



Operations Epic Fury and Roaring Lion: 3/24/26 Update

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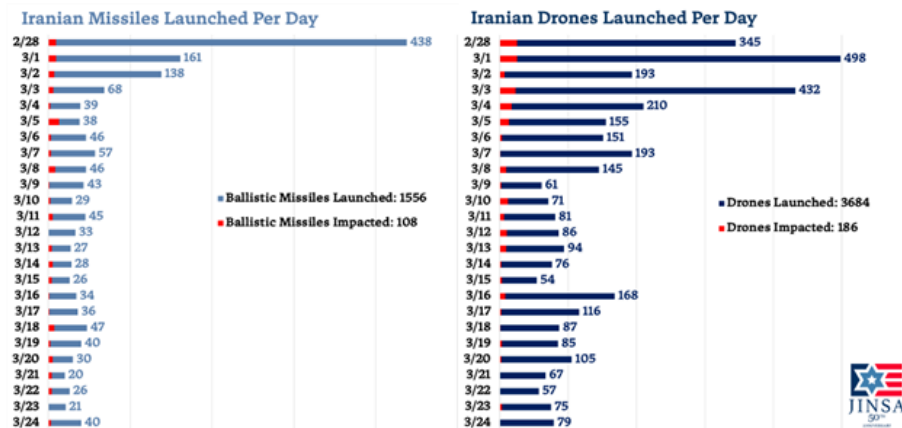
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With the United States and Israel launching a joint campaign—Operations Epic Fury and Roaring Lion, respectively—against Iranian regime targets and Iran launching retaliatory missile and drone attacks against U.S. forces in the region, Israel, and 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 24 at 11:00 am ET.

1. Overview

- President Donald Trump [stated](#) on March 23, “we’ve been negotiating [with Iran] for a long time, and this time, they mean business,” noting that Iran’s leadership is seriously engaging with the United States “only because of the great job that our military did.” He also [added](#) that “hopefully a deal is possible, but no matter what, we’ll ensure that Iran never obtains a nuclear weapon.”
- Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.) are taking substantive [measures](#) to aid the United States and weaken Iran in the war, *The Wall Street Journal* reported on March 23, citing Arab, Israeli, and U.S. officials.
 - » These measures include:
 - Saudi Arabia permitting U.S. use of its King Fahd Air Base;
 - Emirati officials cracking down on Iranian assets on U.A.E. soil; and
 - The leaders of both countries regularly asking President Trump to knock out Iranian military capabilities before ending the war. On March 24, *The New York Times* [also reported](#) that Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman has done so.
 - » Saudi Arabia and the U.A.E. are also weighing launching their own strikes against Iran to restore deterrence, according to sources cited by the *Journal*.
- Oil prices jumped significantly after President Trump signaled that negotiations to end the war are progressing.
 - » On March 24, according to *CNBC*, “Brent crude futures with May delivery traded up 3.1% at \$103.07 per barrel, while U.S. West Texas Intermediate futures for May traded [4.3% higher](#) at \$91.89 per barrel.”
- Energy Secretary Chris Wright stated in a March 23 interview that it is “[highly unlikely](#)” the United States will release more oil from the U.S. Strategic Petroleum Reserve.

- » He also noted, “we’re not selling those [recently-released] barrels. We’re trading those barrels. ... We will end out with a Strategic Petroleum Reserve that has more oil in it at the end of next year than it does today.”
- Iran has begun [charging](#) transit fees of up to \$2 million per voyage on select commercial vessels passing through the Strait of Hormuz, with the practice appearing to be ad hoc.
- Iran continues to launch far fewer missiles than it did during the opening days of the war, but drone attacks surged on March 23, with Iran launching 36 drones against Bahrain alone compared to just two on March 22. Iran also launched a large escalation of missile fire against Kuwait, with 17 missiles on March 24.
- » Iranian missile fire declined 19 percent on March 23, with 21 missiles fired, down from 26 on March 22. However, Iran has fired 40 ballistic missiles already on March 24, nearly doubling the previous day’s total.
- » Iran escalated its drone attacks against Saudi Arabia overnight on March 24, with 13 separate attacks over the span of two hours.
- » Iran has launched over 3,670 drones, 1,550 ballistic missiles, and 28 cruise missiles since the war began.



