



Operations Epic Fury and Roaring Lion: 3/31/26 Update

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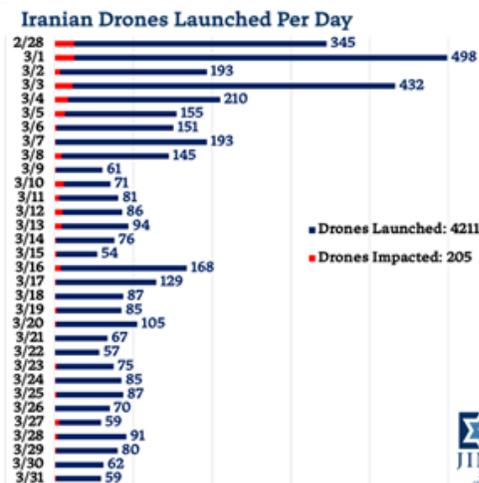
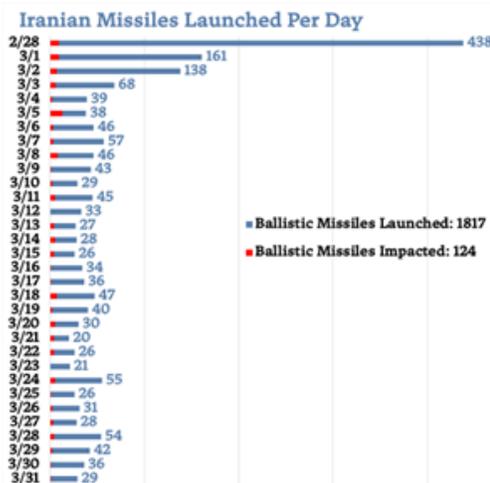
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With the United States and Israel launching a joint campaign—Operations Epic Fury and Roaring Lion, respectively—against Iranian regime targets and Iran launching retaliatory missile and drone attacks against U.S. forces in the region, Israel, and Arab nations—dubbed Operation True Promise IV—JINSA will regularly release updates detailing the conflict. The update below includes information since [JINSA's last update](#) as of March 31 at 11:00 am ET.

1. Overview

- In a Pentagon press conference on March 31, U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Dan Caine [noted](#) that American forces have conducted over 11,000 strikes in Iran since the war began.
 - » At the briefing, Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth [stated](#), “The last 24 hours saw the lowest number of enemy missiles and drones fired by Iran.”
- *The Wall Street Journal* [reported](#) on March 31 that President Donald Trump is willing to conclude Operation Epic Fury before the Strait of Hormuz is open, preferring for the United States to concentrate on the primary goals of the operation—destroying Iran’s missile capabilities and Navy—and use diplomatic pressure to reopen the Strait.
 - » If U.S. diplomatic pressure is not successful, the administration would reportedly urge European and Gulf partners to lead efforts to reopen the Strait of Hormuz.
- On March 31, President Trump [posted](#) on Truth Social, “All of those countries that can’t get jet fuel because of the Strait of Hormuz, like the United Kingdom, which refused to get involved in the decapitation of Iran, I have a suggestion for you: Number 1, buy from the U.S., we have plenty, and Number 2, build up some delayed courage, go to the Strait, and just TAKE IT ... Iran has been, essentially, decimated. The hard part is done. Go get your own oil!”
- In a March 30 article citing senior U.S. intelligence and military officials, *The New York Times* [alleged](#) the Iranian regime’s control over day-to-day operations is effectively gone.
- On March 30, White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt [said](#) the main objectives of Operation Epic Fury are to “destroy the Iranian navy, destroy their ballistic missiles, dismantle their missile and drone production infrastructure, significantly weaken their proxies, and preventing Iran from ever obtaining a nuclear weapon.”
 - » Earlier that day, Secretary of State Marco Rubio had [omitted](#) any reference to ending Iran’s proxy and nuclear programs and specified destroying the [Iranian air force](#) when he listed the war’s objectives.

