



Highest ever orbit conquered

# Iran puts research satellite into orbit

National Desk

Iran on Saturday launched a research satellite into its highest orbit yet in a new milestone for the country's aerospace program. The Soraya satellite of the Iranian Space Agency (ISA) was successfully launched with the Ghaem-100 satellite carrier of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, IRNA reported.

This is the first time that Iran has successfully placed a satellite in

an orbit higher than 500 kilometers.

Telecommunications Minister Issa Zarepour said the satellite, which weighs about 50 kilograms, was put in orbit 750 kilometers above Earth.

According to Fars News Agency, the satellite had started sending telemetry data.

The Ghaem-100 carrier rocket, manufactured by the IRGC's Aerospace Division, is capable of carrying a payload of 100kg. It is

Iran's first three-stage solid-fuel satellite launcher.

Top IRGC officials including chief commander Hossein Salami and head of the Aerospace Division Amir-Ali Hajizadeh as well as ISA President Hassan Salarieh oversaw the blastoff.

Over the past decade, Iran has sent several satellites into orbit, and in 2013 launched a monkey into space. In 2020, the IRGC put Iran's first military satellite, dubbed the Nour, into orbit.

## UK conducts 50 spy missions over Gaza



AFP

International Desk

The UK military has flown 50 spy missions over Gaza since the start of December in support of Israel, an investigation has revealed. Investigative journalism and media organization Declassified UK said the intelligence gathering flights are conducted using Shadow R1 surveillance aircraft taking off from Britain's controversial Akrotiri airbase in Cyprus, Al Jazeera reported.

It said the government refused to confirm the number of spy flights or what kind of information was passed to the Israeli army when asked.

Palestinian Health Ministry says 165 Palestinians were killed and 280 wounded in Gaza over a 24-hour period.

Deadly Israeli air raids continue to rain down on Gaza as fighting continues in Khan Younis and near Nasser Hospital.

At least 24,927 people have been killed and 62,388 were wounded in Israeli attacks on Gaza since October 7, 2023, when Hamas fighters entered Israel and took numerous captives.

Musa Abu Marzouk, a member of the Hamas political bureau, says the movement does not want to keep the Israeli captives and is seeking a new prisoner exchange deal.

"In the end, Israel will be forced to make a deal, because it failed during more than a hundred days of war to recover any prisoners by force," Abu Marzouk told the Russian Sputnik agency.

US President Joe Biden on Friday said he spoke with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu about possible solutions for the creation of an independent Palestinian state, suggesting one path could involve a non-militarized government.

Asked if a two-state solution was impossible while Netanyahu was still in office, Biden said, "No, it's not."

Meanwhile, criminal complaints were filed against Israeli President Isaac Herzog for allegedly committing war crimes in Gaza while he was in Davos for the World Economic Forum, Swiss prosecutors said Friday.

The Office of the Swiss Attorney General said: "The criminal complaints will be examined according to the usual procedure," Reuters reported. It also said it would determine how questions of diplomatic immunity operate given Herzog's Israeli citizenship.

## Four IRGC advisors assassinated in Israeli air raid on Syria

International Desk

Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) says four of its military advisors have been assassinated in an Israeli strike in the Syrian capital.

The IRGC said in a statement on Saturday that the advisors were "martyred" along with a number of Syrian forces in the attack in Damascus, Press TV reported.

The attack targeted a three-story residential building in the city's Mezzeh neighborhood which houses

several diplomatic missions. "As a result of an air raid by the barbaric and criminal Zionist regime on the city of Damascus, a number of Syrian forces and four military advisers of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps were martyred," the statement said.

The statement further identified the martyrs as Hojjatollah Omidvar, Ali Aqazadeh, Hossein Mohammadi, and Saeed Karimi. It gave no ranks for them.

Nour News, which is close to Iran's Supreme National Security Council, identified

two of the dead in Damascus as Brigadier General Sadeq Omidzadeh, the intelligence commander of the IRGC's Quds Force in Syria, and his deputy, who goes by the nom de guerre Hajj Qolam. The difference in information could not be immediately reconciled.

Israel frequently targets military positions inside Syria, especially those of resistance fighters, who have played a key role in helping the Syrian army in its fight against foreign-backed terrorists.

The Tel Aviv regime has over



the past months carried out airstrikes on various locations in Syria and Lebanon as the illegal entity attempts to expand its aggression against Palestinians in the besieged Gaza Strip to other fronts across the region.

