

Pakistan Army Kills 24 Taliban, Baloch Militants During Raids, Weapons Seized

Ishlamabad, 17 July : Pakistani security forces raided multiple militant hideouts in the country's northwest region, killing Pakistani Taliban and seizing a cache of weapons, the military and local officials said. The military said Friday it used intelligence sources to target militants in operations carried out over the previous day that killed 24 members of the outlawed Pakistani Taliban and Baloch separatist groups.

The military said in a statement that the raids came in response to a pair of militant attacks on Wednesday, including a suicide bomber who used a vehicle packed with explosives to ram police officers and civilians. A little-known militant group also targeted a police station and wounded several officers in Bannu, a district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province bordering Afghanistan.

Pakistan's President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif praised the security forces on Friday for what they described as a swift and effective action against those responsible for recent attacks in Bannu. The two men said in separate statements that eliminating terrorism remained the government's top priority and vowed to bring perpetrators to justice.

The Pakistani Taliban, known as Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, or TTP, are separate from but allied with the Afghan Taliban government, which Pakistan frequently accuses of turning a blind eye to cross-border militant attacks. Afghanistan's government in Kabul repeatedly rejects the claims, although the TTP and Baloch separatist group BLA frequently claim responsibility for attacks in Pakistan.

Since last year, Pakistan has carried out multiple strikes it says targeted TTP hideouts along the Afghan border. The Pakistani government in the capital Islamabad also alleges the groups receive support from India to the south, which the Indian government in New Delhi denies. In their statements Friday, the president and prime minister repeated the allegation. Pakistan's security forces intend to press ahead with Azm-e-Istehkam, or "Resolve for Stability," a nationwide counterterrorism campaign approved last year under the National Action Plan to dismantle militant networks across the country, the military said.

Iranian army spokesman Brigadier General Mohammad Akraminia said on Thursday that the Strait of Hormuz, which carried about a fifth of global oil and gas shipments before the war, was a "red line" for Iran over which it maintains firm control. "The Americans thought that by attacking some of our bases on the southern coasts of the country, they could take control of this strategic strait," Akraminia said.

"However, the Islamic Republic of Iran has the ability to exert control over the Strait of Hormuz from every single point of its territory, and this matter is never dependent on coasts and islands." Three U.S. officials told Reuters that U.S. strikes aimed at forcing open the strait are also targeting Iranian military capabilities the U.S. would want to destroy before executing more complex operations.

Iran's army earlier said in reference to the strait: "We will undoubtedly resist until the end and will neutralize American interventions in the region". Iran's military spokesperson has said that the only way to reopen the Strait of Hormuz was for the U.S. to comply with the 14-point memorandum of understanding that the two sides signed in June, and the implementation of "Iranian regulations" regarding ship traffic in the strait.

"Nightmare": Trump Claims China Interfered In 2020 US Polls, Beijing Responds

Washington, 17 July : US President Donald Trump has accused China of compromising the American election data. He said he would declassify intelligence on "shocking vulnerabilities" in the system, escalating his claims that the 2020 presidential election -- that Trump lost to Joe Biden -- was stolen from him. Trump claimed US midterm elections are "vulnerable to being rigged and stolen" unless radical changes are made to the voting system in ways that will make it much harder for voters to cast ballots.

"Over a period of years, starting during the 2020 election cycle, the People's Republic of China carried out what is believed to be the largest compromise of election data in history, resulting in China's illicit acquisition of 220 million US voter files," the US leader said in a televised prime-time address from the White House. He accused members of the deep state worked to cover China's data fraud. "This data loss presents an unprecedented election security nightmare," he said.

Trump said America's election system "falls catastrophically short" of an accurate and fair system.

"Every American deserves to know that when they cast their vote, that vote will be counted accurately in a system, and that is to make that system secure -- one where cheating and interference are not just difficult, but virtually impossible," he said.

"Unfortunately, the system we have today falls catastrophically short

of that standard. Tonight, I'm announcing the immediate declassification and release of critical intelligence, revealing shocking vulnerabilities in our election infrastructure. This evidence shows that the election system we have dangerously exposes and really exposes like levels never thought possible to hacking," Trump added.