- Thousands of 82nd Airborne Division troops within the U.S. Army have [arrived](#) in the Middle East to support the war effort against Iran’s government, adding to the already massive troop buildup in the region.
- Several Arab leaders, in particular from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, are reportedly strongly pushing President Trump to [continue the war](#) and further weaken Iran. This diplomatic effort, according to reports from March 31, also includes the leaders of Bahrain and Kuwait.
- The Trump administration would like Arab countries to help the United States [foot the bill](#) for the Iran war, just as Arab nations helped finance the U.S. war against Iraq in 1991, Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said on March 30.
 - » On March 31, the United Nations [estimated](#) that the ongoing war has indirectly cost Arab nations at least \$186 billion.
- Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu [told](#) Newsmax on March 30 that the Iran war is “beyond the halfway point, in terms of mission success.”
 - » Netanyahu stated, “We’ve already degraded their missile capabilities, destroyed factories, and eliminated key nuclear scientists,” noting that the war’s main focus is now on securing Iran’s enriched uranium stockpile.
- The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) [announced](#) that it would complete its attacks on all of the Iranian military’s “critical” weapon production facilities by tomorrow, April 1.
- During a March 27 discussion with the American Enterprise Institute, Israeli Ambassador to the United States Yechiel Leiter said the war’s objective is [ensuring](#) Iran is not “developing nuclear weapons, developing weapons of mass destruction in terms of these ballistic missiles, and supporting proxies around the region.” Ambassador Leiter added, “Now, if that can be done without regime change, okay. Probably can’t, though.”
- Iran continues to launch far fewer missiles and drones than it did during the opening days of the war and has further decreased its missile fire this week after a large escalation over the weekend. However, it has escalated its ballistic missile fire against Saudi Arabia and maintained heavy drone attacks against the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.).
 - » Iranian missile fire continued its decline on March 30, with 36 missiles fired, down from 42 on March 29. So far on March 31, Iran has fired 29 missiles.
 - » Iran has launched roughly 4,211 drones, 1,817 ballistic missiles, and 34 cruise missiles since the war began.



2. Diplomatic Engagement

- President Trump [announced](#) on March 30 that his administration has been in contact with Iranian parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf and that he'll know "in about a week" if Ghalibaf is willing to cooperate with the United States.
- Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth [stated](#) on March 31 that the new regime in power in Iran "should be wiser than the last." Secretary Hegseth added, "President Trump will make a deal. He is willing, and the terms of the deal are known to them."
 - » However, Secretary Hegseth noted, "If Iran is not willing [to make a deal], then the [Pentagon] will continue with even more intensity."
 - » Secretary Hegseth added, "There are many more vessels flowing through [the Strait of Hormuz] today than there were [before], as the President has arranged."
 - Secretary Hegseth further stated, "there are countries around the world who ought to be prepared to step up on this critical waterway as well. It's not just the United States Navy. ... This is an international waterway that we use less than most. ... So the world ought to be prepared to stand up."
- In a March 31 call with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, President of the European Council Antonio Costa "[urged](#) Iran to stop the unacceptable attacks on countries in the region and to engage positively on the diplomatic track, notably with the UN to ensure the freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz."
- On March 31, Pakistan and China jointly [announced](#) a proposed five-point peace initiative, including:
 - » Immediate cessation of hostilities;
 - » Start of peace talks as soon as possible;
 - » Security of non-military targets;
 - » Security of shipping lanes; and
 - » Primacy of the United Nations Charter.

3. U.S. and Israeli Operations

- Gen Caine [noted](#) in a press briefing on March 31 that B-52 bombers have successfully started to carry out "overland missions," due to U.S. air superiority over Iran.
- On March 31, the IDF [reported](#) that it had destroyed over 180 Hezbollah launchers in Lebanon during Operation Roaring Lion. In addition, the Israeli Air Force (IAF) and an Israeli artillery brigade eliminated dozens of Hezbollah infrastructure targets, hitting missile launch positions, arms depots, observation posts, and underground facilities.
- Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz [stated](#) on March 31 that the Israeli military would maintain a security zone in southern Lebanon after Operation Roaring Lion ends, noting that Israel will preserve "security control over the entire area up to the Litani River."
 - » Minister Katz remarked that Israel is "determined to separate Lebanon from the Iranian arena – to pull out the snake's teeth and strip Hezbollah of its ability to threaten." He noted that Israel would aim to "change the situation in Lebanon" through a continuing military presence.
 - » Minister Katz stated that the IDF would destroy "all homes in Lebanese villages near the border ... in accordance with the Rafah and Beit Hanoun model in Gaza," allowing Israel "to remove, once and for all, the threats near the border."

