

## 03092026 NEWS SPECIAL Don't miss Lev U'Neshama NOTE at end!

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### **1 dead, 2 seriously wounded as Iranian cluster bomb warhead hits central Israel Iran fires 7 missile salvos at Israel since midnight, woman moderately injured by flying debris in Rishon Letzion; Bahrain's only oil refinery burns as attacks continue against Gulf infrastructure**

By [Emanuel Fabian](#)

and [AP Today](#), 1:21 pm

*Footage shows two Iranian cluster bomb munitions' impact in central Israel during a ballistic missile attack, and first responders at the scene, March 9, 2026. (Social media, used in accordance with Clause 27a of the Copyright Law/Magen David Adom)* **Go to website for video rdb**

**At least one person was killed and two others seriously wounded by an Iranian missile with a cluster warhead that was fired at central Israel on Monday, the seventh salvo of fire since midnight as Tehran kept up its attacks on Israel and Gulf nations.**

**The cluster warhead hit at least six sites across central Israel, including in Yehud, Or Yehuda, Holon and Bat Yam. One man was killed and another was critically wounded at a construction site in Yehud, and a third man was seriously wounded in Or Yehuda, according to medical officials.**

**At the construction site, two men in their 40s were critically hurt by shrapnel, with one succumbing to his wounds, Magen David Adom said. The second man was taken to a hospital.**

Images from the scenes of the impacts showed craters in the ground and vehicles and buildings damaged by the explosions. Iran has launched multiple ballistic missiles at Israel carrying [cluster bomb warheads](#) during the ongoing conflict, indiscriminately spreading small bombs over wide areas of the country.

The repeated volleys of missiles targeted sites across the country, including southern Israel, the center and the north. At the same time, the Iran-backed Hezbollah terror group fired rockets and drones at the north.



In an early morning strike, a woman in Rishon Lezion was moderately wounded.

*Israeli rescue and emergency forces at the scene where shrapnel from a ballistic missile fired from Iran fell in Holon, March 9, 2026. (Avshalom Sassoni/Flash90)*

MDA paramedics treated the injured woman in her 50s for a head injury after she was hit by flying rocks resulting from part of a cluster munition that fell in the area, then took her to Shamir Medical Center in stable condition.

Hospital staff later announced she was in good health. She was not inside a bomb shelter when she was hit by the debris.

Iranian state broadcaster IRIB hailed the strikes, saying the country fired its "first wave of missiles

under Mojtaba Khamenei towards occupied territories," referring to the newly elected leader who was chosen Sunday as successor to his father, Ali Khamenei.

#### **IDF strikes Isfahan**

While Iran fired the repeated salvos at Israel, the Israel Defense Forces continued to carry out air strikes in Iran.

The IDF said it struck several bases of Iran's Basij paramilitary force and internal security forces in the city of Isfahan, along with missile sites in other areas of the country.

During the wave of strikes in Isfahan, the IDF said it hit the headquarters of Iran's "regional corps," a command center of the internal security forces, a base used by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and Basij, and the IRGC's police headquarters.

Elsewhere, the Israeli Air Force struck a rocket engine production facility and missile launch sites, the military said.



*Women mourners walk past a banner depicting Iran's slain supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, hanging from a shade covering the graves of recently-buried people killed in US-Israeli airstrikes, at Beheshta Zahra cemetery on the southern outskirts of Tehran on March 9, 2026. (Photo by ATTA KENARE / AFP)*

### **Regional anger grows as energy infrastructure is hit and oil prices spike**

In addition to the strikes on Israel, Iran also kept up its attacks on the Gulf states and on shipping through the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran's stranglehold on the Strait of Hormuz has also all but stopped tankers from using the shipping lane between the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman through which a fifth of

the world's oil is carried. The price of Brent crude oil, the international standard, surged to nearly \$120 a barrel on Monday, about 65% higher than when the war started, before retreating slightly.

As global economic concerns grew, US President Donald Trump downplayed the spike in prices.

"Short term oil prices, which will drop rapidly when the destruction of the Iran nuclear threat is over, is a very small price to pay for U.S.A., and World, Safety and Peace," Trump wrote on social media.

Iran has targeted Israel and American bases in the region since the start of the war, and has also been launching missiles and drones at energy and water infrastructure.

On Monday, a fire broke out at an oil facility that was attacked in Fujairah, United Arab Emirates. Bahrain's only oil refinery was apparently also hit and Saudi Arabia said it had intercepted several drones attacking its massive Shaybah oil field.

Saudi Arabia lashed out at Iran following a thwarted drone attack on Shaybah, saying Tehran would be the "biggest loser" if it continues to attack Arab states.



*This image released by Bahrain's Interior Ministry shows firefighters extinguishing flames after an Iranian projectile struck an industrial area in Ma'ameer, Bahrain, Monday, March 9, 2026. (Bahrain Interior Ministry via AP)*

The Foreign Ministry said Iranian attacks mean "further escalation which will have grave impact on the relations, currently and in the future."

In addition to energy facilities in the UAE, authorities there said the capital of Abu Dhabi was targeted by Iranian missiles, and two people were hurt by shrapnel from interceptions.

### **Bahrain's only refinery burns**

Iran attacked Kuwait, Qatar and Bahrain, where it hit a

residential area, wounding 32 people, including several children, according to authorities. Another attack appeared to have started a fire at Bahrain's only oil refinery, sending thick plumes of smoke into the air.

Bahrain has also accused Iran of damaging one of its desalination plants, though its electricity and water authority said supplies remained online. Desalination plants supply water to millions of residents in the region and thousands of stranded travelers, raising new fears of catastrophic risks in parched desert nations.

On Monday, Bahrain's state oil company declared force majeure for its oil shipments, the state-run Bahrain News Agency reported, a legal maneuver releasing a company of its contractual obligations because of extraordinary circumstances. It insisted that local demand could still be met.

In Iraq, air defenses downed a drone as it attacked a US military compound inside the Baghdad International Airport, a security source told The Associated Press, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the press. No injuries or damage were reported. It was not immediately clear who was behind the attack, but pro-Iranian Iraqi militias have previously targeted the base.

Elsewhere, the US military said a service member died of injuries from an Iranian attack on troops in Saudi Arabia on March 1. Seven US soldiers have now been killed.

The US State Department early Monday ordered nonessential personnel and families of all staff to leave Saudi Arabia following the escalation in attacks.

Eight other US diplomatic missions have ordered all but key staff to leave: Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and the consulate in Karachi, Pakistan.

## Hezbollah missile fire wounds 16; damages daycare, 'infrastructure' in central Israel

Officials said to assess terror group will ramp up attacks in bid to distract from Iran fighting, as Lebanon reportedly inquires about direct negotiations with Israel

By Emanuel Fabian, Nava Freiberg, Lazar Berman and Agencies Today, 11:51 pm



Israeli rescue and emergency forces at the scene where shrapnel from a missile fired from Lebanon fell outside a kindergarten in Ramle, March 9, 2026. (Yossi Aloni/Flash90)

**The Hezbollah terror group on Monday launched a barrage of missiles at central Israel, in its deepest attack since hostilities intensified last week, wounding 16 people lightly and causing damage to "infrastructure" and a daycare, authorities said.**

**The long-range attack came amid reports that officials expect the attacks from Lebanon to ramp up in the coming days, in an attempt to draw Israeli attention away from its conflict with Iran.**

**The Israel Defense Forces said air defenses**

**intercepted some of the missiles and others hit open areas.**

One missile impacted in central Israel, and the "circumstances of the incident are under investigation," the military said.

That missile, which hit the central city of Ramle, lightly injured 14 people and caused damage to a daycare, rescue workers and the Magen David Adom ambulance service said.



