



Spotlight on Iran and the Shiite Axis

March 25-30, 2026

Editor: Dr. Raz Zimmt



Highlights¹

- ▶ The Majles speaker praised the participation of components of the “Axis of Resistance,” led by Hezbollah, in the campaign between Iran, the United States, and Israel.
- ▶ The Houthis joined the campaign alongside Iran, claiming responsibility for two attacks against targets in southern Israel using missiles and drones, for the first time since halting their activity following the ceasefire in the Gaza Strip in October 2025. A ballistic missile, a cruise missile, and a drone were reportedly launched. The IDF Spokesperson announced the interception of two drones.
- ▶ Pro-Iranian militias in Iraq continued attacks using missiles, rockets, and drones against American bases and facilities in Iraq, the Gulf states, and Jordan, at the same time with continued attacks attributed to the United States against Popular Mobilization bases in Iraq.
- ▶ The Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman made clear that Iran’s ambassador to Lebanon would remain in Beirut and continue his duties, despite the Lebanese Foreign Ministry's deadline for his departure.
- ▶ The Iranian foreign minister spoke with Lebanese Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri and discussed developments in the war in Iran and Lebanon.
- ▶ Amid activity by Iraqi militias alongside Iran, the Iranian president spoke with his Iraqi counterpart and condemned US and Israeli attacks on Iraqi targets.

Iran and the “Resistance Front” amid the Military Campaign

Iran

- ▶ In a message to the Iranian people marking one month of war with Israel and the United States, Majles Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf praised the joining of the “Resistance Front” to the campaign. He noted that Hezbollah in Lebanon, which had long faced threats of disarmament, now constitutes an important and influential component of the “resistance”; that the “resistance” in Iraq is fighting courageously and has surprised the enemy; and that the Houthis in Yemen, upon entering

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

the campaign, have provided new momentum to the “Resistance Front” and are prepared to create significant surprises (Tabnak, March 29, 2026).

The Houthis

► On March 28, 2026, the Houthi military spokesman, Yahya Saria, announced that they had launched a barrage of ballistic missiles toward “sensitive targets” in southern Israel, “in coordination” with Iran and Hezbollah. This was the first Houthi claim of responsibility for an attack against Israel since October 2025, when they halted operations following the Gaza ceasefire. This is also their first attack since the outbreak of the military campaign between Iran, Israel, and the United States. By March 30, 2026 (12:00), Saria issued an additional claim of responsibility for an attack using cruise missiles and drones against “vital and military sites of the Zionist enemy” in southern Israel (Yahya Saria’s Telegram channel, March 28–30, 2026). It was reported that the launches toward Israel included a ballistic missile, a cruise missile, and a drone from Yemen, and that they were intercepted by the IDF (Israeli media, March 28, 2026). The IDF Spokesperson also reported that two additional drones launched from Yemen were intercepted, although the Houthis had not yet claimed responsibility for them (IDF Spokesperson, March 30, 2026).



**Illustration of a joint launch by Iran, the Houthis, Hezbollah, and the militias in Iraq
(Sabereen News, March 28, 2026)**

► A few Hours before the first attack, Saria issued a statement condemning the “ongoing aggression” by the United States and Israel against Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, “Palestine,” and the Gaza Strip, which he claimed was intended to implement the “Zionist plan to establish Greater Israel under the guise of reshaping the Middle East.” He called for an immediate halt to the “aggression,” the lifting of the blockade on Yemen, and full implementation of the Gaza ceasefire agreement. He further threatened direct military responses if any other “alliance” joined the United States and Israel in the conflict, if the Red Sea were used for hostile actions by the United States and Israel, or if escalation against Iran

and the “resistance” continued. He asserted that Houthi military operations target only Israel and the United States, not any “Muslim people” (Yahya Saria’s Telegram channel, March 27, 2026).

► The Houthi Foreign Ministry stated that the military intervention was part of the “legitimate right” to confront the “brutal aggression” of the United States and Israel against Iran and its allies, emphasizing moral and religious responsibility toward the Islamic nation and an aspiration to stop the “aggression” that harms security and stability in the region and the world, as well as the global economy and international trade routes. The ministry called on all Islamic countries to confront the “aggression” and thwart the “Zionist plan” and confirmed that the Houthis’ actions are directed only against Israel and the United States and not against other countries, unless they take part in this “aggression” (Telegram channel of the Houthi Foreign Ministry, March 28, 2026).