- Prime Minister Netanyahu [said](#) in a March 30 interview with Newsmax, “[Iran is] pursuing nuclear weapons and the means to deliver them to American cities. That’s what this war is about.”
- According to the Israeli *Maariv* newspaper, Prime Minister Netanyahu [remarked](#) in a cabinet meeting that Israel is “forming alliances with Arab countries that are talking about fighting together on our side.” He added, “Today they [Arab states] understand” the threat Iran poses.
- Israeli Ambassador to the United States Yechiel Leiter [noted](#), “Some of our [Israel’s] allies have become even greater allies over the past month.” He added, “Whether it’s UAE, Bahrain, I think we’ve become closer to the Saudis, closer to the Omanis. Closer to the Kuwaitis for crying out loud. They’ve asked us for assistance.”
 - » Ambassador Leiter alluded to the potential for Israeli-Arab defense cooperation, stating, “Israel and her allies will continue to act. This could really make the difference going into the future.”
- On March 30, Israel [passed](#) a defense budget of about \$44.8 billion for 2026, about \$9.48 billion higher than last year’s defense budget. This amount will likely increase due to expected supplemental funding for the war in Iran.
- The IDF [announced](#) on March 31 that “Hezbollah has seized control of the village of Qawzah in southern Lebanon and has begun launching terror attacks from within the village. This includes rocket and missile launches as well as anti-tank fire.”

Day 32 of Operations: March 31

Iran

- Overnight, the U.S. military [dropped](#) 2,000-pound bunker buster bombs on a major ammunition facility near Isfahan.
- Over the past day, the Israeli Air Force (IAF) [launched](#) more than 230 strikes on Iranian military assets, [including](#) a building used to equip ballistic missile warheads with explosives; a facility for producing ballistic missile components; a weapon components research and development site; a site for developing anti-tank and anti-aircraft missiles; and [primed ballistic missile launchers](#).
- Iranian media [reported](#) that Jamshid Eslami, advisor to the head of the General Staff of Iran’s Armed Forces and an individual sanctioned by the United States for his involvement in evading oil sanctions, was recently killed in Tehran.

Lebanon

- The IDF also [announced](#) that its troops operating in southern Lebanon recently killed dozens of Hezbollah fighters and destroyed several of the group’s surveillance posts.
 - » Israeli troops from the 36th Division [captured](#) a Hezbollah operative surveilling them in southern Lebanon and transported him to Israel to be interrogated.
 - » The 36th Division also identified and [eliminated](#) other Hezbollah fighters attempting to attack the soldiers.
- The Israeli military [launched](#) airstrikes on Hezbollah sites in Beirut’s southern suburbs.

Iraq

- An unattributed strike [hit](#) a base belonging to the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) in Al Anbar Governorate, killing two fighters and injuring four others.

Day 31 of Operations: March 30

Iran

- Throughout the day, the IAF [dropped](#) approximately 400 bombs on 170 targets, striking several main military headquarters; a central facility for producing critical weapon components; a weapons development complex; a drone engine manufacturing complex; a Basij building in Baghlan; and a police station in Sanandaj.

Lebanon

- The Israeli military [conducted](#) a strike in Beirut, killing the deputy commander of Hezbollah's Unit 1800, Hamza Ibrahim Rakhin, as well as the chief of operations of the unit. Unit 1800 coordinates Hezbollah operations with other Palestinian terrorist groups throughout the region.

4. Iranian and Proxy Operations

- According to *The New York Times*, the Iranian regime has [lost the ability](#) to conduct centralized decision-making.
 - » Dozens of top Iranian leaders and their staff have been killed, and the surviving leaders are reportedly unwilling to meet in person or communicate by phone over fears of being tracked and killed. This has effectively knocked out nationwide command-and-control of military operations.
 - » The *New York Times* reported that Iran's ongoing drone and missile launches are the product of a system put in place before the war that delegates strike authority to local commanders across Iran. Those commanders are not communicating with one another or with Iran's central government.
 - » In addition, peace talks have stalled in part due to the regime's internal disarray, according to the article.
- Iran, Hezbollah, and the Houthis continue to target Israel with an array of drone, missile, and rocket attacks.
 - » Cluster munitions from an Iranian ballistic missile [impacted](#) sites in Bnei Brak, Ramat Gan, and Petah Tikva, causing fires and injuring eight people.
 - » Israeli defenses [intercepted](#) several Iranian ballistic missiles, allowing the others to crash into open areas.
 - » Shrapnel from a Hezbollah rocket [struck](#) a man in Avivim.
- In addition, Hezbollah continues ambush attacks on Israeli forces in southern Lebanon.
 - » A Hezbollah gunman [fired](#) on Israeli troops serving in the Nahal Brigade's Reconnaissance Unit in southern Lebanon, killing four soldiers and wounding three others. Hezbollah fighters, in a separate incident, [launched](#) rockets and drones at Israeli troops, injuring four.
- Arab countries continue coming under Iranian and proxy fire. Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the U.A.E. each reported attacks on their country over the past day:
 - » Bahrain:
 - Bahrain [intercepted](#) two drones in its airspace.
 - » Iraq:
 - Two separate rocket salvos and two separate drone attacks [targeted](#) a Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs command center in Iraqi Kurdistan; no casualties were reported.