No warning sirens had sounded in the city. The IDF Home Front Command was investigating the incident.

Meanwhile, "damage was caused to infrastructure," and two people were lightly hurt when a missile struck "an open area in the Mateh Yehuda [Regional Council] area," police said.

**Damage to a classroom following a strike that hit a kindergarten in the central city of Ramle on March 9, 2026 (Ilia YEFIMOVICH / AFP)**

In separate statements, the Iran-backed terror group claimed to have targeted the IDF Home Front Command headquarters in Ramle, known as Rehavam Base, as well as a "satellite communications station" in Haela Valley near Beit Shemesh, with a "barrage of precision missiles."

Hezbollah claimed the satellite station belonged to the "Communications and Cyber Defense Division of the Israeli enemy army," although the site is in fact not a military installation, but rather a civilian-commercial site



operated by the European company SES.

**The site of a Hezbollah missile impact in an open area of central Israel, March 9, 2026. (Israel Police)**

The IDF later said that the three Hezbollah launchers that had been used to fire the long-range projectiles at Israel were destroyed in airstrikes within an hour of the attack.

The terror group has been attacking Israel with renewed rocket and missile fire since last Monday, claiming it is in retaliation for the killing of Iran's late supreme leader Ali Khamenei.

Israel, in response, has struck hundreds of Hezbollah targets across Lebanon, including dozens in Beirut, and

the IDF has pushed ground forces deeper into southern Lebanon in what it has said is a defensive measure to protect communities in northern Israel.

On Monday evening, Lebanese media reported that an Israeli airstrike hit a building belonging to the Hezbollah-linked Al-Qard al-Hasan (AQAH) association in the village of Aaqbiyeh, south of Sidon.

The IDF issued an evacuation warning for the building ahead of the strike, and warned earlier Monday that it would be striking branches of AQAH, which is known to be used by the terror group as a quasi-bank.

Founded in 1983, AQAH describes itself as a charitable organization that provides loans to people according to Islamic principles that forbid interest. It has more than 30 branches across Lebanon, mainly in Hezbollah bastions such as Beirut's southern suburbs, but also in central Beirut and other major cities.



**Smoke rises from an Israeli airstrike in Dahiyeh, Beirut's southern suburbs, Monday, March 9, 2026. (AP Photo/Hassan Ammar)**

However, the US Treasury Department, which sanctioned AQAH in 2007, has said that Hezbollah uses it as a cover to manage "financial activities and gain access to the international financial system."

"While AQAH purports to serve the Lebanese people, in practice it illicitly moves funds through shell accounts and facilitators, exposing Lebanese financial institutions to possible sanctions," it said in a statement sanctioning individuals linked to the organization in 2021.

The IDF also issued a wide evacuation warning for the entire village of Ansariya, just south of Aaqbiyeh, on Monday.

"The activities of the Hezbollah terror organization are forcing the IDF to act against it with force. The IDF does not intend to harm you," said army spokesman Col. Avichay Adraee.

"For your safety, you must evacuate your homes immediately and move away from the village to a distance of no less than 1000 meters," he said.

#### **Diverting attention**

As the IDF pushed ahead with its renewed operations in Lebanon, defense officials were said to have warned Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Israel Katz in a meeting on Monday evening that Hezbollah could be expected to increase its rocket and drone attacks in the coming days.

Citing senior Israeli officials, Channel 12 reported that security officials warned at the meeting that Hezbollah was seeking to wear down northern Israel and the broader home front

by launching larger daily volumes of missiles and UAVs, including at strategic facilities.



**People rush to a public shelter in the city of Ramle after a siren warning of incoming missiles from Lebanon, March 9, 2026. (Yossi Aloni/Flash90)**

Israeli officials have assessed that this, combined with reports of Hezbollah and other terror groups clashing with the Lebanese Armed Forces in southern Lebanon, is part of a broader effort to divert Israel's attention from the ongoing campaign in Iran.

#### **Weakening Hezbollah as a 'shared interest'**

Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar defended the IDF's advances to the UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, telling her the deployment of the troops was necessary to prevent ground incursions by

Hezbollah forces and rocket fire toward Israeli civilians and communities."

"Hezbollah launched an attack against us, and there is no actor in the international community working to stop it except us," said Sa'ar, in comments provided by his office.

He told the UN envoy that weakening Hezbollah was a “shared interest” of both Israel and Lebanon.

Shoring up that assessment, the Axios news site reported on Monday that the Lebanese government had recently proposed holding direct negotiations with Israel aimed at ending its war with the Iran-backed group and possibly reaching a peace agreement with Beirut.

According to the report, which cited five sources familiar with the matter, the possibility was raised through the Trump administration.

Both Jerusalem and Washington responded skeptically to the proposal, according to sources, including a US official, an Israeli official, and three sources with direct knowledge of the matter.

The Lebanese government was said to approach US envoy Tom Barrack — who worked on the Lebanon file last year but has been less active in recent months — last week, asking him to mediate with Israel. Beirut reportedly claimed that some Hezbollah members were open to a deal and proposed holding direct talks with Israel at the ministerial level in Cyprus.

Barrack was said to respond that the Lebanese government must “stop with the bullshit” on disarming Hezbollah in order to move forward. “If it’s not real action about Hezbollah’s weapons, there’s no point,” a source told Axios.



***Mourners carry the bodies of Hezbollah fighters who were killed by Israeli airstrikes during their funeral procession in Khraibeh village, eastern Lebanon, March 8, 2026. (AP Photo/Bilal Hussein)***

Some sources said that Lebanese Army chief Gen. Rodolphe Haykal has resisted deploying troops against Hezbollah while fighting continues, despite the army’s stated commitment to disarming the terror group. This has reportedly prompted pressure from Washington on Lebanese President Joseph Aoun to remove Haykal.

Israel rebuffed the proposal, Axios reported, saying that it was too late and that its military is currently focused on eliminating Hezbollah, the sources said, although Israel’s Channel 12 reported that Jerusalem

was still examining the offer.

According to the sources cited by Axios, Lebanese officials have grown increasingly frustrated that the Trump administration has largely ignored their outreach, leaving little room for mediation or peace talks with Israel.

“There is no interest from the Trump administration to deal with Lebanon,” one source with knowledge told Axios.

Netanyahu’s office did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the report.

An Israeli official told The Washington Post in an earlier report that Israel is “willing to engage with Lebanese officials [to] reach agreement on a ceasefire,” though the official made no indication that any Lebanese proposal had been made.

Still, with or without Israeli peace talks, the Lebanese government appeared committed to keeping up the pressure on Hezbollah on Monday, with Aoun accusing it of working to “collapse” the state.

To stop the fighting in his country, the president proposed a four-point initiative and called on the international community to help implement it.

The plan included “establishing a full truce” with Israel, “logistical support” for the army to disarm Hezbollah, and “direct negotiations (with Israel) under international auspices.”

Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa endorsed his Lebanese counterpart on Monday, saying, “We stand alongside Lebanese President Joseph Aoun in disarming Hezbollah.”

But the head of Hezbollah’s parliamentary bloc, Mohamed Raad, vowed on Monday evening that his group would “defend our existence whatever the cost,” saying it has “no other option to preserve honor, pride and dignity than the option of resistance.”

Israel regularly struck Hezbollah targets in Lebanon following a November 2024 ceasefire agreement, accusing the terror group of ceasefire violations, and continued to hold on to five border posts inside Lebanon, citing security needs. It has now expanded beyond those points, citing defensive needs.

