



Spotlight on Iran and the Shiite Axis

March 4-11, 2026

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Highlights¹

- ▶ The IDF continued its strikes in Iran and Lebanon against operatives and infrastructure of the IRGC Qods Force that supported the financing and military buildup of Hezbollah and other terrorist organizations operating against Israel. Iran claimed that four Qods Force operatives killed in Beirut were diplomats.
- ▶ Due to IDF threats, it was reported that dozens of IRGC operatives had left Lebanon. However, according to Iran's ambassador in Beirut, the diplomatic mission is operating normally, and only the families of diplomats and "a group of Iranians residing in Lebanon" left the city.
- ▶ The Houthis have not yet intervened in the confrontation involving Iran, Israel, and the United States, but the movement's leader said they are ready to act depending on developments in the region.
- ▶ Pro-Iranian militias in Iraq claimed responsibility for about one hundred attacks using missiles, rockets, and drones against American bases and facilities in Iraq, Jordan, and Gulf countries. A spokesman for one militia claimed that there is full coordination among all components of the Axis of Resistance in the Middle East regarding the operation of forces against Israel and the United States.
- ▶ It was reported that some militias fear continued attacks could lead to a broad American response against them.
- ▶ The Iranian foreign minister spoke with senior officials in the Iraqi government and in the Kurdish region in northern Iraq following reports about the possible use of Kurdish separatist groups as part of the military campaign against Iran.

The Military Campaign in Iran and Lebanon

Damage to the Qods Force

- ▶ During the past week, IDF forces continued their strikes in Iran (alongside the United States) and in Lebanon. As part of these activities, the IDF also attacked targets linked to the support provided

¹ The weekly study includes the activities of Iran, the Shiite militias in Iraq, and the Houthis in Yemen.

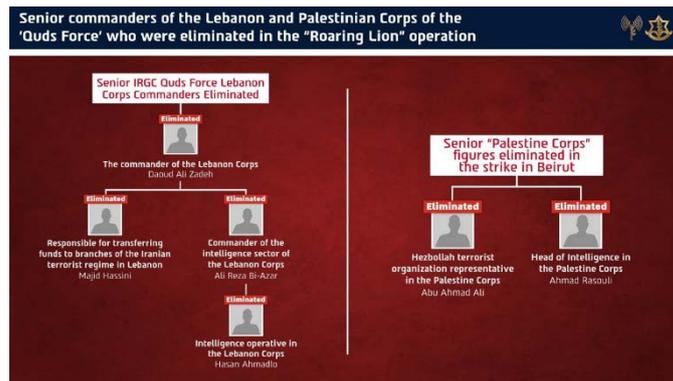
by the IRGC Qods Force to Hezbollah and other terrorist organizations operating against Israel. The following are key developments:

- ◆ More than 16 Qods Force aircraft were destroyed in a strike during the night of March 6–7 at Mehrabad Airport in Tehran. The aircraft were used by the Qods Force transport network to transfer weapons and cash to Hezbollah and to Iran’s proxies in the region (IDF Spokesperson and Israeli media, March 7 and 9, 2026).



Aircraft destroyed at Mehrabad airport (Al-Marsad al-Askari X account, March 7, 2026)

- ◆ The IDF reported that a targeted strike at the Ramada Hotel in Beirut eliminated five commanders from the Lebanon Corps and the Palestine Corps of the Qods Force: Majid Hosseini – responsible for transferring funds to regime proxies in Lebanon for financing Hezbollah, Hamas, and other terrorist organizations operating from Lebanon; he also oversaw funding and production of weapons to advance Hezbollah’s military activity; Alireza Bi-Azar – intelligence branch commander of the Lebanon Corps and considered a significant source of knowledge in intelligence research; he also worked to collect intelligence for Hezbollah; Ahmad Rasouli – intelligence chief in the Palestine Corps of the Qods Force, responsible for collecting intelligence for Palestinian terrorist organizations in Lebanon and the Gaza Strip; Hossein Ahmadlou – intelligence operative involved in collecting intelligence on Israel for terrorist purposes; Abu Muhammad Ali – Hezbollah representative in the Palestine Corps who maintained the organization’s ongoing coordination with the corps (IDF Spokesperson, March 8, 2026). In a letter to the UN Secretary-General, Iran’s ambassador to the UN claimed that four Iranian diplomats belonging to the embassy in Lebanon were killed in the Israeli strike: Majid Hassani Kondsar, Alireza Bi-Azar, Hossein Ahmadlou, and Ahmad Rasouli (Fars News Agency, March 10, 2026).



