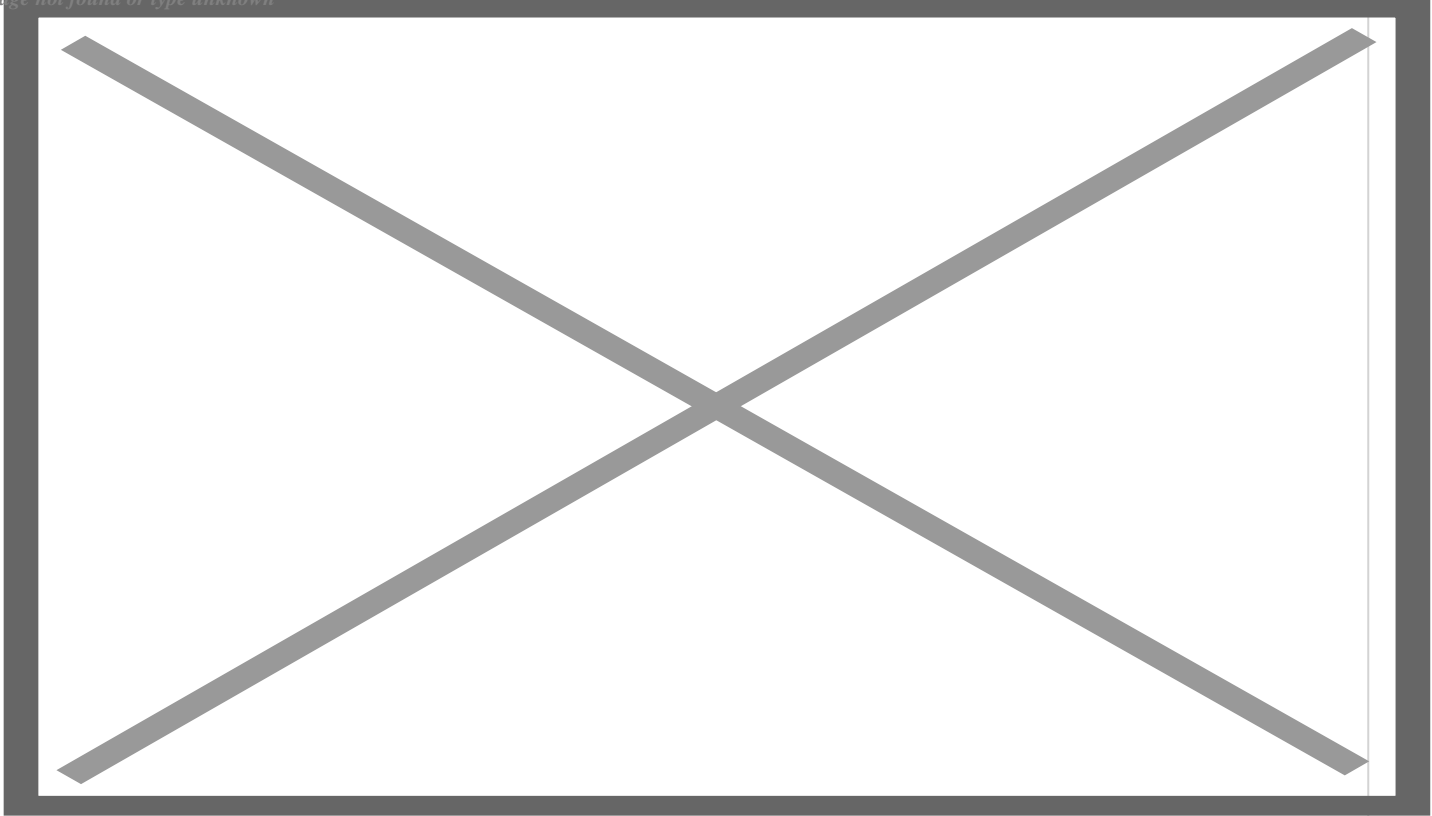


U.S. flies two B-52s over Persian Gulf amid tensions with Iran

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**U.S. Air Force B-52H Stratofortress bomber takes off from Andersen Air Force Base, Guam.
(Photo: Getty Images)**

Washington, December 10 (RHC)-- The U.S. military has flown two B-52H bombers from Louisiana to the Middle East as tensions mount in the region following the assassination of a prominent Iranian nuclear scientist.

U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) said in a statement on Thursday that the two Air Force "Stratofortresses" flew nonstop from Barksdale Air Force Base, across Europe and then the Persian Gulf on a short-notice mission.

Aircraft from Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Qatar flew with the U.S. jets during portions of the one and a half day-long flight, a senior US military official told NBC News. "Potential adversaries should understand that no nation on earth is more ready and capable of rapidly deploying additional combat power in the face of

any aggression,” said Gen. Frank McKenzie, who is head of CENTCOM. “We do not seek conflict, but we must remain postured and committed to respond to any contingency or in opposition to any aggression.”

Days ago, the U.S. military moved the USS Nimitz aircraft carrier back into the Persian Gulf along with other warships. A U.S. military official told the CNN that the deployment was meant to provide “combat support and air cover” for American troops withdrawing from Iraq and Afghanistan by January 15 before President Donald Trump leaves office.

The announcement came following the assassination of Iranian physicist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, the head of the Defense Ministry's Organization of Defensive Innovation and Research (SPND). Fakhrizadeh, the head of the Iranian Defense Ministry's Organization of Defensive Innovation and Research, was targeted in a terrorist attack in the city of Absard, Tehran Province's Damavand County, on November 27th.

Fakhrizadeh's death came two years after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, during an erroneous presentation about Iran's nuclear activities, warned the world to “remember that name.” The spokesman for the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) said last week satellite equipment was used in the assassination of Fakhrizadeh.

Brigadier General Ramezan Sharif said, “Advanced electronic instruments guided by satellite were used in the assassination of Martyr Fakhrizadeh.” He added that “the Zionists are well aware that their measures [against Iran] will not go unanswered and this issue has been proven to them in the past.”

Iran's President Hassan Rouhani has said the assassination by ‘Zionist elements’ was a grave and inhumane crime aimed at curbing the Iranian march toward scientific progress. “The Zionists are well aware that their measures against Iran will not go unanswered.”

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