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## Woman wounded by shrapnel, dozens lightly hurt as Iranian missile hits northern town

US military announces 4 killed in aircraft crash; IDF strikes 200 targets in Iran over past day, including underground weapons site; French soldier killed in Iraq, 2 dead in Oman

By [Emanuel Fabian](#), [Agencies](#) and [Diana Bletter](#)

Today, 11:46 am



*Residents and officers from Israel's Home Front Command inspect a house destroyed by an Iranian missile strike in the northern town of Zarzir, March 13, 2026. (AP Photo/Ariel Schalit)*

**An Iranian ballistic missile attack on the northern Israeli town of Zarzir moderately wounded a 34-year-old woman and lightly wounded dozens more in the early hours of Friday.**

**The incident came as Iran continued to fire barrages at both Israel and neighboring Gulf countries, while Israel carried out hundreds of strikes on regime targets across the Islamic Republic, including on an underground weapons site, as the war that began with US-Israeli strikes on**

### February 28 neared the two-week mark.

The US military announced on Friday that four of its soldiers died when a [refueling aircraft crashed over Iraq](#) last night, bringing the US military death toll to 11. US President Donald Trump has sent mixed signals about how long the war will continue, warning on Friday that “deranged scumbags” should watch out.

The war has shaken the world’s energy market as Iran has struck countries across the region and blocked the Strait of Hormuz, a key artery for the global oil supply.

One day earlier, Iran’s new leader Mojtaba Khamenei ostensibly issued his first statement, but was not seen or heard. His father, former supreme leader Ali Khamenei, was killed in strikes on the war’s first day, and the younger Khamenei was reportedly injured. On Thursday, Trump said he believes Mojtaba is “probably” alive.

### Zarzir strike blows out windows, sprays glass

The IDF said it was investigating the circumstances that led to the impact in Zarzir at around 2:30 a.m. on Friday.



*A man collects items from a house damaged overnight by an Iranian missile overnight, in Zarzir, northern Israel, March 13, 2026. (Michael Giladi/Flash90)*

Home Front Command search and rescue soldiers were dispatched to the scene, where they conducted an assessment alongside rescue services and assisted with clearing the scene, the army said.

According to the IDF’s initial findings, the missile may have been partially intercepted by air defenses, and the warhead remained entirely intact and ultimately crashed down on Zarzir and exploded.

Nearly 60 people were wounded by the incident, almost all of them lightly due to broken glass or panic attacks. One 34-year-old woman was moderately wounded by shrapnel. She, along with a 17-year-old who was lightly hurt, were taken to a local hospital. Many of the wounded had been discharged by the late morning.

Images from the scene showed a large crater and extensive damage to homes and cars following the direct impact. The strike blew out windows and damaged dozens of homes.



***A man looks at the site struck by an Iranian missile in Zarzir, northern Israel, March 13, 2026. (AP Photo/Ariel Schalit)***

The missile that struck Zarzir came as the Tehran-backed Hezbollah terror group in Lebanon has aimed constant missile fire at the north. Hezbollah entered the fray last week, launching missiles and drones at Israel. In response, Israel has conducted heavy strikes on the terror group and expanded its ground presence in Lebanon.

There were no other reports of injuries as a direct result of Iran's three ballistic missile attacks overnight and early Friday, which set off sirens in northern and southern Israel.

The missile in the third attack was likely intercepted, according to initial military assessments. Sirens had sounded in the southernmost city of Eilat.



***People live inside a bomb shelter in the northern city of Kiryat Shmona amid the ongoing war with Iran and Hezbollah and missile fire toward Israel, March 12, 2026. (Ayal Margolin/Flash90)***

The Health Ministry reported Friday that in the preceding 24 hours, 213 injured people had been taken to hospitals as a result of the conflict with Iran. Among those treated in hospitals, four were in moderate condition, and 196 were in good condition. Thirteen people had been treated for acute anxiety.

The ministry did not give a breakdown of the causes of injuries, and some might have been sustained by people trying to reach shelter rather than as a direct result of missile

fire from Iran or rocket fire from Lebanon.

On Thursday evening, a 17-year-old girl [was fatally run over](#) by a car in Rehovot, paramedics said, reportedly while dashing across a street to seek shelter ahead of an Iranian missile attack.

### **IDF strikes underground ballistic missile site in Shiraz**

On Friday morning, the military said the Israeli Air Force had launched a fresh wave of "extensive" airstrikes in Tehran, targeting Iranian regime infrastructure sites. It also issued an "urgent warning" to Iranians in several areas in the Tehran region, ahead of planned airstrikes targeting the regime.

***A policeman stands next to a portrait of former supreme leader Ali Khamenei during the annual anti-Israeli Quds Day, or Jerusalem Day, rally in support of Palestinians in Tehran, Iran, March 13, 2026. (AP/Vahid Salemi)***



Previous waves of Israeli airstrikes in Tehran, Shiraz, and Ahvaz on Thursday hit several Iranian military sites, including a subterranean ballistic missile manufacturing and storage site, the Israel Defense Forces said.

The military said the underground site in Shiraz was used by Iran to manufacture and store ballistic missiles "which were set to be launched toward the State of Israel."

In Tehran, the IDF said it struck several sites belonging to Iran's air defense array, including a "key base," along with facilities used by Iran to manufacture various weapons, including air defense systems and ballistic missile components.

In Ahvaz, the IDF said it struck several headquarters of various Iranian regime bodies, including the IRGC ground forces and Iran's internal security forces. The military said dozens of Iranian soldiers were operating at the headquarters that were targeted.

The military also said Friday morning that the IAF had struck over 200 targets in western and central Iran over the preceding twenty-four hours.

Dozens of IAF aircraft dropped numerous bombs on the targets, the military added, attaching footage showing some of the strikes.

### **Sirens heard at NATO base in Turkey hosting US troops**

Amid the fighting, countries surrounding Iran reported continuing attacks by the Islamic Republic on targets within their territory.

Sirens were heard early Friday morning at Turkey's Incirlik airbase, a key NATO facility where US troops are stationed near the southeastern city of Adana, state news agency Anadolu reported.

There was no immediate official comment on the incident, which took place four days after NATO air defenses shot down a ballistic missile in Turkish airspace that was fired from Iran, the second in five days.

Several people posted mobile phone footage on social media of a glowing image flying through the sky, suggesting it could be a missile heading for the airbase, it said.

NATO said it shot down a second ballistic missile fired from Iran on Monday, prompting a stern warning from Turkey to Tehran not to take "provocative steps."

### **Gulf states report ongoing attacks; two dead in Oman**

Two people died after security forces intercepted a drone in northern Oman, state media says, without giving further details.

Both victims in the incident at the Al Awahi industrial area were expatriates, the Oman News Agency says, adding that others were injured.

A building at the Dubai International Financial Center also sustained damage on Friday after what authorities described as a "successful interception." The Dubai Media Office did not elaborate on what had been intercepted, nor did it acknowledge the damage done to DIFC, an economic free zone for banks, capital traders and wealth managers, home to exclusive restaurants and nightclubs for the city's elite.

