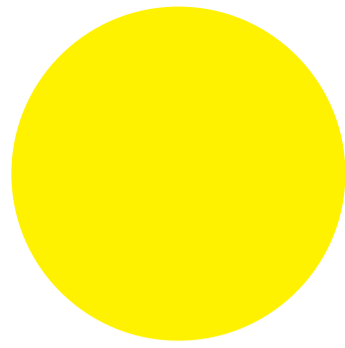


US-Israeli economic, banking centers warned to be next targets

Washington sustained \$25b losses in war: **IRGC**

2 >



Iran Daily

Vol. 8072 • Thursday, March 12, 2026 • Esfand 21, 1404 • Ramadan 22, 1447 • 100,000 rials • 4 pages



irandaily.ir

newspaper.irandaily.ir

IranDailyWeb

Pezeschkian denies regional conflict, underlines defensive stance

2 >

Hidden bottleneck of modern warfare: Supply chains, rare earths & new era of conflict

By Reza Mousaei
Economist

OPINION
EXCLUSIVE

The opening stages of the recent military confrontation between the United States, Israel, and Iran—codenamed Operation Epic Fury—have laid bare a sobering reality about the nature of 21st-century warfare. Beyond the immediate geopolitical shockwaves, including the sudden martyrdom of Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei after the strikes, the conflict exposed a profound vulnerability hidden deep within the Western military-industrial complex. The true bottleneck of modern military supremacy is no longer merely the availability of operational funds or the courage of frontline forces; it is the fragile global supply chain, the rigid limits of industrial manufacturing capacity, and an uncomfortable reliance on critical minerals controlled by geopolitical rivals.

Math of attrition

To understand the immense strain placed on military logistics, one must look at the sheer volume of ordnance expended. In a remarkably short window, the United States and Israel deployed more than 3,000 precision-guided munitions and sophisticated interceptors. On the other side, Iran launched over 1,000 projectiles across the Middle East, necessitating rapid and continuous interception efforts by the U.S. and its allied forces. The United States utilized a highly advanced mix of weaponry: standoff strike missiles for the initial waves, ground-launched rockets for time-sensitive targets, suppression weapons designed to neutralize radar systems, and large volumes of precision-guided bombs. Specifically, the U.S. arsenal utilized in these crucial hours included an estimated 250 JDAMs, 120 Tomahawk cruise missiles, 60 Hellfire missiles fired from MQ-9 Reapers, and 10 Massive Ordnance Penetrators. Defensively, the U.S. fired 90 Patriot missiles and 180 SM-family naval missiles. Israel's offensive strategy similarly relied on vast quantities of precision weaponry that can be manufactured in quantity and linked to aircraft capable of relentless sortie rates. Their forces expended approximately 280 Spice guided bombs, 70 Rampage supersonic missiles, 50 Delilah cruise missiles, and 140 smart bomb kits, alongside their

Tamir interceptors which formed the backbone of their defensive shield. While these high-tech interception efforts were largely successful, they came at an exorbitant logistical cost. Reports indicate that at least one U.S. ally in the Persian Gulf is currently running dangerously low on the crucial interceptor munitions required to defend against Iranian drone and missile attacks.

Illusion of checkbook

A common misconception among policymakers is that massive defense budgets can immediately solve these shortfalls. However, while Western defense departments can swiftly allocate funding and award emergency contracts, the physical reality of manufacturing cannot be accelerated by executive decree. Building sophisticated weaponry requires qualified tooling, highly trained labor, and specialized production facilities that cannot be increased overnight. When advanced systems are depleted, replacing them takes years. For instance, manufacturing a new AN/FPS-132 radar costs approximately \$1.1 billion and requires five to eight years to complete. Similarly, replacing an AN/TPS-59 radar takes between 12 and 24 months, with an estimated price tag of \$50 million to \$75 million. Time, therefore, acts as a rigid barrier that capital alone cannot overcome.