► Hezam al-Assad, a member of the Houthi political bureau, posted a message in Hebrew alongside footage of a fire at the Neot Hovav site in southern Israel following the interception of an Iranian missile. The message read: “Netanyahu, Katz, Zamir, Smotrich, Ben Gvir... The black clouds and fire that citizens in the Middle East and southern Europe see are only the beginning of the curse of the eighth decade. The blood of the children of Gaza and the schoolgirls of Iran that rose to the sky is now descending in punishment and disgrace upon the criminals” (Hezam al-Asad’s X account, March 29, 2026).

The pro-Iranian militias in Iraq

► During the reporting period, the Islamic Resistance in Iraq claimed responsibility for at least 85 attacks using missiles, rockets, and drones against “enemy headquarters” in Iraq and the region. The attacks targeted primarily US facilities in Baghdad, the Kurdish region in northern Iraq, and neighboring countries (Telegram channel of the Islamic Resistance in Iraq, March 25–30, 2026). Saraya Awliya al-Dam, a front militia linked to Asa’ib Ahl al-Haq and affiliated with the Islamic Resistance in Iraq, claimed responsibility for 14 attacks against US bases in the region (Saraya Awliya al-Dam Telegram channel, March 25–30, 2026). The militia Kata’ib Sarkhat al-Quds, a front for Harakat al-Nujaba, claimed responsibility for a drone attack against US and “Zionist” targets in Jordan (Kata’ib Sarkhat al-Quds Telegram channel, March 28, 2026). The Jaish al-Ghadab militia, which is also part of the Islamic Resistance in Iraq, claimed responsibility for four attacks by missiles, rockets, and drones against “American-Zionist” targets in Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, and Bahrain (Jaish al-Ghadab Telegram channel, March 25–30, 2026). Another attack, for which no party claimed responsibility, was conducted using drones against the Qasrak base in northeastern Syria. The base has been in the process of being evacuated by American forces since the end of February 2026 and is

expected to be handed over to the Syrian security forces (Al-Arabiya and Shafaq News, March 29, 2026).

► The attacks, attributed to the Americans, continued, although no one claimed responsibility, against bases and assets of the pro-Iranian militias in various areas throughout Iraq. The Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF, the umbrella organization of the militias) reported that at least three of their ranks had been killed (PMF Telegram channel and Iraqi media, March 25-30, 2026).

► A drone reportedly targeted the residence of Kurdistan Region President Nechirvan Barzani. Another drone was intercepted near a Peshmerga base in Duhok, northern Iraq. The attack was widely condemned, including by Iraqi Prime Minister Muhammad Shia al-Sudani and elements of the pro-Iranian militias in Iraq (Reuters and Shafaq News, March 28, 2026). Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi also condemned the assassination attempt. In a letter to the senior Kurdish official, Araghchi wrote that Israel and the United States have a long history of creating conflicts and inciting division among regional and neighboring states, inter alia through “false flag” operations, and stressed the responsibility of all governments and international organizations to prosecute and punish them for their “cruel aggression” against Iran and their “illegal and terrorist” attacks in Iraq (Iranian Foreign Ministry website, March 28, 2026).

► On March 27, 2026, Kata’ib Hezbollah announced a further five-day extension of its suspension of military operations against the US Embassy in Baghdad, following two prior extensions. The statement also claimed that most of the operations “directed against the Iraqis by the Zionist-American enemy” using drones originated in Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait. The militia criticized the “Kurdistan Regional Government” and claimed that it “bears responsibility for all the damages on the various fronts due to its malign policy” while hosting armed Iranian opposition groups, Mossad elements, and American occupation forces. In addition, it threatened the Kurdish leader, Massoud Barzani, that if he wanted to preserve his “entity,” he must stop posing a threat to others. Finally, the militia claimed that all the elements calling for the disarmament of the militias in Iraq were part of the “Zionist-American project” that sought to sacrifice the honor of their people for the sake of the “criminals” Trump and Netanyahu (Kata'ib Hezbollah Telegram channel, March 27, 2026).