The United Arab Emirates' air defenses have intercepted more than 1,500 Iranian drones and nearly 300 missiles during the current war.



*Smoke bellows from a fire which, according to the authorities was caused by a successful projectile interception, at Dubai's Al Quoz Industrial area, United Arab Emirates, on March 13, 2026. (AP Photo)*

Saudi Arabia's defense ministry said its own air defenses had downed 10 more drones headed toward the kingdom's Eastern and Central Provinces, bringing the total to nearly 50 drones entering Saudi airspace over the span of a few hours.

The overnight barrage represented a higher-than-usual number of aerial threats for the kingdom, which has seen sites including the US Embassy in Riyadh, oil infrastructure, and a military base hosting US troops targeted as the war has intensified.

On Friday, the Saudi Defense Ministry said its forces intercepted a drone targeting Riyadh's Diplomatic Quarter, housing foreign embassies.

### **French soldier killed by drone attack in Iraqi Kurdistan**



Meanwhile, French President Emmanuel Macron announced early Friday that a French soldier was killed, the country's first fatality in this war, in a drone attack in Iraq's autonomous Kurdistan region.

A member of the armed forces "died for France during an attack in the Erbil region of Iraq," Macron wrote on X. He added that several other soldiers had been wounded in the incident, which the French military earlier said was a drone attack on troops carrying out a training exercise.

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

Around the same time, the pro-Iranian Ashab al-Kahf group in Iraq posted a statement to its Telegram channel, warning that French interests “in Iraq and the region” will be “under targeting fire” after the arrival of a French aircraft carrier.

Iran’s military, in a statement carried by state TV, also claimed that an allied group in Iraq had downed an American refueling aircraft and killed all its crew. The Islamic Resistance in Iraq, a loose alliance of Iran-backed factions, claimed to have struck the plane with a missile.

An American KC-135 aerial refueling aircraft [did crash in western Iraq](#). However, US Central Command, which is responsible for American forces in the Middle East, said in a statement Thursday that the crash “was not due to hostile fire or friendly fire.”

### **At rally, IRGC threatens Iranians who would protest government**

Israel’s strikes came just before rallies were to begin for the annual Quds Day on Friday, which Iran has been marking on the last Friday of Ramadan since its 1979 Islamic Revolution, and which sees annual anti-Israel demonstrations.

In Iran, state television aired footage on Friday showing thousands of people participating in the Quds Day rallies, chanting “Death to Israel” and “Death to America” while carrying Iranian flags.

Iran’s Revolutionary Guards warned on Friday that any new protests against the authorities would be met with a stronger response than in anti-regime protests in January, when activist groups say security forces killed as many as tens of thousands of people.

“The evil enemy, failing to achieve its field battle goals, is once again pursuing the instillation of fear and street riots,” the Guards said in a statement broadcast on TV. The statement promised “a stronger blow than on January 8” in the event of new unrest.

The rallies came almost a week after Mojtaba Khamenei, the son of Iranian supreme leader Ali Khamenei, took over the helm of the Islamic Republic. The elder Khamenei was killed on the war’s first day.



*A schoolgirl holds up a poster of Iran’s new supreme leader Mojtaba Khamenei during an anti-US and Israel demonstration in Baghdad on March 12, 2026. (AHMAD AL-RUBAYE / AFP)*

### **Trump: ‘Watch what happens’ to regime ‘scumbags’ today**

Trump weighed in on the younger Khamenei’s status after the new supreme leader ostensibly issued his first statement since being appointed.

Asked if he thinks Mojtaba Khamenei is alive, Trump said, “I think he probably is.”

“I think he is damaged, but I think he’s probably alive in some form, you know,” Trump continued, speaking to the Brian Kilmeade Show

on Fox News Radio. The interview was taped on Thursday to air Friday morning.

Early Friday, Trump issued a new threat online, writing: “Watch what happens to these deranged scumbags today.”

Trump made the post on his Truth Social website, saying that “Iran’s Navy is gone, their Air Force is no longer, missiles, drones and everything else are being decimated, and their leaders have been wiped from the face of the earth.”

“They’ve been killing innocent people all over the world for 47 years, and now I, as the 47th President of the United States of America, am killing them,” Trump wrote. “What a great honor it is to do so!”

*Times of Israel staff contributed to this report. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/woman-wounded-by-shrapnel-dozens-lightly-hurt-as-iranian-missile-hits-northern-town/>*

## **Hegseth says Mojtaba Khamenei ‘wounded, likely disfigured,’ questions if he’s governing**

***US defense secretary says Iran’s missile production ‘defeated,’ defense companies will be destroyed; 1 killed in Tehran blast as several top Iranian leaders attend Quds Day rally***

By [Lazar Berman](#)  
and [Agencies Today](#), 7:17 pm



US Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth speaks during a press conference at US Central Command (CENTCOM) headquarters at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida, on March 5, 2026. (Photo by Octavio JONES / AFP)



Iranians hold up posters as they take part in a Quds Day, or Jerusalem Day, rally in Tehran, on March 13, 2026. (AFP)



An Israeli Air Force F-35I prepares to take off for strikes in Iran, in an image published by the military on March 13, 2026. (Israel Defense Forces)



Demonstrators attend the annual anti-Israeli Quds Day, or Jerusalem Day, rally in Tehran, Iran, March 13, 2026. (AP Photo/Vahid Salemi)



An Iranian man pokes his crutch at an image of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, as others stand on the poster in the Al-Quds Day rally, in Tehran on March 13, 2026 (AFP)

**Iran's new Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei is "wounded and likely disfigured," US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said in a briefing Friday, questioning Khamenei's ability to govern after nearly two weeks of US and Israeli attacks on the Islamic Republic.**

**Hegseth's comments came as a large explosion was reported where top Iranian regime leaders had gathered in Tehran for an annual Quds**

**Day demonstration, though the cause of the blast was unclear.**

**Khamenei was not present at the rally, and no images have been released of him since an Israeli strike at the start of the war that killed much of his family, including his father and wife. His first apparent public comments came in a statement read out by a television presenter on Thursday.**

"We know the new so-called not-so-supreme leader is wounded and likely disfigured. He put out a statement yesterday. A weak one, actually, but there was no voice and there was no video. It was a written statement," Hegseth said during a press briefing Friday.

"Why a written statement?" asked Hegseth. "I think you know why. His father — dead. He's scared, he's injured, he's on the run and he lacks legitimacy."

“Who’s in charge?” Hegseth taunted. “Iran may not even know.”



**A woman holds a picture of Iran’s Supreme Leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei during the annual anti-Israeli Quds Day, or Jerusalem Day, rally in support of Palestinians in Tehran, Iran, March 13, 2026. (AP Photo/Vahid Salemi)**

An Iranian official told Reuters on Wednesday that the newly appointed supreme leader was lightly injured but was continuing to operate, after state television described him as war-wounded.

Meanwhile, Hegseth said, the US will keep its foot on the gas.