Gallium ghost in machine

Intertwined with the challenges of time and industrial capacity is the critical variable of raw materials and mining. Even the most seemingly straightforward modern munitions rely on complex guidance kits, which in turn depend on high-performance components manufactured using rare earth elements. This is where the defense supply chain intersects dangerously with global resource monopolies. For example, the production of advanced radar systems requires significant amounts of gallium. The strategic vulnerability here is stark: China currently controls 98 percent of the global supply of this specific mineral. While the mining sector is not the sole deciding factor in a war, this near-total monopoly transforms access to basic minerals into a potent geopolitical lever, underscoring how Western military sustainability remains tethered to the resource extraction of a primary competitor.

Page 2 >

Funeral held for top commanders martyred in US-Israel aggression

We will defend country until last drop of our blood: Army chief

2 >



Iranians attend a funeral ceremony held for military commanders and civilians killed in the US-Israel aggression in Tehran on March 11, 2026. IRNA



Iranian women's team targeted by propaganda warfare at Asian Cup

3 >



Normal flow of trade, essential goods, imports continues

4 >



Isfahan's historic heart damaged by nearby airstrikes

4 >

Pezeshkian denies regional conflict, underlines defensive stance

International Desk

President Masoud Pezeshkian asserted that Iran has no intention of targeting or confronting with any neighboring country, stressing that only facilities from which attacks are launched against Iranian territory will be considered legitimate targets under the principle of self-defense. In a telephone conversation with Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday, Pezeshkian highlighted that US and Israeli aggressors have been exploiting the sovereignty of neighboring countries to launch attacks on critical infrastructure, hospitals and schools in Iran, the presidential website reported. The remarks came amid heightened tensions following the joint US-Israeli aggression on Iran



Shehbaz Sharif

Masoud Pezeshkian

on February 28.

In retaliation, Tehran has launched strikes, not only on occupied territories, but also on US bases across the region. Tehran, however, has reiterated its commitment to the principle of good neighborliness, stressing that the attacks are on US interests only. "The global community and international organizations must

address the root causes of this imposed war," the president said. "Otherwise, the architecture of worldwide peace and security will remain destabilized." During the phone call, Prime Minister Sharif reiterated Pakistan's "principled stance" in condemning the US-Israeli aggression and expressed "deep solidarity with the Iranian people and government."

He called for continued cooperation to strengthen bilateral ties between the two Muslim majority neighbors and to promote broader Islamic unity in the region.

Utter lie to justify operation 'Epic Mistake'

Earlier, Iranian Foreign Minis-

ter Abbas Araghchi had echoed Pezeshkian's position in a separate conversation with his Egyptian counterpart Badr Abdelatty on Tuesday.

Araghchi described Iran's strikes on American installations as "legitimate self-defense against aggression" and reaffirmed Tehran's commitment to a "policy of good neighborliness" and to "regional stability without foreign interference."

Before the onset of the war, Araghchi had warned that Iran would respond to any attacks by targeting US assets in the Middle East, since it has no access to American soil.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei also explained in a tweet Iran's rationale behind the defensive strikes on US bases and assets in the region.

He noted that missiles are launched at Iran from residential areas in the territory of neighboring countries and US fighters are using the airspace of those states to attack Iran, "all putting regional security at risk".

Araghchi also later dismissed Washington's claim that Iran was planning on attacking the US or US forces "whether preventively or preemptively", calling it "a sheet and utter lie".

He said in post on his X account that the sole purpose of such a lie is to justify what he termed "Operation Epic Mistake," referencing the US codename, "Operation Epic Wrath," for its aggression against Iran.

Araghchi described the operation as "a misadventure engineered by Israel and paid for by ordinary Americans."