2. Diplomatic Engagement

- According to an unnamed Israeli official, mediating countries [seek](#) to hold negotiations in Islamabad, Pakistan, later this week. Vice President JD Vance, U.S. Special Envoy to the Middle East Steve Witkoff, and White House advisor Jared Kushner would represent the United States, and Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf would represent Iran. Witkoff has reportedly [arrived](#) in Pakistan.
- » An Israeli official [claimed](#) that Witkoff and Kushner had already spoken with Qalibaf. In contrast, an unnamed Iranian official [stated](#) that Washington asked Qalibaf to meet with an American delegation, but that Iran’s Supreme National Security Council has not made a decision.
- » Qalibaf is [reportedly closer](#) to Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei than Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, who reportedly lacks the authority to speak on Khamenei’s behalf.
- » However, Qalibaf [rejected](#) claims about his negotiations with the United States, noting that Iranians “demand the complete and humiliating punishment of the aggressors.”

- Qalibaf also [stated](#) that claims of him negotiating with the United States are “fake news” and “intended to manipulate financial and oil markets and to escape the quagmire in which America and Israel are trapped.”
- » The Pakistani government is reportedly the [main intermediary](#) between Iran and the United States, with Pakistan’s Chief of Defense Forces Asim Munir playing a particularly outsized role.
- » In addition to Pakistan, Egypt and Turkey are reportedly [mediating](#) talks.
- U.S.-Iran indirect discussions reportedly have hit [sticking points](#) already, with Iran demanding concessions the United States sees as highly unreasonable, including placing the Strait of Hormuz under formal Iranian control; providing Iran with extensive financial compensation; closing all U.S. bases across the Middle East; and guarantees that there would not be [military action](#) in the future.
 - » Conversely, other media reports [indicate](#) Iran is showing some flexibility about its missile, nuclear, and terror finance programs.
 - » As talks are underway, Iran has reportedly [deployed](#) at least one dozen mines in the Strait of Hormuz, though it is unclear when.
- Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu released a [statement](#) on March 23, claiming that President Trump “believes there is an opportunity to leverage the tremendous achievements we have reached alongside the U.S. military to realize the goals of the war through an agreement that will safeguard our vital interests.”
 - » However, Israeli officials are reportedly [concerned](#) that a potential deal will not address Iran’s remaining stockpile of 60 percent enriched uranium.
 - » In a recent JINSA [webinar](#), former Israeli National Security Advisor Maj. Gen. (ret.) Yaa-kov Amidror, a JINSA Distinguished Fellow, described the uranium stockpile as “the elephant in the room” and noted, “an operation to take it out is very complicated. It’s possible, but very complicated.”

3. U.S. and Israeli Operations

- U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) [announced](#) that its forces have bombed over 9,000 Iranian regime targets throughout Operation Epic Fury, including more than 140 naval vessels, missile locations, and intelligence facilities belonging to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).
 - » The United States seemingly confirmed that a U.S. nuclear-powered submarine is in the theater, listing it under “U.S. assets employed” in an [infographic](#) released on March 23.
- According to the *New York Times*, senior U.S. military leaders have [considered](#) deploying a brigade of approximately 3,000 troops from the 82nd Airborne Division to Iran, who could potentially take control of the country’s Kharg Island.
- Israel has been [systematically targeting](#) the commanders of Iran’s ballistic missile array in recent days, according to Israel’s *Maariv* outlet. The strikes are reportedly eliminating senior-ranking individuals with technical knowledge and command authority while instilling fear in the surviving commanders.
- The Israeli military [announced](#) that it has disarmed approximately 330 of the Iranian regime’s 470 ballistic missile launchers.
- Following an investigation, Israeli defense officials [revealed](#) that Israel’s David’s Sling air defense system engaged, but failed to intercept, the two ballistic missiles that struck the cities of Arad and Dimona over the weekend. The strike, believed to be caused by Iran’s Ghadr ballistic missile, injured almost 200 people and struck near an Israeli nuclear site.

- Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz [announced](#) that the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) would take control over a “security zone” in the Lebanese territory south of the Litani River, and would not permit the residents of southern Lebanon to return to the area until Hezbollah no longer poses a threat to Israel’s northern communities.
- Defense Minister Katz also [noted](#) that Lebanon’s military “did nothing” after the government claimed it would disarm Hezbollah.

