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Iran hits 2 oil tankers in Gulf as IDF reports striking 'critical' nuclear site near Tehran

Iran fires 5 ballistic missile barrages at Israel Thursday, no injuries reported; Tehran's strikes on Gulf continue as anxiety mounts over global oil supply; NYT: Cost of war's first 6 days for US was \$11 billion

By [Emanuel Fabian](#),

[Agencies](#) and [Diana Bletter](#)

Today, 2:13 pm

Tankers in the Persian Gulf are set aflame after being struck on March 12, 2026. (Screenshot from Reuters) [Go to website for video rdb](#)

Two oil tankers were struck in the Gulf, killing one person, as Iran continued its attacks on targets across the region and the IDF reported hitting a "critical" nuclear site near Tehran, amid ongoing US-Israeli strikes on the Islamic Republic.

Iran also continued its missile attacks on Israel, firing five salvos by midafternoon Thursday, the 13th day of the war, after attacking Israel on Wednesday night in coordination with its Lebanese terror proxy Hezbollah. No injuries were reported in the Thursday salvos.

Throughout the war, which began with US-Israeli strikes on February 28, Iran has targeted countries across the region and said it would choke off the Strait of Hormuz, a major artery for the world's oil supply. The attacks on the two oil tankers exacerbated a crisis that has sent crude prices soaring, despite countries releasing their oil reserves at historic rates. Arab states in the region also reported shooting down Iranian projectiles, including in residential and diplomatic areas.

The renewed attacks followed a warning from Tehran that it could wage a prolonged war that would "destroy" the world economy. The Islamic Republic has also threatened to bomb the offices of tech giants in Israel and the region.

US President Donald Trump has sent shifting signals on how long the American fight against the regime would last, and another sign of the war's cost came in a report from The New York Times that the fighting's opening week cost the United States more than \$11.3 billion.

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The [report](#), citing what lawmakers were told in a Pentagon briefing, says the figure excludes many costs connected with the buildup to the strikes — suggesting the final tally for the first week could rise substantially.

Two oil tankers hit near Iraq

The two tankers came under attack near Iraq on Thursday, with Iraqi authorities saying at least one crew member was killed, another 38 had been rescued and a search for others was ongoing.

Iran took responsibility for striking one of the tankers and did not mention the other, according to the Times. Iraq believes Iran is responsible for both attacks.

The Iraqi government's media cell told national news agency INA that the "two tankers were subject to sabotage," and the country's oil ministry said it had "deep concern" about incidents involving oil tankers in the Gulf.

The attack forced authorities to halt operations at all the country's oil terminals, though commercial ports remained open, officials said.

Drones also struck fuel tanks at Oman's Salalah port, where operations were subsequently suspended as well.



An oil tanker is set aflame after being struck in the Gulf on March 12, 2026. (AP)

Shipping in and around the Strait of Hormuz came under renewed attack, with a container ship near the United Arab Emirates hit by an “unknown projectile,” the UK maritime agency said in an alert Thursday.

The projectile caused a small fire onboard, but all crew were reported as safe, the agency said.

Meanwhile, two members of the Thai-flagged Mayuree Naree bulk carrier, which was hit by two projectiles on Wednesday, were still missing on Thursday “and believed to be trapped in the engine room” of the ship, according to transport company

Precious Shipping.

A tanker in the Persian Gulf is seen after being struck on March 12, 2026. (Screenshot from Reuters)

Iran’s Revolutionary Guards said it had struck the Mayuree Naree, as well as a Liberia-flagged vessel, in the strait because the ships had ignored “warnings.”

Oman, meanwhile, has shifted all vessels out of its main oil export terminal at Mina Al Fahal outside the strait in a precautionary move, Bloomberg News reported Thursday, citing direct recipients of a port agent’s notice.

IDF says it hit Iranian nuclear site, conducted strikes in Tehran

The US and Israel, meanwhile, continued to pound regime targets



within the Islamic Republic.

On Thursday, the IDF said it had recently struck an Iranian nuclear facility where the regime advanced “critical capabilities in the development of nuclear weapons.”

The site near Tehran, identified by the military as the Taleghan compound, was hit during waves of strikes carried out in the area in recent days.

The IDF said that in recent years, Iran used the site for “the development of advanced explosives and for conducting sensitive experiments as part of AMAD Project,” Iran’s alleged secret nuclear weapons development program.



This satellite image taken and released on March 11, 2026 courtesy of Vantor shows a view of Taleghan 2 facility with three craters after airstrikes at the Parchin military complex, some 30 kms (20 miles) southeast of Tehran, Iran (Satellite image ©2026 Vantor / AFP)

The Taleghan compound had been struck by Israel in October 2024, during a retaliation for an Iranian missile attack on Israel earlier that month.

The military said that it recently identified that Iran had “taken steps to rehabilitate the compound” following those strikes.

“The Iranian regime has continued efforts to advance and develop capabilities required for the development of a nuclear weapon,” the IDF said, adding that the recent strike was part of a

“series of operations” aimed at “further damaging the Iranian terror regime’s nuclear aspirations.”

Iran has consistently denied seeking to acquire nuclear weapons. However, it has enriched uranium to levels that have no peaceful application, obstructed international inspectors from checking its nuclear facilities, and expanded its ballistic missile capabilities

In addition, overnight, the Israeli Air Force said it launched a new wave of “extensive” airstrikes on Iranian regime sites in Tehran.

Iran threatens to hit offices of tech giants

As Iran continued to fire missiles at Israel, the country’s Tasnim news agency published a list of more potential targets for the regime, including the offices of tech giants such as Amazon, Google, Microsoft and Nvidia in Gulf countries and Israel.

“With the expansion of regional war into infrastructure warfare, the scope of Iran’s potential targets are gradually expanding,” Tasnim wrote, without citing a source for the possible development.

In Israel, the Health Ministry reported Thursday morning that over the preceding 24 hours, 179 injured people, including both civilians and soldiers, had been taken to hospitals as a result of the conflict.

Among those treated in hospitals, four were in moderate condition and 157 were in good condition. Eighteen people had been treated for anxiety.



People sit outside a public bomb shelter at a playground in the northern city of Haifa, March 10, 2026. (Yossi Aloni/Flash90)

While the ministry did not give a breakdown of the causes of injuries, it was assumed that most were sustained by people trying to reach shelter rather than as a direct result of missile fire from Iran or rocket fire from Lebanon.

The ministry said that since February 28, when the war began, 2,745 people had been admitted to hospitals, 85 of whom were hospitalized as of the ministry’s update.

