US–Iran Conflict Briefing

2026-11-20 · Morning edition · Issued 07:00 CST

Iraqi Forces Deploy in Jurf al-Sakhar Under Compromise With Kataib Hezbollah

- Iraqi security forces began deploying in Jurf al-Sakhar on Friday, November 20, 2026 under a compromise deal brokered by Shi'ite politicians to defuse tension with Kataib Hezbollah; a convoy flying Iraqi flags moved toward the town and soldiers took up positions on the outskirts, with Kataib Hezbollah's yellow flags still visible further inside, and Kataib members expected to withdraw to other parts of Iraq, Reuters reported from Jurf al-Sakhar. — Reuters
- Under the arrangement, Iraqi forces were due to set up a security headquarters in Jurf al-Sakhar to oversee the handover from Saturday, November 21, including a unit tasked with protecting energy facilities; Kataib members were not visible to reporters accompanying the hundreds of troops, Reuters reported. — Reuters
- Iraqi Shi'ite political figures said Esmail Qaani, commander of Iran's Revolutionary Guards Quds Force, arrived in Baghdad on Monday to help defuse tensions with Kataib Hezbollah over Jurf al-Sakhar; nine senior security and oil officials have been dismissed following the investigation into the alleged oil-smuggling network there, Reuters reported. — Reuters
- The deployment is a compromise, not a forced entry or disarmament: Kataib Hezbollah has rejected the smuggling accusations, has not handed over weapons, and retains a presence inside the town, Reuters reported. — Reuters

Saudi Arabia Intercepts Houthi Missile and Drones in the South

- Saudi air defences intercepted and destroyed a ballistic missile launched by Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthi movement towards the kingdom's southern region on Friday, November 20, 2026, the Saudi-led coalition said, Reuters reported. — Reuters
- Saudi Civil Defence reported that drones were intercepted in the kingdom's southern region and issued early-warning alerts for several areas, including Jazan, Abha and Khamis Mushait, before announcing that the danger had passed, Reuters reported. — Reuters
- Houthi-run Al-Masirah TV reported Saudi airstrikes on the Yemeni capital Sanaa on Friday, November 20, 2026, and there was no immediate comment from Saudi Arabia on the reported strikes, Reuters reported. — Reuters

Iran War Divisions Threaten a Pre-Christmas Government Shutdown in Congress

- Congress could be headed for a pre-Christmas government shutdown as divisions over the Iran war and President Trump's demand for $350 billion in new Pentagon spending threaten to derail a funding deal, lawmakers from both parties warned, Reuters reported. — Reuters
- Senate Democrats acknowledged they are wrestling with whether to insist on language to restrict President Trump's use of force against Iran in a funding deal, even if it means cutting off funds to federal agencies ahead of the deadline, Reuters reported. — Reuters

- Senate Republicans decided to pursue bipartisan talks on a $1.1 trillion defense appropriations bill containing only $69 billion of President Trump's $350 billion funding request, rather than the partisan budget reconciliation route, Reuters reported. — Reuters
- The Wall Street Journal separately reported that the Republican effort to pass $350 billion in extra military spending has stalled in the lame-duck Congress, with Senate Democrats discussing blocking war spending as a funding condition. — Wall Street Journal

Trump Pushes an Iran Strike Decision Into the New Year

- President Trump told Reuters on Thursday, November 19, 2026, when asked about renewed major strikes on Iran, 'Well, I'll talk to you about it after the beginning of the year' and 'We've got time,' and told Axios and News 12 'I'm not rushing to make any decisions on Iran' — pushing a decision on renewed strikes into next year and extending a timeline he had previously tied to the November midterm elections, Reuters reported. — Reuters

Two Men to Stand Trial in 2027 Over RAF Fairford Incident Allegedly Linked to Iran

- Two men charged over September's security incident at RAF Fairford, which British and US prosecutors say was orchestrated on behalf of Iran, will stand trial in London on November 22, 2027, a judge said on Friday, November 20, 2026, Reuters reported. — Reuters
- Mohmed Abdulkarim, 24, and Nouman Essghir, 25, appeared in court by videolink on Friday, November 20, 2026, and their lawyers said both were likely to plead not guilty to charges over the RAF Fairford incident, Reuters reported. — Reuters

Markets

- Brent crude was at $92.22 a barrel early on Friday, November 20, 2026, Reuters reported. — Reuters
- United States West Texas Intermediate crude for January delivery was at $82.64 a barrel early on Friday, November 20, 2026, Reuters reported. — Reuters
- The United States 10-year Treasury yield was at 5.051 percent on Thursday, November 19, 2026, the Wall Street Journal reported. — Wall Street Journal

Shipping

- Crude shipments through the Strait of Hormuz have returned to roughly pre-war levels, Reuters reported. — Reuters

---

Sources: Reuters · Reuters · Reuters · Wall Street Journal · Reuters · Reuters · Reuters · Wall Street Journal

Compiled from X posts and traditional news outlets. Verify before acting on any single report.