US-Israeli economic, banking centers warned to be next targets

Washington sustained \$25b losses in war: **IRGC**

National Desk

The spokesperson for the Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters warned on Wednesday that economic centers and banks belonging to the United States and Israel could become the next targets of Iranian strikes following Israel's decision to target an Iranian bank last night.

in war, the enemy has opened our hands to target economic centers and banks belonging to the United States and the Zionist regime in the region," Zolfaghari added. The spokesperson stressed that Washington should expect a painful retaliatory response. "Americans should wait for our reciprocal and painful

of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) has said the 37th wave of Operation "True Promise-4" was carried out with the most severe and heavy attacks against positions of aggressors. The IRGC launched the heaviest attacks against the positions of the US and Israeli regime on the eve of the martyrdom anniversa-

ged for the second time. In addition, the Iranian armed forces targeted the military centers in Haifa along with US Fifth Naval Base in Erbil of Iraq severely. Meanwhile, the Intelligence Organization of the IRGC said the United States has sustained \$25 billion losses as a result of US-Israeli aggression against Iran.

The management of the Strait of Hormuz has privileged Iran's effectiveness in the economic equations in the worldwide, the IRGC said, adding that victorious battle of the Iranian Armed Forces has imposed more than \$25 billion military cost for the enemy directly. The US bases in the region have become "inactive" and the Europe's gap with its historic ally has been revealed during the war, IRGC noted.

The US and Israel attacked Iran on February 28, which led to the martyrdom of Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, senior military commanders and civilians. The US-Israeli aggression has damaged or destroyed around 13,000 civilian units so far, according to official figures.



ISNA

Ebrahim Zolfaghari said the United States and Israel carried out an attack on one of Iran's banking facilities after failing to achieve their military objectives in the ongoing aggression against the country. "With this illegitimate and unconventional ac-

tion," he said, warning civilians in the region to stay away from potential targets. "People in the region should not remain within a one-kilometer radius of banks," Zolfaghari underlined. The warning comes as the Public Relations Office

ry of the first Shia Imam, Imam Ali (PBUH), using "Khorramshahr" missile. The IRGC forces pounded the US bases in the region and Israeli positions with highly-sophisticated missiles, in which, a satellite communications center in southern Tel Aviv was tar-

Funeral held for top commanders martyred in US-Israel aggression

We will defend country until last drop of our blood: **Army chief**

National Desk

Thousands of Iranians took to the streets of the capital Tehran on Wednesday to participate in a funeral ceremony held for a dozen of Iranian top commanders martyred during the ongoing military aggression by the United States and Israel against Iran.

The funeral was held for the Chairman of the Chief of Staff of Iran's Armed Forces Major General Abdolrahim Mousavi, Commander-in-Chief of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps (IRGC) Major General Mohammad Pakpour, Defense Minister Brigadier General Aziz Nasirzadeh, and Representative of the Leader in the Supreme Defense Council Ali Shamkhani and several other commanders who were martyred in the US and Israel's attacks.

The ceremony began in the morning in the iconic Enqelab Square and was also held for many citizens from the capital, who lost their lives in the recent airstrikes. Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei was also mar-



tyred in the first day of the aggression.

Carrying the pictures of the martyrs and waiving black flags and Iran's flags, the mourners chant slogans against the United States and the Israeli regime, which began their aggression against Iran on February 28 by attacking 30 targets across Tehran.

Since then, Iranian Armed Forces have decisively retaliated against the strikes by launching barrages of missiles and drones against the Israeli-occupied territories as well as US bases in region.

Army Commander Brigadier General Amir Hatami in a message praised the huge presence of Iranians in the ceremony, saying that, "We will defend the country until the last drop of our blood". Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf also in a message thanked the Iranian people for their presence in the rallies in support of the country in recent days, vowing that Iran's Armed Forces will "cut the hands" of aggressors. Many Iranian top commanders were also killed during an aggression by the Israeli regime against Iran in June.

Hidden bottleneck of ...