Among those hospitalized, 11 people were in serious condition, 10 people were in moderate condition, and 64 were in good condition.

Fourteen people in Israel have been killed throughout the war so far.

Reported Iranian attacks in Bahrain, Kuwait, UAE

Iranian attacks across the Gulf, which has experienced missile fire throughout the war, continued on Thursday. In the morning, Bahrain told residents to stay inside and close windows to keep fumes out after a fire broke out due to an Iranian attack on fuel tanks.

The blaze began in the country’s Muharraq Island, which is home to Bahrain International Airport. The kingdom had already moved some aircraft out of the area of the airport early Wednesday.

Suspected Iranian attacks were also reported in Kuwait, which said two people were injured by a “hostile drone” that hit a residential building, and also that several drones caused “material damage” at the country’s international airport.

In the United Arab Emirates, explosions were heard in downtown Dubai, as the state said its air defense was responding to a missile threat. Small clouds of smoke were seen rising above a residential neighborhood in the metropolis.

The Dubai government’s media office reported “a minor incident caused by debris from a successful interception that fell onto the facade of a building on Sheikh Zayed Road.”

Earlier, the media office reported “a minor drone incident in the Al Bada’a area.”

Both incidents caused no casualties, it said in the statements on X.

Saudi Arabia said it intercepted drones headed toward the Shaybah oil field as well as its embassies district.

Italian Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani said there was an “attack” on an Italian base in the Iraqi Kurdish city of Erbil, but said there were no injuries. Italy has soldiers in Erbil training Kurdish security forces as part of an international coalition force.

As of early Thursday, attacks in the Gulf since the war’s start have killed 24 people, including 11 civilians and seven US military personnel, according to local authorities and the US Central Command.



Crude oil tops \$100 a barrel, amid historic supply disruption

Amid the disruptions, the International Energy Agency said Wednesday that its members had agreed to unlock 400 million barrels of oil from their reserves — their largest release ever. The United States Department of Energy followed up by saying it would release 172 million barrels from the strategic petroleum reserve “beginning next week.”

Still, the price of a barrel of Brent crude oil, the international standard, topped \$100 a barrel early Thursday, just days after it spiked near \$120, and US benchmark crude oil jumped to about \$95 a barrel.

A fuel tanker passes the Mobil fuel distribution centre in the Melbourne suburb of Yarraville on March 12, 2026 as the demands and prices of petrol and diesel soar due to the Middle East conflict. (William WEST / AFP)

The Paris-based IEA, a world authority on energy markets, said Thursday that the 13-day conflict had caused the “largest supply disruption in the history of the global oil market,” surpassing those of the 1970s.

The Gulf states’ total oil output is down by at least 10 million barrels per day and there were “no signs of a de-escalation in hostilities,” it added.

US military shares clip of it destroying Iranian planes

The American military published footage showing the destruction of Iranian cargo planes and other aircraft in strikes at Kerman Airport in Iran’s south.

A video released by the US Central Command showed strikes on a Lockheed C-130 Hercules, Lockheed P-3 Orion, and an Ilyushin Il-76.

The US-made planes were supplied to Iran before the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

“The Iranian regime is losing air capability day by day. US forces aren’t just defending against Iranian threats, we are methodically dismantling them,” CENTCOM said on X. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/iran-hits-2-oil-tankers-in-gulf-as-idf-reports-striking-critical-nuclear-site-near-tehran/>

Israel targets Iran’s Basij members and drones, as Tehran’s missile attacks continue IDF says it destroyed over 250 Iranian drones and dozens of launchers as US boasts of hitting 6,000 targets since start of war; UAE, Saudi Arabia, Oman continue to intercept UAVs

By [Emanuel Fabian](#)

and [Agencies](#) 13 March 2026, 12:04 am



Rescue workers stand amid the rubble of a destroyed building in Tehran on March 12, 2026. (AFP)

Israel and the US continued to strike targets across Iran on Thursday, the 13th day of the conflict, as Iranian missiles repeatedly targeted Israel and the Islamic Republic continued to strike Gulf states.

At least six salvos of Iranian missiles targeted Israel throughout Thursday, sending millions of Israelis from Eilat in the south to Kiryat Shmona in the north to shelters. According to initial military assessments, a small number of missiles were launched and were

intercepted. No serious injuries were reported.

The IDF said it continued to strike key strategic targets across Iran, while the US military said it had struck around 6,000 targets since the start of the war. Among the targets hit by US forces were more than 90 Iranian vessels — around 60 ships and 30 minelayers — according to US Central Command, which is responsible for American forces in the region.

Targets struck by Israel included members of Iran’s Basij paramilitary force as well as its drone operations and capabilities.

According to the IDF, the Basij established checkpoints in several areas of Iran’s capital in recent days. Following the identification, the Israeli Air Force struck the Basij checkpoints and members of the force, the IDF said.

Iranian media reported that several members of Iran’s internal security forces and Basij stationed at checkpoints were killed.

Drone strikes are carried out by the Israeli Air Force against checkpoints and soldiers of Iran’s Basij paramilitary force in Tehran, in footage published by the military on March 12, 2026. (Israel Defense Forces)

[Go to website for video rdb](#)

“These armed forces are part of the Iranian regime’s security apparatus and have for years been responsible for carrying out terror activities,” the Israeli military said, adding that “these forces lead the main repression operations against internal protests, particularly in the recent period, employing severe violence, widespread arrests, and the use of force against civilian demonstrators.”

The IDF also said Thursday that its strikes had destroyed more than 250 Iranian drones and dozens of launchers, and killed numerous soldiers and commanders in Iran’s unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) array.

During one wave of strikes, the military said, the Air Force identified Iranian soldiers from the UAV array preparing to launch drones at Israel. Within a short while, the launcher and the soldiers were struck by the IAF, thwarting the planned attack, the military said.

“So far, the Air Force has struck more than 250 unmanned aerial vehicles, launchers, and dozens of launch sites. In addition, many commanders and soldiers in the UAV array responsible for numerous launches toward the State of Israel have been eliminated,” the IDF said in a statement.

According to the IDF, since the start of the war, more than 110 drones launched from Iran have been intercepted by the IAF with fighter jets and helicopters. The Navy has also intercepted several drones.

Iran’s drone capabilities have been a key element in its targeted attacks against many of its neighbors, in particular the United Arab Emirates, which has borne the brunt of Iran’s drone warfare.

The UAE’s defense ministry said that it intercepted 10 ballistic missiles and 26 drones launched by Iran on Thursday. Since the start of the war on February 28, the UAE said its air defenses had intercepted 278 ballistic missiles, 15 cruise missiles and 1,540 drones. Six people have been killed, all foreigners.