“No quarter, no mercy for our enemies,” he said, using a military phrase denoting a lack of compassion.

Hegseth added that US President Donald Trump “will determine the pace, tempo and timing of this

conflict...America First, Peace through Strength in action.”

He also claimed that Iran has lost the capability to rebuild its destroyed military assets, adding: “Very soon, all of Iran’s defense companies will be destroyed,” indicating a focus of US-Israeli operations in the coming days.

Every company that builds components of Iran’s ballistic missiles “has been defeated, has been destroyed,” Hegseth said, and Iran’s military has been made “combat ineffective, devastated.”



**US Air Force military ground personnel prepare Joint Direct Attack Munitions for a B-1 Lancer bomber on the tarmac at RAF Fairford in southwest England on March 12, 2026. (Henry NICHOLLS / AFP)**

Hegseth said that over 15,000 Iranian targets have been hit and that “no other combination of countries in the world” can do what the US and Israelis are doing over Iran.

He boasted that when the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps looks up in the sky, they only see two things on the sides of aircraft: “the Stars and Stripes, and the Star of David — the evil regime’s worst nightmare.”

“Iran has no air defenses,” he continued, “Iran has no air force, Iran has no navy. Their missiles, missile launchers and drones are being destroyed or shot out of the sky.”



**A UAE navy vessel patrols next to cargo ships and oil tankers in the Strait of Hormuz as seen from Khor Fakkan, United Arab Emirates, March 11, 2026. (AP Photo/Altaf Qadri)**

Tehran’s missile launches are down 90 percent, he claimed, and its drone attacks are down by 95 percent, leading it to begin “exercising sheer desperation” by attempting to block the Strait of Hormuz, where oil and gas tanker transit has all but completely halted amid Iranian attacks.

“It’s something we’re dealing with, have been dealing with, and you don’t have to worry about it,” he promised, amid fears of an extended spike in oil prices.

**Blast near Tehran square as leaders attend Quds Day rally**

Meanwhile, in Tehran, a large explosion struck near a central square filled with demonstrators as several top leaders had gathered to mark Quds Day, or Jerusalem Day, Iranian state television reported.

According to state media, one person was killed in the explosion in an area home to many government buildings.

Video published by the semiofficial Tasnim news agency showed a plume of gray smoke rising as demonstrators screamed “Death to Israel!” and “Death to America!” Footage from Ferdowsi Square showed people shouting “God is the greatest!” as smoke rose.

The cause of the blast was not immediately known, and there was no immediate comment from the IDF or Iranian authorities.

Iran's national security chief Ali Larijani, who was present at the rally along with other top officials, dismissed the suspected Israeli strike as an act of "desperation."

"These attacks are out of fear, out of desperation. One who is strong wouldn't bomb demonstrations at all. It's clear that it has failed," Larijani told state TV while marching at the rally, held each year since the Islamic Revolution in 1979 in a show of support for the Palestinian cause and opposition to Israel.

Striking a defiant tone, he said Trump "doesn't understand that the Iranian people are a brave nation, a strong nation, a determined nation. The more he presses, the stronger the nation's determination will become."

The attendance by Larijani is one of the most high-profile public appearances by an Iranian official since the February 28 strike that killed supreme leader Khamenei and other top officials.

Judiciary chief Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejei and national police chief Ahmad-Reza Radan were also in attendance, state TV pictures showed.



Holding images of the slain supreme leader and his son and successor, people marched through Tehran in the annual event, trampling on images of Trump and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

*An Iranian man pokes his crutch at an image of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, as others stand on the poster in the Al-Quds Day rally, in Tehran on March 13, 2026 (AFP)*

Al Quds Day, named after the Arabic name for Jerusalem and marked on the last Friday of the Muslim holy fasting month of Ramadan, originated in Iran and has been held annually since the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Marches are held in cities worldwide. [https://www.timesofisrael.com/hegseth-says-](https://www.timesofisrael.com/hegseth-says-mojtaba-khamenei-wounded-likely-disfigured-questions-if-hes-governing/)

[mojtaba-khamenei-wounded-likely-disfigured-questions-if-hes-governing/](https://www.timesofisrael.com/hegseth-says-mojtaba-khamenei-wounded-likely-disfigured-questions-if-hes-governing/)

## Six US soldiers killed as refueling plane crashes in Iraq due to apparent accident

*Second tanker involved in incident safely lands at Ben Gurion Airport after sending out emergency signal*

By [Emanuel Fabian](#)

and [Agencies Today](#), 2:16 am Updated at 4:41 pm



*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 said Friday that all six crew members died after a KC-135 refueling aircraft crashed in Iraq in an apparent accident involving another tanker.

The military said the circumstances of the incident are being investigated. Earlier, US Central Command, which oversees the Middle East, said the crash followed an unspecified incident

involving two aircraft in "friendly airspace," and that the other plane landed safely.

The military said the loss of the aircraft was "not due to hostile or friendly fire."

The deaths of the crew members bring the total of American service members killed in the war with Iran to 13.

"The identities of the service members are being withheld until 24 hours after next of kin have been notified," the military said.

On Thursday, CENTCOM said in a statement: "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."

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.

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 person 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.

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/>

## Hezbollah faces severe financial crisis as Iran strikes choke funding

'Hezbollah's ability to receive funds directly from Iran has nearly dropped to zero,' a senior intelligence official says; Israeli strikes on Iranian regime targets and Hezbollah financial assets deepen the terror group's worst economic crisis in decades

[Ron Crissy](#) | 14:24

**Beyond the damage inflicted on elements of Iran's regime and its missile and nuclear programs, a senior intelligence official revealed Friday evening that the strikes in Iran are also severely harming Hezbollah's financial situation. The Lebanese terror group serves as a proxy of the ayatollah regime. "Alongside exploiting the money of Lebanese citizens, Hezbollah relies on Iranian financial transfers through money changers, investments and other channels," the official said. "It uses these funds to rebuild the organization and its operatives, strengthen its strategic capabilities, and at the same time makes false promises to Lebanese citizens regarding reconstruction and compensation."**

*Archive footage of IDF strikes in Iran and Lebanon*

(Photo: IDF) [Go to website for video rdb](#)

According to the official, "Striking regime targets reduces Hezbollah's ability to receive money directly from Iran to nearly zero. The money-changing and transfer capabilities are being cut off at their source." "As a result of severing the financing chain from its two main sides, Iran on one hand and the civilian population in Lebanon on the other, Hezbollah now finds itself in the most severe economic collapse it has faced in decades, a situation that continues to deteriorate with IDF strikes," the official added.

For years, Hezbollah has presented itself as the "protector of Lebanon," offering social services as part of that image. One of the mechanisms it uses to provide services to Lebanese citizens is the Al-Qard al-Hassan Association, a financial organization that operates as a parallel system to Lebanon's official banking sector. The association stores reserves for times of crisis, provides loans based on depositors' funds, offers financial services to the organization, including salary payments and money transfers, and runs donation campaigns for Hezbollah.