Collision of doctrine

This rapid depletion of stockpiles of **Page 1 >** has sparked significant debate at the highest levels of American leadership. Prior to the outbreak of the war, top military officials, including Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Dan Caine, explicitly cautioned President Donald Trump. They warned that a prolonged military campaign against Iran would inevitably degrade U.S. weapons stockpiles, potentially jeopardizing Washington's abil-

ity to support other critical allies. President Trump, however, publicly dismissed these structural concerns. Arguing on social media, he claimed the U.S. possesses a "virtually unlimited supply" of such weapons and stated that munition stockpiles have "never been higher or better." Emboldened by the initial strikes, the President has also signaled an appetite for further foreign interventions, suggesting that other nations could be the next target. As the conflict evolves,

sheer conventional firepower may become less decisive. The geopolitical landscape of the Middle East was irreparably altered following the martyrdom of Iran's Supreme Leader. In the wake of his passing, reports suggest Tehran is preparing to transition the conflict from a direct conventional exchange into an asymmetric, protracted shadow war. In such a scenario, the rapid expenditure of multi-million-dollar interceptors against low-cost proxy attacks will only exacerbate the West's supply

chain woes. Ultimately, the opening salvos of Operation Epic Fury offer a vital lesson. Technological superiority is an undeniable asset, but it is intrinsically fragile. A nation's capacity to sustain a high-intensity conflict is dictated not merely by its front-line platforms, but by a delicate balance of resilient industrial bases, skilled labor, and secure access to critical minerals. Recognizing that even the deepest arsenals have a bottom is the first step toward true strategic readiness.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Provinces shield world heritage sites from war damage

Iranica Desk

Following the onset of the US-Israel conflict against Iran and aimed at protecting cultural and historical assets during crisis conditions, cultural heritage authorities in Kermanshah, West Azarbaijan, and South Khorasan provinces have announced the implementation of extensive protective measures. In this regard, Kiumars Azami, Director General of Kermanshah Province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization, announced that exquisite historical artifacts from the province's museums have been transferred to se-

cure vaults for enhanced safety. Highlighting the continuous monitoring of historical sites by experts in recent days, he emphasized that, fortunately, no damage has been sustained by the museums thus far, according to chtn.ir.

During these inspections, the historical Moaven-al-Molk Tekyeh which houses several provincial museums, was subject to specialized oversight. Simultaneously in the northwest, Morteza Safari, the Director General of West Azarbaijan Province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization reported the commencement of installing the

"Blue Shield" emblem at museums and World Heritage sites across the province.

Stating that this emblem is deployed to protect historical monuments in crisis situations, he said, "This initiative has been implemented at the province's global heritage sites and will be progressively operationalized at other historical locations."

Safari, referring to the significance of the 1,876 nationally registered and prominent sites such as Takht-e Soleyman, Qara Klisa, Hassanlu Hill in the province warned that the destruction of cultural heritage constitutes an irreparable loss to the history of both Iran and

the world.

In the east, the Director General of South Khorasan Province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization announced the relocation of valuable artifacts from the Birjand Archaeology Museum and the Akbariyeh Garden World Heritage Site to secure repositories following the onset of the US-Zionist imposed war.

He defined the objective of this move as the primary mission of museums — the protection and preservation of historical legacies — and added that the "Blue Shield" emblem has been installed at the province's historical sites.



● chtn.ir

Strategic fortification for Persian civilizational assets

Iranica Desk

Jalil Golshan, a distinguished figure in Iran's cultural heritage, former head of the Research Institute of Cultural Heritage and Tourism (RICHT), and a current member of the Strategic Council of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, has shared his expertise on the urgent necessity of protecting historical monuments during times of crisis.

Golshan, who managed the National Museum of Iran during the height of the eight-year Iran-Iraq War (1982-1987), spoke to ISNA regarding the emergency measures required to safeguard the nation's civilizational legacy amid current regional tensions and the onset of conflict involving the United States and Israel against Iran.

"The historical assets in our possession are generally divided into two categories: movable and immovable properties," Golshan explained. "During wartime, there is practically very little that can be done for immovable sites, as they cannot be relocated. The only effective action in this regard is the creation and strengthening of international deterrent laws to strictly prohibit countries from damaging or destroying such structures."