Workers inspect damage caused by an Iranian drone strike overnight at the Address Creek Harbour hotel in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, March 12, 2026. (AP/Fatima Shbair)

Saudi Arabia’s defense ministry said Thursday that it intercepted three drones headed toward the Shaybah oil field, which is crucial to the country’s oil production.

Oman on Thursday also reported intercepting a drone attack, and said there were no casualties.

In addition, airstrikes from both the US and Iran rained down on Iraq Thursday, as the country continued to serve as a proxy battleground between the two rivals.



A plume of smoke rises following an interception of a drone in Erbil on March 12, 2026. (Shvan HARKI / AFP)

Italy said Thursday it was temporarily withdrawing all personnel from a military base in Iraqi Kurdistan that came under a drone attack, completing a retreat that was already underway.

“A retreat was already planned” before Wednesday’s attack that caused no injuries, Defense Minister Guido Crosetto told Italian news program TG1, a withdrawal confirmed by Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani.

Airstrikes attributed to the US killed at least 11 Iran-backed fighters in Iraq on Thursday near the Iraqi-Syrian border and in the capital Baghdad, senior security and armed faction officials told AFP.

Iraqi authorities denounced the “blatant attacks” on bases that belong to the Hashed al-Shaabi, a former paramilitary group now integrated into the regular army, which also encompasses brigades from Iran-backed armed groups.

Nine fighters were killed and another 10 wounded in strikes that targeted a base housing the US-blacklisted Harakat Ansar Allah al-Awfiya, two security officials said.

“The base was destroyed, and the rescue teams who arrived at the site were also targeted,” one of the officials said on condition of anonymity.

A man walks along a road as smoke rises following attacks early morning in a nearby airbase in Basirma, Iraq, March 12, 2026. (AP/Leo Correa)



The base belongs to the Hashed al-Shaabi or the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF), whose positions have been repeatedly targeted in attacks likely carried out by the United

States.

The PMF confirmed that nine of its members were killed in Thursday’s attack. It accused the US of striking its positions, and said that these sites “had no role in targeting US bases in Iraq or elsewhere.”

In a separate attack, at least two Iran-backed fighters from a different group were killed in a strike on a base in Baghdad's suburbs, according to officials in the powerful Hezbollah Brigades, allied with Tehran (and separate from Lebanon's Hezbollah terror group).

The bombing targeted a site shared by police and PMF forces, a government security source told AFP. It marks the first such attack so close to the Iraqi capital. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-targets-irans-basij-members-and-drones-as-tehrans-missile-attacks-continue/>

IDF launches wave of strikes in Beirut; chief of staff says northern campaign 'will not be short'

IDF strike Hezbollah infrastructure in Beirut as IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir warns the northern campaign will be prolonged and takes responsibility for not updating residents after the latest rocket barrage
[Elisha Ben Kimon](#) | 11:30

The Israeli military said Thursday afternoon it had begun a wave of strikes against Hezbollah terror infrastructure across Beirut, as fighting with the Iran-backed group intensified.

According to reports, strikes were carried out in Beirut's Dahieh district — a Hezbollah stronghold in the southern suburbs of the capital. Reuters reported that one strike occurred in the heart of the city, hitting a building less than a kilometer from the Lebanese government headquarters.



Beirut (Photo: REUTERS/Claudia Greco)



(Photo: REUTERS/Mohamed Azakir)

Meanwhile, Lebanon's Health Ministry said that 687 people have been killed in Israeli strikes in the country since March 2.

Footage published in Lebanon showed a massive traffic jam as residents evacuated toward the city of Sidon after the Israel Defense Forces ordered the immediate evacuation of all areas in southern Lebanon south of the Zahrani River — a region that Reuters said accounts for about 10% of the country's territory.

Evacuations toward Sidon from areas south of the Zahrani River

Earlier Thursday, IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir visited Northern Command alongside Northern Command head Maj. Gen. Rafi Milo and other senior officers, the military said.



IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir (Photo: IDF)



(Photo: IDF)

During the visit, Zamir conducted a situational assessment and received an operational briefing on the fighting against Hezbollah. The IDF said the chief of staff instructed commanders to reinforce the northern sector and deploy additional forces there.

“This campaign will not be short,” Zamir said during remarks at the command. “We will bring additional order of battle and capabilities to the north. We will continue operating with great force. We keep moving forward.” At the start of his remarks, Zamir said Israel is facing a “multi-front war.” “We are operating simultaneously against Iran and its proxies and acting with great force against the regime of evil,” he said. “Every blow to Iran weakens all of its proxies. The war against Hezbollah is another main arena, not a secondary one.”

Zamir said the IDF makes decisions daily with the security of Israel and its citizens as the central consideration.

“We are acting for the residents of the north and their safety,” he said. “We will investigate and study the decisions made last night. If there was a mistake, the responsibility is first and foremost mine. We will draw lessons and learn.

“Let there be no confusion — we are fighting absolute evil. We must not allow our enemies to sow demoralization among us. We will continue operating in the north with force and will reinforce the troops. Hezbollah made a grave mistake and will continue to pay a heavy price.”

Zamir also criticized the Lebanese government. “The government of Lebanon is not enforcing its authority in its territory — therefore we will do so,” he said.

Of the hundreds of rockets fired at Israel the previous night, Zamir said only two struck Israeli territory, calling it “a very significant achievement.”

He said Northern Command’s operations, advance preparations and decisive actions had produced strong results.

“Dozens of terrorists were killed, most launchers were neutralized after firing, and we struck dozens of structures in the heart of Hezbollah’s terror infrastructure in Beirut,” Zamir said. “We also located and eliminated the commander of the Imam Hussein Division and his deputy, along with many of the division’s staff officers.”

After the strike in Dahieh, many Hezbollah operatives fled to other hiding places in Beirut among the civilian population, Zamir said.

“We will continue to defend our citizens everywhere and from everywhere,” he said, adding that Northern Command had been reinforced with hundreds of additional soldiers, intelligence officers and intelligence-gathering and fire capabilities.

“They are achieving amazing and impressive results, and I am full of appreciation for them and their accomplishments,” he said. <https://www.ynetnews.com/article/syb1100pe5we#autoplay>

Katz threatens to take territory in Lebanon if attacks persist; evacuation warnings expand



Demanding end to Hezbollah’s rocket and drone fire, defense minister says army readying to expand operations; Lebanese told to leave homes south of Zahrani River

By Emanuel Fabian and Agencies Today, 5:12 pm

Defense Minister Israel Katz (center) meets with senior IDF officers at the military’s underground command center, March 12, 2026. (Ariel Hermoni/Defense Ministry)

Defense Minister Israel Katz said Thursday he has warned Lebanon that if it does not stop the Hezbollah terror group’s continuing rocket and drone attacks, Israel will “take the territory and do it ourselves.” Meanwhile, Israel expanded its evacuation warnings in south Lebanon, telling more communities further away from the border to leave or risk being targeted as the military escalates its operations against the terror group.