In practice, Hezbollah uses these services to create economic dependence on the association while exploiting the funds to purchase weapons and pay salaries to the group's operatives. Until Operation Northern Arrows, Hezbollah relied for years on Iranian financial transfers alongside the exploitation of Lebanese citizens' funds. After the fall of the Assad regime, the transfer axis was severely damaged, along with the channels used to move money. As a result, the Al-Qard al-Hassan Association has become a central pillar of Hezbollah's economy, as it safeguards the organization's funds.



### **Naim Qassem. A financial blow to the terror group**

Through its various financial sources, the association enables Hezbollah to safely store Iranian funding, obtain money from independent funding channels, pay salaries to its operatives and provide them with bank-like financial services. The association's storage facilities protect Hezbollah's financial reserves, estimated at hundreds of millions of dollars, and serve as an economic safety net for the organization. Some of these facilities are located within

civilian areas.

Before Operation Northern Arrows, Hezbollah's budget stood at tens of millions of dollars per month. After the war, Iran provided an additional \$1 billion for the organization's compensation program for Shiite residents whose homes were damaged during the fighting. The monthly funds Hezbollah receives from Iran support the group's routine operations but are insufficient to cover its expanding expenses following the war.

Hezbollah's attempts to rebuild its economy are severely harming Lebanon's national economy. As Lebanese-Iranian money continues to flow, the Lebanese state grows weaker. On July 15, Lebanon's central bank banned financial institutions in the country from maintaining ties with the Al-Qard al-Hassan Association and threatened to freeze accounts and revoke licenses of institutions that continue to work with it. The move followed international pressure to shut down the organization. Despite the pressure, the association continues to operate as usual and serves Hezbollah as a central mechanism for financing terrorist activity and fighting against Israel.



#### **Strikes in Bushehr during Operation Lion's Roar**

During Operation Lion's Roar, the Israel Defense Forces and the United States military launched strikes in Iran against numerous targets linked to the Iranian regime. Hezbollah voluntarily joined the campaign and launched attacks against Israel. In response, the IDF began a broad offensive against Hezbollah targets in southern Lebanon and in Beirut, including key assets and cash storage facilities belonging to the Al-Qard al-Hassan Association.

The combined Israeli strikes on regime targets in Iran and on Hezbollah's most critical infrastructure in Beirut's Dahieh district are significantly affecting the group's financial condition and weakening it. The Iranian regime's direct war against Israel and the United States is also preventing it from continuing to fund and arm its proxy organization in Lebanon. At the same time, strikes on assets belonging to the Al-Qard al-Hassan Association that contain Hezbollah's cash reserves are destroying its financial capabilities, significantly damaging its ability to plan and carry out terrorist attacks against Israel on multiple fronts.

#### **IAF kills Basij fighters overnight**

Meanwhile, the Israeli Air Force killed members of the Basij militia overnight who were operating checkpoints recently established in Tehran. The Basij forces are part of the Iranian regime's security apparatus and for years have been responsible for carrying out terrorist activities.

In addition, the forces lead the regime's central repression efforts against internal protests, particularly in recent months, using severe violence, mass arrests and force against demonstrators.

<https://www.ynetnews.com/article/h1xqymqbe#autoplay>

## **US deploys 2,200 Marines toward Middle East as Iran tensions escalate**

**31st Marine Expeditionary Unit sails from Japan with F-35 squadron as Washington weighs options on Hormuz security and Iran's buried 60% enriched uranium stockpile in Isfahan**

[ynet Global](https://www.ynetnews.com/article/h1xqymqbe#autoplay)|Updated:15:53

**ABC News reported Friday that a U.S. Marine Corps expeditionary unit comprising about 2,200 Marines aboard three Navy amphibious ships has been ordered to move toward the Middle East. The unit deployed is the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, which is permanently based in Japan and normally operates in the Indo-Pacific Command area. It is now being sent toward the region amid the ongoing war with Iran.**



**US Marines; reinforcements on the way (Photo: US Navy)**

ABC reported that the deployment does not necessarily mean the Marine unit will be used as a ground force inside Iran.

However, it will provide military commanders with additional land, amphibious and air assets that could be used if needed. The specific Marine unit heading toward the Middle East also includes a squadron of F-35 fighter jets and a squadron of MV-22 Osprey tiltrotor aircraft.

The report about the large Marine deployment comes as the world waits to see how U.S. President Donald Trump will address two problems that could require the dramatic use of additional forces. The first is the growing threat to oil tankers in the Strait of Hormuz, the world's busiest maritime route for oil trade. Iran has begun attacking cargo ships there and has warned that it will set fire to any vessel passing through the area.



***Ships near Oman, not far from the Strait of Hormuz (Photo: Reuters/Stringer)***

Trump said several times this week, including again Friday, that the United States could provide military escorts for ships in the Strait of Hormuz to protect them from Iranian missile and drone attacks. However, the U.S. Treasury secretary and other officials in Washington acknowledged that such escorts could take many days to organize because most U.S. military resources in the region are currently allocated to offensive operations in Iran. The second issue is Iran's stockpile of uranium enriched to 60 percent, estimated at about 440

kilograms. Enriching it to 90 percent, the level required for nuclear weapons, could be done in a relatively short period of time. As far as is known, a large portion of the stockpile is buried beneath the rubble of the nuclear facility that the United States and Israel bombed in Isfahan in June, while another portion is believed to be stored elsewhere. The concern is that if the war ends without the stockpile being removed from Iran, Tehran could later move rapidly toward developing a nuclear bomb.

In recent days Trump has repeatedly signaled that he does not rule out sending ground forces to retrieve the uranium stockpile. Reports said the United States has also discussed the possibility with Israel. Such an operation, however, would be extremely complex and would involve significant risks.

<https://www.ynetnews.com/article/bkok7ezq11e>

## **Iran's Larijani says war won't end before enemies made sorry for 'grave miscalculation'**

***Tehran vows to 'set region on fire' if energy infrastructure and ports targeted; parliament speaker says attacks on Iran's Gulf islands will see them 'run with the blood of invaders'***

By [Agencies](#) 12 March 2026, 11:53 pm



***A plume of smoke rises after a reported Iranian strike on fuel tanks in Muharraq, Bahrain, on March 12, 2026. (Fadhel MADHAN / AFP) /***

**As US President Donald Trump makes intermittent comments about the war with Iran nearing its end, Iranian officials on Thursday vowed an unrelenting campaign across the Middle East, echoing comments attributed to new Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei vowing revenge against the US and Israel.**

**"While starting a war is easy, it cannot be won with a few tweets. We will not relent until making you sorry for this grave miscalculation," Iranian security chief Ali Larijani said on X.**

Larijani also threatened to target power grids in the region if the United States attacked the Islamic Republic's electricity supplies.

"If they do that, the whole region will go dark in less than half an hour and darkness provides ample opportunity to hunt down US servicemen running for safety," said Larijani.

Trump had said US forces could knock out Iran's electricity supply "within one hour" and leave the country with reconstruction that could take a generation.