Day 25 of Operations: March 24

Iran

- Overnight, the Israeli military [struck](#) over 50 targets throughout central and northern Iran, targeting ballistic missile launch sites and storage facilities.
- Strikes targeted several regime sites throughout Iran, including an [air force base](#) in Shiraz; a [naval base](#) in Bushehr; the [Jowzdan Industrial Zone](#) in Najafabad; [Iran Electronic Industries](#) in Isfahan; and other [targets](#) in the cities of Tehran, Shahin Shahr, Bandar-e Dayyer, [Tabriz](#), [Mashhad](#), and [East Azerbaijan](#) province, according to *Iran International*.
- Iran’s *Fars News Agency* [reported](#) that U.S. and Israeli strikes attacked a gas administration building and a gas pressure regulation station in Isfahan, partially damaging the sites.
 - » *Fars* also [reported](#) that strikes targeted the Khorramshahr gas pipeline processing station, with a projectile crashing near the facility.

Lebanon

- The IDF [struck](#) a headquarters of Hezbollah’s Radwan Force and a headquarters for Hezbollah’s intelligence division in Beirut, and at least seven [Hezbollah sites](#) in the city’s southern suburbs.
- In southern Lebanon, Israel’s air force [attacked](#) a Hezbollah headquarters hidden in the group’s Al-Nour radio station studio.
- Israel’s military [struck](#) several Hezbollah-owned Al-Amana gas stations the group uses to “refuel trucks transporting weapons and terrorists.”
- The IDF also [announced](#) that Golani Brigade troops killed eight Hezbollah fighters last week, including a Radwan Force sniper, and dismantled a tunnel containing the operatives’ weapons.

Iraq

- An unattributed strike [hit](#) a base belonging to the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) in Al Anbar Governorate, killing 15, including a commander, and wounding 30 others.

Day 25 of Operations: March 24

Iran

- The Israeli military [dropped](#) more than 100 bombs on Iranian regime targets, including:
 - » An IRGC Quds Force operational and intelligence base; an IRGC Quds Force intelligence headquarters; headquarters for IRGC air defense and ground forces; an Iranian naval cruise missile production facility; and various weapons production and research sites for developing ballistic missiles and warheads.
- Israel’s Air Force also [struck](#) the IRGC’s central security headquarters, which was hidden amongst civilian infrastructure in Tehran.

Lebanon

- The IDF [announced](#) that its troops had captured two Hezbollah members fighting for the group’s Radwan Force in southern Lebanon after they surrendered over the weekend.

- Israel's military [carried out](#) airstrikes in Hezbollah's stronghold south of Beirut.
- Israeli forces [struck](#) al-Dalafa Bridge over the eastern part of the Litani River, which Hezbollah uses to transport weapons and fighters into southern Lebanese territory.

Rationale and Policy Objectives

- Two days before the commencement of Operations Epic Fury and Roaring Lion, Prime Minister Netanyahu reportedly [told](#) President Trump that the meeting of Iranian leaders on February 28 might be the best chance to eliminate Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and exact retribution for Iran's plots to assassinate President Trump.
 - » Prior to the call, President Trump supported the idea of an American military operation against Iran. Three sources interviewed by Reuters reported that the call, coupled with intelligence on the limited timeframe to take out Khamenei, prompted Trump to order the commencement of Epic Fury.

4. Iranian and Proxy Operations

- Iran and Hezbollah continue to target Israel with an array of drone, missile, and rocket attacks. Over the past 24 hours:
 - » An Iranian missile carrying around [100 kilograms](#) of explosives [impacted](#) four sites in Tel Aviv, causing damage to vehicles and buildings and lightly wounding six people.
 - » Cluster munitions from an Iranian ballistic missile [impacted](#) several sites throughout Haifa.
 - » In the Negev Desert, ballistic missile fragments struck a house in the [Tel Arad](#) Bedouin village, causing damage but no injuries, and a mobile home in a [Bedouin community](#), injuring three people, including a two-month-old baby.
 - » Hezbollah [launched](#) approximately 30 rockets at the Haifa Bay Area, with Israel's air defenses intercepting most of the projectiles.
 - Four people [injured](#) during the Hezbollah rocket attack on northern Israel on March 23 were transported to hospitals in Safed and Haifa, with two victims sustaining shrapnel injuries to the limbs and face.
- Lebanese media [reported](#) that missile fragments, allegedly from an Iranian missile, struck Sahel Alm and Jounieh in Lebanon.
- Arab countries continue coming under Iranian and proxy fire. Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and the U.A.E. each reported attacks on their country over the past day:
 - » Bahrain:
 - Drone activity "[disrupted](#)" Amazon Web Services in Bahrain.
 - An Iranian attack [caused](#) a fire at a Bahraini company.
 - Bahrain's military [announced](#) that a Moroccan contractor was killed and five Emirati servicemembers were wounded during an Iranian attack on Bahraini territory.
 - » Iraq:
 - Six ballistic missiles [targeted](#) a Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs base in Iraqi Kurdistan, killing six fighters and wounding 30 others. Prior to the missile strike, two separate rocket attacks [targeted](#) Peshmerga bases, with the first launch consisting of five rockets and the second a single rocket.
 - A drone targeting Erbil International Airport was [intercepted](#).
 - » Kuwait:

