

# Israeli onslaught claims 12 lives, injures dozens across Lebanon

## Iran rebukes regime's massacre, ceasefire breaches

### International Desk

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman in a statement on Saturday condemned Israel's new deadly attacks on Lebanon, calling for immediate action by the United Nations to stop the regime's aggression against the Arab country.

According to Lebanon's Health Ministry, the Friday's attacks in eastern and southern Lebanon killed 12 people and injured at least 25 others.

The ministry said 10 people lost their lives after a series of attacks on the Bekaa Valley in eastern Lebanon on Friday evening.

A Hezbollah official said on Saturday that eight members of the group were among the victims.

The Israeli forces also launched an attack on the Ain al-Hilweh Palestinian refugee camp in Saida in the south, killing two people and wounding several others.

The refugee camp was the target of an Israeli attack last November, during which 13 people, including 11 children, were killed.

Lebanese President Joseph Aoun on Saturday condemned the attacks, which took place days after the government announced that the army will start implementing the second phase of its plan to disarm Hezbollah in southern Lebanon.

He called the attacks "a blatant act of aggression aimed at thwarting diplomatic efforts" by the United States and other nations to establish stability.

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei condemned the attacks as blatant violations of Lebanon's national sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as the November 2024 ceasefire agreement. He emphasized the direct responsibility of the ceasefire guarantors, the US and France, for the crimes committed by the regime.



A heavily-damaged building is pictured in the village of Ali al-Nahri in the center of Lebanon's eastern Bekaa Valley region on February 21, 2026, following Israeli strikes. ● AFP

Baqaei also stressed the necessity of immediate action by the UN and its Security Council to fulfill their legal responsibilities to stop the Israeli military aggression.

Israel has kept up regular strikes on Lebanon despite a November 2024 ceasefire that sought to halt more than a year of hostilities with Hezbollah.

In a report published by UNIFIL on December 12, 2025, more than 10,000 violations by Israeli armed forces have been documented since the ceasefire agreement, including air and ground aggressions that have breached Lebanese sovereignty. According to Lebanon's Health Ministry, from October 8, 2023, until the ceasefire, the Israeli regime killed 4,000 Lebanese



citizens, and wounded at least 17,000 others, most of them women and children.

Lebanon has filed a complaint with the UN about the repeated Israeli violations, urging the UN

Security Council to push Israel to end its attacks and fully withdraw from the country.

## Tehran demands evidence as Trump claims 32,000 riot deaths

### International Desk

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi rejected US president's claim that 32,000 civilians were killed during the recent riots across the country, demanding evidence for his claim.

"Fulfilling our pledge of full transparency towards our own people, Iran's Government has already published a comprehensive list of all 3117 victims of recent terrorist operation, including about 200 officers. If anyone disputes accuracy of our data, please share any evidence," the Iranian foreign minister said in a post on X.

Araghchi's comments came hours after US President Donald Trump told reporters that 32,000 people were killed during the protests. He did not offer a source for the death toll.



"32,000 people were killed over a relatively short period of time," Trump told reporters, saying, "I feel very badly for the people of Iran."

Iran's Foundation of Martyrs and Veterans Affairs announced in a statement on January 21 that a total of 3,117 people had lost their lives during the protests, adding that 2,427 of those killed were innocent civilians and security personnel. Protests began on December 28,

with merchants in Tehran's central bazaar closing shops to protest the collapse of Iran's currency. But they turned violent after foreign-backed rioters hijacked the legitimate protests.

Iranian officials have linked the riots and terrorist acts to the US and the Israeli regime.

The US and Israel's Mossad have admitted their involvement on the ground, with former US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo tweeting, "Happy New Year to every Iranian in the streets. Also, to every Mossad agent walking beside them." In a Persian-language social media post, Mossad encouraged rioters to "Go out together into the streets. The time has come," adding that Mossad agents are with the rioters "not only from a distance and verbally. We are with [them] in the field."

## President reaffirms Iran will not cave in to bullying

### International Desk

President Masoud Pezeshkian on Saturday reiterated that the Islamic Republic will not give in to bullying and the troubles the enemies have created for the country.

Addressing a group of Iranian Paralympics medalists in Tehran, Pezeshkian praised the disabled athletes who managed to win medals during the latest Paralympics Games, which were held in France's capital in 2024.

"You did not give in to problems, we either. Despite all the problems they have caused and the wounds they have inflicted upon the body of our society, will not give in to the problems and the bullying," the Iranian president said.

He was referring to the sanctions and restrictions that the country's enemies have imposed on Iran and their support for the recent riots that led to the death of thousands of Iranians in January.

The Iranian president underlined that the government will do its utmost to overcome all the shortages and hardships through unity.

More than 3,000 Iranians were killed during the last month's riots which were



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian addresses a group of Iranian Paralympics medalists in Tehran on February 21, 2026. ● IRNA

triggered by protests over economic problems.

Sanctions imposed on Iran by Western countries during the past decades have led to the devaluation of Iran's currency, which have worsened economic woes in Iran.

## Navy commander calls for increased naval collaboration at MILAN 2026 drill

Iranian Navy Commander Rear Admiral Shahram Irani called for the enhancement of bilateral and multilateral naval collaboration during a sequence of high-level discussions at the MILAN 2026 international naval exercise in India.

Rear Admiral Irani conducted individual meetings with Admiral Htein Win, the Commander of Myanmar's Navy, Admiral Aleksandr Alekseyevich Moiseyev, the Commander of the Russian Navy, and Lieutenant General Mohammad Bin Abdulrahman Bin Hamed Al-Gharibi, the Chief of Staff of the Royal Saudi Naval Forces, to explore methods for enhancing collaboration in the maritime sector, Press TV reported.

During the meetings, senior commanders highlighted the strategic importance of oceans in economic growth and sustainable security, stressing the necessity to enhance professional interactions among



navies, share training teams, conduct collaborative exercises, and leverage each other's technical and operational capabilities. Topics such as fighting piracy, safeguarding maritime communication routes, maritime search and rescue operations, and managing maritime crises were also key points of discussion.

Elaborating on Iran's stance on promoting collective security and regional collaboration, the Iranian



Iranian Navy Commander Rear Admiral Shahram Irani (L) meets with his Russian counterpart Admiral Aleksandr Alekseyevich Moiseyev on the sidelines of the MILAN 2026 international naval exercise in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, India, on February 21, 2026. ● IRNA

Navy commander characterized multinational drills as an effective means for fostering trust, improving operational coordination, and sharing experiences between nations.

Exercise MILAN 2026 is the 13<sup>th</sup> edition of the Indian Navy's biennial multilateral maritime drill, conducted in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

This year's event aligns with the International Fleet Review (IFR) and the IONS Conclave, featuring participation from over 72 nations and involving more than 60 warships.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist

### CARTOON

