

# Iranian FM: Operation True Promise 'a warning' to Israel

'Iran could have hit Haifa, Tel Aviv'

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian speaks during an interview with NBC News on April 19, 2024.  
NBC NEWS

**International Desk**  
Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said Iran could have hit Haifa and Tel Aviv but the recent Iran's retaliatory attack against Israel intended to be "a warning."  
"We could have also targeted all the economic ports of Israel," the foreign minister, Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, said in an interview with NBC News.

"But our red lines was civilians," he added. "We only had a military purpose." Iran launched extensive missile and drone strikes late Saturday night on the Israeli-occupied territories, marking the first direct attack by the Islamic Republic against the regime.

The series of retaliatory strikes, dubbed Operation True Promise, inflicted damage on Israeli military bases across the occupied lands. It was in retaliation for the Israeli attack on April 1 against the Iranian consulate in Damascus, located next to the embassy building in Damascus's Mezzeh district.

The airstrike killed two senior Iranian military personnel who were on an advisory mission to Syria as well as five of their accompanying officers. Referring to an alleged Israeli attack on Iran on Friday, he described the weapons that were used in the attack as more like children's toys. "What happened last night

was not a strike," Amir-Abdollahian said. "They were more like toys that our children play with - not drones." On Friday, the sound of explosions was heard near Isfahan and the northwestern city of Tabriz after air defense systems fired at "suspicious objects". Iranian officials said important facilities in the Is-

fahan Province, especially nuclear facilities, are completely safe and no incidents have been reported. Amir-Abdollahian said Iran was not planning to respond to the attack unless Israel launches a significant attack. "As long as there is no new adventurism by Israel against our interests, then we are not going to

have any new reactions," he said. But the foreign minister warned that if Israel did attack Iran, the response would be swift and severe. "If Israel takes a decisive action against my country and this is proven to us," he said, "our response will be immediate and to the maximum and will cause them to regret it."

## Flash floods kill at least 10 in Iran's southeast



**National Desk**  
At least 10 people have been killed in flash floods that have swept the southeastern Iranian province of Sistan and Baluchestan. Iranian lawmaker Moineddin Saeedi said that the floods have destroyed several villages and cut off water and electricity supplies to many villages. He said that floods have

also destroyed up to 70% of roads in south of the province and damaged many bridges. The spokesman for the country's Crisis Management Organization Hossein Zafari said several helicopters have been dispatched and rescue operations are underway in the flood-hit areas to help people trapped there. He said that Sistan and Baluchestan Province is

in emergency situation but it is under control. On Friday, Iran's Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi visited the flood-hit areas in the province which has been hit with second flood since March. According to Zafari, the southern provinces of Hormuzgan, Sistan and Baluchestan, Fars, Kerman and Bushehr have reported unprecedented rainfalls in recent days.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist



## Attack on campus Over 100 pro-Palestinian protesters arrested at New York university

More than 100 pro-Palestinian protesters were arrested on Thursday on the campus of Columbia University after its president authorized New York police to clear an encampment set up by students demonstrating against Israel's genocide in Gaza. Columbia University President Nemat Minoche Shafik, who a day earlier came under fire from Republicans at a House of Representatives committee hearing on antisemitism on campus, said she had authorized police to clear an encampment of dozens of tents set up by protesters on Wednesday morning, Reuters reported. Shafik said the protesters had violated the school's rules and policies against holding unauthorized

demonstrations, and were unwilling to engage with administrators. New York City Mayor Eric Adams said police made over 108 arrests without violence or injuries. Police said the arrests were related to trespassing. Columbia said it had started to suspend students who had participated in the tent encampment, considered an unauthorized protest. "We are continuing to identify them and will be sending out formal notifications," a university spokesperson said by email. At least three students - Isra Hirs, Maryam Iqbal, and Soph Dinu - have received suspension notices from Barnard College, an affiliate of Columbia, for participating in the encampment, the pro-Pal-

estinian advocacy group Institute for Middle East Understanding said. Hirs is the daughter of US Representative Ilhan Omar, who had expressed support for protesters during the hearing at which Shafik testified on Wednesday. "Those of us in Gaza solidarity encampment will not be intimidated," Hirs said on social media after being suspended. The clash, reminiscent of the demonstrations against the Vietnam War at Columbia more than 50 years ago, is the latest in a series of demonstrations disrupting university campuses, bridges and airports since the Israeli regime began its genocidal war on Gaza Strip on Oct. 7. The war has claimed the lives of more than 34,000

Palestinians, mostly women and children. Protesters at Columbia have demanded a permanent cease-fire in Gaza and an end to US military assistance for Israel, as well as university divestment from companies profiting from Israel's incursion. The encampment was organized by a student-led coalition of groups, including Columbia University Apartheid Divest, Students for Justice in Palestine, and Jewish Voice for Peace. Separately on Thursday, about 500 demonstrators marched at the University of Southern California in support of Asna Tabassum, a Muslim student whose valedictorian speech was canceled by the university, which cited safety concerns.

## Deadly explosion hits Iraq PMU's headquarters

One person was killed and eight wounded in an overnight explosion at an Iraqi military base housing Iraq's anti-terror Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), officials said Saturday. The full details remain unclear hours after the blast hit the Kalsu military base in Babylon Province south of Baghdad, where regular army, police and of PMU members are stationed, AFP reported. The Iraqi security forces' media unit said "an explosion and a fire" hit the

Kalsu base in the early hours of Saturday, leaving one person dead and eight wounded. Air defense command reported "no drones or combat aircraft in the airspace of Babylon Province before or during the explosion", it added in a statement. There was no immediate claim of responsibility. Shortly after the explosion, the US military said its forces were not behind a reported strike in Iraq. "The United States has

not conducted air strikes in Iraq today," US Central Command (CENTCOM) posted on social media platform X, adding that reports that American forces had carried out a strike were "not true". When reached by AFP, the Israeli army said it "does not comment on information published in foreign media". In a statement, the PMU said investigators had been sent to the site. On Saturday morning, however, the PMU issued



another statement that referred to a meeting between its chief of staff and investigation committees "on the site that has been attacked". The PMU is an integral part of the official Iraqi security apparatus under the authority of the prime minister.