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## US Military Strikes Suspected Drug Boats, Eleven Killed



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WASHINGTON, Feb. 17: The United States military carried out coordinated strikes on three vessels in the eastern Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea, killing 11 people, U.S. Southern Command confirmed Tuesday.

According to the command, four individuals were killed on each of two vessels in the eastern

Pacific, while three others died on a third vessel in the Caribbean. The military said intelligence assessments identified the boats as operating along established narcotics-trafficking routes and allegedly engaged in drug-smuggling activities. No U.S. personnel were reported injured in the operation.

U.S. authorities have not publicly presented evidence regarding the vessels, cargo, or identities of those killed. The strikes form part of an expanded U.S. campaign targeting suspected maritime drug-trafficking networks across Latin American waters.

Since September, U.S. forces have conducted roughly 40 publicly known strikes against alleged drug-smuggling boats in the Caribbean and eastern Pacific, resulting in more than 130 deaths, according to official statements and independent reporting.

The latest action follows renewed operations that resumed in late January after a U.S. military raid earlier in the month targeting Venezuelan leadership, marking a further escalation in Washington's anti-narcotics strategy in the region.