The ceasefire ended a year of hostilities between Hezbollah and Israel, which started when the terror group began firing missiles and drones into northern Israel one day after its ally Hamas launched a devastating attack on

southern Israel that set off the war in Gaza. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/hezbollah-missile-fire-wounds-16-damages-daycare-infrastructure-in-central-israel/>

## Trump to Times of Israel: It'll be a 'mutual' decision with Netanyahu regarding when Iran war ends

*US president, in phone interview, clarifies that he'll make final call to end operation 'at right time'; says he and PM 'worked together' against Islamic Republic: 'We've destroyed a country that would have destroyed Israel'*

By [Jacob Magid](#)

Today, 2:36 am



*US President Donald Trump, right, shakes hands with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu during a news conference at Mar-a-Lago, in Palm Beach, Florida, December 29, 2025. (Alex Brandon/AP)*

**US President Donald Trump told The Times of Israel on Sunday that a decision on when to end the war with Iran will be a “mutual” one that he’ll make together with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.**

**Trump also asserted in the brief telephone interview that the Islamic Republic would have destroyed Israel if he and Netanyahu had not been around. “Iran was going to destroy Israel and everything else around it... We’ve worked**

**together. We’ve destroyed a country that wanted to destroy Israel.”**

**The US president was asked whether he alone would decide when the war with Iran ends or if Netanyahu would also have a say.**

“I think it’s mutual... a little bit. We’ve been talking. I’ll make a decision at the right time, but everything’s going to be taken into account,” he responded, indicating that while Netanyahu will have input, the US president will have the final say.

Asked whether Israel could continue the war against Iran even after the US decides to halt its strikes, Trump declined to entertain the theoretical possibility before adding: “I don’t think it’s going to be necessary.”

Trump has sought to avoid being locked down to a specific timeline for the war, but White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said Friday that Washington expects it to last four to six weeks.

Trump’s answers to The Times of Israel pointed to the significant degree of influence Netanyahu would appear to have over Trump’s decision-making in the war, which the US and Israel launched jointly on February 28 with a strike that killed Iran’s supreme leader Ali Khamenei.



*FILE: Mojtaba Khamenei, son of Iranian supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, attends the annual anti-Israeli Al-Quds, Jerusalem, Day rally in Tehran, Iran, May 31, 2019. (AP Photo/Vahid Salemi)*

Trump held the phone interview shortly after Iran’s state media [announced](#) that the Islamic Republic’s Assembly of Experts had named Khamenei’s son, Mojtaba, as the country’s next supreme leader.

Hours earlier, Trump told ABC News that the next leader of Iran won’t “last long” if he doesn’t have approval from the White House.

Trump declined to comment to *ToI* on Mojtaba’s election, sufficing by declaring: “We’ll see what happens.”

### Give Netanyahu that pardon

The US president made [headlines](#) in Israel last week by calling President Isaac Herzog a “disgrace” for not heeding his call to pardon Netanyahu, who is standing trial for alleged bribery, fraud and breach of trust.

The next day, though, Trump’s ambassador to Israel, Mike Huckabee, [met](#) with Herzog and hailed the

latter's leadership.

Asked if this was part of a “good cop-bad cop” strategy to sway Herzog, Trump avoided answering directly, but again chided the Israeli president.



*US President Donald Trump (right) poses for a photo with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu before he boards Air Force One at Ben Gurion International Airport, October 13, 2025, near Tel Aviv, as President Isaac Herzog (left) watches. (AP/Evan Vucci)*

“Bibi Netanyahu should be given that pardon immediately. I think [Herzog is] doing a terrible thing by not giving it. We want Bibi to be focused on the war, not on a ridiculous pardon,” Trump told Tol, referring to Netanyahu by his nickname.

Herzog's office said last week that it's his prerogative to decide for himself whether to grant Netanyahu a pardon.

“President Herzog greatly respects and appreciates the tremendous contribution of Donald Trump to Israel's security,” his

office said, while stressing that Israel “is a sovereign state governed by the rule of law,” and as such, the pardon request is currently being dealt with by the Justice Ministry, which will offer its legal opinion, as per the law. No timeline has been announced for when that legal opinion will be issued.

Trump's relationship with Netanyahu has improved dramatically since the 2024 US presidential election season, after the pair seemed to have had a falling out four years earlier when the Israeli premier congratulated Joe Biden for defeating Trump.

In a 2021 interview with Israeli journalist Barak Ravid, Trump [blasted](#) Netanyahu for calling Biden to congratulate him on the 2020 election win and went on to assert that the Israeli premier had never been interested in making peace with the Palestinians.

Asked during the Sunday phone interview whether his feelings about Netanyahu have evolved since his previous tenure, Trump responded: “We've done a great job together, like what we've done with Iran.”



*A thick plume of smoke rises from an oil storage facility hit by an Israeli strike late Saturday in Tehran, Iran, March 8, 2026. (AP Photo/Vahid Salemi)*

### **‘Now we have Iran being destroyed’**

The US president then made a new assertion regarding Iran's intentions, in an apparent attempt to further justify the decision to launch the war against the Islamic Republic eight days earlier.

“Iran was going to destroy Israel and everything else around it... and now look what we have — we have them being destroyed,” Trump said of Iran.

The US president said he wasn't surprised by how widespread [support](#) for the Iran war is in Israel, joking that the only thing more popular there is his own [favorables](#).

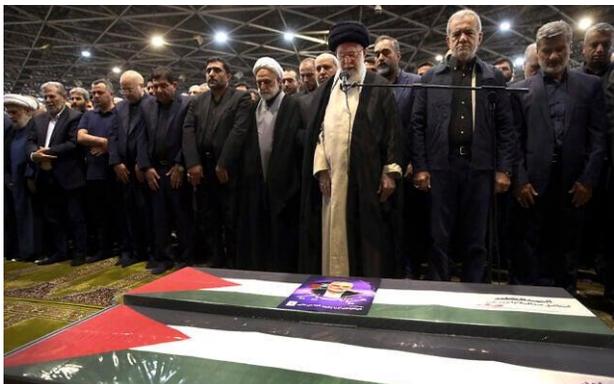
He then reiterated his praise for Netanyahu and their partnership against the Islamic Republic: “Bibi's done a great job. He's been a wartime prime minister. We've worked together. We've destroyed a country that wanted to destroy Israel. Would have destroyed Israel if I wasn't around.

“And [if] Bibi wasn't around, Israel would not exist today,” he added.

*In this photo released by the official website of the office of the Iranian supreme leader, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, third right, leads a prayer over the coffins of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh and his bodyguard who were killed in an Israeli operation, during their funeral ceremony at the Tehran University campus, in Tehran, Iran, August 1, 2024. (Office of the Iranian Supreme Leader via AP)*

### **Will Iran war lead to Hamas disarmament?**

The Iran war appears to have pushed off discussions the US and fellow Gaza mediating countries Egypt, Qatar and Turkey are slated to hold with Palestinian terror group Hamas on its disarmament.



Given Iran's longstanding financial support for Hamas, Trump was asked whether Tehran's weakening in the ongoing war would make it easier to coax the Gaza-based terror group to give up its weapons.

"Many people will disarm because of [the war against Iran]," he responded. "Because right now, Iran is in a position that it's never known before, and it's only going to get worse for them."

Before ending the call, Trump said again: "Tell this president to give him the pardon right now."