- Over the past day, Kuwait's Ministry of Defense [stated](#) that Kuwait was targeted by 17 missiles and 13 drones, of which 13 missiles and 10 drones were intercepted.
- » Saudi Arabia:
 - Between March 23–24, the Saudi Ministry of Defense reported it intercepted at least 49 drones, including 13 within a two-hour period overnight.
- » Syria:
 - Pro-Iranian proxies in Iraq [fired](#) seven rockets toward a former U.S. military installation now run by the Syrian government in Al-Hasakah Governorate.
- » U.A.E.:
 - The U.A.E. [intercepted](#) five ballistic missiles and 17 drones over various parts of the country.
- According to *CBS News*, Iran has [deployed](#) around 12 mines in the Strait of Hormuz.
- Iran's Supreme Leader, Mojtaba Khamenei, is still not [responding](#) to messages sent to him by other Iranian leaders and has yet to hold face-to-face meetings with any subordinates, according to U.S. and Israeli media reports.

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 Khork, 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 200 members of the U.S. military have been [injured](#) thus far in the war, 10 of whom have been "seriously wounded," according to CENTCOM Capt. Tim Hawkins.
- Since the war began, 26 people [have been killed in](#) Israel, while over 4,000 people have been [hospitalized](#).
 - » Two Israeli soldiers have been [killed](#) in southern Lebanon.
- Since the war's outbreak, numerous other casualties have been reported:
 - » Iran:
 - At least 3,268 people, including at least 1,167 military personnel, have been [killed](#), with at least 20,000 [wounded](#). However, *Iran International* reported that at least 5,000 military personnel have been [killed](#).
 - » Azerbaijan:
 - Four civilians have been [injured](#).
 - » Bahrain:
 - Three people have [been killed](#), including a [Moroccan contractor](#), and at least 40 people have [been injured](#), including five [Emirati soldiers](#).

- » Iraq:
 - At least 77 people have been [killed](#), including:
 - 62 Iran-backed militia fighters;
 - Six Iraqi Kurdish Peshmerga;
 - Five Iranian Kurdish militants;
 - Five members of Iraq’s Counter-Terrorism Service;
 - Four individuals, reported to be Iranian, in a targeted airstrike in Baghdad;
 - One French soldier in Iraqi Kurdistan;
 - One airport security guard in Erbil; and
 - One civilian southeast of Baghdad.
- » Jordan:
 - At least 29 people have been [injured](#).
- » Kuwait:
 - Two [Kuwaiti navy sailors](#), two [Kuwaiti interior ministry officers](#), and a [Kuwaiti civilian](#) have been killed, over 70 Kuwaiti military personnel have [been injured](#), and two medical staff have been [wounded](#).
- » Lebanon:
 - At least 1,039 people have been [killed](#), and more than 2,870 have been wounded—figures that do not distinguish between Hezbollah operatives and civilians.
- » Oman:
 - At least [three people](#) have been killed, and at least 10 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.:
 - Eight people have been [killed](#), and at least 161 have been [injured](#).

