

Iran urges ICAO to designate two airports as 'safe' for humanitarian operations in wartime



● TASNIM

Economy Desk

Iran has requested the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to designate two airports within the country as "safe airports" to facilitate humanitarian operations, with Mashhad as the top priority, IRNA reported.

Head of Iran's Civil Aviation Organization Abouzar Shirudi made the appeal during a virtual meeting with Khelifa Rahma, the newly appointed regional director of ICAO for the Middle East, on Friday evening.

Shirudi stated that Mashhad airport in the northeast remains Iran's top priority for designation as a safe airport. He also sought designation for a second, unnamed airport to ensure operational

flexibility.

The meeting was held following multiple attacks by the US and the Zionist regime on Iranian infrastructure, including airports and navigation systems, since they launched aggression against the country on Feb. 28.

The request aims to secure routes for humanitarian aid, medical supplies, and the evacuation of foreign nationals from Iran, as well as the return of Iranian citizens from abroad.

In a separate statement on the damages, Head of Iran Air Taher Abdolhay has recently said that four passenger aircraft operated by Iranian airlines had been deliberately targeted in US-Zionist attacks, calling it a clear violation of international human rights laws.

In the virtual meeting, Shirudi also emphasized that the recent attacks on Iranian airports and aviation infrastructure constitute a clear violation of the Chicago Convention. He provided an update on the state of Iran's aviation industry in the wake of the recent conflict, highlighting the impact of the attacks.

The aviation chief urged the international body to pressure aggressors to comply with international laws regarding the protection of civil aviation infrastructure. In response, Rahma pledged to exert every effort to designate Mashhad as a safe airport. He also commended Iran for its efforts to maintain aviation safety and manage airspace closures effectively during the conflict.

Highlighting Iran's role as a founding member of ICAO and its key influence in the Middle East, Rahma expressed hope that conditions would improve soon, allowing for a strong return by Iran to the global aviation industry.

Over 52,000 flights canceled

More than two weeks after the commencement of the attack on Iran, the global aviation industry is facing one of the largest disruptions in its contemporary history, with tens of thousands of flights on routes connected to the Middle East canceled or rerouted.

According to Tasnim news agency, citing the latest data from the aviation analysis firm Cirium, over 52,000 flights have been canceled out of approximately 98,000 planned flights for the Middle East region since the beginning of the U.-Zionist attack on Iran. This event has affected around 6 million passengers.

Factories add double, triple shifts to offset war losses: Minister



● IRNA

Economy Desk

Iran's industrial sector is mobilizing to offset production losses caused by enemy attacks, with factories ramping up output and adding shifts to compensate for destroyed facilities, Industry Minister Mohammad Atabak said.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the international Quds Day rallies in Tehran on Friday, Atabak condemned the targeting of schools, residential areas, and industrial sites by the US and Israel, noting that the strikes had caused damage to several industrial centers, Tasnim news agency reported.

The US and the Zionist regime launched their aggression against the country on Feb. 28, with civilian targets and infrastructure among the primary sites struck.

"If enemy attacks on industrial centers and factories disrupt the production of a specific good, other production hubs have strived to compensate for the shortage by boosting output — doubling or tripling production — and implementing double or triple shifts," Atabak said.

The minister emphasized that the government is making every effort to meet public needs, ensuring that essential goods are available in supermarkets and shopping centers.

56 historical sites across Iran severely damaged

Arts & Culture Desk

In a statement on Saturday, Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts condemned military strikes by the United States and Israel on Iran's historical buildings, museums, and sites, announcing that at least 56 museums, historical monuments, and cultural sites across various provinces have sustained severe damage.

Tehran Historic Citadel (Arg), the Tehran Grand Bazaar, the Marble Palace, the historic Shahrbani Palace, the former Senate Building, the Sepahsalar Mosque, and the Farahabad Palace-Museum are among the structures targeted by direct strikes.

The statement also detailed the extent of the damage in other provinces. For example, in Kurdistan, 12 prominent structures, including the

In Lorestan Province, the historic Falak-ol-Aflak Fortress and its museums sustained damage. In Kermanshah, the Tekyeh Biglarbeygi and the historic Kozazi High School were targeted in the assault. In Bushehr Province, the Sabzabad Mansion and the historic Whitehouse building in the Port of Siraf were damaged, just like the Darreh-Shahr Archaeological Museum in Ilam Province.