<https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&opi=89978449&url=https://www.timesofisrael.com/trump-to-times-of-israel-itll-be-a-mutual-decision-with-netanyahu-regarding-when-iran-war-ends>

## **Israel, US devastate Iran's aging air force as decades-old jets fall to modern fighters**

***IDF gained rapid air superiority over Tehran as strikes destroyed aircraft on the ground and exposed how decades of sanctions left Iran reliant on missiles and drones instead of a modern air force***

ynet|17:31

**Iran has continued launching ballistic missiles toward Israel during the war, but its aging air force has played little role in the fighting, allowing the IDF to establish air superiority over Tehran within a short time.**

**A report by The Wall Street Journal described how Iranian aircraft — many of them decades old — are being systematically destroyed by Israeli and U.S. strikes, often while still on the ground.**

***F-35 stealth fighter shoots down a Yak-130 jet (Video: IDF) [Go to website for video rdb](#)***

The only Iranian aircraft shot down in the war so far was a [Yak-130, a training jet that was downed by an F-35 stealth fighter](#), according to the IDF. The Yak-130 is one of the newest aircraft in Iran's fleet, purchased in 2023, but it is primarily designed as a trainer and flies at roughly half the speed of the F-35.

Many other aircraft have been destroyed in airstrikes at military airfields.

According to the report, the IDF struck F-14 Tomcat fighters at an air base in Isfahan, while two Russian-made Su-24 fighter-bombers were destroyed on the ground at an air base in Shiraz, along with other aircraft.

The air force also targeted F-5 fighters and F-4 Phantom jets that were preparing for takeoff at Tabriz in western Iran.

In Tehran, more than 16 transport aircraft belonging to the [Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' Quds Force](#) were destroyed, the IDF said.

U.S. forces have also struck Iranian aircraft, and Qatar intercepted two Su-24 jets that approached the Persian Gulf, according to the report.

The Wall Street Journal noted that many Iranian aircraft are so old they resemble "museum pieces," kept operational only through improvised spare parts and maintenance.

Several aircraft types still in use date back decades. The Su-24, a Russian tactical bomber, entered service in the early 1970s and has not been produced for more than 30 years. The F-4 Phantom, originally introduced in the early 1960s, has not been manufactured for nearly half a century. The F-5 fighter, whose first flight was in 1959, is of a similar era.

Russian-made fighter jets burning in Tehran

None of Iran's aircraft have stealth capabilities, making them far more vulnerable against modern fighters such as the F-35.

Iran's fleet has also suffered frequent crashes during training flights even before the war. Last month, an F-4 crashed during a night training exercise in western Iran's Hamedan province, killing one of the pilots. Iranian authorities attributed the accident to a mechanical malfunction.

Former Russian air force officer Gleb Irisov told The Wall Street Journal that in 2020, while flying in a military transport plane over Iran en route to Syria, he was surprised when two Iranian Phantom jets approached the aircraft.

"I was shocked to see such an old model," Irisov said. "It was like a ghost from the past."

Iran acquired many of its aircraft before the 1979 Islamic Revolution, including the Phantom and F-5 fighters purchased from the United States in the 1960s and 1970s.

Additional aircraft entered the fleet during the Iran-Iraq war when Iraqi pilots defected to Iran, bringing with them French Mirage F-1 jets and Russian Su-22 aircraft.

Decades of international sanctions have prevented Tehran from purchasing new aircraft or spare parts for much of its fleet.

Russia has discussed selling modern Su-35 fighter jets to Iran for years, but despite repeated Iranian

statements that the deal was close, the sale has not materialized.

As a result, Iran has been left with a relatively small and aging fleet. As of 2025, Tehran operated about 218 fighter aircraft, compared with 278 operated by Israel, according to the report. The gap in technological capability is significantly larger than the difference in numbers.

To keep aircraft operational, Iranian intermediaries have attempted to acquire spare parts on the international market. Iranian businessmen told The Wall Street Journal they have tried to buy components from used Boeing and Airbus aircraft but often struggle to find sellers due to U.S. banking restrictions.

*US strikes against the Iranian Air Force (Video: X) [Go to website for video rdb](#)*

***Iran's helicopter fleet is also aging. One military helicopter recently crashed into market stalls near Isfahan, killing the pilot, co-pilot and two vendors. The aircraft was an AH-1 Super Cobra attack helicopter purchased from the United States in 1971.***

In 2024, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi was killed in another helicopter crash involving a Bell 212, a model first produced in 1968. Iranian media reported mechanical failure in both cases.

Iran has attempted over the years to reverse-engineer and upgrade aircraft or develop domestic fighters, but analysts say the country has lacked the financial resources and technological capacity to do so effectively.

Those limitations pushed Tehran to invest heavily in alternative weapons systems — particularly ballistic missiles and drones — to compensate for its weak air force.

But analysts told The Wall Street Journal that the recent conflict has exposed the limits of that strategy. Saeid Golkar, an Iran expert, said the regime's mistake was believing that missile programs could replace the need for a strong air force.

"The regime's naivety," Golkar said, "was believing missile programs could compensate for the lack of a capable air force." <https://www.ynetnews.com/article/h1hkjtnkze#autoplay>

**Trump says Iran war is going to end 'very soon,' but not this week | Live**

**Trump said Operation Epic Fury is 'ahead of our initial timeline by a lot' and suggested the conflict could conclude shortly; claimed Iran's missile capability has been heavily degraded**

[Reuters](#)|Updated:16:58

**U.S. President Donald Trump said Monday the war against Iran is expected to end "very soon," while warning that Washington is prepared to escalate strikes if Tehran threatens global oil supplies.**

**Speaking to reporters in Doral, Florida, Trump said the U.S. military campaign is "ahead of our initial timeline by a lot" and suggested the conflict could conclude soon, though he acknowledged it would not necessarily end this week.**



*(Photo: AP Photo/Mark Schiefelbein)*

When asked directly whether the war would be over within days, Trump replied "no."

Trump said the United States is "close to finishing this excursion," referring to the joint U.S.-Israel military campaign against Iran.

"It's going to be ended soon," Trump said.

At the same time, he indicated Washington could expand operations if needed.

"We can leave it here, but we are going to go further," Trump said.

The president said U.S. forces have already made "major strides," describing the mission as "pretty much complete."

According to the U.S. president, American forces have struck more than 5,000 targets in Iran since the campaign began, including drone manufacturing facilities, naval assets and missile infrastructure.

Trump said Iran's missile capability had been heavily degraded.

"Their missile capability is down to about 10% — maybe less," he said.

He also warned Tehran against attempting to disrupt global oil supplies.

"I will not let a terrorist regime hold the world hostage and try to stop the global oil supply," Trump said. "If Iran does something like that, they will be hit much, much harder."

Trump added that the U.S. Navy would escort ships through the Strait of Hormuz when the time comes, amid concerns about the security of the key global shipping route.

He said the United States is waiving certain oil-related sanctions to ensure adequate supply and limit the

impact on energy markets.

Trump acknowledged that oil and gas prices had risen as a result of the conflict but said the increase was smaller than he expected.

The president also said U.S. authorities are closely monitoring whether Iran has activated potential “sleeper cells.”

Earlier Monday, Trump addressed Republican lawmakers at a fundraising event in Florida, where he described the conflict as a “short-term excursion” from his domestic agenda.

“We took a little excursion because we felt we had to do that to get rid of some people,” Trump said, apparently referring to Iran’s leadership.

He said the United States and Israel were “crushing the enemy in an overwhelming display of technical skill and military force,” adding that Iran’s drone and missile capabilities were being “utterly demolished.”

Trump also criticized the selection of Mojtaba Khamenei as Iran’s new supreme leader, saying he was disappointed by the choice and warning it would likely lead to “more of the same problem for Iran.”

Meanwhile, Trump said he held a “very good call” with Russian President Vladimir Putin, adding that the two leaders discussed both the war in Iran and the conflict in Ukraine.