“Hezbollah launched heavy barrages toward the State of Israel yesterday. The IDF responded forcefully in the Dahiyeh and against Hezbollah targets across Lebanon,” Katz said during an assessment with senior Israel Defense Forces officers, referring to Beirut’s southern suburb, a Hezbollah stronghold.

“I warned the president of Lebanon that if the Lebanese government does not know how to control the territory and prevent Hezbollah from threatening the northern communities and firing at Israel, we will take the territory and do it ourselves,” he said.

Katz also said that he and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had “instructed the IDF to prepare for an expansion of IDF activity in Lebanon to restore calm and security to the northern communities.”

On Wednesday, Hezbollah [launched some 200 rockets](#) and around 20 drones at Israel over a period of several hours, marking its heaviest fire since it began its attacks on Israel in support of its sponsor Iran, amid the US-Israeli war against the regime in Tehran.

The vast majority of the rockets were intercepted or struck open areas. There were two impacts in residential areas, causing damage and lightly injuring two people. Nearly all of the drones were intercepted, aside from one that crashed near a border community without exploding, according to the military.

One rocket hit the yard of a home in Moshav Haniel in central Israel, causing a crater and destroying much of the home, with the exception of the reinforced room.

According to Channel 12, the woman who lives in the house and her carer managed to make it to the shelter during the 90-second warning period provided by the siren, and were likely saved as a result.



People stand at the scene where a house was hit by a missile fired toward Israel overnight in Moshav Haniel, March 12, 2026. (Michael Giladi/Flash90)

Another rocket struck a home in the northern town of Bi’ina, injuring a man. Four others were treated for acute anxiety at the scene.

Ongoing attacks

Since March 2, when Hezbollah began attacking Israel in response to the killing of Iran’s supreme leader Ali Khamenei, the terror group has launched around 100 rockets a day, according to the IDF.

The IDF says two-thirds of those rockets have been aimed at Israeli forces operating in southern

Lebanon and along the border, and a third have been aimed at Israel.

In addition, Hezbollah has launched more than 100 drones at Israel during that time, the vast majority of which were shot down by the Israeli Air Force, according to the military.

The attacks continued Thursday, with sirens sounding in the Galilee during three separate attacks, one of which — around 3 p.m. — came as a barrage of ballistic missiles was launched from Iran toward central Israel.



Israelis take cover at bomb shelter in Jerusalem as a siren sounds warning of incoming ballistic missiles fired from Iran toward Israel, March 11, 2026. (Yonatan Sindel/Flash90)

Education Minister Yoav Kisch confirmed Thursday that the ministry’s plan for a partial reopening of schools starting as early as next week will not include northern Israel or the Tel Aviv area — the regions most targeted.

Israel has responded to the fire from Hezbollah with airstrikes targeting the group across Lebanon, including significant attacks in Dahiye, which the IDF ordered all residents to evacuate from, as well as occasional strikes inside central Beirut.

Israel has also sent ground troops further into southern Lebanon, going beyond the five strategic points it’s occupied since a ceasefire was reached with the terror group in late 2024.

Evacuation warnings expand

The IDF expanded its evacuation warning for southern Lebanon, telling all civilians south of the Zahrani River they should evacuate their homes immediately, amid the fighting against Hezbollah.

“The activity of the Hezbollah terror organization is forcing the IDF to act against it with force, especially in your areas. The IDF does not intend to harm you,” said army spokesman Col. Avichay Adraee.

“For your safety, we call on all residents located south of the Zahrani River: You must evacuate your homes immediately,” he said. “You must move immediately to the north of the Zahrani River.”

Last week, the IDF called on Lebanese civilians in southern Lebanon to evacuate to the north of the Litani

River. The Zahrani River is located further north, and the new evacuation warning includes dozens more Lebanese towns.



An IDF evacuation warning issued for southern Lebanon on March 12, 2026. (Israel Defense Forces)

“Anyone who is near Hezbollah’s members, facilities, or [weapons] is putting their life at risk. Any building used by Hezbollah for military purposes may become a target,” Adraee said.

He warned that “any movement southward may put your life at risk.”

Key commanders killed

On Thursday, the military said the commander of the Imam Hossein Division, an Iranian militia that operates alongside Hezbollah, was killed along with his deputy and other commanders in an airstrike in Lebanon overnight.

The Imam Hossein Division commander was named by the IDF as Ali Musallam Tabaja. The military says he was appointed to the role after the previous commander was killed by Israel in October 2024.

“This is an Iranian division of the Revolutionary Guards whose role is to attack Israel from Lebanese territory. For years, we have been trying to locate and eliminate them. Last night, while they were managing the fire toward Israel, they were eliminated within seconds,” IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir said in a video statement on Thursday.

According to the IDF, also killed in the strike last night were Jihad al-Safira, the deputy division commander; Sager al-Handasa, the division’s UAV officer; and a number of other top commanders.

Also on Thursday, the IDF announced that a member of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps who was operating as a commander in Hezbollah’s missile unit had been killed in an Israeli airstrike two days earlier.

Abu Dharr Mohammadi, who the military said was a “central figure in the military coordination” between Hezbollah and the Iranian regime, was targeted in Beirut on Tuesday. The army shared footage of the strike.

The IDF said Mohammadi coordinated between Hezbollah and senior Iranian officials, was “a key figure” in Hezbollah’s military force buildup in the field of missiles, and “served as an authority on the subject of Hezbollah’s strategic weapons.”

Separately, the IDF said the commander of the south Lebanon sector in Hezbollah’s elite Radwan Force was killed in an airstrike last weekend. Abu Ali Riyan was targeted in an airstrike in the southern Lebanese town of Harouf on Saturday, according to the military.

The Radwan Force was previously tasked with invading Israel in a future war, and the IDF says the elite unit had advanced the terror group’s “Conquer the Galilee” plan for years, until the 2023-2024 war that saw most of Hezbollah’s leadership eliminated and the group badly weakened.

The military said Riyan managed the Radwan Force in southern Lebanon and was a “central figure responsible for coordinating operations, recruiting operatives, and managing the unit’s weapons supply chain.”