Senior Qods Force operatives who have been eliminated since the beginning of the campaign (IDF Spokesperson, March 8, 2026)

- ◆ In this context, Israeli security sources reported that dozens of IRGC operatives left Beirut out of fear they would become targets of Israeli strikes. The Iranian officers, mostly belonging to the Qods Force, served as military advisers to Hezbollah and had significant influence over its military activity. The operatives reportedly left Lebanon after the public warning issued by the IDF on March 3, 2026, calling on Iranian regime representatives still present in Lebanon to leave the country. Some of those who departed had operated from the Iranian embassy in Beirut, while a small group of IRGC officers remained to maintain the Qods Force presence (Mako, Israeli news outlet, March 6, 2026). Another report stated that a plane carrying 117 passengers evacuated Iranians from Lebanon via Russia. According to the report, the plane also carried five bodies, including those of an Iranian citizen and his wife who were killed in an Israeli Air Force strike on a hotel in the town of Hazmieh, near Beirut (Al-Hadath, March 8, 2026). It was also reported that a Russian aircraft evacuated dozens of Iranian diplomats from Lebanon to Turkey (Al-Jadeed, March 8, 2026).
- ◆ However, Iran’s new ambassador to Lebanon, Raouf Sheibani, stated that the Iranian embassy in Beirut continues to operate normally, including consular services for Iranian citizens in Lebanon. He added that families of embassy personnel, along with teachers and students from an Iranian school and a group of Iranians residing in Lebanon, had temporarily left Beirut due to “security conditions resulting from the brutal attacks of the Zionist regime” to ensure their safety (Iranian Embassy in Beirut X account, March 11, 2026).

The Houthis

► Although the Houthis have not yet intervened in the confrontation alongside Iran, the movement’s leader Abd al-Malik al-Houthi warned that “our fingers are on the trigger” regarding escalation and action if developments require it, in order to prevent the “Greater Israel” plan through which Israel allegedly seeks to impose obedience on the Islamic nation and turn its members into “slaves.” In a

speech marking the anniversary of the Battle of Badr, he stressed that the Houthi movement would remain steadfast on the path of jihad and in its “unwavering position” against “global Zionism and its arms” – the United States and Israel. He also stated that the Houthis stand alongside Iran and the Iranian people and praised the “heroic acts and destructive blows” delivered by Iran, Hezbollah, and the “Iraqi resistance” against Israel and American bases in the region. Finally, al-Houthi urged countries hosting American bases to expel them from the “lands of Islam” (Houthi military media Telegram channel, March 6, 2026).

► The Houthi foreign ministry stated that the United States and Israel are “the most dangerous threat to security and peace in the modern era” and called on the international community to take a firm and responsible stance to stop their aggressive actions, which are pushing the region and the world toward tension and instability. According to the statement, the “aggression” is doomed to fail, given the difficult lessons Iran is teaching its attackers, and will only lead them to sink into a swamp from which it will not be easy to escape. The ministry added that attacks against American bases in the region do not constitute attacks against the countries hosting them, and that those countries should reconsider the presence of such bases, which serve American interests rather than the security of the host states (Houthi Foreign Ministry Telegram channel, March 7, 2026).

► The Houthis have not yet intervened in the campaign alongside Iran, but the movement's leader, Abd al-Malik al-Houthi, warned that “our fingers are on the trigger” regarding military escalation and action if developments warrant it, and to prevent the “Greater Israel” plan through which Israel is trying to “impose” obedience on the Islamic nation and turn its members into “slaves.” In a speech marking the day of the Battle of Badr the Great, He stressed that the Houthi movement would remain steadfast on the path of jihad and its “unwavering” stance against “global Zionism and its arms” – America and Israel. He also said that the Houthis stand by Iran and the Iranian people and praised the “heroic deeds and destructive blows” inflicted on Israel and the American bases in the region. Finally, al-Houthi pleaded with the countries where American bases are located to expel them from the “lands of Islam” (Telegram channel of the Houthis' combat propaganda, March 6, 2026).

► The Houthis' foreign ministry said that America and Israel are “the most dangerous threat to security and peace in the modern era” and called on the international community to take a firm and responsible stance to stop their aggressive actions that are pushing the region and the world towards tension and instability. The statement also said that the “aggression” was intended to fail considering the harsh lessons that Iran is teaching the attackers, and that it would only lead to the attackers sinking into a quagmire from which it would not be easy for them to escape. According to

the ministry, the attack against the American bases in the region does not constitute an attack against the countries hosting them, and that these countries should reconsider the presence of these bases, since they are not intended to protect the countries, but only American interests (Telegram channel of the Houthi Foreign Ministry, March 7, 2026).