Iran maintains an advisory mission in Syria at the request of Damascus with the aim of helping the war-torn Arab country vanquish the foreign-backed militants

who have been fighting the democratically-elected Syrian government since 2011. Last month, an Israeli air attack on a suburb of Damascus killed Iranian general Sayyed Razi Mousavi, a longtime IRGC adviser in Syria.

Earlier in December, Israel also killed two IRGC military advisors — Mohammad Ali Ataee and Panah Taqizadeh — in an attack in Syria.



People and security forces gather in front of a building destroyed in an Israeli strike in Damascus on January 20, 2024.

AFP

The IRGC announced in a statement that the two officers were martyred against the backdrop of the relentless savagery of the "fake and child-killing" Israeli regime in Gaza.



IRNA

## Resistance leaders attest Gaza as symbol at Tehran conference

International Desk

The 12th Conference of Gaza, The Symbol of Resistance, was held in Tehran on Saturday with the participation of esteemed high-ranking guests, military officials, and the families of martyrs of the resistance front and Iran.

In a message to the conference, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, Secretary General of Lebanon's Hezbollah resistance movement, noted that what makes Gaza the symbol of the resistance is its noble, ground-breaking, and uncompromising efforts to represent the wishes and ambitions of a nation yearning for dignity and victory.

"The number of military officers and soldiers killed by the

Palestinian resistance groups during this recent conflict in Gaza is multiple times that of the Israeli casualties in the Six-Day War in 1967," he said. The Israeli army, which conquered more than 69,000 square kilometers of Muslim lands during the 1967 war, has suffered so many losses in just a part of the Gaza Strip that forced it to "downplay its retreats as entering the next phase of the war," Nasrallah highlighted. "So, the conference's motto was rightly chosen."

The leader of Hezbollah said Operation Al-Aqsa Storm had manifold impacts: it debunked Israel's myth of invincibility, neutralized efforts to brush aside the Palestinian cause, and disrupted the nor-

malization route that has always aimed to put restraints on the will of the Palestinians. The deputy commander of the Quds Force of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) also maintained that the operation tarnished the Zionist regime's dubious military, intelligence, and economic reputation, which in turn denied the United States its source of hope and dependence in the region.

Attending the event, Mohammad Reza Fallahzadeh stated that the Palestinian resistance will continue the fight with the support of other resistance groups located in the West Bank, Lebanon, Iraq, and Yemen.

Yemen's ambassador to Iran warned against losing steam in the religious endeavor to stand up for Gazans, who are under the most brutal attacks by the occupying regime, saying that the enemy is already trying to divide the resistance and "has realized the danger".

Making the remarks at the 12th Gaza Conference, The Symbol of Resistance, Ebrahim al-Dailami called for all Muslims of the world to do whatever is in their power to help the oppressed Palestinians, as Allah would reprimand them if they didn't.

## Iran, Pakistan agree to de-escalate after airstrikes

Iran and Pakistan "agreed to de-escalate" tensions, after trading deadly airstrikes on targets in each other's territory this week.

The rare military actions in the porous border region of Baluchistan — split between the two nations — had stoked regional tensions.

Iran carried out a missile and drone attack on terrorist targets in Pakistan on Tuesday night, with Pakistan in turn striking militant targets inside Iran on Thursday.

Pakistan recalled its ambassador from Tehran and said Iran's envoy — on a visit home — was blocked from returning to Islamabad. The United Nations, Russia and the United States appealed for restraint, while China offered to mediate.

But after speaking by phone, Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian and his Pakistani counterpart Jalil Abbas Jilani agreed to "continue se-



curity cooperation".

After the call, Amir-Abdollahian said in a statement "the cooperation of the two countries to neutralize and destroy terrorist camps in Pakistan is essential". The two top diplomats "agreed to de-escalate the situation," according to a summary of the conversation released by Pakistan's Foreign Ministry.

They also agreed "close coordination on counter terrorism and other aspects of mutual concern should be strengthened".

The two sides want to cooperate moving forward and return each other's ambassadors to

Tehran and Islamabad, IRNA said.

Meanwhile on Friday, Pakistan Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar held an emergency security meeting with military and intelligence chiefs.

A statement after the meeting said the leadership discussed the situation following the airstrikes.

The committee stressed that existing communication channels between Pakistan and Iran "should be used to address each other's security concerns in the larger interest of regional peace and stability," according to the statement.