The IDF said it has killed over 350 terror operatives in Lebanon since hostilities escalated this month, mostly Hezbollah members, including over 100 fighters in the Radwan Force.

More than 60 command centers of the Radwan Force have also been struck, the army said.

Lebanon’s information minister said Thursday that Israeli strikes in the country had killed at least 687 people since March 2.

In a statement following a cabinet meeting, Paul Marcos said that “the number of killed reached 687, including 98 children and 52 women.” Beyond that, he did not distinguish between civilians and combatants.

IDF acknowledges failure in alerting public

The IDF [acknowledged](#) Thursday that it was a mistake not to update the public ahead of the Hezbollah attack the previous night, especially after Israel’s assessments of the planned barrage were leaked on social media and published by international media.

The military had had indications that the terror group planned a larger-than-usual attack, though it was not seen by the IDF as extraordinarily large considering that the Iranian proxy had already fired hundreds of rockets at Israel since the start of the conflict.

Rumors that Israel was bracing for a large attack swept through the country throughout the late afternoon. But at around 7 p.m. IDF Spokesman Brig. Gen. Effie Defrin downplayed the matter, saying in a post on X that there



were no changes to the guidelines for civilians.

The military did begin to update local authorities in the north shortly before the Hezbollah attack began around an hour later. But IDF officials acknowledged that this was far too late, saying that the public should have been notified much earlier.

Some reporters said they were even blocked by the military censor from publishing the information ahead of the barrage, leaving Israelis to learn about the matter from [leaks to foreign media](#).

The army said it would investigate and learn from the incident, and in the future will seek to update the public ahead of potential major attacks.

View of a sign pointing toward a protected space on Jaffa Street in Jerusalem amid the ongoing war with Iran and Hezbollah and missile fire toward Israel, March 10, 2026. (Chaim Goldberg/Flash90)

Rossella Tercatin and Times of Israel staff contributed to this report.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/katz-threatens-to-take-territory-in-lebanon-if-attacks-persist-evacuation-warnings-expand/>

Hezbollah launches 217 rockets and drones at Israel in rare overnight barrage

Hezbollah launched more than 200 rockets at Israel in the past 24 hours, with 127 crossing into Israeli territory — nearly matching the roughly 300 missiles Iran has fired since the war began

[Moran Azulay](#) | 10:57

One of the most unusual barrages since the start of the campaign was recorded yesterday along Israel's northern front, when hundreds of launches were fired from Lebanon toward Israel within a short period of time. Air defense systems operated under heavy load, with numerous interceptions visible in the skies over northern Israel. Security officials said the barrage was likely only part of a broader attack plan.



According to the data, 217 rockets were launched from Lebanon during the unusual barrage. Of those, 127 crossed into Israeli territory, while air defense systems intercepted a significant portion of the launches.

The interceptions yesterday in the western Galilee (Photo: Amir Yarchi)

In addition to the rockets, five unmanned aerial vehicles, or UAVs, were launched. Air defenses intercepted most of them, though two penetrations were reported, with no injuries.

According to assessments, Hezbollah planned to carry out the attack in three waves. The first barrage was launched, but the two additional waves were disrupted following operational activity by the Israel Defense Forces, which thwarted parts of the plan.

Since the start of the fighting, hundreds of projectiles have been launched toward Israel from several fronts. According to the data:

- About 300 missiles have been launched from Iran
- 594 rockets have been launched from Lebanon and reached Israel
- In total, about 1,300 launches have been carried out from Lebanon, though not all crossed into Israeli territory

Significant figures were also recorded in the use of unmanned aerial vehicles:

- 167 UAVs were launched from Iran
- 74 UAVs were launched from Lebanon

Widespread evacuations in Lebanon

Alongside the escalation, large population movements have been recorded in Lebanon. According to estimates, about 1.2 million people have evacuated their homes. Of them, about 700,000 residents left the Dahieh area of Beirut — a Hezbollah stronghold — and roughly half a million others fled southern Lebanon.

In response to the launches, the IDF has expanded its strikes in Lebanon. Since the start of the campaign, about 80 structures have been destroyed: roughly 60 in Beirut and about 20 in southern Lebanon. Security officials said some of the buildings served as Hezbollah infrastructure and targets.

The data also indicates that Iran has launched more than 10 cluster munitions during the conflict. Each munition contains between 20 and 80 submunitions, with each warhead weighing between about 4 and 8 kilograms (9 to 18 pounds). <https://www.ynetnews.com/article/rkkndueq11x>

Iran's new supreme leader issues defiant first statement, without appearing

Mojtaba Khamenei vows to 'avenge the blood' of Iranians killed in US and Israeli strikes, continue utilizing the 'lever of blocking the Strait of Hormuz'

By [Agencies](#) Today, 7:11 pm



A statement by Iran's new supreme leader Mojtaba Khamenei is televised in Tehran on March 12, 2026. (AFP)

Iran's new Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei, who has yet to appear in public, vowed on Thursday to avenge the deaths since the start of the war with the US and Israel, in a statement read out by a presenter on state TV.

"I assure everyone that we will not neglect avenging the blood of your martyrs," Khamenei told the Iranian people.

It was Khamenei's first statement since he was proclaimed as the Islamic Republic's new supreme leader on Sunday and

after the killing of his father and predecessor in US and Israeli strikes.

The 56-year-old has yet to make a public appearance since his appointment and regime officials have indicated he was lightly injured during the ongoing war. State TV offered no explanation for why his first remarks were read out by a presenter rather than delivered in a video address.

"A limited amount of this revenge has so far taken concrete form, but until it is fully achieved, this case will remain among our priorities," Khamenei said, according to the statement.

"We will seek compensation from the enemy, and if they refuse, we will take as much of their property as we determine, and if that is not possible, we will destroy the same amount of their property," he added.

Iran's health ministry claimed on March 8 that more than 1,200 people had been killed in the war, and over 10,000 civilians injured.

On February 28, the US and Israel killed the late supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in the initial strikes that triggered the war that has since spread across the Middle East.



Policemen stand on top of their car with pictures of the late Iranian supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, right and left, and his son Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei, the successor to him, center, during a rally to support him in Tehran, Iran, March 9, 2026. (AP/Vahid Salemi)

Iran has responded with drone and missile strikes on Israel and US interests across the region and effectively closed the strategic Strait of Hormuz.

In his statement, Khamenei said Iran's neighbors should close all US bases on their territory, and said the Islamic Republic would continue to attack any such bases.

"The claim of establishing security and peace by America was nothing more than a lie," he said.