Regarding movable artifacts, the archaeologist noted that conditions are significantly different. "Items held in museums must be transferred to secure centers as soon as a potential threat is perceived. During the Iraq-Iran war, secure vaults were constructed in several Iranian cities. Unfortunately, the process of building these repositories



● irna.ir

was not sustained. Now, with the current strikes against Iran, we face a situation where some regions lack any secure facilities to house their artifacts." He emphasized that after experiencing multiple conflicts since the victory of the Islamic

Revolution, it is essential for the state to establish a clear policy and build standardized, secure locations for historical objects during crises.

When asked about the role of international organizations, Golshan clarified that their con-

tribution is primarily technical rather than financial. "Nations with specific expertise can assist us. For instance, Japan, due to its experience with earthquakes, has valuable knowledge in protecting movable heritage. They can provide expert consultation to help us create standardized repositories that meet necessary environmental and technical requirements."

On the subject of public involvement, Golshan stated that citizens have limited options regarding large monuments during bombings or missile strikes. However, he suggested localized measures, "In some mosques or historical buildings containing valuable stucco mihrabs or delicate artworks, sandbags can be stacked in front of them to absorb the pressure of a potential explosion. Beyond

this, the public's best hope lies in the enforcement of international deterrent laws."

Furthermore, he proposed that the government should not only secure state-owned artifacts but also create a mechanism where citizens can temporarily entrust their private historical valuables to the state for safekeeping during a crisis, to be returned once stability is restored.

Addressing the social and historical risks of war — including concerns over separatism or social polarization — Golshan highlighted Iran's long-standing national identity. "The reality is that Iran has always been a land of ethnic diversity, home to Baluchs, Turkmens, Kurds, Turks, Lors, and many others. Despite this diversity, these groups have lived together for centuries as one nation, in peace and harmony."

Iranian women's team targeted by propaganda warfare at Asian Cup

Sports Desk

Iran's women's national football team became the focal point of a political and media storm during the AFC Women's Asian Cup in Australia, as foreign governments and outlets amplified claims that the players faced execution upon returning home, Fars News Agency reported.

The controversy began after the Iranian players chose not to sing the national anthem before its opening match against the South Korea. Social media accounts in Persian quickly circulated rumors that the players would be punished for this act. The rumor was then echoed by the London-based broadcaster Iran International and amplified by several English-language media outlets citing uncertain sources.

U.S. President Donald Trump, took advantage of the situation, urging Australian authorities, through social media posts, not to let Iranian players return home, claiming they would face severe punishment. Trump made the allegations less than 10 days after American missiles struck an elementary school in Minab, southern Iran, killing over 170 students. Israeli journalist Barak Rav-



Iranian players observe a military salute during the national anthem before a game at the 2026 AFC Women's Asia Cup in Gold Coast, Australia.

● AFC

id of Axios had previously stated that Mossad uses media as a strategic tool — a claim that observers found newly relevant amid this coordinated campaign. This was not the first time an Iranian team abstained from singing the national anthem at an international event; in none of the previous cases were athletes accused of treason or sentenced upon their return. Iranian officials denied all the allegations, with the vice president, attorney general, minister of sports, and the Football Federation chief each releasing statements welcoming the athletes and emphasizing that no punitive measures awaited them. Subsequently, the team sang the anthem and performed military salutes in their second

and third matches. Despite reassurances, the rumor persisted. Trump issued two additional posts urging Australia to grant asylum to Iranian players. Reports from Iranian media suggested that Australian police separated several players in their hotel under the guise of doping tests and facilitated their departure. Farideh Shojaei of the Iranian Football Federation described witnessing players leaving discreetly through the hotel parking lot.