Allegations of Beijing collecting US voter data are not new. A 2020 re-



port by the National Intelligence Officer for Cyber, partially declassified in 2022, said Chinese intelligence officials analyzed voter registration data from multiple American states to conduct "public opinion analysis."

However, more than 60 lawsuits by Trump and his allies produced no ruling establishing fraud capable of changing the outcome of the 2020 election, while recounts, audits, and

his own Justice Department found none.

Trump closed out his 24-minute speech by urging the passage of the SAVE Act. The bill, known as the Safeguard American Voter Eligibility Act, would require documentary proof of US citizenship for anyone registering to vote -- something voting rights groups have warned could disenfranchise millions of Americans.

Noncitizen voting is illegal

lion-dollar-in-value airwaves for absolutely no money. They pay nothing," he said, calling out ABC and NBC by name.

The Chinese Embassy in the US has reacted to Trump's allegations. Embassy spokesperson Liu Chang said, "China has all along adhered to the principle of non-interference in other's internal affairs. The US election is an internal matter of the U.S. Its outcome is determined by the votes of the American people. China has never and will never interfere in the presidential elections of the US."

But these billboards rarely have such lucid messaging. It coincides with the vengeance seen in recent weeks among the Iranian public on behalf of Ali Khamenei and others killed in US-Israeli strikes. Recently, a conservative newspaper in Iran also published a list of people to be targeted as revenge for the killing of Khamenei, including the leaders of the US, Israel, and European countries.

The list features photos of 13 foreign leaders, including US President Donald Trump, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, among others.

"We're looking at Pickaxe because somebody said there's a little activity. We have cameras, they can read your name and a badge from space and every area of Pickaxe. If they make any move, we immediately go and do whatever we have to do."

Iran Strikes US Airbase In Qatar "To Punish The Aggressor"

Tehran, 17 July: Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps said Friday that they had targeted US radar systems and military aircraft in Qatar to "punish the aggressor" following overnight US strikes on Iran. "In continuation of last night's retaliatory operations, the brave fighters of the IRGC's Aerospace Force... carried out a heavy and surprise attack on the US airbase at al-Udeid, Qatar, to punish the aggressor and the child-killing US military," the IRGC said in a statement.

The boat, called Ocean Pearl Island, was carrying about 32 Indian tourists, three crew members, and a Vietnamese guide toward An Thoi International Port when it went down around 1 pm on July 11, roughly 400 metres off Hon Mai Rut Ngaoi island. Officials say the weather deteriorated rapidly.

The first people on the scene, Khoa says, weren't soldiers or coast guard personnel—they were local residents. Under Vietnam's "four-on-the-spot" emergency system, nearby residents used their own boats and headed out within minutes while alerting authorities. Border guards, the military, police, coast guard, navy, and medical teams followed soon after, working through high waves and strong winds that also put rescuers at risk. All 36 people on board were eventually pulled from the water and brought ashore, where locals began CPR and first aid before medical teams arrived to transfer the injured to hospitals in Ho Chi Minh City. Despite those efforts, 15 people died. Seventeen others remained hospitalized for treatment. Behind the scenes, Khoa describes extensive coordination between Vietnamese officials, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, provincial leaders, hospital administrators,

and Indian diplomats in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. An Giang's provincial chief flew to the island to oversee the response. A hospital director also arrived on the afternoon of the accident. Police expedited procedures so the bodies of the victims could be repatriated quickly at the request of India's Consulate General. By July 13, all 15 victims had been flown back to India, arriving that night. Khoa says the effort was made to respect the wishes of the bereaved families.

One tourist, whose recovery has been complicated by pre-existing health conditions, remains in intensive care at Cho Ray Hospital with specialist treatment.

Khoa says the province is covering all medical and transportation costs. He also states that India's ambassador and consul general thanked Vietnam for its response, describing the country as a "trusted friend" during a difficult time.