- On March 30, an attempted drone attack [targeted](#) a Peshmerga security patrol in Iraqi Kurdistan, without resulting in casualties.
- » Kuwait:
 - Kuwait's Armed Forces [intercepted](#) five ballistic missiles and seven unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).
- » Saudi Arabia:
 - The Saudi Ministry of Defense reported it intercepted nine missiles and 10 drones.
- » U.A.E.:
 - The Emirati Ministry of Defense [reported](#) it intercepted four cruise missiles, eight ballistic missiles, and 36 drones over various parts of the country.
 - Emirati authorities [said](#) a drone struck an administrative building belonging to Thuraya Telecommunications in Sharjah, and debris from an air defense [interception](#) wounded four people in Dubai.
- A fully laden Kuwaiti oil tanker was [struck](#) by an unspecified Iranian projectile on March 31 while anchored in a Dubai port, sparking a fire onboard and causing damage.
 - » The onboard fire burned for several hours but was ultimately [extinguished](#).
- Turkey's defense ministry [reported](#) that North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) defense systems intercepted an Iranian ballistic missile in Turkish airspace on March 30, the fourth such incident since hostilities began.
- The Kurdistan Democratic Party, the ruling party of the Kurdistan Regional Government, [reported](#) on March 31 that the region has sustained 474 attacks over the past 30 days, 179 of which were carried out by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).
- Iran is reportedly [pressing](#) the Houthis to prepare for a renewed campaign against Red Sea shipping. Houthi leaders are weighing more aggressive action, while internal leadership divisions have slowed decision-making on the extent of their involvement, according to European officials cited by *Bloomberg*.

5. Estimated Casualties of Iranian Operations

- Thirteen U.S. service members have died during Operation Epic Fury.
 - » An Iranian drone attack [killed](#) six U.S. servicemembers at Port Shuaiba in Kuwait on March 1: Maj. Jeffrey O'Brien, 45; Chief Warrant Officer 3 Robert Marzan, 54; Capt. Cody Khorak, 35; Sgt. 1st Class Nicole Amor, 39; Sgt. 1st Class Noah Tietjens, 42; and Sgt. Declan Coady (posthumously promoted from specialist), 20.
 - » A U.S. servicemember, Sgt. Benjamin Pennington, 26, was [killed](#) in a March 8 Iranian attack targeting U.S. troops at the Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia.
 - » Six U.S. servicemembers were [killed](#) when a KC-135 aerial refueling aircraft crashed over western Iraq on March 12: Major John A. Klinner, 33; Captain Ariana G. Savino, 31; Technical Sergeant Ashley B. Pruitt, 34; Captain Seth R. Koval, 38; Captain Curtis J. Angst, 30; and Technical Sergeant Tyler H. Simmons, 28.
- At least 303 members of the U.S. military have been [injured](#) thus far in the war.
 - » 10 have been seriously [wounded](#), and at least 273 of the injured have reportedly returned to duty.
 - » In the March 27 Iranian attack on a U.S. base in Saudi Arabia, at least 15 U.S. servicemembers were [injured](#), including two who were seriously wounded. Over the past week,

at least 24 American troops [sustained injuries](#) in various Iranian attacks on the base, according to PBS.

