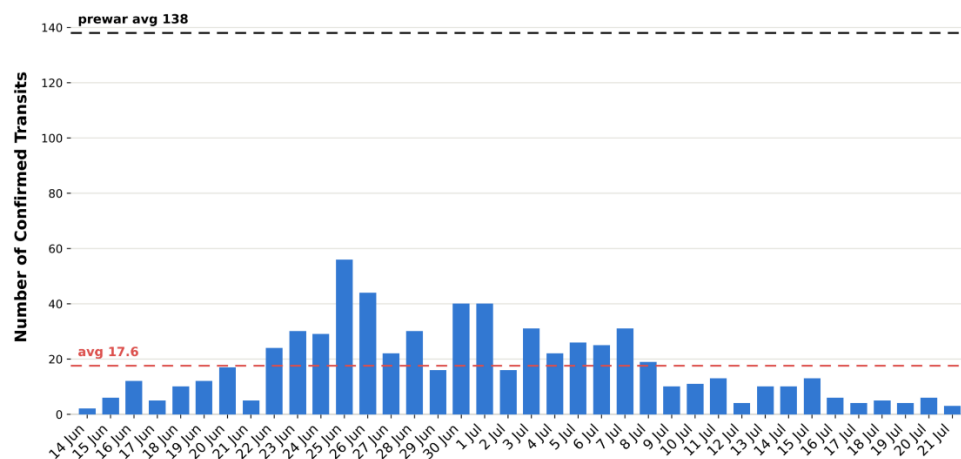
5. International Response

- On July 20, French Foreign Minister Jean-Noël Barrot [claimed](#) that two French diplomats stationed in Iran were interrogated and “detained for several hours without reason,” while one of them was subject to physical abuse.
 - Foreign Minister Barrot called the incident “an extremely serious act of intimidation” and confirmed that the two diplomats were later allowed to return to the French embassy.
 - On July 21, France [summoned](#) Tehran’s chargé d’affaires to the foreign ministry in Paris in response to the diplomats’ detentions.

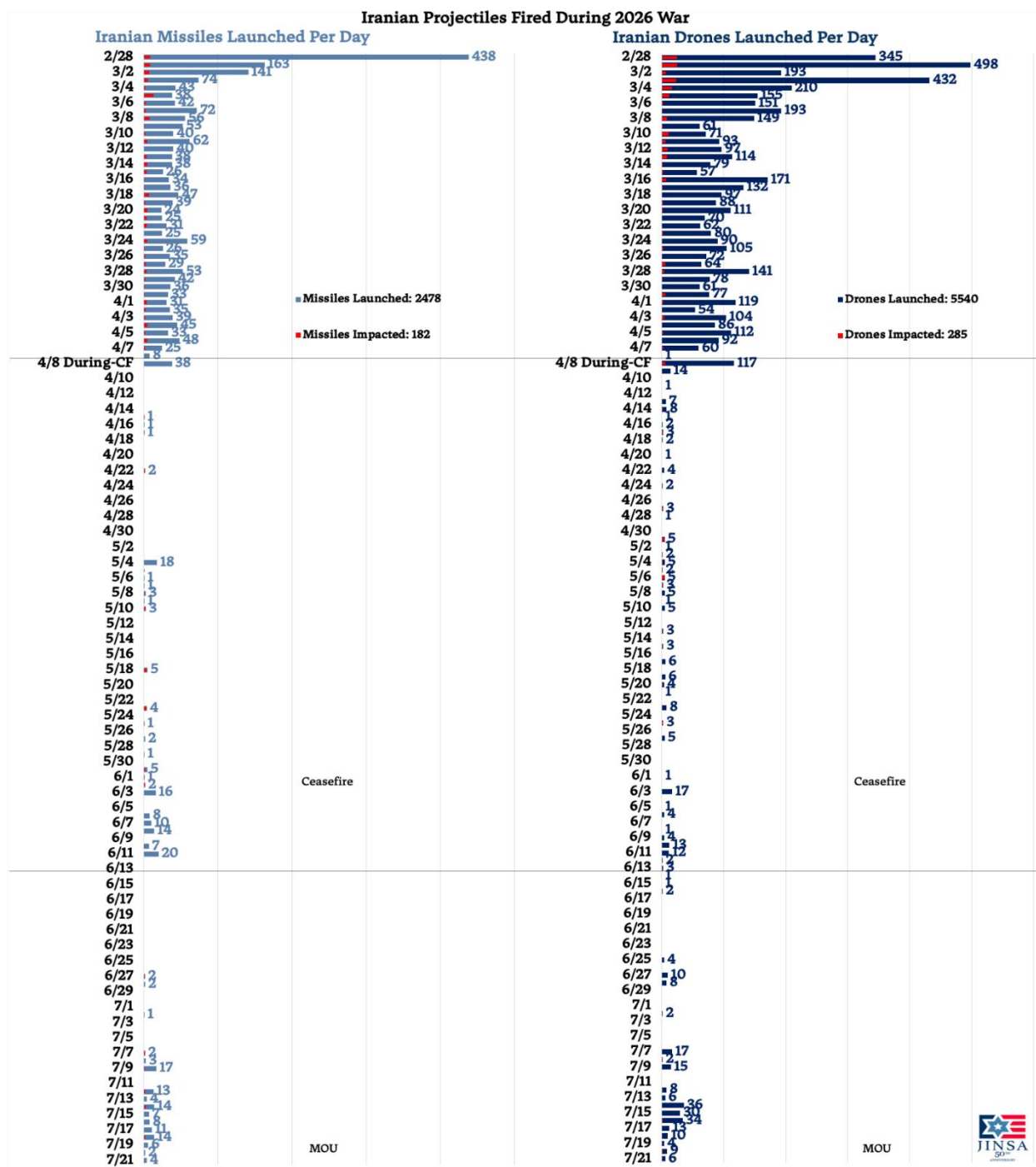
Estimated Casualties of Iranian Operations			JINSA
Country	Killed	Injured	Notes
United States	17	404+	1 missing; 10 seriously wounded; 100 wounded in July; 358+ returned to duty
Israel	65+	7,795+	Killed include 26 civilians and 39 killed fighting Hezbollah (38 soldiers, 1 contractor)
Iran	3,688+	26,520+	Includes 1,221+ military; Iran International reports 4,700+ security personnel killed
Azerbaijan	—	4	All civilians
Bahrain	3	46	Killed include a Moroccan contractor; injured include 5 Emirati soldiers
Iraq	127	Several	Includes 28 in Iraqi Kurdistan
Jordan	—	31+	
Kuwait	8	161+	Injured includes 90 soldiers
Lebanon	4,328	12,229	Figures do not distinguish Hezbollah operatives from civilians
Oman	3+	17+	
Qatar	7	23	Killed occurred in March 22 helicopter crash
Saudi Arabia	3	23	Killed include 1 Saudi national and 2 foreign nationals
Syria	4+	Several	
United Arab Emirates	12	230	
International Waters	10	Several	