Iran Claims It Downed MQ-9 Drone As US Strikes Damage Children's Cancer Hospital

Tehran, 17 July : The United States carried out a fresh round of airstrikes on Iran overnight and renewed a blockade of its ports, while Tehran targeted American allies in the Middle East as it vowed to keep the Strait of Hormuz closed "until the US ends its aggression." In Iran, explosions were heard in several locations, including Qeshm Island, Bandar Abbas, Sirik, Chabahar, Konarak, Rask City, Khondab, and the western city of Khorramabad, according to a report by Al Jazeera.

Explosions were also heard in Ahvaz, where Iran's



Mehr News Agency reported that Shahid Baghaei Hospital was impacted by the American bombardment, damaging its child cancer treatment department. As a result, the hospital, which provides chemotherapy treatment for cancer patients, including children, had to be evacuated.

The American strikes also hit an Iranian army barracks, killing at least seven troops and wounding hundreds of people across the country, Iranian officials said. Overall, Tehran said at least 35 people have been killed, and more than 300 people have been injured in Ameri-

can strikes so far.

Air defence systems were also activated in the Iranian capital, Tehran, to "counter hostile threats," state media reported. Earlier reports also cited blasts around southern sites including Qeshm and Bandar Imam Khomeini, while state media later said fresh US strikes hit Bushehr, home to Iran's only civilian nuclear plant.

US Central Command (CENTCOM) said it targeted Iranian military capabilities used to threaten vessels freely transiting the vital waterway. The US military also said one of its aircraft fired on and dis-

abled an empty oil tanker that was trying to break the naval blockade of Iran's ports. Central Command said the Curacao-flagged M/T Belma was stopped after the aircraft fired Hellfire missiles into the ship's smokestack. "The ship is no longer transiting to Iran," it said on X.

In response, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) said they targeted the US Fifth Fleet in Bahrain, where air sirens rang out as attacks against civilian targets were intercepted, while Jordan's armed forces said they had downed three missiles from the Is-

lamic Republic.

IRGC also claimed it has intercepted and destroyed an "enemy" MQ-9 drone over the southwestern city of Andimeshk, according to the Tasnim news agency. The Iranian force said the aircraft was brought down by a new air defence system operated by its aerospace force.

In Iraq, Kurdish forces said the US-led coalition downed eight explosive-laden drones over Erbil, the capital of the northern Kurdistan region, where AFP journalists heard explosions and saw smoke near the US consulate. No casualties were reported. Amid the ongoing hostilities in the Middle East, the US State Department has said that it has "made a determination approving a possible" \$1.96bn weapons sale to Saudi Arabia and a separate \$484m aircraft sustainment package for Kuwait.

According to the State Department, the proposed Saudi deal includes up to 20,000 Advanced Precision Kill Weapon System guidance sections for air-to-air and air-to-ground use, along with warheads, launchers, training and logistical support and spare parts.

The Kuwait package, it said, includes sustainment and related equipment for C-17 aircraft, including components, software, maintenance support, training, and logistics services. The proposal will go through a congressional review before being approved. Soon after the US launched its third wave of strikes in 24 hours, Trump said Iran was ready to strike a peace deal.



Turkey's Grand National Assembly's speaker Numan Kurtulmus, center, and other politic leaders place red carnations to honor the victims of failed coup attempt against the government in 2016, in Ankara, Turkey,

Qatar Jet Leak Probe Intensifies, US Officials Asked To Hand Over Phones

Qatar, 17 July: White House officials were asked to hand over their phones as the Trump administration stepped up its investigation into leaks about a Qatari-gifted plane expected to be used as Air Force One.

White House Chief of Staff Susie Wiles and FBI Director Kash Patel led the investigation after President Donald Trump expressed anger over reports detailing security deficiencies in the Qatari-gifted aircraft, according to CNN.

"Leaks that jeopardize the safety of the president, his staff and the traveling press pool are dangerous and a threat to national security. The White House takes these leaks seriously and will do everything legally within its legal power to ensure the individual or individuals are caught and it does not happen again," a White House official said, according to the NY Times.