Putin indicated he wanted to be helpful regarding Iran, Trump said, describing their discussion on Ukraine as positive. <https://www.ynetnews.com/article/b180kohk11l>

## Iran's IRGC commander vows to only use missiles with warheads weighing at least one ton - report

*Mousavi added that the "wavelength" and intensity of missile launches will increase, with attacks broadening in scope, according to Iran International.*

By [MAYA ZANGER-NADIS](#) MARCH 9, 2026 22:14 Updated: MARCH 9, 2026 22:39



*ILLUSTRATIVE: Iranian missiles are displayed at the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) Aerospace Force Museum in Tehran, Iran, November 12, 2025. (photo credit: MAJID ASGARIPOUR/WANA (WEST ASIA NEWS AGENCY) VIA REUTERS)*

**Iran will only launch missiles with warheads weighing over one ton, Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) Aerospace Force commander Majid Mousavi said on Monday, according to Iranian opposition outlet Iran International.**

**To put this in perspective: At the outset of the current conflict with Iran, a missile weighing hundreds of kilograms but less than one ton completely destroyed a building in Tel Aviv.**

**Mousavi added that the "wavelength" and intensity of missile launches will increase, with attacks broadening in scope, according to Iran International.**

Iran, though weakened by US and Israeli strikes, still has a powerful arsenal at its disposal, according to a *Wall Street Journal* report citing Martin Sampson, former UK defense adviser and leading Middle East military analyst.

These weapons include cruise missiles, cyber warfare, and mines, according to the *WSJ*, which quoted Sampson as saying that Iran “potentially has the ability to escalate much more broadly” with its current reserve.

*Bright fragments streak across the sky in what local media described as a missile with a split warhead, amid the US-Israeli conflict with Iran, as seen from Ashkelon, Israel, March 5, 2026. (credit: REUTERS/AMIR COHEN)*

**Use of cluster munitions in Operation Roaring Lion, and in previous war with Iran**

Iran has begun using [cluster munitions](#) in recent strikes, resulting in the killing and wounding of Israeli civilians. Cluster munitions are known to be highly destructive; Iran also [used them against Israel in the 12-Day War in the summer of 2025.](#)

According to an initial investigation, conducted during the 12-Day War following suspected use of cluster



munitions, the missile split into several smaller bombs approximately seven kilometers above the ground, creating an eight-kilometer impact radius when they fell.

Each of the smaller bombs carried around two kilograms of explosives.

Mousavi did not clarify whether or not the heavier warheads would also contain cluster bombs, which can be made in a variety of weight ranges.

### **Despite Saturday spike in missile sirens, IDF affirms 75% of Iranian missile launchers destroyed**

Although there was a spike in Iranian ballistic missile threat sirens on Saturday, sending millions of Israelis into their safe rooms and bomb shelters throughout the day, the IDF said that it had destroyed 75% of Iran's missile launchers.

The 75% figure is a jump from 65% two days ago.

At the same time, IDF sources have not expressed any certainty about fully stopping Iranian missile fire in the near future.

Yonah Jeremy Bob contributed to this report.

<https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/iran-news/article-889404>

## **Stock markets worldwide quake after oil prices briefly spike to almost \$120 a barrel** *With traffic frozen in Strait of Hormuz amid US-Israeli war with Iran, a barrel of Brent crude hit \$119.50 on Monday, its highest price since Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022*

By [STAN CHOE](#) 9 March 2026, 4:56 pm



*A man walks past an electronic quotation board displaying numbers of the Nikkei Stock Average on the Tokyo Stock Exchange along a street in Tokyo on March 9, 2026. (Philip FONG / AFP)*

**NEW YORK (AP) — Stock markets shuddered worldwide Monday on worries about whether the global economy can withstand spiking prices for oil, which briefly got to nearly \$120 per barrel, their highest level since four summers ago.**

**The S&P 500 fell 1.3%, coming off its worst week since October. The Dow Jones Industrial Average was down 721 points, or 1.5%, as of 9:35 a.m. Eastern time, and**

**the Nasdaq composite was 1.2% lower. That followed even worse losses in European and Asian stock markets.**

Since the war with Iran began with attacks by the United States and Israel, the central worry for financial markets has been how high oil prices will go because of it and how long they will stay there. Early Monday, the price for a barrel of Brent crude, the international standard, briefly touched \$119.50. It hasn't been that expensive since the summer after Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022, another military conflict that likewise raised the risk for blockages in the global flow of oil.

If oil prices stay very high for very long, households' budgets that are already stretched by high inflation could break under the pressure. Companies, meanwhile, would see their own bills jump for fuel and to stock items on their store shelves or in their data warehouses. It all raises the possibility of a worst-case scenario for the global economy "stagflation," where growth stagnates and inflation remains high.

To be sure, oil prices pared their huge gains Monday following talk that some of the world's largest economies could coordinate a response to the spiking price of oil. A barrel of Brent crude pulled back to \$101.76, though that's still up 9.8% from Friday.

A barrel of benchmark US crude, meanwhile, jumped 9.6% to \$99.59 after briefly spiking as high as \$119.48.



*Motorists queue beside a sign showing current prices at a gasoline station a day before the implementation of a big oil price hike on March 9, 2026, in Quezon city, Philippines. (AP Photo/Aaron Favila)*

The US stock market has a history of bouncing back relatively quickly from past military conflicts, such as Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, as long as oil prices don't stay too high for too long. And for all of the recent swings in the market, the S&P 500 index that sits at the heart of many 401(k) accounts is still within 5% of its record set in January.

That has some professional investors suggesting drops in prices for stocks could ultimately offer

opportunities to buy them at cheaper levels before they rise again.

“We continue to believe that the current acute shortage of oil will be reversed in the coming months as new supply comes online and oil should drop significantly,” according to Sameer Samana, head of global equities and real assets at Wells Fargo Investment Institute.

All that hinges, though, on the flow of oil returning toward normal. At the moment, it’s far from that.

Consider the Strait of Hormuz, a narrow waterway off Iran’s coast that a fifth of the world’s oil sails through on a typical day. Now, tanker traffic has all but stopped because of worries about a possible attack by Iran.

If the strait remains closed for only a few weeks, the price of oil could push to \$150 per barrel or higher, according to oil and gas strategists at Macquarie Research.



***A navy vessel is seen sailing in the Strait of Hormuz, a vital waterway through which much of the world’s oil and gas passes on March 1, 2026 (Sahar AL ATTAR / AFP)***

“Although we are not attempting to predict how long Hormuz transit will be substantially or completely curtailed, we are growing more confident that without an agreement and a fast cessation of all kinetic activity, the crude market will begin to break in days, and not in weeks or months,” the strategists led by Vikas Dwivedi wrote in a report.

The most immediate pain on Wall Street is hitting companies that have already big fuel bills.

Carnival lost 7.3% because it has to fill huge cruise ships with fuel. United Airlines sank 6.9%, and Old Dominion Freight fell 3.8%.

Retailers who have to ship in products from far away, while also needing their customers to have enough budget space leftover after gasoline to spend, also struggled. Best Buy fell 4.4%, and Williams-Sonoma dropped 4%.

In stock markets abroad, where economies are more dependent on the import of oil and natural gas, stocks fell even more. South Korea’s Kospi sank 6%, Japan’s Nikkei 225 tumbled 5.2% and France’s CAC 40 dropped 1.7%.

A Chinese special envoy to the Middle East, Zhai Jun, called for an end to the attacks and said strikes on non-military targets and civilians should be condemned. Meanwhile, South Korean President Lee Jae Myung warned against hoarding, panic buying and collusion between refiners and gas stations.

Both sides in the war struck new targets over the weekend, including civilian ones. Bahrain accused Iran of hitting one of the desalination plants that are crucial for drinking water in Gulf countries. Its national oil company declared force majeure after the country’s sole oil refinery was attacked. Israel struck oil depots in Tehran, sending up thick smoke and causing environmental alerts.



***Members of Iran’s Red Crescent society stand near smoke plumes from an ongoing fire following an overnight airstrike on the Shahr oil refinery in northwestern Tehran on March 8, 2026. (AFP)***

US President Donald Trump said late Sunday that high oil prices at the moment are worth the cost.