► The leaders of the leading pro-Iranian militias issued statements presenting their views regarding the reasons behind the “aggression” by the United States and Israel:

- ◆ Ahmad Mohsen Faraj al-Hamidawi, the secretary-general of Kata’ib Hezbollah, welcomed the Houthis’ entry into the campaign against the “Zionist-American enemy.” In addition, he praised the “resistance in Palestine” and Hezbollah and accused “the criminal Trump and the

butcher Netanyahu” of trying to destabilize Iran and incite the Iranian people against their leadership. Finally, he argued that war is a clash of desires and that the defeat of the enemy’s will is on the horizon (Kata’ib Hezbollah Telegram channel, March 29, 2026).

◆ Akram al-Kaabi, the secretary-general of the Nujaba militia, attacked the “murderous criminals,” who he claimed were concerned only with their personal interests at the expense of the peoples of West Asia and the countries under their control. According to him, if they take over Iran, they will undermine the governments they appoint in the various countries and divide the peoples in them in order to ignite civil wars that will weaken them and then plunder the resources of these countries in the name of democracy and peace (Telegram channel of the Nujaba militia, March 25, 2026).

◆ Abu Alaa al-Wala’i, the secretary-general of Kata’ib Sayyid al-Shuhada, attacked the Gulf states that assist the United States and Israel, claiming that were it not for their support, Israel would not have survived to this day and would have withdrawn from “Palestine,” thereby preventing the current war and destruction. In a separate statement, al-Wala’i argued that the objective of the war against Iran is to overthrow its regime and take control of its oil resources. When the United States and Israel realized this was unattainable, he claimed, the objective shifted to opening the Strait of Hormuz, and in a later stage it would shift again to a safe withdrawal of what remains of their forces in “West Asia,” in order to avoid influencing the US midterm elections. According to al-Wala’i, the victory of the “Axis of Resistance” exposed the “falsehood of the enemies” and proved that the “resistance” does not end with the disappearance of individuals, because it is an idea that derives its existence from Allah (Abu Alaa al-Wala’i’s X account, March 26–27, 2026).

Iran’s Involvement in Lebanon

► Majles Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf issued a statement praising Hezbollah for carrying out “87 operations in one night” against Israeli targets. Qalibaf wrote that before the outbreak of the war, he said in an interview that Hezbollah was more vital than ever, and that today, the rapid operations and the ongoing high-quality attacks, which caused heavy damage to the equipment and forces of the “Zionist enemy,” prove the truth of the promises of the “Martyred Leader” (Ali Khamenei). He added that Hezbollah is the pride of Islam and that many more surprises are about to come (Qalibaf’s X account, March 26, 2026).



Majles Speaker Qalibaf (Tabnak, March 29, 2026)

► A day after the Iranian ambassador to Lebanon, Mohammad Reza Shibani, was supposed to leave the country in accordance with the Lebanese Foreign Ministry’s demand, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei said that the embassy in Lebanon was operating as usual and that Ambassador Shibani would continue his commitment as ambassador and remain there, based on discussions held with the “relevant Lebanese authorities” (Al-Manar, March 30, 2026). Earlier, an “Iranian diplomatic source” reported that the ambassador would continue to remain in Lebanon, in response to the wishes of the speaker of the Lebanese parliament, Nabih Berri, and Hezbollah, who called on the Lebanese authorities to retract their decision to expel him (Agence France-Presse, March 29, 2026). In addition, an “official source” in Lebanon noted that Beirut understood that the Iranian ambassador did not intend to leave at the required time and that he would ignore the order to expel him with the support of Hezbollah and Parliament Speaker Berri. According to the source, the ambassador will become a de facto refugee inside the embassy since the Lebanese authorities cannot storm the diplomatic compound, while he will not be able to leave because he will be subject to measures by the authorities (Nidaa al-Watan, March 29, 2026).

► Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi spoke with the Speaker of the Lebanese Parliament, Nabih Berri, and discussed the war between Iran and the United States and Israel, as well as the war between Israel and Hezbollah. Araghchi praised Berri’s support for Lebanon’s national unity and stressed Iran’s support for Lebanon’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. The Iranian foreign minister also noted the need to strengthen internal cohesion in order to counter “external plots” against the interests of Lebanese society. The speaker of the Lebanese parliament updated Araghchi on the Israeli attacks in Lebanon and claimed that their objective is to harm Lebanon’s vital infrastructure and forcibly displace Lebanese citizens from areas where they lived. During the conversation, the two sides stressed the importance of strengthening and developing relations between the two countries (ILNA, March 27, 2026).