6. Threats, Condemnations, and Statements from Iranian Officials

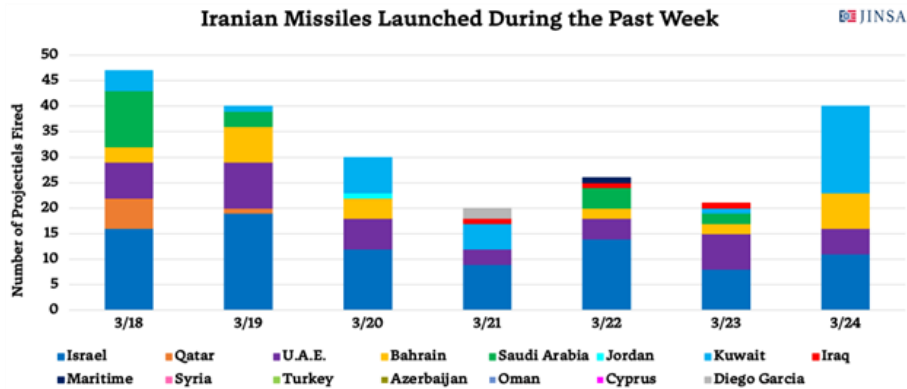
- Iran [appointed](#) former IRGC commander Mohammad Bagher Zolghadr as the new head of the Supreme National Security Council, following the death of Ali Larijani in an Israeli airstrike on March 17.
- Former IRGC commander and Expediency Council member Mohsen Rezaei [warned](#) that any further strikes on Iranian infrastructure would prompt a response far exceeding proportional retaliation, declaring Iran would exact “a head for an eye, limbs for an eye,” and claiming the final days of “America’s salvation are coming to an end.”
- Iran [arrested](#) 466 people for online activity that Iran claimed aimed to cause instability.

7. International Response

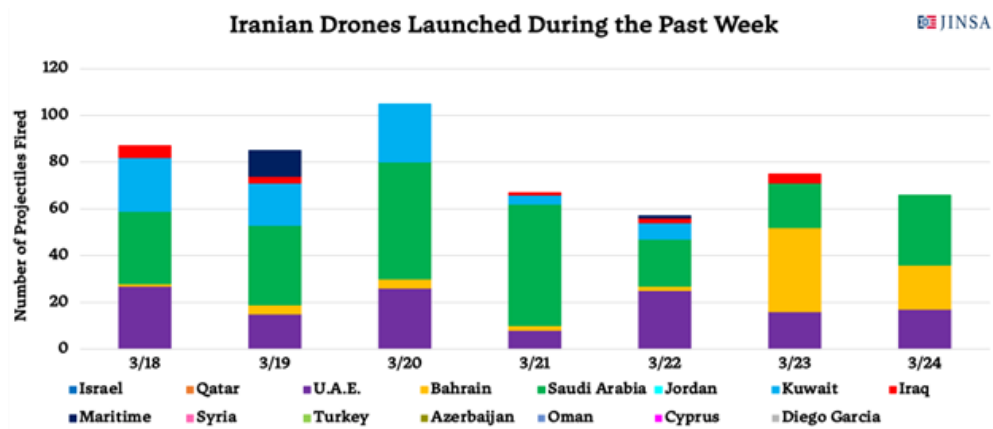
- Lebanon [declared](#) the Iranian Chargé d’Affaires and designated Iranian Ambassador to Lebanon, Mohammad Reza Shibani, *persona non grata* and requested that he leave the country by March 29.
- Bahrain [proposed](#) a United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) that would authorize the use of “all necessary means” in and near the Strait of Hormuz to ensure commercial shipping can transit the Strait and prevent efforts to impede movement through it.
 - » France also [proposed](#) a UNSCR that encourages countries to coordinate defensive actions to protect commercial shipping.
- Pakistan offered to host U.S.-Iran negotiations, [stating](#) that it “stands ready and honoured to be the host to facilitate meaningful and conclusive talks for a comprehensive settlement of the ongoing conflict.”
- Saudi Arabia has [agreed](#) to allow U.S. forces to use its King Fahd air base, and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman is close to a decision to join the war against Iran, with one source saying it is “only a matter of time,” according to the *Wall Street Journal*.
- Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky [stated](#) that Ukraine’s military has “irrefutable” evidence of Russian intelligence sharing sensitive information with Iran.
- French Foreign Minister Jean-Noël Barrot [urged](#) Israel to “refrain” from sending ground troops to take control of a sector in southern Lebanon, arguing such a decision would “have major humanitarian consequences” and would “exacerbate the country’s already dire situation.”
- German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier [stated](#) that the war in Iran is “contrary to international law” and a “politically disastrous mistake.”
 - » He added, “Just as I believe there will be no going back in relations with Russia to before February 24, 2022, so too do I believe there will be no going back in transatlantic relations to before January 20, 2025,” when Trump’s second term began.
- Iran has reportedly [ceased](#) natural gas exports to Turkey—from where Turkey receives roughly 13 percent of its natural gas imports—following Israel’s March 18 strike on the South Pars gas field.