He also called for using "the lever of blocking the Strait of Hormuz" — a strategic waterway through which a fifth of global oil passes.

"The popular demand is to continue our effective defense and make the enemy regret! The lever of blocking the Strait of Hormuz must continue to be used," he said.



This handout photo taken on March 11, 2026 and released by the Royal Thai Navy shows smoke rising from the Thai bulk carrier 'Mayuree Naree' near the Strait of Hormuz after an attack. (ROYAL THAI NAVY / AFP)

The new leader also thanked Iran's allies in the region, including Lebanon's Hezbollah, Yemen's Houthis and armed groups in Iraq.

"We consider the countries of the Resistance Front our best friends, and the cause of resistance and the Resistance Front are an inseparable part of the values of the Islamic Revolution," he said.

Following the reading of the statement, Iran's Revolutionary Guards said they had launched strikes on

Israel and US bases in tribute to Khamenei and his family, and that, in keeping with his orders, they would keep the Strait shut.

Two tankers were ablaze in an Iraqi port on Thursday after being hit by suspected Iranian explosive-laden boats, a step-up in attacks that have cut off oil from the Middle East. The attacks were a clear sign of defiance of US President Donald Trump, who said on Wednesday that the United States had already won the war.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/irans-new-supreme-leader-issues-defiant-first-statement-without-appearing/>

US refueling plane crashes in Iraq due to apparent accident, rescue efforts ongoing **Second tanker involved in incident safely lands at Ben Gurion Airport after sending out international emergency signal**

By [Emanuel Fabian](#)

and [Agencies Today](#), 2:16 am



Illustrative: This photo provided by the US Defense Department shows a North American Aerospace Defense Command F-16 fighter refueling from a KC-135 Stratotanker over western Alaska on February 19, 2026. (U.S. Department of Defense via AP)

The US Central Command on Thursday said a KC-135 refueling aircraft crashed in Iraq in an apparent accident involving another tanker.

"The incident occurred in friendly airspace during Operation Epic Fury, and rescue efforts are ongoing. Two aircraft were involved in the incident. One of the aircraft

went down in western Iraq, and the second landed safely," CENTCOM said in a statement.

CENTCOM said the aircraft was part of the operation against Iran but that the incident was "not due to hostile fire or friendly fire."

It added that more information would be made available "as the situation develops."

The second tanker involved in the incident landed at Ben Gurion Airport earlier in the evening. The aircraft had sent a "squawk code" of 7700, an international emergency signal, according to flight tracking data.

It wasn't immediately clear if there were any casualties. Both US President Donald Trump and Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth have warned that the Iran war would likely claim more American lives before it ends.

KC-135s, which have been in operation for more than 60 years, generally have a crew of three — a pilot, a copilot and a third who operates the boom used to refuel other aircraft, according to the US Air Force.

But some KC-135 missions require a navigator, and the aircraft can carry up to 37 passengers, an Air Force factsheet said.



US Air Force refueling aircraft are seen parked on the tarmac of the Ben Gurion airport near Tel Aviv on February 25, 2026. (Jack GUEZ / AFP)

The tanker is the fourth publicly acknowledged aircraft to crash as part of the US military's operations against Iran. Last week, the military confirmed that three American fighter jets were mistakenly downed by friendly Kuwaiti fire.

All six crew members safely ejected from the F-15E Strike Eagles and were in stable condition after being recovered, the US said.

Seven American troops have been killed in combat during the Iran war so far. Six of the service members were killed when an Iranian drone struck an operations center at a civilian port in

Kuwait. The seventh died after being wounded during an attack on the Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia. About 140 US service members have been wounded, including eight severely, the Pentagon said earlier this week. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/us-refueling-plane-crashes-in-iraq-due-to-apparent-accident-rescue-efforts-ongoing/>

At least 33 wounded, two in moderate condition, after projectile hits home northern Israel

The strike hit a residential building in Zarzir near Nazareth after three waves of launches from Iran triggered widespread air raid sirens across northern Israel within about an hour

ynet|19:38

A projectile struck homes in the northern village of Zarzir early Friday, wounding about 33 people, including a woman in moderate condition, during a series of missile launches from Iran that triggered air raid sirens across northern Israel.

Magen David Adom said a 34-year-old woman wounded by shrapnel in her back was taken in moderate condition to Rambam Medical Center in Haifa. A 17-year-old girl was lightly wounded by broken glass, while other victims suffered light injuries or anxiety and were taken to hospitals including HaEmek Medical Center in Afula and the Italian Hospital in Nazareth.

About 19 wounded after projectile hits home northern Israel

Paramedic Eran Abo said responders arrived to find heavy damage to several homes. "We saw destruction in a number of houses and shattered glass," he said.

Local officials said one of the houses at the site was completely destroyed. Police said a munition fell in the Jezreel Valley community, damaging a building. Officers and bomb disposal units were operating at the scene.

Scene of the strike [Go to website for video rdb](#)

The strike came after the IDF detected three waves of launches from Iran toward northern Israel within roughly an hour, triggering sirens across wide areas including Haifa, Nazareth, Afula, Yokneam Illit, Shfaram, Nesher, Kiryat Ata, Tiberias, Sakhnin, Zichron Yaakov, Tirat Carmel and Migdal HaEmek. A separate siren also sounded in the border town of Metula.

Later, alerts warning of possible hostile aircraft infiltration sounded in Nahariya, Acre and nearby communities before expanding to the Krayot suburbs of Kiryat Bialik, Kiryat Motzkin and Kiryat Yam.

<https://www.ynetnews.com/article/bjunj0x9be#autoplay>

Iran threatens region's oil facilities if Israel, US target its energy infrastructure - report
Iran's UN Ambassador also said that Tehran would not close the Strait of Hormuz, adding that it was Iran's right to preserve the security of the key shipping route.

By JERUSALEM POST STAFF, REUTERS MARCH 13, 2026 01:50



People walk as smoke rises in the background after a reported strike on Shahran fuel tanks, in Tehran, Iran, March 8, 2026(photo credit: MAJID ASGARIPOUR/WANA (WEST ASIA NEWS AGENCY) VIA REUTERS)

Iran's armed forces threatened to "light every oil field in the region" if the US or Israel attacked its energy facilities, the London-based opposition-outlet Iran International reported on Thursday.

According to the report, the Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters, which acts as the main headquarters of the Iranian military, warned that any attack on the country's energy infrastructure or ports would trigger a "devastating response," threatening to set fire to oil and gas facilities across the region linked to the US or its allies.

ports of the Islamic Republic of Iran will be followed by our crushing and destructive response," the Iranian military spokesman said.

