

Living under the shadow of missiles and drones

Experts say anxiety, sleep disruption and heightened alertness are natural responses during periods of conflict

Ghadeer Alkumaish
TDT | Manama

Sudden noises, flashing lights, or distant echoes can make some residents pause and brace for danger.

"Every sudden sound makes the heart jump," said Dr Hasan Ebrahim, a clinical psychologist, describing the emotional strain many people in Bahrain have experienced since missile and drone attacks began nearly two weeks ago.

In an interview with The Daily Tribune, Dr Ebrahim said many residents are experiencing what psychologists call an exaggerated startle response — a heightened reaction following frightening or threatening events.

"When people experience danger, the brain begins to

associate certain sounds or signals with threats," he said. "Even when there is no immediate risk, the body may react strongly. This is not an over-reaction. It is the brain's natural defence system keeping us alert."

For many, the impact goes beyond momentary fear. Some have become unusually sensitive to everyday noises. According to Dr Ebrahim, such reactions can reflect collective trauma when an entire community experiences the same distressing events.

"When a community goes through a shared frightening experience, the emotional impact is shared as well," he said. "It can temporarily affect how safe people feel in daily life."

Another common reaction is hypervigilance, a state in which

the nervous system remains constantly alert.

"In this condition, the brain keeps scanning the environment for potential danger," Dr Ebrahim said. "Even minor sounds or movements can trigger a strong fear response. This is a recognised reaction after highly stressful or traumatic events."

The lingering tension many feel is linked to the body's biological response to stress. During threatening situations, the brain releases hormones such as adrenaline, activating the fight-or-flight response that prepares the body to react quickly.

In some cases, delayed reactions may appear weeks or months later. "The brain does not process time the same way our conscious think-

ing does," he explained. "It may take time for the body and mind to fully calm down after stress."

According to Dr Ebrahim,



common short-term reactions include difficulty sleeping, irritability, sudden crying, anger, and recurring memories of frightening moments. "A person may seem calm at first," he said. "But once

pressure eases,

the brain

begins to

process

the ex-

perience

more

deeply.

That re-

sponse

is nor-

mal."

Mental

health

specialists

recommen-

d simple strate-

gies to manage stress during uncertain periods, including slow breathing, grounding techniques such as the "five-four-three-two-one" method, limiting exposure to distressing news, and maintaining daily routines.

"If symptoms persist for more than a month, interfere with daily life, or lead to repeated panic attacks, professional help should be considered," Dr Ebrahim said.

Family and community support, he added, can play an important role in helping people regain stability. "Listening without judgment, offering reassurance, and engaging in calm activities can help the nervous

system settle. Just as fear can spread among people, calm and reassurance can spread as well."

Italy-US airbase in Kuwait hit by drone, no injuries: Rome



US Military personnel take away Joint Direct Attack Munitions (JDAMs), removed from a US Air Force B-1 Lancer bomber at RAF Fairford in south-west England

AFP | Rome, Italy

Italy's military said yesterday there had been a drone attack on the Ali Al Salem airbase in Kuwait hosting Italian and US forces, but said all its personnel were safe.

"This morning, Ali Al Salem base in Kuwait, which hosts American and Italian personnel and capabilities, was the target of a drone attack," Chief of the Defence General Staff, General Luciano Portolano, said in a statement posted by the military on X.

It "hit a shelter housing a remotely piloted aircraft of the Italian Task Force Air (TFA), which was destroyed."

"At the time of the attack, all personnel were safe and uninjured."

The statement posted by the

Armed Forces General Staff said the number of personnel had been reduced in recent days in response to the "evolving security situation in the area".

"The personnel remaining at the base are being deployed to carry out essential mission activities," it said.

"The affected aircraft was an essential asset for operational activities and remained deployed at the base to ensure the continuity of operations."

An Italian military base in Iraqi Kurdistan also came under drone attack last week, although there were no injuries.

Afterwards, Rome said it was temporarily withdrawing its personnel — numbering less than 300 — who were in Erbil training local security forces as part of an international force.

Netanyahu mocks social media rumours about his death

AFP | Jerusalem, Undefined

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu published a short video on Sunday making light of rumours on social media that he was dead.

"I'm dead for coffee," he said sarcastically on his official X account as he received a steaming cup at a cafe outside Jerusalem, employing a colloquial Hebrew expression meaning to love something to death.

He then raised his hands to the camera, asking, "Do you want to count the number of fingers?" — a reference to speculation on social media that his latest televised address was gen-



An Israeli self-propelled howitzer artillery gun fires rounds towards southern Lebanon from a position in the upper Galilee in northern Israel near the border

erated by AI as he appeared to have six fingers on one hand. The premier then urged Israeli citizens to respect safety

instructions in the event of incoming rockets, adding their resilience "gives strength to me, to the government, to the army, to the Mossad (spy agency)."

"We are doing things that I cannot share at this moment, but we are striking Iran very hard, and also Lebanon," he added.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) threatened on Sunday to kill Netanyahu, as the war against the Islamic republic led by Israel and the US entered its third week.

"IRGC vows to pursue and kill 'child-killer' Netanyahu if he is still alive," Iran's IRNA news agency said in a post on X.

War with US, Israel to end when Iran 'certain' it cannot be repeated: FM

AFP | Doha, Qatar

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said in an interview published on Sunday that the war pitting his country against the United States and Israel will only end when Tehran can be certain it will not be restarted.

"This war will end when we are certain it will not be repeated and that reparations will be paid. We experienced this last year: Israel attacked, then the United States... they regrouped and attacked us again," Araghchi told Arabic-language news outlet Al-Araby Al-Jadeed, referring to Iran's war with Israel and the US in June 2025.

Gaza hospital says Israeli strike on police vehicle kills eight

AFP | Gaza City, Palestinian Territories

A hospital in Gaza said it had received the bodies of eight people killed when a police vehicle was hit by an Israeli strike in the centre of the territory yesterday.

The strike came as a Hamas delegation was due to meet with Egyptian officials in Cairo, according to a source from the Palestinian Islamist movement, and as Gaza's civil defence agency reported another four people killed in an earlier Israeli strike.

When asked by AFP about both incidents, the Israeli military said it was looking into the reports.

The Al-Aqsa hospital in the central city of Deir al-Balah said in a statement that "eight martyrs arrived as a result of the targeting of a police vehicle in the town of Zawaida in the central Gaza Strip". Gaza's Hamas-run interior ministry confirmed the toll, saying all those killed were policemen, including the head of police in the central governorate, Colonel Iyad Abu Yusef.

Iran has 'ample evidence' US bases in Mideast used in attacks: FM

AFP | Doha, Qatar

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said in an interview published Sunday that Tehran has "ample evidence" US bases in the Middle East have been used to target the Islamic republic.

"We have ample evidence of this: satellite imagery and electronic surveillance demonstrate that US bases in this region are being used for attacks," Araghchi told Arabic-language news outlet Al-Araby Al-Jadeed, claiming that missiles had been launched from the UAE to attack Kharg Island, a vital Iranian oil hub.