The investigation became public after The New York Times reported that the US Justice Department had issued

subpoenas to four of its journalists who wrote about the plane's security issues. The newspaper has challenged the subpoenas in court, calling them "abusive and improper."

Investigators also questioned officials, including members of the US Secret Service who travelled with Trump on the Qatari plane trip to Turkey last week. Some officials were asked to hand over their phones, although not everyone agreed to do so. The Secret Service also instructed its employees to direct any requests from outside investigators to the agency's lawyers.

Todd Blanche, the acting attorney general, said, "We're not targeting reporters — they're material witnesses, just like a reporter would be a material witness to a car crash," Mr. Blanche said, adding, "The question we want to ask them is who provided them with classified national security information."

The official said the administration considers such leaks a threat to national

security and will use all legal means to identify those responsible.

According to CNN, after Trump arrived in Turkey for the NATO summit on the Qatari-gifted aircraft, security officials reviewed the plane and decided it was not safe enough for his return journey. White House Chief of Staff Susie Wiles then informed Trump that he would have to fly back on the older Air Force One instead "for old time's sake."

However, The New York Times reported that he switched planes because the Secret Service had security concerns about the new aircraft. Another report said the plane does not have the same defensive systems as the current Air Force One. "The ongoing protests in PoJK are a direct consequence of Pakistan's decades-long systemic exploitation, denial of fundamental rights, and administrative oppression in areas under its illegal and forcible occupation," said Randhir Jaiswal, the official spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs.

3 Policemen Killed, 34 Injured In 2 Terrorist Attacks In Pakistan

Indian-origin astronaut Anil Menon launched from the historic Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan along with Russian cosmonauts

Ishlamabad, 17 July : Three policemen were killed and 34 injured after terrorists attacked a police convoy and a police station in separate incidents in Pakistan's restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, officials said. Terrorists attacked a police station in Lower Dir district with hand grenades and automatic weapons on Wednesday, killing three police personnel and injuring 19. Police said the attack occurred near Ladam Top at Haider when the convoy was passing through the area. The assailants first hurled hand grenades and then opened heavy fire on the convoy.

During the assault, the attackers also set two police vehicles ablaze. The injured personnel were shifted to hospitals, where they

were receiving medical treatment.

Police said further details would be shared once the situation became clearer. Security forces have since cordoned off the area and launched a search operation to trace the attackers. In a separate incident, security forces foiled a suicide attack on the Miryan Police Station in Bannu district after intercepting and destroying an explosives-laden vehicle before it could reach its target, the officials said.

Four attackers were killed during the exchange of fire. Fifteen police personnel were injured in the attack, of whom 10 were critically wounded. They were referred to the Peshawar district for treatment. Bannu District Police Officer Captain (Retd) Muhammad Furqan



Bilal confirmed the incident and said the situation was being assessed, adding that details regarding casualties would be shared later.

According to initial reports, the attackers attempted to ram the

bomb-filled vehicle into the police station. However, police personnel, backed by security forces, opened fire, destroying the vehicle before it reached the premises.

The officials said the assailants subsequently attempted to

storm the police station, but the attack was repulsed.

A heavy contingent of police and other law enforcement agencies rushed to the spot, cordoned off the area and launched a search and clearance operation.

Authorities said investigations were underway, while details regarding casualties, damage and other aspects of the incident would be released after verification.

In April, a suicide car bomb attack at the Domel Police Station in Bannu killed at least five civilians, while 13 others were injured, including one policeman. The terrain in the reservoir area has a loose structure and weak cohesion, warning that fault activity, earthquakes and prolonged immersion

could easily trigger instability in the slopes on both sides of the reservoir, they added.

The Yarlung Tsangpo downstream hydropower project, construction of which began last year, is expected to generate around 300 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity annually, with a capacity nearly three times that of China's Three Gorges Dam.

"Since the Pai village area is located within the construction zone of the Yarlung Tsangpo downstream hydropower project, its records of Quaternary tectonic activity provide an important basis for exploring the structural stability of nearby projects," the team said.

Researchers said geological records indicate that the Paizhen