The statement came after the [IDF struck Tehran's fuel depots on Saturday](#), causing significant fires in the area and smoke to engulf the Iranian capital for several days.

The IDF confirmed at the time that the attacks targeted facilities used by Iran's army and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), and did not constitute an attack on civilian infrastructure.



Smoke continues to rise after a reported strike on fuel tanks in an oil refinery, amid the U.S.-Israeli conflict with Iran, in Tehran, Iran, March 8, 2026. (credit: MAJID ASGARIPOUR/WANA (WEST ASIA NEWS AGENCY) VIA REUTERS)

Iran claims Strait of Hormuz is open at UN headquarters

Iran's UN Ambassador said on Thursday that Tehran would not close the Strait of Hormuz, but added that it was Iran's right to preserve the security of the key shipping route.

Amir Saeid Iravani made his comments to reporters at the United Nations when asked about remarks by the new Iranian supreme leader, [Mojtaba Khamenei](#), who said on Thursday that the "lever of blocking the Strait of Hormuz must continue to be used."

"We are not going to close the Strait of Hormuz," Iravani said. "But it is our inherent right to preserve the peace and security in this waterway."

In a prepared statement he read to reporters before responding to questions, Iravani said that "Iran fully respects and remains committed to the principle of freedom of navigation under the law of the sea."

"However, the current situation in the region, including in the Strait of Hormuz, is not the result of Iran's lawful exercise of its right of self-defense. Rather, it is the direct consequence of the destabilizing actions of the United States in launching aggression against Iran and undermining regional security," he added

<https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/iran-news/article-889841>

IDF top lawyer nixes charges against troops accused of abusing Palestinian detainee

In shock decision on Sde Teiman case, new military advocate general says evidentiary 'complexity,' release of alleged victim to Gaza and leak scandal compromised defendants' right to fair trial

By [Jeremy Sharon](#), [Emanuel Fabian](#) and [Nava Freiberg](#)



Today, 11:32 pm

Reserve soldiers indicted for abusing a Palestinian security detainee at the Sde Teiman military detention center speak to the media outside the Supreme Court in Jerusalem on November 2, 2025 (Jeremy Sharon/ Times of Israel)

In a bombshell decision, Military Advocate General Maj. Gen. Itai Ofir on Thursday ordered the cancellation of an indictment against five IDF reserve soldiers who were accused of severely abusing a Palestinian security detainee at the Sde Teiman detention facility in 2024.

According to the indictment filed last year, the five soldiers severely beat and assaulted the prisoner after he was brought to the detention facility, leaving him with grave injuries, including broken ribs and an internal tear in his rectum. The case made headlines around the world.

The IDF said that Ofir's decision to cancel the charges came in the wake of "significant developments" in the case since the indictment was filed, and following a review of all considerations, evidence, and relevant circumstances.

A document summarizing the reasons behind Ofir's decision to cancel the charges listed several factors, including "complexity regarding the existing evidence," and the release of the detainee himself back to Gaza in the October 2025 ceasefire, without him testifying on the matter.

It also cited an "abuse of process" claim by the defendants against the indictments — in reference to the scandal involving the leak by the former military advocate general of security camera footage from Sde Teiman purportedly showing the abuse, which the defendants claimed compromised the legal process. **More-** <https://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-top-lawyer-nixes-charges-against-troops-accused-of-abusing-palestinian-detainee/>

Never is now: Global leaders convene to confront the surge in antisemitism

ADL's flagship summit in NY, March 16 and 17, will bring policymakers, activists, and innovators together to tackle rising hate and shape strategies for the future

By [JERUSALEM POST STAFF](#), IN COLLABORATION WITH ADLMARCH 12, 2026 11:19Updated: MARCH 12, 2026



11:20

Never is Now Summit 2025(photo credit: ADL/COURTESY)

Thousands will gather in New York City next Monday and Tuesday, March 16-17, for "Never Is Now," the world's largest summit on antisemitism and hate, presented by ADL (the Anti-Defamation League).

~ "Antisemitism has moved from the fringes into our mainstream, into our institutions, into the fabric of daily life," says Jonathan Greenblatt, ADL CEO and National Director. "Silence is not an option. The urgency of this moment couldn't be

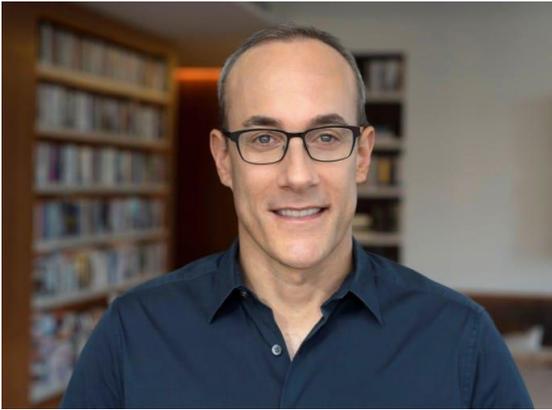
clearer."

>> [Click here for ticket and registration details.](#)

Greenblatt's comments are backed up by ADL's 2024 Audit of Antisemitic Incidents, which reported that there were 9,354 antisemitic incidents across the United States in 2024—the highest number recorded since ADL began tracking this data 46 years ago. This represents a 344 percent increase over the past five years. Moreover, findings of the Blue Square Alliance have shown that antisemitic attitudes are now held by 25% of the population — an increase of 26 million people in just 18 months. While Jews account for only 2% of the U.S. population, they are the target of nearly 70% of faith-based hate.

Attendees at the Never Is Now summit will gather to experience a day and a half of powerful programming with over 100 renowned experts leading a wide variety of dynamic panels on topics such as "Effectively Advocating Against Antisemitism, Online and Off;" "Building and Sustaining Christian-Jewish Alliances;" "Addressing Antisemitism Across Professional Sectors;" and many others. Global leaders will discuss the current wave of antisemitic activity amidst Iranian regime tensions and how ADL protects the community.

This year's Summit will feature a special segment commemorating the United States' upcoming 250th birthday and how it connects Jewish values to the broader American story. Among the distinguished speakers who will share their perspectives are renowned investor, author and historian David Rubenstein who is the principal owner of the Baltimore Orioles, and prominent historian, writer and academic Pamela Nadell, whose books, "America's Jewish Women: A History from Colonial Times to Today" and "Antisemitism, an American Tradition" have each won a National Jewish Book Award.