“Short term oil prices, which will drop rapidly when the destruction of the Iran nuclear threat is over, is a very small price to pay for USA, and World, Safety and Peace,” he said in a posting on his social media network.

In the bond market, the yield on the 10-year Treasury remained at 4.15%, where it was late Friday.

Worries about high inflation and oil prices are pushing upward on Treasury yields. But worries about a potentially slowing economy are pulling downward at the same time.

Worries about possible stagflation worsened Friday following a surprisingly weak report on the US job market showing that employers cut more jobs last month than they added. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/stock-markets-worldwide-quake-after-oil-prices-briefly-spike-to-almost-120-a-barrel/>

**Board of Peace issued tenders for Gaza villages, troop base, headquarters amid Iran war - exclusive**

**Despite the ongoing conflict with Iran, Trump's postwar Gaza plan moves forward, with the Board of Peace already issuing tenders for key projects. By [ZVIKA KLEIN](#) MARCH 9, 2026 18:24 Updated: MARCH 9, 2026 19:04**



*US President Donald Trump holds a signed resolution, during the inaugural Board of Peace meeting at the US Institute of Peace in Washington, February 19, 2026. (photo credit: REUTERS/Kevin Lamarque TPX IMAGES OF THE DAY)*

**US President Donald Trump's plan for postwar Gaza continued to move forward despite the US-Israel war with Iran, with the Board of Peace (BoP) already issuing tenders for projects on the ground, two sources close to the initiative told The Jerusalem Post on Monday.**

**According to the sources, the initiative has moved beyond diplomatic planning and into early implementation. The BoP is already operating as an official entity, they said, and has opened a bank account with an initial budget of between \$60 million and \$70 million. The funding is allegedly not from the US or from Israel, but from other entities in the region.**

The sources said the BoP had already issued tenders for three projects: refugee villages in the Gaza Strip, a base for international troops expected to serve there, and a management headquarters in Israel.

One of the sources said that the process was expected to accelerate in the coming weeks and now stood a higher chance of success.

A senior Israeli official told the *Post* that the weakening of Iran has become a major factor in advancing the initiative.



*Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian meets with the head of the Political Council of Hamas, Mohammed Ismail Darwish, in Tehran, Iran, February 8, 2025; illustrative. (credit: IRAN'S PRESIDENTIAL WEBSITE/WANA (WEST ASIA NEWS AGENCY)/HANDOUT VIA REUTERS)*

"The geopolitical powers in the Middle East are changing, and the Israel-US alliance will enable forcing Hamas into disarming more than it would prior," the official said.

Another source pointed to Hamas's conduct since the outbreak of the current war, saying that despite earlier assumptions, the group had not joined the attack on Israel with missile fire.

**Five countries agree to send troops to Gaza as part of ISF, sources**

**confirm**

The sources also said that five countries had formally agreed to send troops to Gaza as part of the International Stabilization Force (ISF), a multinational force under Trump's postwar framework. The force is intended to help secure the territory, support reconstruction, assist Palestinian police, and eventually enable an Israeli withdrawal, with a projected size of about 20,000 troops.

The BoP believes the war with Iran could ultimately accelerate progress on one of the initiative's most sensitive issues – Hamas disarmament – by weakening Tehran's regional influence and its long-standing support for the terror group, one source said.

A Reuters report published on Monday said that the talks had been put on hold since last week, when the US and Israel launched strikes on Iran. Citing three sources with direct knowledge of the negotiations, Reuters reported that the pause threatened to stall implementation of Trump's broader Middle East initiative.

However, one source cited by Reuters described the delay as brief and technical, caused mainly by flight disruptions that prevented mediators and representatives from traveling around the region. Cairo has frequently hosted talks.

A Palestinian official close to the mediation effort told Reuters that Hamas had been expected to hold talks with Egyptian, Qatari, and Turkish mediators on the day the war erupted, but the meeting was canceled, and no new date had been set.

A Hamas official also told Reuters that talks on Trump's Gaza plan had been frozen for the time being, but declined to elaborate. According to Reuters, Israel's government did not immediately respond to a request for comment. <https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/article-889384>

**Hezbollah missile fire wounds 16; damages daycare, 'infrastructure' in central Israel**

**Officials said to assess terror group will ramp up attacks in bid to distract from Iran fighting, as Lebanon reportedly inquires about direct negotiations with Israel**

By [Emanuel Fabian](#), [Nava Freiberg](#), [Lazar Berman](#) and [Agencies](#) 9 March 2026, 11:51 pm



*Damage to a classroom following a strike that hit a kindergarten in the central city of Ramle on March 9, 2026 (Ilia YEFIMOVICH / AFP)*

**The Hezbollah terror group on Monday launched a barrage of missiles at central Israel, in its deepest attack since hostilities intensified last week, wounding 16 people lightly and causing damage to “infrastructure” and a daycare, authorities said.**

**The long-range attack came amid reports that officials expect the attacks from Lebanon to ramp up in the coming days, in an attempt to draw Israeli attention away from its conflict with Iran.**

The Israel Defense Forces said air defenses intercepted some of the missiles and others hit open areas.

One missile impacted in central Israel, and the “circumstances of the incident are under investigation,” the military said.

That missile, which hit the central city of Ramle, lightly injured 14 people and caused damage to a daycare, rescue workers and the Magen David Adom ambulance service said.

No warning sirens had sounded in the city. The IDF Home Front Command was investigating the incident.

Meanwhile, “damage was caused to infrastructure,” and two people were lightly hurt when a missile struck “an open area in the Mateh Yehuda [Regional Council] area,” police said.



*Israeli rescue and emergency forces at the scene where shrapnel from a missile fired from Lebanon fell outside a kindergarten in Ramle, March 9, 2026. (Yossi Aloni/Flash90)*

In separate statements, the Iran-backed terror group claimed to have targeted the IDF Home Front Command headquarters in Ramle, known as Rehavam Base, as well as a “satellite communications station” in Haela Valley near Beit Shemesh, with a “barrage of precision missiles.”

Hezbollah claimed the satellite station belonged to the “Communications and Cyber Defense Division of the Israeli enemy army,” although the site is in fact not a military installation, but rather a civilian-commercial site operated by the European company SES.

*The site of a Hezbollah missile impact in an open area of central Israel, March 9, 2026. (Israel Police)*

The IDF later said that the three Hezbollah launchers that had been used to fire the long-range projectiles at Israel were destroyed in airstrikes within an hour of the attack.

The terror group has been attacking Israel with renewed rocket and missile fire since last Monday, claiming it is in retaliation for the killing of Iran’s late supreme leader Ali Khamenei.

Israel, in response, has struck hundreds of Hezbollah targets across Lebanon, including dozens in Beirut, and the IDF has pushed ground forces deeper into southern Lebanon in what it has said is a defensive measure to protect communities in northern Israel.

On Monday evening, Lebanese media reported that an Israeli airstrike hit a building belonging to the Hezbollah-linked Al-Qard al-Hasan (AQAH) association in the village of Aaqbiyeh, south of Sidon.

The IDF issued an evacuation warning for the building ahead of the strike, and warned earlier Monday that it would be striking branches of AQAH, which is known to be used by the terror group as a quasi-bank.



Founded in 1983, AQAH describes itself as a charitable organization that provides loans to people according to Islamic principles that forbid interest. It has more than 30 branches across Lebanon, mainly in Hezbollah bastions such as Beirut's southern suburbs, but also in central Beirut and other major cities.