Anti-government activists and supporters of the Pahlavi monarchy reportedly attempted to block the team's bus route to the Gold Coast airport, while police allegedly failed to intervene. At the airport, further attempts were made by

Australian and American political representatives to pressure players to seek asylum, offering housing, salaries, and lifetime insurance. Iranian sources claim that most athletes refused to sign asylum documents. Ultimately, six players and one technical staff member applied for asylum, with Australia's Home Affairs Minister approving five requests. Late Tuesday, the remaining team members departed Sydney for Malaysia, then Turkey, on their way back to Iran.

What started as a sports event evolved into a politically charged episode exposing how global tensions spill onto the playing field, with media narratives shaping public perception far beyond the match results.

Asani seeking Esteghlal departure amid war: Report

Sports Desk

Albanian winger Jasir Asani is desperate to terminate his contact with Persian Gulf Pro League club Esteghlal, Varzesh3 reported, citing several South Korean media outlets.

Following recent reports about Moroccan Munir El Haddadi's request to part ways with the Tehran Blues, Korean sources claim Asani has also expressed interest in returning to the K-League due to the ongoing instability caused by U.S. and Israeli actions targeting Iranian territory, which have led to the suspension of football competitions in the country.

South Korea's Inter Football reported that Asani, who joined Esteghlal last year from Guangzhou FC, has returned to his homeland and is already in contact with several Korean clubs. Other outlets echoed these claims, calling the potential move "exciting," yet pointed out two major obstacles: the player remains under contract with Esteghlal, and financial considerations may complicate any transfer since most K-League teams have completed their signings and Asani is expected to

seek a high salary. Another Korean outlet stated that Asani's representatives have even reached out to Lee Jong-hyo, the head coach of Suwon Samsung, though foreign-player quota limits make such a move highly unlikely at the moment.

Asani, 28, has been one of Esteghlal's standout performers this season. After joining the Tehran club for around €1 million, he racked up 13 goals and four assists in 29 matches, establishing himself among the most prolific players in the Iranian top

flight. His attacking contribution and consistency have earned praise from fans and analysts alike.

If the reports of a possible departure prove accurate, Esteghlal could face a significant setback in its domestic league and cup campaigns, losing one of its most influential offensive options. Neither the player nor the club has yet commented officially, but the coming days are expected to reveal whether Asani will indeed pursue a return to the Korean club football or continue his spell in Tehran.



● VARZESH3

Iran's foreign exchanges surpass \$103b

Normal flow of trade, essential goods, imports continues

Economy Desk

The deputy head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) announced that the country's foreign trade is continuing without disruption and that the import of essential goods remains stable under the current conditions.

Morteza Salehi emphasized the strategic role of the Trade Promotion Organization in managing exports and imports, stating that the organization has focused all its efforts on reducing the challenges facing trade so that merchants and traders can carry on their business activities with minimal concern, according to ISNA.

Salehi reaffirmed the organization's readiness to respond to the needs and questions of economic actors, announcing that necessary measures have been implemented to facilitate trade processes — particularly regarding the import of essential goods required by society.

Concluding his remarks, the TPO deputy and advisor noted that trade cycles



are operating smoothly and that the organization continues to support producers and traders.

"Our main priority under current conditions is to accelerate trade processes, and so far, no major issues have been reported in this regard," he said.

Iran's 11-month trade figures

The Iranian Customs Administration announced that the country's foreign trade reached \$103.209 billion over the first 11 months of the current Iranian calendar year of 1404 (started March 21, 2025).

Based on the latest data released by the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), the country's trade in the 11 months of 1404 (March

2025–February 2026) amounted to 180.447 million tons, up two percent in weight compared with the same period last year.

The total value of trade during this period stood at \$103.209 billion, showing a 12.8 percent decrease compared with the same time last year.

The report added that 143.299 million tons of goods worth \$49.290 billion were exported to various countries, marking a 1.5 percent rise in weight but a 7.7 percent decline in value year-on-year.

Meanwhile, imports totaled 37.148 million tons valued at \$53.919 billion — representing a 4.3 percent increase in volume and a 17 percent drop in value compared with the corresponding period last year.