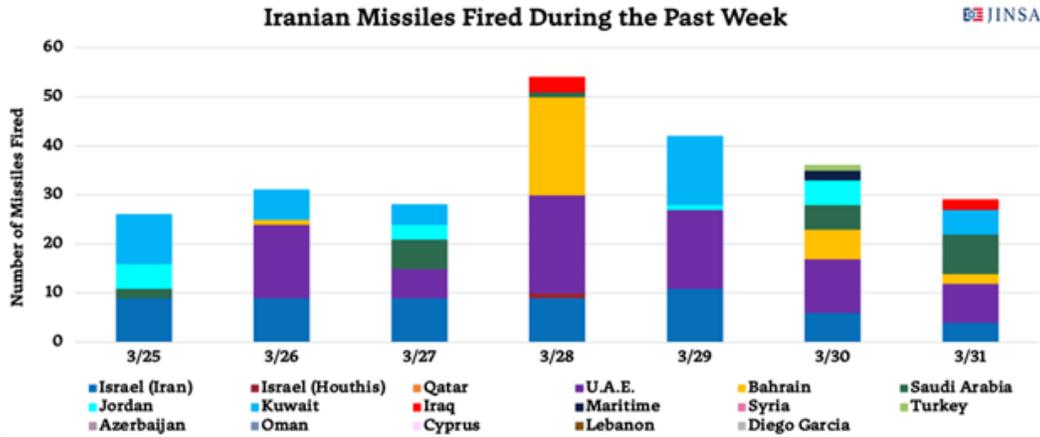
- Since the war began, 37 [people have been killed in](#) Israel, while over 6,131 people have been [hospitalized](#). [Ten](#) of these casualties include Israeli soldiers who have been killed while fighting Hezbollah in southern Lebanon.
- Since the war's outbreak, numerous other casualties have been reported:
 - » Iran:
 - At least 3,492 people, including at least 1,211 military personnel, have been [killed](#), with at least 24,800 [wounded](#). However, *Iran International* reported that over 4,700 security personnel have been [killed](#), including members of the Basij, IRGC, and police forces.
 - » Azerbaijan:
 - Four civilians have been [injured](#).
 - » Bahrain:
 - Three people have [been killed](#), including a [Moroccan contractor](#), and at least 42 people have [been injured](#), including five [Emirati soldiers](#).
 - » Iraq:
 - At least 100 people have been [killed](#), including 13 people in Iraqi Kurdistan.
 - » Jordan:
 - At least 25 people have been [injured](#).
 - » Kuwait:
 - Two [Kuwaiti navy sailors](#), two [Kuwaiti interior ministry officers](#), two [Kuwaiti civilians](#), and an [Indian national](#) have been killed, over 90 Kuwaiti military [personnel have been injured](#), and two medical staff have been [wounded](#).
 - » Lebanon:
 - At least 1,238 people have been [killed](#), and more than 3,543 have been wounded—figures that do not distinguish between Hezbollah operatives and civilians.
 - Three UN peacekeepers from Indonesia were [killed](#) in separate incidents within a 24-hour period on March 30 and 31. The IDF's preliminary investigation [determined](#) that at least two of the three deaths were likely caused by Hezbollah explosives.
 - » Oman:
 - At least [three people](#) have been killed, and at least 15 people have been [wounded](#).
 - » Qatar:
 - Around 20 people have been [wounded](#), and seven people were [killed](#) on March 22 in a helicopter crash in Qatari territorial waters due to a technical issue.
 - » Saudi Arabia:
 - Two foreign nationals have been [killed](#), and at least 16 others have [been injured](#).
 - » Syria:
 - At least four people have been [killed](#) in Syria, and several others have been [injured](#).
 - » U.A.E.:
 - 11 people have been [killed](#), and 182 others have [been injured](#).