**Smoke rises from an Israeli airstrike in Dahiyeh, Beirut's southern suburbs, Monday, March 9, 2026. (AP Photo/Hassan Ammar)**

However, the US Treasury Department, which sanctioned AQAH in 2007, has said that Hezbollah uses it as a cover to manage “financial activities and gain access to the international financial system.”

“While AQAH purports to serve the Lebanese people, in practice it illicitly moves funds through shell accounts and facilitators, exposing Lebanese financial institutions to possible sanctions,” it said in a statement sanctioning individuals linked to the organization in 2021.

The IDF also issued a wide evacuation warning for the entire village of Ansariya, just south of Aaqbiyeh, on Monday.

“The activities of the Hezbollah terror organization are forcing the IDF to act against it with force. The IDF does not intend to harm you,” said army spokesman Col. Avichay Adraee.

“For your safety, you must evacuate your homes immediately and move away from the village to a distance of no less than 1000 meters,” he said.

#### **Diverting attention**

As the IDF pushed ahead with its renewed operations in Lebanon, defense officials were said to have warned Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Israel Katz in a meeting on Monday evening that Hezbollah could be expected to increase its rocket and drone attacks in the coming days.

Citing senior Israeli officials, Channel 12 reported that security officials warned at the meeting that Hezbollah was seeking to wear down northern Israel and the broader home front

by launching larger daily volumes of missiles and UAVs, including at strategic facilities.



**People rush to a public shelter in the city of Ramle after a siren warning of incoming missiles from Lebanon, March 9, 2026. (Yossi Aloni/Flash90)**

Israeli officials have assessed that this, combined with reports of Hezbollah and other terror groups clashing with the Lebanese Armed Forces in southern Lebanon, is part of a broader effort to divert Israel's attention from the ongoing campaign in Iran.

#### **Weakening Hezbollah as a 'shared interest'**

Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar defended the IDF's advances to the UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, telling her the deployment of the troops was necessary to prevent

ground incursions by Hezbollah forces and rocket fire toward Israeli civilians and communities.”

“Hezbollah launched an attack against us, and there is no actor in the international community working to stop it except us,” said Sa'ar, in comments provided by his office.

He told the UN envoy that weakening Hezbollah was a “shared interest” of both Israel and Lebanon.

Shoring up that assessment, the Axios news site reported on Monday that the Lebanese government had recently proposed holding direct negotiations with Israel aimed at ending its war with the Iran-backed group and possibly reaching a peace agreement with Beirut.

According to the report, which cited five sources familiar with the matter, the possibility was raised through the Trump administration.

Both Jerusalem and Washington responded skeptically to the proposal, according to sources, including a US official, an Israeli official, and three sources with direct knowledge of the matter.

The Lebanese government was said to approach US envoy Tom Barrack — who worked on the Lebanon file



last year but has been less active in recent months — last week, asking him to mediate with Israel. Beirut reportedly claimed that some Hezbollah members were open to a deal and proposed holding direct talks with Israel at the ministerial level in Cyprus.

Barrack was said to respond that the Lebanese government must “stop with the bullshit” on disarming Hezbollah in order to move forward. “If it’s not real action about Hezbollah’s weapons, there’s no point,” a source told Axios.

*Mourners carry the bodies of Hezbollah fighters who were killed by Israeli airstrikes during their funeral procession in Khraibeh village, eastern Lebanon, March 8, 2026. (AP Photo/Bilal Hussein)*

Some sources said that Lebanese Army chief Gen. Rodolphe Haykal has resisted deploying troops against Hezbollah while fighting continues, despite the army’s stated commitment to disarming the terror group. This has reportedly prompted pressure from Washington on Lebanese President Joseph Aoun to remove Haykal.

Israel rebuffed the proposal, Axios reported, saying that it was too late and that its military is currently focused on eliminating Hezbollah, the sources said, although Israel’s Channel 12 reported that Jerusalem was still examining the offer.

According to the sources cited by Axios, Lebanese officials have grown increasingly frustrated that the Trump administration has largely ignored their outreach, leaving little room for mediation or peace talks with Israel.

“There is no interest from the Trump administration to deal with Lebanon,” one source with knowledge told Axios.

Netanyahu’s office did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the report.

An Israeli official told The Washington Post in an earlier report that Israel is “willing to engage with Lebanese officials [to] reach agreement on a ceasefire,” though the official made no indication that any Lebanese proposal had been made.

Still, with or without Israeli peace talks, the Lebanese government appeared committed to keeping up the pressure on Hezbollah on Monday, with Aoun accusing it of working to “collapse” the state.

To stop the fighting in his country, the president proposed a four-point initiative and called on the international community to help implement it.

The plan included “establishing a full truce” with Israel, “logistical support” for the army to disarm Hezbollah, and “direct negotiations (with Israel) under international auspices.”

Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa endorsed his Lebanese counterpart on Monday, saying, “We stand alongside Lebanese President Joseph Aoun in disarming Hezbollah.”

But the head of Hezbollah’s parliamentary bloc, Mohamed Raad, vowed on Monday evening that his group would “defend our existence whatever the cost,” saying it has “no other option to preserve honor, pride and dignity than the option of resistance.”

Israel regularly struck Hezbollah targets in Lebanon following a November 2024 ceasefire agreement, accusing the terror group of ceasefire violations, and continued to hold on to five border posts inside Lebanon, citing security needs. It has now expanded beyond those points, citing defensive needs.

The ceasefire ended a year of hostilities between Hezbollah and Israel, which started when the terror group began firing missiles and drones into northern Israel one day after its ally Hamas launched a devastating attack on southern Israel that set off the war in Gaza. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/hezbollah-missile-fire-wounds-16-damages-daycare-infrastructure-in-central-israel/>

## Synagogue in Belgium damaged in blast, no injuries; mayor: ‘Violent act of antisemitism’

**Counter-terror police investigating Liege explosion; mayor says ‘there can be no question of importing external conflicts’; house of worship also serves as Jewish community museum**

By [Agencies](#) and [Tol Staff](#) Today, 11:04 am

**Belgian police conduct their investigation outside the synagogue on Leon Fredericq street, after it was hit overnight by a blast in Liege on March 9, 2026. (JOHN THYS / AFP)**

A synagogue was damaged in a blast early Monday in Liege, eastern Belgium, police said, in an incident denounced by the mayor as an “extremely violent act of antisemitism.”

No injuries were reported, with “only material damage,” a spokesman for the police in the city said in a statement.

Police cordoned off the street while a specialized counter-terrorism team investigated the incident.

The blast took place around 4:00 a.m. in front of the synagogue, blowing out the windows of the buildings across the road, the police spokesman said.

Liege Mayor Willy Demeyer [expressed](#) his “utter condemnation of this extremely violent act of antisemitism” in an interview with RTBF.

“There can be no question of importing external conflicts into our city,” he said, in an apparent reference to the Middle East.



**Police work in a secured area after a blast outside a synagogue, in Liege, Belgium, March 9, 2026. (AP Photo/Valentin Bianchi)**

A local resident told the outlet that they heard a large explosion.

“We were woken up by the noise, and then, when we went downstairs, we saw that everything had been blown out,” the unnamed individual said.

Belgian Prime Minister Bart De Wever issued a statement on X condemning the attack.

“Antisemitism is an attack on our values and our society, and we must fight it unequivocally,” De Wever [wrote](#). “We stand in

solidarity with the Jewish community in Liège and across the country.”

MP Michael Freilich, Belgium’s only Orthodox Jewish lawmaker, responded that government inaction on antisemitism had created an environment that made such incidents possible.

“When antisemitism isn’t a priority for the public prosecutor’s office — with dozens of dismissed cases — it creates a climate of impunity,” Freilich [wrote](#) on X. “Physical attacks are, unfortunately, the predictable result. The once-promised zero tolerance for antisemitism is now colliding with an oversaturated justice system. My appeal to the government: finally address this.”