Dan Senor (Credit: ADL/COURTESY)

Best-selling author and award-winning podcast host Scott Galloway will also be at the summit and will discuss how innovation and technology are changing how communities connect and how harm can spread. Other prominent participants in the conference include Emmanuel Acho, New York Times best-selling author, Emmy Award winner and host, who will receive the ADL Ally Award; Lucy Aharish, ADL Abraham Award honoree, Bianna Golodryga, CNN Anchor, Senior Global Affairs Analyst and co-author, "Don't Feed the Lion."

Robert Kraft (Credit:



ADL/COURTESY)

ADL will present Robert Kraft, Founder of the Blue Square Alliance Against Hate, with its prestigious Changemaker Award at the summit. The Changemaker Award is presented to a leader in sports or entertainment who has used their platform and position to effect positive change in the world, recognizing individuals who have advocated for justice and fair treatment for all.

In addition, Richard Dickson, President and CEO, Gap Inc., will receive the Courage Against Hate Award at the summit, in recognition of his commitment to combating antisemitism and hate, his decisive corporate leadership in standing against bigotry, and his vision for making the fight against hate a core business imperative. Tickets for the Never Is Now Summit are selling quickly, but registration remains open through March 12.

<https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/article-889672>

EXCLUSIVE: Tommy Robinson WARNS America: Islam's UK Takeover Only the Beginning | The Watchman

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rxAw1EGdiqU&t=540s>

OP ED

Before Pouring Billions into Gaza, Trump's 'Board of Peace' Needs To Ask A Few Hard Questions



by [Khaled Abu Toameh](#)

March 12, 2026 at 5:00 am

Corruption, mismanagement and diversion of aid have repeatedly undermined reconstruction efforts in the Gaza Strip and played a major role in preventing aid from reaching ordinary Palestinians. Cement and construction materials intended for civilian housing have repeatedly ended up being used for Hamas's terror tunnels and military infrastructure. Pictured: A school run by UNRWA in Gaza City, photographed on December 1, 2022, the day the agency revealed that there was a terror tunnel under one of its schools in Gaza. (Photo by Mohammed Abed/AFP via Getty Images)

As US President Donald J. Trump and members of his "Board of Peace" [pledged](#) billions of dollars for "relief and reconstruction" in the Gaza Strip, two recent public opinion [polls](#) show that most Palestinians are still

concerned about widespread corruption in Palestinian society.

This concern should sound alarm bells for the Trump Administration and donor countries if they are about to invest billions of dollars in the Gaza Strip. The Palestinians are loudly warning international donors that Palestinian leaders are not trustworthy in handling money.

According to [polls](#) conducted by the Coalition for Integrity and Accountability -- a Palestinian civil society organization that seeks to combat corruption and promote integrity, transparency and accountability in Palestinian society -- 57% of the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip expect the level of corruption to remain or increase in the aftermath of the war that Hamas launched on October 7, 2023.

The polls found that 90% of the Palestinians consider so-called anti-corruption [efforts](#) (by the Palestinian Authority and Hamas) insufficient. They attributed this failure primarily to weak transparency in state institutions, weak political will to hold corrupt individuals accountable, the weak deterrent effect of applied penalties, and the absence of officials serving as role models in upholding integrity and safeguarding public resources. Sixty-one percent of the Palestinians, in addition, said they believed that the level of corruption increased in 2025, and expected it to rise in 2026.

The results of the latest surveys do not come as a surprise. Other polls conducted by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research have consistently shown that [more](#) than 80% of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip believe that there is corruption in institutions of the Palestinian Authority (PA).

This disclosure is important: the Palestinian Authority is expected to play a significant role in the future management of the Gaza Strip. Recently, Nickolay Mladenov, High Representative for the "Board of Peace," [announced](#) the establishment of a "Liaison Office" by the PA for communication and coordination regarding the board's activities in the Gaza Strip. The newly established National Committee for the Administration of Gaza, which is supposed to be an independent body of apolitical technocrats, is dominated by officials [affiliated](#) with the PA and its ruling Fatah faction.

Under PA President Mahmoud Abbas, many Palestinians [believe](#) corruption has deepened rather than receded. Common practices [include](#) *wasta* (nepotism/favoritism), misuse of public funds, and the enrichment of a political elite while the general population faces economic hardship. Widespread disenchantment with the PA's corruption was a primary factor in Hamas's victory in the Palestinian Legislative Council election of 2006 (the last election held), as the terror group [campaigned](#) on a platform of "clean governance" and "reform."

For the past 33 years, the international community has failed to track the flow and use of aid money donated to the Palestinians, enabling high-level corruption. Tens of billions of dollars in international aid given to the Palestinian Authority and the Hamas regime in the Gaza Strip have been [lost](#) to corruption, siphoned off by terror groups or mismanaged by the PA leadership.

Since October 2023 alone, Hamas has reportedly generated an [estimated](#) \$500 million by seizing humanitarian aid trucks and selling supplies to Gaza residents at inflated prices.

[Corruption, mismanagement](#) and [diversion of aid](#) have repeatedly undermined reconstruction efforts in the Gaza Strip and played a major role in preventing aid from reaching ordinary Palestinians. Cement and construction materials intended for civilian housing have repeatedly ended up being used for Hamas's terror tunnels and military infrastructure. Resources that donors believed were helping build homes and schools were instead strengthening Hamas and other terror groups. Much of the donor money has been swallowed by corruption, political patronage, and the militarization of Palestinian society.

The Gaza Strip has become the only place in the world where a terror group can repeatedly wage war -- funded by the international community -- while that same international community pays to rebuild the battlefield afterward, possibly for the next war.

The people of the Gaza Strip urgently need humanitarian assistance, housing, infrastructure, and economic opportunity. However, pouring money into the territory without strict safeguards will not help those residents.

For decades, the Gaza Strip has been one of the most heavily funded territories in the world in terms of international aid per capita. Yet despite the enormous financial injections, the Gaza Strip remains impoverished, unstable, and dominated by Hamas and other terrorist groups. International aid has empowered a governing system that prioritizes rockets over reconstruction. While donors thought they were funding hospitals and schools, Hamas was appropriating enormous resources and investing them in weapons, military infrastructure, and preparation for the next confrontation with Israel.

If the "Board of Peace" truly wants to help the Palestinians, it must abandon the illusion that money alone will solve the problem. Any serious reconstruction effort must begin with extremely uncompromising conditions:

tracking and full transparency over how funds are spent, strict monitoring of construction materials, and a clear demand that Hamas and all other terror groups lay down their weapons and permanently exit the scene. The assumption that writing big checks will somehow produce different results has collapsed in the face of reality. *Khaled Abu Toameh is an award-winning journalist based in Jerusalem.*
<https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/22339/pouring-billions-into-gaza>



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 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