6. International Response

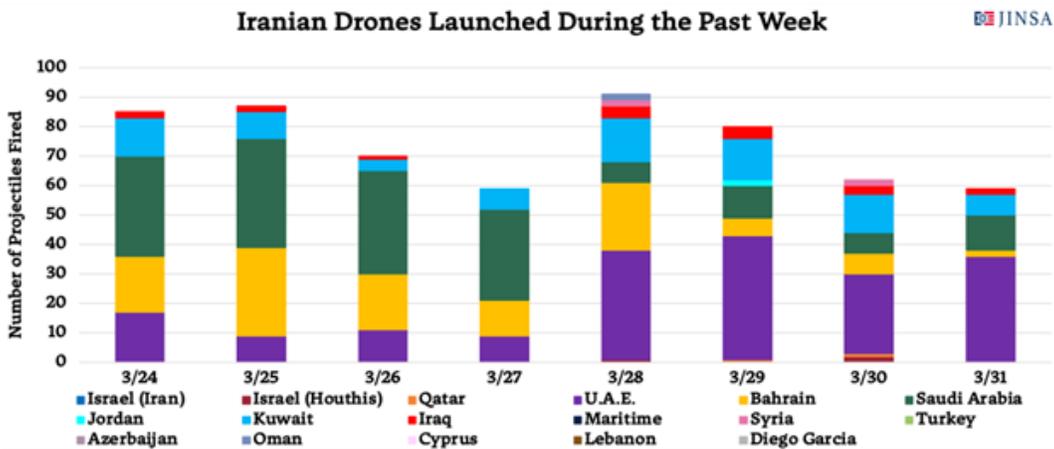
- On March 31, President Trump posted on Truth Social that France has not [permitted](#) U.S. aircraft carrying weapons to Israel to fly over French territory.
- Bahraini, Emirati, Kuwaiti, and Saudi leaders, according to a March 31 report from the Associated Press, have been [strongly pushing](#) the United States to continue combat operations against Iran.
- The Arab leaders view the war as a historical, possibly one-of-a-kind, chance to decimate the regime. The leaders do not want the war to conclude until Iran's leadership fundamentally changes or until there is a major shift in Iran's malign behavior, sources told the Associated Press.
- The Emirati Minister of State Khalifa bin Shaheen Al Marar [remarked](#) on March 30, "Continued Iranian aggression makes coexistence with the Iranian regime under its current behavior impossible." He added, "addressing the Iranian threat—including nuclear, missile, drone programs, and maritime security—is essential for sustainable peace."
- On March 30, French Foreign Minister Jean-Noël Barrot has [asked](#) for an emergency United Nations Security Council (UNSC) meeting following attacks close to UN forces in Lebanon, resulting in the death of a peacekeeper from the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).
- According to reporting on March 31, Italy recently [denied](#) authorization for U.S. combat aircraft headed to the Middle East to land at its Sigonella base, with an Italian Defense Ministry source telling Agence France-Presse that Italian bases may only be used by U.S. military aircraft for logistical purposes, with combat missions requiring parliamentary approval.
- European Union Council President Antonio Costa [urged](#) Iranian President Pezeshkian, in a March 31 phone call, to halt attacks on regional countries, protect civilians, and engage diplomatically to restore freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz, calling the situation in the Middle East "extremely dangerous."
- Malaysia has [secured](#) assurances from Iran that its vessels will be granted safe and toll-free passage through the Strait of Hormuz, Malaysian transport minister Anthony Loke announced on March 31. Loke attributed the exemption to Kuala Lumpur's strong diplomatic relations with Tehran.
- On March 31, Bahrain's Interior Ministry [announced](#) the arrest of three individuals suspected of forming a Hezbollah-linked terrorist cell, alleging they coordinated with foreign terrorist elements to conduct espionage and undermine the country's sovereignty.
- Lebanon formally [notified](#) the United Nations of its government's March 2 decision declaring Hezbollah's military activities illegal, a step a source described as intended to keep international partners informed and potentially shield Lebanese state infrastructure from targeting, according to reporting by the Lebanon-based *L'Orient–Le Jour* on March 31.

7. Charts and Trends

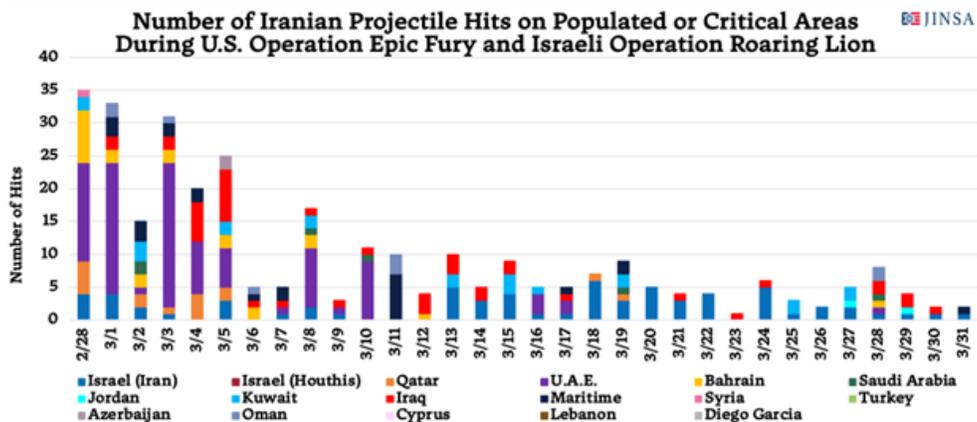
- Iranian missile fire saw a 14 percent decline on March 30, with 36 missiles fired, down from 42 on March 29. So far on March 31, Iran has fired 29 missiles.
 - » On March 30, Iran fired one missile intercepted over Turkey, marking the fourth attack against the country.
 - » So far on March 31, Iran fired eight missiles at Saudi Arabia, up from five on March 30.