Iran also threatened to wreak havoc on the region's oil and gas industry if its own energy infrastructure was attacked.

"We will set the region's oil and gas on fire with the slightest attack on Iran's energy infrastructure and ports," said a spokesman for the Iranian military's central operational command, known as Khatam al-Anbiya.



**Fire and a plume of smoke is visible after, according to authorities, debris of an Iranian intercepted drone hit the Fujairah oil facility, in Fujairah, United Arab Emirates, March 3, 2026. (Altaf Qadri/AP)**

And Iran's powerful parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf warned Thursday that Tehran will "abandon all restraint" if the United States and Israel attack any of its islands in the Gulf.

"Any aggression

against soil of Iranian islands will shatter all restraint. We will abandon all restraint and make the Persian Gulf run with the blood of invaders," Qalibaf said in a post on X.

**In this photo released by Iran's Supreme National Security Council office, Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council Ali Larijani attends a meeting in Muscat, Oman, February 10, 2026. (Erfan Kouchari/Iran's Supreme National Security Council Office via AP)**



It was not immediately clear which islands he was referring to, but a recent Axios report cited US officials as saying that capturing Kharg was on the table as the war in the Middle East spirals.

In an interview with AFP, Iran's deputy foreign minister Majid Takht-Ravanchi claimed that Tehran was only acting in "self-defense" and wanted to ensure that war could not be "imposed" on it again.

Takht-Ravanchi confirmed that Iran had been approached by some "friendly countries" to put an end to the conflict, without specifying which ones.

"We are telling them the same thing, that we want the ceasefire to be part of an overall formula for ending the war altogether," he added.

**Journalists stand atop a fuel tanker as they cover a nearby ongoing fire following an overnight airstrike on the Shahr oil refinery in northwestern Tehran on March 8, 2026. (AFP)**



Gulf states have borne the brunt of retaliatory attacks from Iran. Images from Bahrain on Thursday showed thick smoke rising after a strike on fuel tanks in Muharra, with residents told to stay

inside and close their windows.



Drones caused damage again at Kuwait's international airport and in downtown Dubai, while Saudi Arabia said it had intercepted drones headed towards its Shaybah oil field and its embassy district.

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

With Gulf states slashing production and oil tankers stuck in the Gulf, benchmark oil prices have risen 40-50 percent since the US and Israel attacked Iran on February 28, threatening to crimp growth and stoke inflation. [https://www.timesofisrael.com/irans-larijani-says-war-wont-end-before-enemies-made-sorry-for-grave-](https://www.timesofisrael.com/irans-larijani-says-war-wont-end-before-enemies-made-sorry-for-grave-miscalculation/)

[miscalculation/](https://www.timesofisrael.com/irans-larijani-says-war-wont-end-before-enemies-made-sorry-for-grave-miscalculation/)

**Trump announces massive US strike on Iran's 'crown jewel,' says all military targets 'totally obliterated'**

**The United States struck Iran's Kharg Island for the first time in the war, targeting the key Persian Gulf export hub through which about 90% of Iran's oil passes; President Donald Trump warned Tehran against disrupting shipping in the Strait of Hormuz**

ynet|Updated:18:38

**President Donald Trump said the United States carried out a major bombing raid on Iran's Kharg Island, claiming US forces destroyed all military targets on the strategic island but deliberately avoided striking its oil infrastructure.**

**In a statement, Trump said the operation was conducted by US Central Command at his direction and described it as "one of the most powerful bombing raids in the history of the Middle East."**



*Kharg Island*

**He said US forces "totally obliterated every military target" on Kharg Island, which he referred to as Iran's "crown jewel."**

**Trump said the United States refrained from targeting the island's oil infrastructure "for reasons of decency," but warned that decision could change.**

"Should Iran, or anyone else, do anything to interfere with the free and safe passage of ships through the Strait of Hormuz, I will immediately reconsider this

decision," he said.

Trump also touted the strength of the US military, saying he rebuilt it during his first term and that it remains "the most lethal, powerful and effective force anywhere in the world."

He claimed Iran lacks the ability to defend against US attacks.

"Iran has no ability to defend anything that we want to attack — there is nothing they can do about it," he said.

Trump repeated his longstanding pledge that Iran will not obtain nuclear weapons and said the country would not be allowed to threaten the United States, the Middle East or the wider world.

He also urged Iran's military and others supporting what he called a "terrorist regime" to lay down their arms.

"They would be wise to lay down their arms and save what's left of their country," Trump said.



*Kharg Island*

Kharg Island had long been viewed as a potential target. After Iran's attack in October 2024, reports said the island was under consideration for a strike, but it was not hit in Israel's response at the time. It also remained untouched during the 12-day war in June 2025 and was not attacked until now.

Kharg is a small island about 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) long, located roughly 25 kilometers (15 miles) west of Iran's coast in the Persian Gulf, opposite Bushehr province.

Its strategic importance grew during Iran's oil boom in the 1960s. After numerous oil fields were developed in the Persian Gulf and southern Iran,

Kharg became a massive crude oil terminal — at the time the largest of its kind in the world.

Today, about 90% of Iran's oil exports pass through the terminal. Estimates suggest Iran could export up to 7 million barrels of oil per day through Kharg, though official figures reported by Tehran are lower.

Because Iran's economy relies heavily on oil exports, the island is widely seen as a major strategic vulnerability. It was repeatedly attacked by Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s, causing significant damage to its infrastructure, though Iran managed to continue exporting oil during that period.



*One of the oil facilities on the island, photographed in 2018 (Photo: Reza Hatami)*

Israel had also reportedly considered targeting the island in its response to Iran's October 2024 attack. At the time, Iran was said to be preparing for that possibility by moving away the many oil tankers that typically anchor near the island — a step it reportedly took again ahead of the current conflict.

Most of the tankers that normally dock at Kharg had indeed left the area. However, Bloomberg reported Wednesday that even after Israeli and US strikes began in late February, some

tankers loaded with crude oil were still present.

Despite Iran's declaration that it had closed the Strait of Hormuz — a vital shipping route through which tankers must pass to export oil from the Gulf — analysts say Iranian tankers may still be making the journey. They often do so covertly, sailing without transmitting their location.

Analysts have warned that damage to Kharg could trigger a further spike in global oil prices. The Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies estimated last month that a strike on the island, or a blockade of it, could push oil prices up by about \$10 per barrel, which have already risen sharply since the war began. <https://www.ynetnews.com/article/hk6nuffqbg>

## Who are Ashab Al Yamim? New Shi'ite terror group claims synagogue attacks across Europe - exclusive

*The group seemingly did not exist before this week and, unusually, does not have its own Telegram or social media channels. Usually, such groups create channels straight away.*

By [MATHILDA HELLERMARCH](#) 13, 2026 12:02 Updated: MARCH 13, 2026 12:52



*A Togolese policeman, disguised as a terrorist, brandishes his weapon on October 20, 2022. (illustrative)(photo credit: Photo by YANICK FOLLY/AFP via Getty Images)*

**A new group calling itself Ashab Al Yamim has claimed responsibility for three attacks on Jewish institutions in Europe this week.**

**The first attack was the bombing of a synagogue in Liege, Belgium, on Monday. This was followed by an attack in Greece on Wednesday and an arson attack on a synagogue in Rotterdam, Netherlands, on Friday.**

**The group seemingly did not exist before this week and, unusually, does not have its own Telegram or social media channels. Usually, such groups create channels straight away.**

Nevertheless, the videos it took of the three respective attacks quickly appeared on Shi'ite axis Telegram channels, such as those associated with Hezbollah or the [IRGC](#). This may suggest a link between Ashab Al Yamim and Iran-related proxy organizations.

