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Beyond the Blast Radius: The Systematic Degradation of US Military Infrastructure

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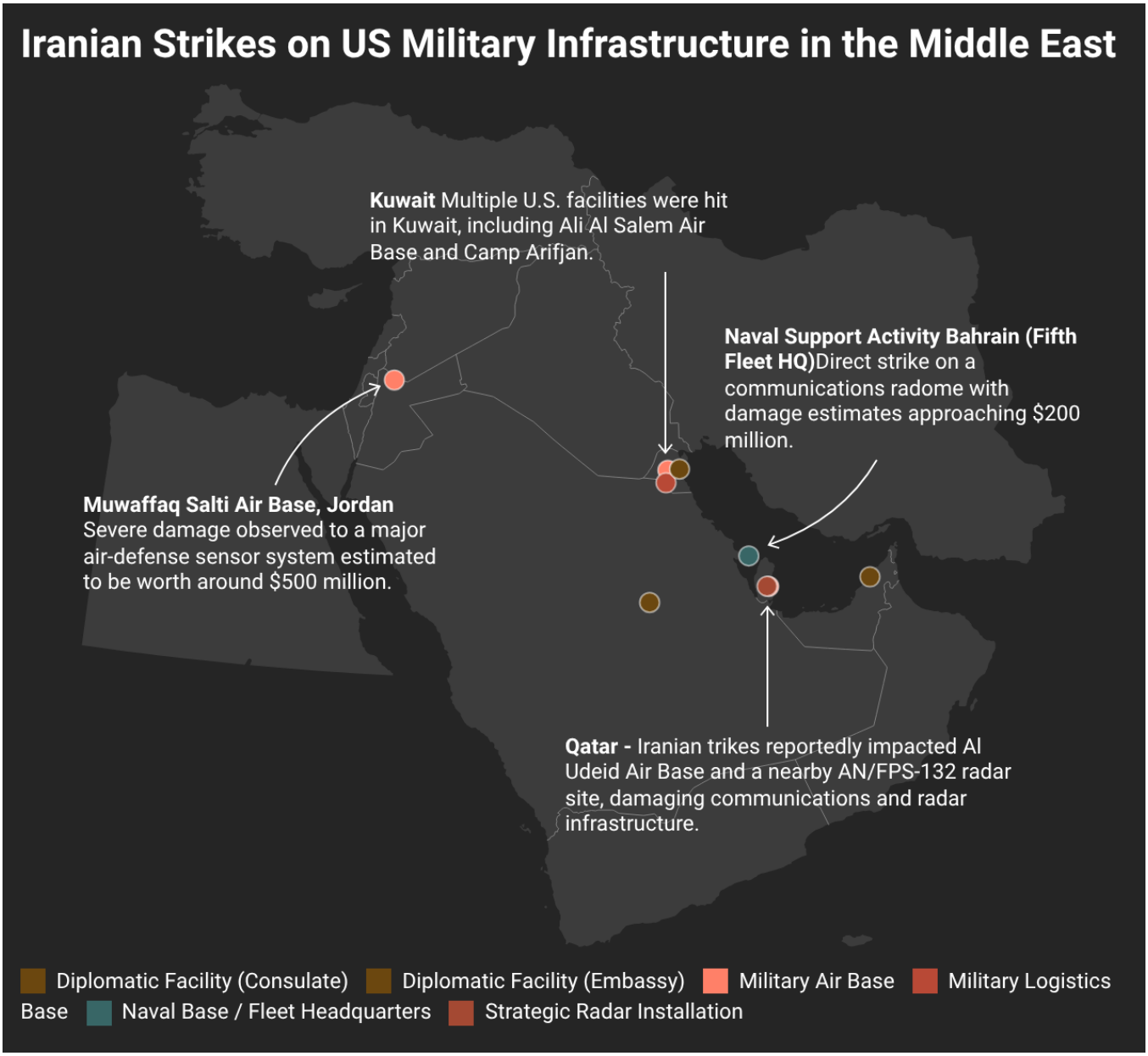
EXECUTIVE BRIEF & KEY FINDINGS

Iranian strikes damaged at least seventeen U.S. military and diplomatic sites across the Middle East, targeting radar, communications, and air-defense infrastructure while exposing a costly economic imbalance in defending against low-cost drone attacks.

A comprehensive assessment drawing on satellite imagery, geolocated videos, and official statements indicates that Iranian strikes have inflicted significant damage on at least seventeen U.S. military, diplomatic, and air-defense installations across the Middle East. The evidence suggests a coordinated campaign aimed at undermining the structural foundations of U.S. power projection in the region.

Eleven U.S. military installations, nearly half of the United States' major bases in the region, have sustained measurable damage. Key facilities, including *Al Udeid Air Base* in Qatar, the *U.S. Navy's Fifth Fleet headquarters* in Bahrain, and *Ali Al Salem Air Base* in Kuwait, have reportedly been struck multiple times. This repeated pattern of attacks suggests a deliberate operational strategy designed to disrupt U.S. command, control, and communications infrastructure.



High-value assets appear to have been especially severely affected. At the Naval Support Activity in Manama, video verification confirms a direct strike on a communications radome, a critical node within the fleet's communications architecture, with damage estimates reportedly approaching $200 million. At Al Udeid Air Base, satellite imagery indicates damage to multiple satellite dishes, potentially reducing bandwidth that is critical to U.S. Central Command operations. Most consequentially, the *AN/FPS-132 Upgraded Early Warning Radar* in Qatar, a $1.1-billion strategic sensor with an estimated 3,000-mile detection range, appears to have sustained structural damage to its primary array, potentially creating a vulnerability within the region's integrated air-defense network.

This degradation extends across the broader operational theatre. In Kuwait, Camp Arifjan reportedly contains at least three damaged radomes, while Jordan's *Muwaffaq Salti Air Base* exhibits severe damage to what analysts assess to be a half-billion-dollar air-defense sensor system. The strikes have also forced the temporary closure of several diplomatic facilities, including the consulate in Dubai and embassies in Kuwait City and Riyadh, thereby disrupting routine diplomatic and administrative functions.

These developments highlight a stark economic asymmetry. Iran has relied heavily on mass-produced, relatively inexpensive *Shahed-136 loitering munitions*, estimated to cost between $20,000 and $50,000 per unit to saturate U.S. air-defense systems. Intercepting these drones frequently requires a *Patriot PAC-3 interceptor*, costing roughly $4 million per launch, thereby generating a financially unfavourable exchange ratio. Reports indicating that the United States has expended tens of billions of dollars in munitions during the initial days of the conflict illustrate the substantial fiscal strain imposed by this strategy.

Although U.S. forces maintain a high tactical interception rate, the broader strategic implications remain significant. Damage to fixed, land-based radar installations necessitate increased reliance on airborne surveillance assets. In doing so, Iran has demonstrated a capacity to target the communications and sensor infrastructure underpinning U.S. Central Command's regional network, challenging longstanding assumptions regarding the resilience and invulnerability of fixed military installations while simultaneously imposing considerable economic costs on American forces.