Over \$660k earmarked to support war victims

Economy Desk

The president of the Iranian Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture announced that the chamber's executive board has approved the allocation of IRR1 trillion (over \$660,000) in credit to provincial chambers of commerce to assist those affected by the ongoing imposed war.

Samad Hassanzadeh, president of the national chamber, stated that the heads of provincial chambers, in coordination and cooperation with provincial crisis management headquarters and the Iranian Red Crescent Society, will take action to address the situation of those impacted by the recent conflict.

Expressing condolences to the families of those killed in the American-Zionist attacks, Hassanzadeh emphasized: "In these difficult times, we are confident that the people of Iran, driven by their sense of altruism and patriotism, alongside the government's efforts, will make sacrifices to help compensate for the damages suffered by citizens, their fellow human beings, and their homes. The country's private-sector economic

actors also bear an important social responsibility in this regard."

Rental accommodation for displaced

Iran's Minister of Roads and Urban Development said the reconstruction process will be led by the Housing Foundation, adding that the assessment of damaged residential units and the formation of case files should be carried out immediately and as a matter of urgency by the relevant organizations.

For those homes deemed uninhabitable, the Housing Foundation will provide rental housing for residents, prioritizing relocation within their original neighborhoods or villages. Farzaneh Sadeq added that particularly in villages and small towns, efforts will be made to begin temporary housing using prefabricated units where possible.

In a virtual meeting with housing officials, the minister said that daily progress reports must be submitted to the Ministry of Roads and Urban Development's central headquarters.

Sadeq noted that, despite enemy media claims that the attacks targeted only military and security sites,

field evidence shows significant damage to infrastructure as well as private and civilian buildings.

She stressed the need to document the destruction and the response efforts to support potential legal action.

in preserving Iran's security and territorial integrity, and that swiftly addressing their problems is one of the government's priorities.

The minister further highlighted the importance of continuous public commu-



An employee of Tehran municipality discusses the state of a residential building with a civilian after a recent bombing by Israel and the United States in Tehran, Iran, on March 7, 2026.
● DAVOUD GHAHRDAR/ISNA

"These actions can be taken to international bodies as war crimes and crimes against humanity, and should not be overlooked," Sadeq emphasized.

She also underlined the need for special attention to border cities and regions of Iran with harsh climatic conditions, saying that the needs of these areas must be addressed with greater sensitivity to prevent the enemy from achieving its goals.

Sadeq added that residents of border regions have always played a crucial role

in communication about the ongoing measures, asserting that people must be kept informed of the services and actions underway so they can trust that their problems are being monitored and resolved.

She concluded, "We will certainly overcome this critical juncture. What matters most is how the people remember the officials' efforts and services. Therefore, with empathy, agility, and an active presence on the ground, we must respond effectively to the needs of the people."

Isfahan's historic heart damaged by nearby airstrikes

Wave of attacks harms cultural landmarks nationwide

Arts & Culture Desk

Explosions triggered by recent US and Israeli strikes have damaged several historic monuments across Iran, with the most extensive impact reported in the historic city of Isfahan, where blast waves struck parts of the Safavid-era Chehel Sotoun Palace and surrounding heritage complexes.

The attacks, which began on February 28, have raised alarm among cultural authorities who say the shockwaves have endangered key elements of Iran's architectural heritage, including Safavid mirrorwork, historic wall paintings and delicate wooden lattice windows known as orsi, IRNA reported. Among the most heavily affected sites is the Chehel Sotoun garden palace in Isfahan, part of the UNESCO-listed "Persian Gardens" ensemble. Field inspections on March 9 reported shattered wooden doors and windows, damaged mirrorwork and Safavid decorative layers, and harm to sections of the palace's double-layered roof. The central pavilion's columns were also pushed slightly out of alignment, raising concerns about structural stability.