The name Ashab Al Yamim translates as Companions of the Right or People of the Right. This does not mean right in the political sense, but rather 'righteous' or 'just.' Ohad Merlin, MENA researcher at the regional program in MIND Israel, explained to The Jerusalem Post that the Quran often uses right and left as metaphors. The specific Arabic name People of the Right also appears in the Quran in Al Waqi'ah 56:28.

The group's logo depicts an upstretched arm holding a rifle, which is pointing to the right. Behind this is an image of the globe. This logo bears all the hallmarks of the logos of Iranian terror groups or Iranian-led Islamic Resistance groups; Kataib Hezbollah in Iraq, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and the IRGC in Iran all feature the same image of a hand holding a rifle pointing rightwards, superimposed on a globe.

One notable divergence with the logo of Ashab Al Yamim is that it features a specific rifle model: a Dragunov rifle. A SVD or Dragunov rifle is a Soviet semi-automatic rifle prized among some groups in the [Middle East](#), but significantly less common in Europe. The other axis groups mentioned use stylized versions of AK rifles.

As mentioned, another parallel is that both the statements and videos made by Ashab Al Yamim appear to have first emerged on online networks associated with the Shi'ite axis of armed groups.

Following the Liege attack, the group published a statement: "In the name of God, the Most

Compassionate, the Most Merciful, 'Go forth, whether light or heavy, and strive with your wealth and your lives in the path of God.' God Almighty has spoken the truth.

"O mujahideen of Islam, O knights of the shadows, defend your religion. Rise, by God's permission, to jihad in His path. Go forth where darkness takes shelter, and let the light of truth be revealed through your strength, and spread justice and light in every corner of the world. (Badr 1, Badr 2, Fath 6, Khaybar 14) Put your trust in God."

It is common for Islamic Resistance groups to include passages or quotes from the Quran in their statements, as well as high praise for Allah. This particular passage calls for jihad - again, in line with other groups.

#### **The statement has several unusual aspects**

"The statement starts with standard praise for God, which looks legitimate or authentic, but the statement is strange. It calls for jihad, yet it lacks a date at the end," Joe Truzman, a Senior Research Analyst at Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD) specializing in Palestinian armed groups and Iranian proxy organizations, told The Jerusalem Post.

"Generally, with the Shi'ite armed organizations, or even the front groups, they at least try to look authentic. In their statements, there's always a date at the end, and there are always little statements that these groups say at the end. You don't see that in the statement at all."

If it were just a statement, Truzman said he would likely have dismissed the Liege post. However, the video changed things slightly.

"Either this is a legitimate, authentic statement, and the video is authentic, or it is some criminal or antisemitic group that's trying to cover its tracks. It's very difficult to say."

However, it is worth noting that Iran has an established pattern of using proxy groups to commit acts of terror on its targets abroad. A prominent example would be the bombing of the Argentine Israelite Mutual Association, a Jewish community center in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on 18 July 1994. 85 people were killed, and over 300 were wounded. In 2024, an Argentine court ruled that Iran directed the attack and that Hezbollah carried it out.

Often, Iran's proxy groups appear out of nowhere and then seemingly disappear after the act of [terrorism](#) has been committed.

"Iran has been operating extensively, not only just in the Middle East, but in Europe as well, and obviously, Latin America, so Iran, the IRGC, they have the capabilities to do something like this, Truzman explained.

Iranian proxy organizations and their network of clients in the region have front groups and fake organizations to try to cover or obscure who is really behind an attack.

Another strange aspect is the video. While it does bear the hallmarks of typical terror videos - for example, it uses threatening music and features no spoken voice - the actual content is less violent than normal. Videos by Hezbollah and Hamas typically include more menacing content, but, in the case of Liege, Greece, and Rotterdam, no one was hurt, and the attacks occurred on buildings at night.

Truzman argued that this does still function as propaganda, as "it can create a fear in the minds of the Jewish community." This is especially the case given the ongoing conflict with Iran and given the fact that Iran has threatened to commit acts of terror abroad.

"It is not that these were huge attacks, but at the same time it could be interpreted as a warning," he concluded <https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/article-889859>

## **Michigan synagogue shooter was Lebanese immigrant whose family was killed in IDF airstrike - report**



**Ayman Ghazali, a 41-year-old restaurant worker from Lebanon, had become a naturalized US citizen in 2016, after entering the country on an immigrant Visa. By [TZVI JASPER](#) MARCH 13, 2026 10:00**

**MEMBERS OF Hatzalah of Michigan, a Jewish volunteer emergency medical service, survey the area near Temple Israel following reports of an active shooter on March 12, 2026 in West Bloomfield, Michigan. (photo credit: Emily Elconin/Getty Images)**

The man suspected of [attacking the Temple Israel Synagogue](#) in West Bloomfield, Michigan, on Thursday was

identified as a Lebanese immigrant whose family had recently been killed in an IDF airstrike in Lebanon, local and national media reported on Friday.

Dearborn Heights Mayor Mo Baydoun said in a statement that the suspected shooter, Ayman Ghazali, had lost several family members, including a sibling, a niece, and a nephew, "in an Israeli attack on their home in Lebanon" earlier in the month.

The IDF has not commented on the situation.

Ghazali, a 41-year-old restaurant worker from [Lebanon](#), became a naturalized US citizen in 2016, after entering the country on an immigrant Visa. He was named by the US Department of Homeland Security as the shooter shortly after the event occurred.



*Law enforcement remain on site at the Temple Israel synagogue in West Bloomfield, Michigan, a Detroit suburb, on March 12, 2026, after an assailant drove a vehicle into the building. (credit: JEFF KOWALSKY/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES/JTA)*

### **Temple Israel attack leads to no casualties other than shooter**

On Thursday, Ghazali allegedly rammed his truck through the front doors of the synagogue before firing on [security guards](#), injuring one. Security forces shot back, killing him.

The [attack](#) took place at Temple Israel, which serves about 12,000 members and is widely described as the largest Reform synagogue in the United States. The building, which also houses a childcare center, went into lockdown during the incident, and authorities said no children or staff were seriously injured.

