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## Iran and US hit tankers in biggest wave of attacks on shipping since war began

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### Summary

IRGC says it attacked 10 ships, including two US vessels and eight oil tankers

US military says it destroyed five Iranian oil tankers

Fuel oil tanker catches fire off Iraq

Seafarer killed aboard oil products tanker off Dubai

Iran also fires on US base in Jordan; Jordan says it intercepted most missiles

CAIRO/WASHINGTON/DUBAI, Sept 9 (Reuters) - Iran said on Wednesday it had attacked 10 ships near the Strait of Hormuz after the U.S. sank five Iranian oil tankers, in the biggest declared wave of tit-for-tat attacks on shipping by both sides since the start of the [six-month-old war](#).

The attacks sent the price of oil surging, with the international Brent crude benchmark [breaching \\$100 a barrel for the first time since July](#). At least one seafarer aboard a tanker was reported killed and another listed as missing.

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Iran also said it had fired ballistic missiles at a base used by U.S. forces in Jordan. Attacks by both sides since the end of August have shattered a month of relative calm, with the U.S. and Iran hitting military, shipping and energy assets.

The Revolutionary Guards said they would sharply escalate their response to any further attacks, and if the enemy struck two or three Iranian targets, Iran would respond by hitting 20. Iran would soon release maps of a new, much larger off-limits zone at sea that would extend as far as the Arabian Gulf off Chabahar on the far reaches of Iran's coast near Pakistan, the Guards said.

Recent days have also seen an escalation in fighting between Saudi Arabia and the Houthis in Yemen, a second theatre of war that threatens global energy supplies from the Middle East.

#### VIDEO SHOWS IRANIAN TANKERS ABLAZE

The Americans said they destroyed five Iranian oil tankers overnight, releasing video of ships ablaze before they sank. The U.S. military's Central Command called its attacks a response to Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps targeting a U.S. Navy warship twice with ballistic missiles over the previous two days. No Americans were harmed, the U.S. said.

Washington has announced a new policy of attacking Iranian tankers in retaliation for fire that threatens its warships. Iran says it is using new, more capable missiles to attack U.S. ships.

"Iran continues to try to hit U.S. naval ships, and for every time they do that or try to do that, they're going to lose tankers," U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio told reporters during a visit to Colombia.

After Iran announced its strikes in response, saying it fired on two U.S. ships and eight tankers, reports indicated vessels had been hit in waters near several neighbouring countries.

One seafarer was killed aboard the oil products tanker Hercules Star while at anchorage off Dubai and another crew member was missing, the vessel's charterer, Peninsula, said. Maritime security sources said it may have been hit by a drone.



[1/8] An Iranian crude oil carrier identified as M/T Riesco sinks after being struck, which U.S. Central Command says it targeted after attempted Iranian missile attacks on a U.S. Navy warship over the... [Purchase Licensing Rights](#) [Read more](#)



The British maritime security agency UKMTO described a vessel in the vicinity that was listing, possibly taking on water after being struck by a projectile. Reuters could not immediately determine whether this referred to the same ship. Two Iraqi port officials said a tanker carrying 2 million barrels of fuel oil, the New Andros, had caught fire after being struck by a drone in Iraqi waters. There were no reports of casualties among the 22 crew.

The UKMTO said it had received reports of several merchant ships struck by disabling fire in the northern Gulf and Gulf of Oman, on either side of the strait. It was not immediately able to confirm casualties or environmental impact.

Iran also threatened oil tankers in Kuwaiti and Bahraini ports, according to a statement carried by state media. A maritime security source reported a liquefied natural gas tanker was damaged in the Emirati port of Khor Fakkan.

The IRGC also said on Wednesday it had fired ballistic missiles at a base used by U.S. forces near Al Azraq, in eastern Jordan. Jordan said its air defences had intercepted 18 of the 20 Iranian missiles, with two falling in unpopulated areas and no casualties. A U.S. official said Iran's strikes in Jordan were ineffective and all American troops were accounted for.

Video filmed in Ash-Shajarah, in northern Jordan, and verified by Reuters showed flashes lighting up the night sky.

STRAIT CHOKED OFF

Iran has largely choked off transit through the strait that carried a fifth of global oil before the war.

Washington has responded with a blockade of Iranian ports, and says it has been able to guide many tankers through the strait, although independent monitors say the extent to which oil is escaping has become increasingly difficult to assess. Preliminary data showed just six ships crossing with transponders on over the last 24 hours.

Escalating combat between Saudi Arabia and the Iran-aligned Houthi movement that controls most populated parts of Yemen has created additional uncertainty for energy markets. A Saudi-backed government based in the south of Yemen has launched a multi-pronged assault on areas controlled by the Houthis, who have threatened Saudi shipping in the Red Sea.

On Tuesday, the Houthis launched an attack on four cities in Saudi Arabia, causing huge fires at oil installations that were visible from space. Saudi authorities said 73 people were wounded. The Saudi Press Agency released footage showing homes severely damaged and injured patients in hospital.

A source in Pakistan, which signed a mutual defence pact with Riyadh last month, said Saudi Arabia had carried out retaliatory strikes on Yemen. The Houthis say dozens of people have been killed in Saudi airstrikes, which Saudi Arabia has not confirmed.

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