

US Intensifies Airstrikes on Iran as Operation Epic Fury Escalates



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WASHINGTON, March 10—The United States signaled a major escalation in its military campaign against Iran, with Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth announcing that Tuesday would mark the most intense day of strikes since the launch of Operation Epic Fury.

Speaking at a news conference alongside Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Dan Caine,

Hegseth said the operation had entered its tenth day and was progressing with increasing intensity. He noted that the day would see the largest number of fighter jets, bombers, and coordinated strikes carried out inside Iran.

Hegseth outlined the key objectives of the campaign: destroying Iran's missile stockpiles and launch systems, dismantling its defense industrial base related to missile production, crippling its naval forces, and preventing Tehran from developing nuclear weapons capability.

"We will not relent until the enemy is totally and decisively defeated," he said, without specifying when the operation might conclude.

According to Gen. Caine, US forces have struck more than 5,000 Iranian targets during the first ten days of the campaign. He added that more than 50 Iranian naval vessels had been destroyed, while US Central Command continues operations targeting mine-laying ships and storage facilities.

Despite the ongoing conflict, Caine said US forces were closely monitoring Iran's military actions and adapting rapidly to developments on the ground.

Iran has responded with missile and drone strikes targeting Israel and Gulf countries hosting US military assets. Hegseth described the attacks on neighboring states as a serious miscalculation by Tehran, saying they exposed the regime's approach to indiscriminate targeting.

He also warned that any attempt by Iran to disrupt shipping through the strategic Strait of Hormuz

would draw a strong response, reiterating that the waterway must remain secure for global energy flows.

The Pentagon chief said the United States takes extensive precautions to avoid civilian casualties and investigates reported incidents when they occur.

Officials emphasized that the operation's primary goal remains neutralizing Iran's missile and military capabilities to ensure it cannot threaten regional stability or project nuclear power.