Phone call between Araghchi and Berri (Iranian Foreign Ministry website, March 28, 2026)

Iran in the Palestinian Arena

► Majles Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf accused Israel of committing “war crimes.” Following the publication of three UN reports on Israel’s activity in the Occupied Territories, Qalibaf wrote that reading the reports provides an explanation for why Iran is fighting for humanity and why Israel poses a “grave threat” to human civilization. He stressed that “raising awareness is an essential part of the resistance” and that these “war crimes” can only be described in one way: “more than a person can bear” (Qalibaf’s X account, March 28, 2026).

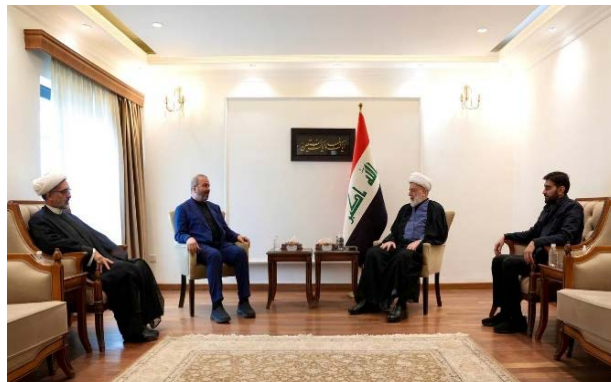
Iran’s Involvement in Iraq

► Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian spoke by phone with Iraqi President Abdul Latif Rashid and discussed regional and international developments against the backdrop of the war between Iran and the United States and Israel. Pezeshkian stressed Iran’s determination to continue “legitimate and determined defense against any aggression.” He condemned the attacks attributed to the United States and Israel on targets of military and security forces in Iraq, stressed his country’s readiness to deepen cooperation with Iraq, and invited the Iraqi president to visit Tehran at the appropriate time. The Iraqi president strongly condemned the US and Israeli attacks on Iran and stressed Iraq’s solidarity with the “national resistance of the Iranian people” (snn.ir, March 27, 2026).

► A commentary article published on the news website Noor News, which is affiliated with the Supreme National Security Council, said that Iraq’s entry into the regional conflict equation marks a development that could change the regional balance of power and create a new front in the security equations of West Asia. The article referred to the decision of the Iraqi National Security Council to recognize the right of the Popular Mobilization Forces (the pro-Iranian Shiite militias) to respond to the attacks against them. According to the website, this step constitutes not only a tactical response to the recent attacks against the militias but also a change in Iraq’s security doctrine and a willingness to respond directly to US actions on Iraqi soil. With the formalization of the “right of

response,” Iraq is effectively becoming a more active actor in the axis of conflict with the United States and Israel, and this means the opening of a new regional front, which no longer relies solely on non-state actors but enjoys the direct support of the state. The article argues that Iraq’s decision could significantly change the deterrence equations in the region. In the short term, there is a chance of an increase in mutual attacks and an increase in tensions. In the medium term, if this policy is accompanied by internal cohesion and regional support, it could strengthen Iraq’s status as a more independent actor in the region. In the long term, the formation of such a front could lead to a redefinition of the regional security arrangement, in which the role of regional actors will be more central and dependence on external forces will be reduced (Noor News, March 25, 2026).

► Iran’s ambassador to Baghdad, Mohammad Kazem Al-e Sadeq, met with Sheikh Hammam Hammoudi, head of Iraq’s Supreme Islamic Council. The ambassador conveyed a personal message to Hammoudi from Iran’s Supreme Leader, Mojtaba Khamenei. He also praised the position of senior clerics in Najaf regarding the Israeli-American attack on Iran, as well as the solidarity of the Iraqi people with the Islamic Republic, including military aid and support marches (Al-Sumaria, March 29, 2026).



The Iranian ambassador to Iraq meets with the head of the Supreme Islamic Council of Iraq (Al-Sumaria, March 29, 2026)

The Militias in Syria

► The Islamic Resistance Front in Syria – Possessors of Might (Uli al-Baas, or UAB) issued an announcement in Hebrew: “Your illusions are locked in our glass, and the hands of time do not turn back. The curse of 80 years is not just a number, but a decree of fate agreed upon by the text, and the ball confirms it” (Telegram channel of the Islamic Resistance Front in Syria, March 28, 2026).



Poster attached to the announcement (Telegram channel of the Islamic Resistance Front in Syria, March 28, 2026)