- Over the last four days, Iran has continued a trend of elevated drone attacks against the U.A.E. and decreased attacks on Saudi Arabia. Iran launched 27 drones against the U.A.E. on March 30 and has already launched 36 drones on March 31, up from 9 to 17 drones per day from March 24 to March 27.
- Iran has sharply reduced drone attacks against Saudi Arabia, launching seven drones on March 30 and 12 drones so far on March 31, down from 31 to 37 drones per day from March 24 to March 27.



- On March 30, the number of Iranian projectiles successfully hitting targets decreased from four hits on March 29 to two hits on March 30, with one Iranian missile hitting Israel and another projectile hitting Iraq. So far on March 31, one Iranian missile struck Israel, and an unknown projectile hit an oil tanker in the Dubai port.



8. JINSA Resources

- Jonathan Ruhe, [Strengthening U.S. Force Posture at Israeli Bases](#), March 31, 2026
- Yoni Tobin and Sarah Havdala, [From the Ceasefire's Ashes: War Returns to Israel's Northern Front](#), March 30, 2026
- Svante E. Cornell, [Turkey on Iran: Gains, Risks, and Strategic Restraint](#), March 30, 2026
- Hussein Aboubakr Mansour, [If Tehran Survives](#), March 27, 2026
- Ari Cicurel, [The Eroding Shield: Air Defense Against Iran](#), March 26, 2026
- Jonah Brody and Rena Gabber, [The Axis Behind Iran: How China, Russia, and North Korea Sustain Tehran's Military Threat](#), March 25, 2026
- Jonathan Ruhe, [Scared Strait: Ending Iran's Threat to Hormuz and the Gulf](#), March 19, 2026
- VADM Herman Shelanski, USN (ret.), IDF MG (ret.) Yaakov Amidror, and Blaise Misztal, "[Webinar - Iran's Threat to Global Shipping: What Can Be Done?](#)" March 19, 2026
- Giran Ozcan and Jonah Brody, [Iran's Kurdish Coalition and the Future of the Opposition](#), March 18, 2026
- Hussein Mansour, [If Tehran Falls: How Iran's Collapse Reshuffles Arab Gulf Relations](#), March 16
- Infographic: [Operation Epic Fury—What is the Aim Point?](#), March 13, 2026
- VADM Mark Fox, USN (ret.), IDF MG (ret.) Yaakov Amidror, and Jonathan Ruhe, "[Webinar: Washington and Jerusalem's Next Moves](#)," March 12, 2026
- Meriem Mokhtari, [How the Muslim Brotherhood Funds Iran's Proxies](#), March 11, 2026
- Robert McNally and Michael Makovsky, PhD, "[Webinar: Iran War Energy Disruption: Short-Term or Here To Stay?](#)" March 10, 2026
- Blaise Misztal, [Principles for U.S.-Kurdish Partnership](#), March 6, 2026
- Hussein Mansour, [Gulf Situation Assessment: Iran's Attacks on Arab States Will Backfire](#), March 5, 2026
- Ari Cicurel, [Iran's Missile Fire Has Almost Run Out](#), March 5, 2026
- Blaise Misztal, [Iran is Not Iraq](#), March 4, 2026
- Giran Ozcan and Jonah Brody, [The Kurdish Moment in Iran](#), March 4, 2026
- Gen. Frank McKenzie, USMC (ret.), IDF MG (ret.) Yaakov Amidror, IDF MG (ret.) Oded Bassiuk, and John Hannah, "[Webinar: Operations Epic Fury and Roaring Lion](#)," March 1, 2026
- Jonathan Ruhe and Ari Cicurel, [U.S.-Israel Joint Operations Against Iran's Regime](#), February 28, 2026
- Jonathan Ruhe and Ari Cicurel, [Israel: America's Third Aircraft Carrier in the Middle East](#), February 25, 2026
- Jonathan Ruhe and Ari Cicurel, [Iran's Evolving Missile and Drone Threat](#), February 20, 2026