According to CBS News, preschool was actively in session at the

time of the incident. <https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/article-889854>

## **Political standoff causing DHS shutdown delays security grants for synagogues**

The grant program has become a cornerstone of security planning for Jewish institutions across the United States, especially in the wake of sometimes deadly attacks. ByASAF ELIA-SHALEV/JTAMARCH 13, 2026 04:41



*Security cameras hang across the street from the Park East Synagogue, NY, 3, 2017, Illustrative.(photo credit: DREW ANGERER/GETTY IMAGES)*

**A shutdown at the Department of Homeland Security since February 14 is halting the review of millions of dollars in security funding for nonprofits, leaving Jewish institutions and other vulnerable groups in limbo at a moment of heightened concern about antisemitic threats.**

**The most recent threat came Thursday when an armed assailant rammed his vehicle into a large synagogue in suburban**

**Detroit, where trained security forces shot at him and he was killed before he could injure anyone.**

The closure stems from a political standoff over immigration enforcement: Senate Democrats are refusing to fund DHS unless the bill includes new oversight and limits on ICE operations, while Republicans and the Trump administration insist on passing funding without those changes. The dispute intensified after the killings of US citizens during recent immigration operations.

Applications for the federal Nonprofit Security Grant Program, which helps synagogues, schools and community centers pay for security guards, cameras, reinforced doors and other protections were due February 1

But because the program is administered through the Federal Emergency Management Agency, a component of DHS, the ongoing shutdown has frozen the process before applications could be reviewed. An effort to end the shutdown failed in the [Senate](#) on Thursday.

*The US Capitol building is illuminated the night the Senate passed a short-term government funding bill, more than a month into the longest US government shutdown, on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC, US, November 10, 2025. (credit: REUTERS/ELIZABETH FRANTZ)*



That means organizations that spent months preparing proposals are now waiting indefinitely to learn whether they will receive funding, at a time of rising anxiety and threats.

The grant program has become a cornerstone of security planning for Jewish institutions across the United States, especially in the wake of sometimes deadly attacks. Demand for the grants has surged in recent years as [antisemitic](#) incidents have climbed and security costs have soared.

### **ADL: Antisemitic incidents in US reach historic high**

According to data from the [Anti-Defamation League](#), antisemitic incidents in the United States have reached historic highs in recent years, with Jewish institutions frequently targeted with threats, vandalism and harassment. Community leaders say the uncertainty surrounding the grants is arriving at precisely the wrong moment.

The NSGP is designed to distribute hundreds of millions of dollars annually to nonprofits considered at high risk of attack. Organizations submit detailed applications outlining their vulnerabilities and the security improvements they hope to fund, which FEMA then reviews and awards through state agencies.

But during a federal shutdown, most DHS personnel responsible for reviewing those applications are furloughed. As a result, the process has effectively stalled.

For many nonprofits, the delay creates practical and financial uncertainty. Security upgrades such as surveillance systems, bollards, access-control systems and trained guards often depend on the grants, and institutions typically plan their budgets around the expectation of federal support.

Jewish communal security groups say the program has been one of the most successful federal efforts to help protect religious institutions. Michael Masters, CEO of the Secure Community Network, a Jewish security nonprofit, said Jewish organizations rely on federal funding to cover essential security needs, saying that it was “a challenge” that DHS was currently not processing security grant applications.

“There’s no other faith-based community in the United States that needs to spend \$760 million a year, at a minimum, on security that we do,” Masters said. “That’s a reality of the threat environment that we have to adapt to, that we have adapted to.” <https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/article-889844>

## **Explosion outside Rotterdam synagogue sparks fire, damages building; 4 arrested**

***No injuries reported; police say suspects may have planned attack on second Jewish house of worship; synagogue chair decries lack of action over rising antisemitism***

*By AFP and ToI Staff 13 March 2026, 4:32 pm*



*A blaze caused by an explosion outside a Rotterdam synagogue on March 13, 2026 (Screen grab via X used in accordance with Clause 27a of the Copyright Law)*

**Dutch police said Friday they had arrested four young men on suspicion of setting off an explosion outside a synagogue in Rotterdam that caused a brief blaze and damage to the building.**

**After the blast, police monitored other synagogues as a precaution and stopped a vehicle near another building driven by someone matching the description of one of the suspects.**

**“It is not yet clear whether the suspects planned to detonate an explosive or set fire to another synagogue as well,” police said in a statement.**

Two men were aged 19, one 18, and the fourth was 17 years old, said police, without specifying any potential motive.

Authorities said they were launching a “large-scale investigation into this serious incident” and appealed for witnesses to come forward.

An unverified video showing an explosion near a building resembling the targeted synagogue circulated on social media on Friday, which police said they were examining as part of their probe.

Justice Minister David van Weel said the attack was “terrible news.”

“We will not tolerate antisemitism, intimidation, and violence. Local authorities are ensuring the safety of synagogues,” he wrote on X.

The minister voiced solidarity with the Dutch Jewish community, adding: “They must feel safe in the

Netherlands.”

Rotterdam city mayor Carola Schouten said the attack had caused “a great deal of anxiety among our Jewish fellow citizens.”

There was no place for antisemitism, intimidation, violence, or hatred toward religious communities in her city, added Schouten.

The synagogue’s chairman, Chris den Hoedt, told public broadcaster NOS that the attack was “shocking” but came amid warnings of a lack of action over rising antisemitism.

“This is material damage,” he said, showing the scorched doors of the building.

“But the emotional damage our community feels is bigger and longer-lasting. We can repair this (the door), but not the rest,” he added.

“It is the prelude to what we have been seeing for two years: rising antisemitism. And the fact that little is being done about it,” he said.

On Monday, an [explosion](#) shook a synagogue in the Belgian city of Liege before dawn, causing some damage but no injuries.



*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)*

On Thursday, an unidentified assailant rammed his car into a synagogue that had a preschool on the premises, on the outskirts of Detroit, Michigan, sparking a blaze. Security guards opened fire on the attacker, who was killed in the assault.

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

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/explosion-outside-rotterdam-synagogue-sparks-fire-damages-building-4->

[arrested/](#)

## Cornell student assembly votes to cut ties with Israel’s Technion

*Undergraduate body also condemns Ivy League for hosting center-left lawmaker Tzipi Livni, part of the broader assault against the Jewish state on US campuses*

By [Luke Tress](#)

Today, 2:14 am



*People walk on the campus of Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, February 2, 2024. (AP/Seth Wenig)*

**Cornell University’s Student Assembly on Thursday voted to cut ties with Israel’s Technion University and condemned the university for hosting center-left Israeli politician Tzipi Livni.**

**The resolutions highlighted how campus anti-Israel activism brings together university politics, unproven international legal allegations and representative groups dedicated to other causes to advance opposition to Israel.**

**The Student Assembly represents Cornell’s undergraduate student body to the university administration and is meant to improve student life on campus through issues like transportation. Resolutions approved by the assembly are brought to the university president, who can accept or reject the measures.**

The resolution targeting the Technion called on Cornell to “terminate its institutional partnership” with the Israeli university, one of Israel’s leading institutions of higher education.

The [measure](#) cited “serious ethical concerns” and “complicity in genocide,” alleging that Technion’s involvement with the Israeli military violated international law.