Data compiled by JINSA from various sources.

Commercial Ships Transiting Strait of Hormuz Since MOU



Figures derived from Kpler shipping data reviewed by JINSA.



6. JINSA Resources

- Jonathan Ruhe and Ari Cicurel, [Arsenal of Procrastination: The United States Must Expand Munitions Production, Not Merely Replenish](#), July 21, 2026
- Jonathan Ruhe, [“The Long, Dark Shadow of the Iran Nuclear Deal,”](#) *The Dispatch*, July 17, 2026
- Yoni Tobin, [Oil For Tehran, Not Us: Removing Iran’s Strait Jacket on Global Energy Flows](#), July 8, 2026

- John Hannah, "[How Trump Can Win Back Allies and Rejuvenate U.S. Diplomacy on Iran](#)," *The Hill*, July 5, 2026
- Michael Makovsky, PhD, and Blaise Misztal, "[Getting on Base: Israel is the Solution to Vulnerability of U.S. Bases in the Gulf](#)," July 2, 2026
- Hussein Aboubakr Mansour, "[The Unmaking of America's Persian Gulf Order](#)," June 26, 2026
- Jonathan Ruhe, "[How the MOU's 'Nuclear Status Quo' Negates a Good Iran Deal](#)," June 24, 2026
- Michael Makovsky, PhD, John Hannah, Blaise Misztal, and Jonathan Ruhe, "[Reversal of Fortunes: The U.S.-Iran Memorandum of Understanding](#)," June 23, 2026
- Ari Cicurel, "[Trump Went to War to End Iran's Missile Threat. Now He Endorses It](#)," *Jewish News Syndicate*, June 23, 2026
- [Infographic - The Iran MOU: Did the U.S. Understand the Assignment?](#), June 18, 2026
- Michael Makovsky, PhD, "[Epic Fury Ends with a Flop](#)," *Jewish News Syndicate*, June 17, 2026
- Blaise Misztal, "[Uncertifiable and Illegal, but Probably Unstoppable: Congress Must Review the Iran MOU](#)," June 17, 2026
- Michael Makovsky, PhD, "[The Origins of the Iran Deal](#)," June 16, 2026
- Sarah Havdala, "[While the War Raged On: Repression in Iran](#)," June 16, 2026
- [Infographic: What's the Deal with the Deal?](#) June 12, 2026
- John Hannah, "[Trump Is Stuck and His Iran Leverage Is Spent](#)," *The Washington Examiner*, June 12, 2026
- Jonathan Ruhe, "[We Need a Long-Term Strategy to Deal With Iran](#)," *The Dispatch*, June 11, 2026
- Maj Gen Charles Corcoran, USAF (ret.) and Yoni Tobin, "[What the Iran War Shows About the Future of Warfighting](#)," *RealClearDefense*, June 8, 2026
- Michael Makovsky, PhD, and Blaise Misztal, "[Trump Is Lost on Iran](#)," June 5, 2026