**Iran’s Big Move in Balochistan**

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Iran’s Revolutionary Guard launched a formidable attack on militant bases nestled in Pakistan’s Balochistan province this Tuesday, intensifying existing tensions in an already volatile region. Employing a combination of missiles and drones, the assault targeted the Sunni extremist group Jaish al-Adl. Regrettably, the offensive resulted in the tragic loss of two innocent lives, with three others sustaining injuries. Pakistan swiftly denounced the strike as an unprovoked violation of its sovereignty, hinting at potential repercussions and a strain on bilateral trust.

The strike on militant strongholds was a calculated strategic move by Iran, undeniably retaliatory. This retaliatory response stems from a lethal assault on an Iranian police station in the southeastern province of Sistan-Balochistan just last month. Iranian Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi attributed the attack to Jaish al-Adl, alleging that the militants orchestrated it from the Pakistani side near Panjgur. This incident likely catalyzed Iran’s recent military actions.

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The current state of affairs underscores the fragile equilibrium in the region, where geopolitical rivalries, internal strife, and the ongoing battle against militancy form a volatile concoction that can ignite with the slightest spark. The international community keenly observes these developments, especially as the Biden administration contemplates designating the Houthis as global terrorists, underscoring the gravity of the situation. Despite retaliatory measures by the US and its allies, the Houthis persist in launching attacks, signalling a potential escalation into a broader regional conflict.

A critical question emerges: will Iran’s attack on Pakistan compromise its standing in the Islamic world, given its prominent role in the ongoing conflict in Gaza? Initiating the use of force might jeopardize Iran’s credibility in the eyes of the Western world, referring here to the populace rather than the governments of Western states. Furthermore, as Pakistan grapples with securing its three borders, the prospect of conducting elections in a stable and secure environment becomes an uphill task. The nation’s involvement in Middle Eastern geopolitics appears unlikely, with internal unrest and an external conflict with Iran taking precedence.

While an all-out war may seem improbable, the potential for further skirmishes and escalations casts a foreboding shadow over the region. Charting a way forward necessitates delicate diplomacy, trust-building measures, and a genuine commitment to addressing the root causes of conflict. The geopolitical chessboard in this volatile region demands strategic moves to avert a descent into chaos, underscoring the imperative for thoughtful and nuanced international engagement.

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