Cornell operates a campus in New York City in partnership with the Technion.



The assembly adopted the resolution on Thursday with 17 votes in favor and five opposed.

The second resolution condemned Cornell's "use of programming to platform individuals implicated in war crimes," due to a Cornell program called Pathways to Peace that [hosted](#) Israeli lawmaker Tzipi Livni.

*Tzipi Livni arrives for a court hearing in the trial against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, at the District Court in Jerusalem on March 20, 2024. (Yonatan Sindel/Flash90)*

Livni is a former Knesset member and minister, a [critic](#) of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and a supporter of a two-state solution, at one point heading peace talks with the Palestinians.

In 2009, a UK court issued a warrant for Livni over alleged war crimes committed by the IDF during the previous year's conflict in Gaza, but Livni did not go through with a planned trip to the UK. A summons that UK police issued to Livni in 2016 was also [dropped](#). Those police moves came after pressure from UK anti-Israel activists.

The Cornell resolution said Livni's participation in campus events created "a hostile and coercive academic environment for students" and exposed students to "state propaganda."

The resolution [demanded](#) the university "reaffirm its commitment to academic integrity and ethical leadership" by not inviting individuals "implicated in war crimes or mass human rights abuses."

The resolution passed with 19 votes in favor, two against, and three abstentions.

Campus activist groups had [encouraged supporters](#) to "pack the student assembly" to voice support for the resolutions.

Cornell did not respond to a request for comment.

International crimes like genocide have strict legal definitions that have not been proven against Israel in international courts, but the accusations themselves are often deployed against Israelis.

Israel and its supporters have long accused biased activists of [weaponizing the international legal system](#) against Israel.

The Cornell assembly's resolutions are part of a broader, ongoing assault by activist US university students against any connections to Israel. Jewish students and federal authorities have said the activism sometimes veers into discrimination against Jews.

Student unions and governing bodies have played a role in stigmatizing Israel, as do [unions representing other industries](#) that are nominally dedicated to improving worker conditions.

Late last year, Cornell's graduate student union [adopted a boycott](#) resolution targeting Israel that supported Palestinian resistance "by any means necessary," a slogan seen as endorsing violence. The university distanced itself from the union and condemned antisemitism.

The graduate student union at Columbia University this week [approved a labor strike](#) to further the demands of anti-Israel activists on the campus, as well as other demands.

The Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE), a free speech group, [placed Cornell](#) at 227 out of 257 US universities in its free speech rankings. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/cornell-student-assembly-votes-to-cut-ties-with-israels-technion/>

[National Security](#) / March 13, 2026

## Iranian Sleeper Cells Here at Home

*Roughly two million illegals evaded Border Patrol during Joe Biden's term. How many were Iranians or proxies waiting for the right opportunity to attack?*



[Sophie Starkova](#) [More by this Author](#)

**Are the supposed sleeper cells of Iran a threat or propaganda? The short answer is, yes — it's both.**

**Wouldn't any smart country fighting for its survival seek to make itself appear more dangerous than it actually is? If we've learned anything over the past decade, it's that the**

## Iranian regime is an extremely wily and devious animal that will do anything to protect itself.

The sleeper cells, spies, or terrorists located in Western countries that remain inactive until ordered to act are a real thing. Reports indicate that shortwave radio broadcasts in Farsi have been intercepted by the U.S., and they could possibly be triggers for sleeper agents. The Atlantic posted a recording of it [here](#). It was revealed that these encrypted messages were communicated across several countries not long after Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was killed on February 28.

A retired Special Forces lieutenant colonel, Mike Nelson, who has extensive experience at U.S. Central Command, told [NewsNation](#) on Tuesday that “Iran has demonstrated a willingness, if not a good capability, to conduct attacks in the U.S. and the West” via use of its agents abroad. He recalled the 80 Iranian dissidents who were assassinated in Europe in the 1980s. Nelson added that although Iran may activate these agents, the cells are “largely proven to be incompetent.”

The threat is valid, but on a smaller, less sophisticated scale than the regime wants us to believe. Rayan Amiri, an Iranian refugee and leader of the Conservative Party of Iran, [said](#), “The sleeper cells linked to the Islamist regime in Iran do exist, but their real scope is far smaller than the terrorist regime claims. Much of the talk about a global network is propaganda and psychological warfare, designed to exaggerate its reach and intimidate and fool the public or opponents.”

Amiri continued, “This shows the weakness of the terrorist totalitarian theocracy ruling Iran. The regime has no real options left except to rely on desperate acts by its proxy terror networks, such as suicide bombings and other Jihadi desperate attacks, like blind gunshots at embassies. The regime is a paper tiger and only is big in threats, not in actual capability. What it calls strength is really a sign of fragility, and its terror operations are an attempt to hide its collapsing and falling situation.”

Despite the cells being fragmented and closely watched by both U.S. intelligence agencies and Israel’s Mossad, their desperate attacks can still cause damage, which is why it is vital to stay vigilant.

Both President Donald Trump and FBI Director Kash Patel have reassured Americans that, as Trump put it, they are “on top of it.” The FBI director [posted on X](#) on Monday, “FBI is working 24/7 to stay ahead of the threat and implement a sweeping Cyber strategy pursuant to President Trump’s ‘Cyber Strategy for America.’ The goal is clear: impose real cost on those who target Americans in cyberspace by dismantling their networks, pursuing the hackers and spies behind them, and degrading their capacity to operate.”

But we can’t ignore what happened under “sleepy” Joe Biden for four years — millions of people poured into our country almost entirely unvetted. That would have made it extremely easy for sleeper cells hanging out in South American countries to sneak in. For example, Hezbollah has had sleeper cells in the Western Hemisphere for some time, and they would often come through Venezuela. The CIA and FBI certainly have their work cut out for them.

Republican Senator Ted Cruz [echoed this warning](#): “The danger has never been higher than right now, particularly after four years of open borders under Joe Biden. We know that radical Islamic terrorists entered this country, and there’s a vulnerability all across this country.”

It is unclear how many of the two million known “gotaways” — illegals who evaded an encounter with Border Patrol — under Biden were Iranians. Many of them could have been on the terrorism watch list. A senior U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) source relayed that of the approximately [1,500 Iranian illegal aliens](#) who entered under Biden and were arrested, 50% of them were released back into the country.

“Because of the open borders, we are at a serious catch-up phase,” former FBI Assistant Director Chris Swecker [warned](#). “We don’t know where those thousand Iranians are, and who knows how many others got across the border. We missed an opportunity when they caught and released those thousand. We missed the opportunity to gather intel by interviewing them and thoroughly vetting them. We just simply let them go, which is gross negligence on the part of the Biden administration.”

So, yes, the sleeper cells are a potential danger — we have already seen two attacks in recent weeks — and they are a psychological propaganda tool being used by the Iranian regime. Still, their reach and scope are limited. As Trump told reporters in reference to Iran on Wednesday, “They are pretty much at the end of the line.” We must remain on guard. A cornered animal will often turn and bite. <https://patriotpost.us/articles/125851>



## 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