Built in 1899, the synagogue also serves as a museum for the history of Liege’s Jewish community.

Antisemitism and anti-Israel sentiments have skyrocketed in Belgium since the start of the war sparked by the devastating Hamas attack on Israel on October 7, 2023.

Attacks such as verbal abuse, intimidation, physical violence, and graffiti continue to occur in the 30,000-strong Jewish community on a weekly basis, Ralph Pais, vice-chair of the Jewish Information and Documentation Centre (JID), [said](#) in December. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/synagogue-in-belgium-damaged-in-blast-no-injuries-mayor-violent-act-of-antisemitism/>

## OP ED

# Are Latinos Staying at Home Out of Fear of Trump?

Sun, 8 Mar 2026 6:34 PM PST by Daniel Greenfield



“Fear of deportation keeps Chicago Latino immigrants home from Mass,” the National Catholic Reporter claims.

“Deportation fears add to mental health problems confronting Colorado resort town workers,” Colorado Newslines warns.

“As Trump administration’s deportation policies sow fear, Hispanic businesses suffer,” the Beacon News contends.

The coordinated nationwide media propaganda campaign paints a picture of a terrified Latino population afraid to leave the house because they’re afraid Trump’s men will lock them up.

Tell the average liberal that 39% of Latinos are afraid that they or someone close to them will be deported

and she'll organize a rally outside the local Target or drive around Holiday Inn in an oversized SUV screaming "F\_\_\_ ICE" faster than you can blow a whistle.

There's one problem... that statistic [actually](#) came from the Biden administration.

The Biden administration was the friendliest to illegal aliens in history. It opened the border wide and allowed millions to flood into the country. Despite that nearly 4 in 10 Latinos were worried about government deportations.

When Trump first took office, the number increased slightly to 42%. That's less than the 46% of Latinos who feared being deported under Obama.

But after months of nonstop media propaganda and nationwide riots, claims that ICE was raiding schools and kidnapping kids, the statistic shot [all the way up to...](#) 52% in November.

Media headlines reported this as "over half of Latinos fear deportation". That's technically true, but it's also an increase of only 13% over Biden. The ratio of Latinos afraid that they or someone they know will be deported only climbed from 4 in 10 to 5 in 10. Not a huge change.

Are these numbers unprecedented?

Under President George W. Bush, the Republican administration that was probably the friendliest to illegal aliens, 53% of Latinos were also worried about deportations.

Latinos were still slightly more afraid of being deported by a president who spoke Spanish and had Latino relatives than they are of Trump.

The simple statistical fact is that between 40% to 50% of Latinos on average are always worried that they or a member of their family will be deported. They fear Republicans more than Democrats, but 4 out of 10 will fear deportation even under the most liberal Democrats.

The underlying issue isn't a 'wave of terror' by ICE, it may not even be a rationally calculated sense of risk, but legitimate worries that they or their family members are breaking the law.

And a key variable is that the percentage of Latinos who are illegal aliens fluctuates.

The Latinos most worried about deportation are young 'immigrant' women with no high school degree. Many of these women are likely illegals and more fearful than the men of enforcement.

American-born 3rd generation Latinos with college diplomas are the least worried about it.

Some of the expansion however has come from a younger and more liberal Latino citizen population that has the least reason to be concerned, but has been pushed into hysteria by a barrage of media propaganda. This is why larger numbers of Latinos usually express these fears during Republican administrations, no matter how friendly, and even though the deportation of illegal aliens poses no possible personal risk to their own status.

How worried are Latinos who are legally in this country that Trump will deport them?

The Pew surveys of Latinos ask a question that offers an easy test. During the first weeks that President Trump was in office, Latinos were asked how many of them carry a document that proves their legal status. According to the survey, 12% of Latinos said that they do.

(There are no comparable figures from the Biden administration and therefore no way to know how many Latinos also carried identifying documents back then.)

That same survey again asked Latinos how many of them carried documents in the fall of 2025.

After all the deportation actions, the number carrying documents had actually [fallen](#) to 11% suggesting that growing numbers realized there was less for them to actually be afraid of.

While a 1% difference is well within the margin of error, it's fairly obvious that the Latinos who fear being deported are the same ones who fear being deported under any administration.

The artificial identity politics trick of collapsing large and diverse populations of people from Latin American countries into one subgroup 'Latinos' and then assuming they share common views and worries is a cynical gambit that failed during the 2024 election, but Democrats and their media operations are trying it again because it's the only way they know to win votes.

In 2024, they missed the fact that Latinos cared more about the economy than immigration. Now they're emphasizing the polls that show a majority of Latinos disapprove of Trump on immigration, but that even [larger](#) numbers disapprove of him on the economy.

The person who is the most worried about illegal aliens being deported is not the average Latino, but the average liberal white woman who was worried about black men being shot by police in 2020, about children starving to death in Gaza in 2024 and who will be outraged about whatever she is told to be outraged about by the New York Times or Bluesky in 2027.

Latinos, like a lot of Americans, are not happy that the economy hasn't recovered from the Biden Depression, and they care far more than about illegal alien deportations. A majority supported mass deportations before the election. Many still support deportations today.

The media headlines claiming that churches are deserted and businesses stand empty because Latinos are afraid to leave the house conflate illegal aliens and citizens while implying that Latinos in general are living in terror because criminals are worried about being deported.

And shouldn't criminals rightly be afraid of law enforcement?

This is the same dishonest racist playbook that was used to claim that every black man was in danger of being shot by police because of a few high-profile shootings of violent criminals.

The numbers are in and the media has been once again caught pushing a false racial panic in order to stir up riots, tear apart society and help the media's preferred party win elections.

***Daniel Greenfield is a Shillman Journalism Fellow at the David Horowitz Freedom Center. This article previously appeared at the Center's Front Page Magazine.***

<https://bkdvk-zgpvh.campaign-view.com/ua/viewinbrowser?od=3z2bfeefc6e25f26cf812b76a5b8ac0e30e27282f9efb6946a6fa34a9221491b79&rd=11289f96a718b6ae0&sd=11289f96a718b5139&n=11699e4c149fcdc&mrd=11289f96a718b5125&m=1>



BS"D

#### STEP BY STEP

STEP BY STEP: Good news is that many friends and supporters of Lev U'Neshama (Heart and Soul) donated towards the Education Fund project to provide basic school supplies for actually 350 children within our Lev U'Neshama families.

We are grateful that the school supply part of our effort has been successful.

According to the Israel Population and Statistics office, Tzfat's population is about 40,000, and one third live at the poverty level. We do what we can so at least the children within our struggling LUN families can get the things they need.

Every week we are providing new sport shoes and eye exams/eyeglasses to the children on our request list. However, previous donations are rapidly dwindling. I am reaching out now before the fund has been emptied and we will have to say "no" to additional requests.

We work with two local shoe merchants who give Lev U'Neshama a discount but they advised us the cost of the shoes has increased. Also, we work with an accredited optician in town who also gives us a discount but his cost is stable.

Lev U'Neshama is an Israeli registered non-profit charity organization, volunteer run, no business expenses whatsoever and every \$ goes into our programs.

Shoes: \$45 per pair regular and \$60 for First Steps, baby shoes.

Eye Exam/Eyeglasses: \$60 per child.

Your support is urgently requested.

Or use the Zelle US to US bank transfer system (contact me at [mortsmo@aol.com](mailto:mortsmo@aol.com) for bank information).

US Donors may also send checks made payable to

Simcha Smolensky, my son, who is also a volunteer. Send to:

Rabbi Simcha Smolensky, 6739 N Mozart St Chicago IL 60645

**Your support will be appreciated.**

Yaffa Smolensky