UNESCO steps in

The director of the UNESCO World Heritage Center expressed grave concern regarding the impact of regional conflicts on World Heritage sites, confirming that several of Iran's globally registered landmarks have been damaged.

According to Lazare Eloundou Assomo, Iran currently possesses 29 sites inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, four of which have been damaged. Among these is the Golestan Palace in Tehran, which is frequently compared to France's Palace of Versailles.

He emphasized that UNESCO has communicated the geographic coordinates of all these historical locations to all parties involved, and everyone is aware that these sites must not be the target of any attack or destruction.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi thanked UNESCO for its prompt and responsible reaction to the bombing of Tehran's Golestan Palace.

Araghchi wrote in a post on X on Friday, "Thank you UNESCO for responsible reaction to bombing of Golestan Palace, a World Heritage site".



The photo shows the extent of damage done to the exterior of a historical cultural site in Isfahan, central Iran, following an air strike.

● SEYED MOHAMMADALI MAHRAMI/MIRAS ARIA

The ministry labeled this military aggression "a crime against the nation's historical identity and a blatant assault on the shared heritage of humanity."

The statement further emphasized that Tehran Province, as Iran's political and cultural heart, tops the list of these crimes with 19 damaged sites. Peerless landmarks such as the Golestan Palace, the

Salar Sa'id Mansion (Sanandaj Archaeological Museum), the Khosrowabad Museum, and the Asef Vaziri Mansion, have been damaged.

In Isfahan, the "jewel of world architecture," the UNESCO-listed Naqsh-e Jahan Square complex, along with the Chehel Sotoun Palace, the Jameh Mosque, and parts of the city's historic fabric, were targeted.

Over 36,000 civilian buildings hit in US-Israeli strikes

Social Desk

More than 36,000 civilian structures have been damaged in the targeted attacks carried out by Israeli and American forces, according to the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS).

The organization has released an updated report detailing the extent of human and material losses resulting from the strikes as of March 13, 2026.

According to the report, 36,593 civilian units have sustained damage in the attacks, most of them residential buildings and public service centers.

In total, 21,520 homes across various provinces were completely or partially damaged, of which 10,000 residential units were located in the Tehran Province alone. Moreover, 4,827 commercial buildings were either destroyed or seriously affected.

The health sector also suffered significant losses. A total of 160 medical and health facilities, including hospitals, clinics, and pharmacies, were damaged or targeted — an act the IRCS described as a "blatant violation of international humanitarian law and the principle of medical neutrality".

Damage was also reported in the education sector, with 69 schools destroyed or damaged.



Civilians salvage what they can from the wreckage that was once their homes in Tabriz, Northwestern Iran, on March 11, 2026, following a targeted US-Israeli attack.

● MASOUD VAEZ/TASNIM

Human losses in the health-care system were also confirmed. Twelve medical personnel were killed, and 78 health workers were injured during the attacks.

Emergency and rescue operations were not spared. According to operational data, 17 Red Crescent relief centers were hit, along with 21 rescue vehicles that were either damaged or destroyed. Nineteen ambulances from the IRCS and emergency services were also rendered inoperable, and one rescue helicopter sustained severe damage during operations.

Among first responders, 10 relief workers were injured in Tehran, Mahabad, and Khomein cities, while one rescuer, Hamidreza Jahanbakhsh from Isfahan Province, was killed in the line of duty while assisting civilians.

The IRCS president highlighted the humanitarian dimension of what he called a "catastrophe," declaring that strikes on res-

idential areas, schools, hospitals, medical centers, and relief workers constitute clear acts of war crimes and gross violations of international humanitarian law.

Pirhossein Kolivand added that the Iranian Red Crescent has launched comprehensive legal actions at the international level to defend the rights of the victims, with full documentation of the alleged crimes being compiled and submitted to relevant bodies.

Reports have already been sent to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the United Nations, and its Human Rights Secretariat.

He urged the global community, humanitarian organizations, and international institutions to end their silence and take immediate action to stop attacks on civilians and provide relief to the victims.