Pro-Iranian militias in Iraq

► During the past week (March 4–10, 2026), the Islamic Resistance in Iraq claimed responsibility for 197 attacks using missiles, rockets, and drones against “enemy headquarters” in Iraq and elsewhere in the region. Since the beginning of the campaign against Iran on February 28, 2026, the militias of the Islamic Resistance in Iraq have claimed responsibility for 291 attacks, primarily targeting American facilities in Baghdad, the Kurdish region in northern Iraq, and neighboring countries. It was claimed that 13 American soldiers were killed in the attacks, although US Central Command reported only seven fatalities (Islamic Resistance in Iraq Telegram channel, March 4–11, 2026). Saraya Awliya al-Dam, a front militia linked to Asa’ib Ahl al-Haq that also declares its affiliation with the Islamic Resistance in Iraq, claimed responsibility for at least 12 attacks against American targets in Iraq and outside it (Saraya Awliya al-Dam Telegram channel, March 4–11, 2026). Kata’ib Sarkhat al-Quds, a front militia of Harakat al-Nujaba, announced that it had attacked American targets using drones in northern Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Jordan (Kata’ib Sarkhat al-Quds Telegram channel, March 5–10, 2026). Another militia called Rijal al-Bas al-Shadid claimed responsibility for 31 attacks against “Zionist and American enemy targets” in Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait (Rijal al-Bas al-Shadid Telegram channel, March 5–10, 2026).



**Launch of a Jamal-1 rocket toward “enemy headquarters”
(Islamic Resistance in Iraq Telegram channel, March 8, 2026)**

► During the past week, attacks for which no official organization claimed responsibility continued against bases and assets of the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) – the umbrella organization of the pro-Iranian militias in Iraq – in several areas across the country. More than ten people were

reportedly killed and dozens wounded among militia members (Baghdad Today and Shafaq News, March 4–11, 2026). Kata'ib Hezbollah reported that at least four operatives were killed in the attacks, including Abu Hassan al-Farjii, one of the militia's leading operations commanders (Kaf Telegram channel, March 4–11, 2026).

► The Coordination Framework of the Resistance in Iraq stated that recent years have shown the existence of a regional equation in which either all enjoy security or none do. Consequently, disrupting security in Beirut's Dahiyeh would affect US interests in the Middle East. According to the statement, any attack on this civilian area would be met with threats to the security of the embassies of the attacking countries in the region and would also affect the security of American oil companies operating in the Arabian Peninsula (Coordination Framework Telegram channel, March 6, 2026). In another statement, the Coordination Framework warned leaders of Kurdish parties in northern Iraq about the consequences of their involvement in supporting Kurdish "criminal gangs" backed by Israel that allegedly seek to infiltrate Iran. According to the statement, if they do not cease their involvement, they will face severe damage to their assets and interests (Coordination Framework Telegram channel, March 8, 2026).

► However, a "source within the Coordination Framework" revealed that the recent attacks against American targets – particularly the attack against the US Embassy in Baghdad – have generated disagreements among the militias. According to the source, some elements oppose continuing the attacks for fear they could lead to broad American actions that might destroy military infrastructure and facilities, while others seek escalation because they see themselves as part of a wider regional campaign. He noted that at least two militias refuse to reach agreements on halting the attacks (Al-Akhbar, March 11, 2026).

► A spokesman for Harakat al-Nujaba stated that direct coordination exists among all factions of the Axis of Resistance in Iraq, "Palestine," Lebanon, and Yemen regarding the operation of resistance forces against the American and Israeli "enemies." According to him, the coordination takes place at several levels and through joint decision-making rooms to organize military responses to the "aggression" in the region and advance the strategic goal of weakening colonial influence and thwarting plans to control the peoples of the region (Qods News Agency, March 10, 2026).

► Abu Ali al-Askari, spokesman for Kata'ib Hezbollah, stated that the assassination of Iran's leader Ali Khamenei, for which he claimed the United States was responsible, has exposed American forces in the region to attacks that will now become a top priority mission for the Iraqi resistance until their expulsion from the country. He also claimed that the conduct of US President Donald Trump lacks

the patience required for a war of attrition, and therefore, he will eventually change his plans and look for alternatives to secure American interests. The militia also expressed support for Hezbollah in its “legendary steadfastness against Zionist-American aggression” (Kata’ib Hezbollah Telegram channel, March 7, 2026).

► Akram al-Kaabi, secretary-general of Harakat al-Nujaba, warned “informants” who pass information about fighters of the Islamic Resistance in Iraq to the enemy, specifically mentioning Cypriot and Jordanian intelligence. According to al-Kaabi, those collaborating with the United States serve as fuel for the realization of its ambitions, but afterwards the United States will abandon them just as it abandoned the Kurds in Syria and its allies in Afghanistan (Harakat al-Nujaba Telegram channel, March 6 and 8, 2026).