Officials said explosions near the Isfahan governor's compound, located in the heart of the historic district, caused additional damage across the wider Safavid-era Dowlatkhaneh complex surrounding

Naqsh-e Jahan Square. Ruhollah Seyedolasgari, a provincial heritage official, said blast waves damaged Timurid Hall, Ashraf Hall and several historic pavilions in the complex.

Parts of the Jabbehkhaneh building, now used as the Contemporary Arts Museum, also sustained roof damage, while windows and glass panels at the Ali Qapu palace overlooking Naqsh-e Jahan Square were shattered. Storefront windows around the historic square were also broken by the force of the explosions.

Chehel Sotoun itself dates to the Safavid period and is known for murals attributed to court painter Reza Abbasi, whose works helped define Persian miniature painting. Iran's Foreign Ministry Spokesman Esmail Baghaei said the strikes targeted the historic core of the city. Writing on X on March 10, he said the attack had damaged "a distinguished civilizational monument" and warned that the international community "must not remain silent in the face of crimes against the shared heritage of humanity."

Other heritage sites across the country have also sustained damage. Ali Darabi, deputy minister and head of Iran's cultural heritage authority, said inspections documented structural damage at several historic complexes. In Tehran, parts of the former



The photo shows the damage done to the windows and fittings of the Chehel Sotoun Palace in Isfahan.
● IRNA

Senate building, now housing the Assembly of Experts, suffered extensive structural damage, while the former police headquarters building at Enghelab Square was destroyed. In Isfahan, historic buildings belonging to Isfahan University of Art were also affected by nearby explosions. The Sa-

faavid-era Tohidkhaneh complex and several Qajar-period houses known as the Hakim complex sustained damage, while shockwaves threatened the stability of the Safavid Mar-tapeters mansion.

Darabi said blast impacts were also recorded at the Falak-ol-Aflak fortress complex in Khor-

ramabad and several historic mansions in Sanandaj, where wooden windows, stucco decorations and architectural ornaments were damaged.

"These incidents constitute a clear violation of international obligations regarding the protection of cultural property during armed conflict," Darabi said, adding that Iran has begun submitting documentation of the damage to international organizations.

Iran has 29 UNESCO World Heritage sites, placing it among the top 10 countries globally in the number of registered cultural landmarks.

President Masoud Pezeshkian said in a message posted on X on March 10 that Iran is "the heir to a civilization at least 6,000 years old," adding that throughout history "no power has succeeded in erasing this storied name."

Diplomatic reactions have also followed the reported damage. In a letter to Denmark's culture minister Jakob Engel-Schmidt, Iran's ambassador in Copenhagen, Mohammadreza Sajjadi, criticized Western silence over the attack on Tehran's Golestan Palace, a UNESCO World Heritage site since 2013.

Iranian officials say assessments of the damage are continuing while legal and diplomatic efforts are under way to pursue the issue internationally and safeguard the country's historic sites.

Iran to reopen calmer cities, eases screening limits

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran's national cinema body will allow movie theaters to reopen in calmer cities from Friday, March 13, while lifting key screening restrictions for films seeking release, the head of film distribution at the Cinema Organization said Wednesday. Mojtaba Behzadian, director general of the Office for Film Distribution and Exhibition, told IRNA that cinemas outside Tehran, Tabriz and Isfahan may resume operations in coordination with the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance.

Comedy films remain barred from screening for now, while other genres are cleared to return to theaters.

The move aims to revive a film market disrupted by recent closures while giving producers greater flexibility to roll out new titles. Authorities have approved incentive packages for films entering the screening cycle, including longer theatrical runs and the removal of limits on daily show times and screening days.

Officials expect one or two new films to join the lineup within the next few days, though Behzadian said current conditions do not yet allow a broader slate of releases.

Films that had already premiered before the shutdown will remain in theaters. Titles such as 'Ahmad', 'Yooz', the animated feature 'The Legend of Sepehr', 'Nilo's Visage', and 'Juliet and the King' will continue their runs, with the closure period excluded from their official screening weeks.