8. Charts and Trends

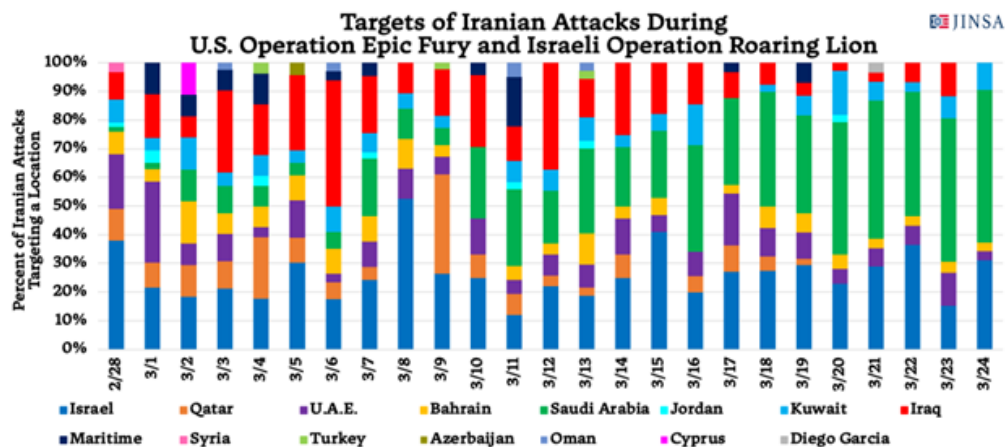
- Overall, Iranian missile fire declined 19 percent on March 23, with 21 missiles fired, down from 26 on March 22. However, Iran has fired 40 missiles already on March 24, nearly double the previous day’s total.
 - » Iran nearly doubled its missile fire against the U.A.E. on March 23, launching seven ballistic missiles compared to four on March 22. On March 24, Iran conducted a large escalation against Kuwait with 17 ballistic missiles and launched seven ballistic missiles against Bahrain, compared to only two the prior day.
 - » Iran has also maintained its fire against Israel with an average of roughly 10-15 missiles per day over the past week.



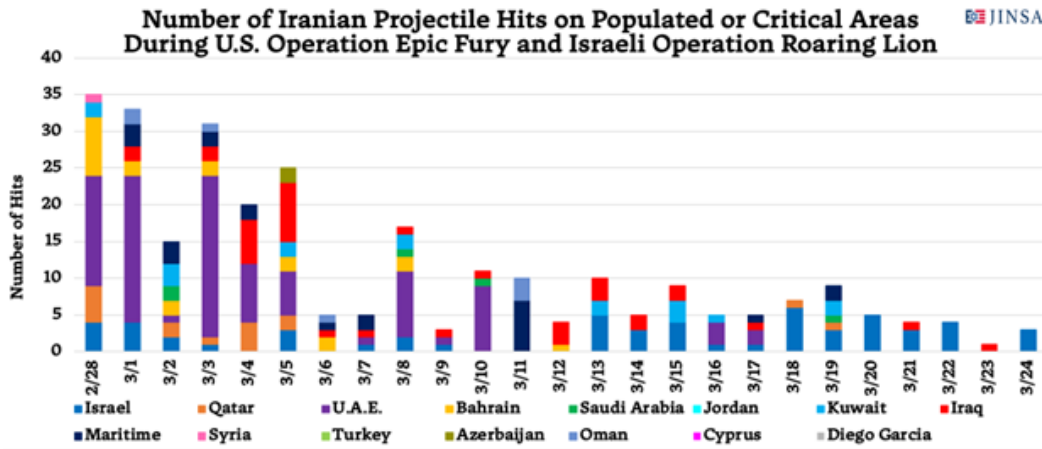
- Iran sharply escalated drone attacks against Bahrain on March 23, launching 36 drones compared to just two on March 22. So far on March 24, drone attacks against Bahrain dropped to 19, while drone attacks against Saudi Arabia surged to 30 drones, largely due to a period overnight with 13 separate drone attacks consisting of 20 drones.



- So far on March 24, Iran has increased its share of attacks targeting Israel, with 29 percent of attacks targeting Israel, up from 15 percent on March 23. Iran has continued its recent trend of conducting more individual attacks against Saudi Arabia than any other country, with 13 attacks on March 23 and 17 attacks so far on March 24.



- After Iran achieved fewer hits than on any other day on March 23, three Iranian projectiles have impacted in Israel on March 24 so far.



9. JINSA Resources

- 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
- Blaise Misztal, Giran Ozcan, and Jonah Brody, [The Rise of Iran's Kurdish Coalition](#), February 27, 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