The militias in Syria

► The militia “Islamic Resistance Front in Syria – Possessors of Might” published a video allegedly documenting a rocket attack against the al-Shaddadi base in northeastern Syria on March 2, 2026. At the end of the video, the following sentence appeared in Hebrew: “And what is yet to come will be even worse” (Islamic Resistance Front in Syria Telegram channel, March 5, 2026).

► In another statement, the militia claimed that many actors recently issued statements taking responsibility for activities against Israeli forces in southern Syria. According to the militia, most of those actors do not actually exist, and their statements likely serve to spread disinformation and confusion as part of psychological warfare in the current confrontation. According to the militia, in contrast to those actors, it is a recognized organization and the only one currently operating against the Israeli military presence in southern Syria (Islamic Resistance Front in Syria Telegram channel, March 6, 2026). It should be noted that the IDF Spokesperson has not reported attacks against Israeli forces in southern Syria.

Iran and the Iraqi Arena

► Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi held a telephone conversation with Iraq’s National Security Adviser Qassem al-Araji, during which they discussed developments related to the confrontation involving Iran, the United States, and Israel. Araghchi thanked al-Araji for his condolences following the deaths of Iran’s leader, senior officials, and Iranian civilians, and updated him regarding the “crimes committed by the United States and the Zionist regime” against the Iranian people. The two also discussed strengthening cooperation to maintain security along the shared border (Khabar Online, March 4, 2026). Araghchi also spoke with Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia’ al-Sudani, discussing regional developments in light of the war. Al-Sudani

expressed condolences to the Iranian government and people over the death of Iran’s Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, and condemned the “recent military aggression against the Islamic Republic of Iran.” He emphasized that the Iraqi government will not allow any threat originating from Iraqi territory against Iran. Araghchi thanked the Iraqi government for its positions and stressed that the Iranian people are determined to defend their honor, national sovereignty, and territorial integrity. He also emphasized the importance of vigilance by all regional and Muslim countries to thwart the “malicious plot of the Zionist regime and the United States” aimed at destabilizing the region and creating divisions among Muslim states (Iranian Foreign Ministry Telegram channel, March 4, 2026).

► Amid the ongoing war, Araghchi also spoke with Nechirvan Barzani, president of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, and discussed recent developments. Araghchi said the “military aggression” against Iran had undermined the security of the entire region and would have far-reaching global consequences, for which the attackers bear full responsibility. The two discussed strengthening cooperation between Iran and the Kurdistan Region based on the security cooperation memorandum between Iran and Iraq, aimed at protecting border security and preventing exploitation by third parties seeking to destabilize the region (snn.ir, March 4, 2026). Araghchi also spoke with Bafel Talabani, chairman of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK). He noted that several terrorist actions had recently occurred along the shared border between Iran and the Kurdish region and stressed the need to strengthen cooperation to maintain border security in accordance with bilateral security understandings (Iranian Foreign Ministry Telegram channel, March 5, 2026).

► The chairman of the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF), Faleh al-Fayyad, congratulated Iran on the selection of Mojtaba Khamenei as the new leader. He praised the cohesion and resilience demonstrated by Iran’s state institutions and their ability to manage the leadership transition in a firm and wise manner, reflecting Iran’s stability and the strength of its institutions (PMF Telegram channel, March 9, 2026).

The Houthis in Yemen

► The Houthi leadership in Yemen issued congratulatory statements following the selection of Mojtaba Khamenei as the new leader of Iran after the assassination of his father, Ali Khamenei, at the beginning of the campaign launched by Israel and the United States against the Islamic Republic:

- ◆ Houthi movement leader Abd al-Malik al-Houthi stated that Mojtaba Khamenei’s selection strengthens the foundations of the Islamic revolution and system and delivers a severe blow to the “tyrants of our time” – the United States and Israel. He reiterated the Houthis’ support for Iran in its war against its enemies (Saba News Agency, March 9, 2026).

- ◆ Mahdi al-Mashat, chairman of the Houthi Supreme Political Council (SPC), wished the Iranian people and their new leader success, particularly during this critical period in which Iran faces “brutal American-Israeli aggression.” He stated that the selection of Khamenei’s son demonstrates Iran’s strength and institutional nature and will contribute to strengthening the country’s political, military, and security institutions in confronting its enemies (Mahdi al-Mashat’s Telegram channel, March 9, 2026).
- ◆ The Supreme Political Council of the Houthis stated that the selection reflects the strength of Iran’s state institutions and their ability to continue functioning responsibly while maintaining the principled and ideological path of the Islamic revolution. The council emphasized the strong fraternal relations between Iran and Yemen and expressed hope that Iran, under its new leader, will continue its steadfast path and overcome all attempts of “aggression and hegemony” on the road to victory (Houthi Military Media Telegram channel, March 9, 2026).