

# Iraq's holy cities stage funeral processions for Martyr Khamenei



Mourners carry the coffin of Iran's martyred Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei at the Imam Ali (PBUH) shrine in Najaf, Iraq on July 8, 2026.  
● HUSSEIN FALEH/AFP

six-day ceremonies Iran has planned for Ayatollah Khamenei who was assassinated on the first day of a recent US-Israeli aggression against Iran.

A procession was held in Iran's holy city of Qom on Tuesday after three days of similar ceremonies in the capital Tehran. The funeral of the martyred Leader will conclude with his burial on Thursday in his hometown of Mashhad in northeast Iran.

In Najaf, despite the scorching heat, vast crowds filled the streets of Najaf since the early morning, with some people pushing close hoping to touch Ayatollah Khamenei's coffin as it rode slowly in the back of a truck en route to the shrine of Imam Ali – the first Shia Imam.

There, the call for prayer echoed in the vast courtyards as hundreds of clerics

waited for hours to pray over Ayatollah Khamenei's body.

Inside the shrine, thousands jostled to get closer to the coffin as it was carried away in the mausoleum's halls – its last stop in Najaf before being flown to the other holy city of Karbala.

Mohammed al-Bayati, 30, said he would have never missed the funeral "of the person who challenged the power of America and Israel."

Murtada al-Maliki, 27, who travelled overnight from the southern Iraq to attend the funeral in Najaf, said Ayatollah Khamenei "stood with us against Daesh" terrorist group, "and kept Israel in check." According to reports, mourning tents had been established throughout the funeral route and black banners had been raised across Najaf's streets and public squares. In Karbala, the bodies were taken to the shrines of Imam Hussein (PBUH), Shias' third imam for farewell ceremonies.

Former Iraqi prime minister Nouri al-Maliki, who heads Iraq's State of Law coalition, also attended the ceremony. "Commemorating the legacy of the mar-

tyred Imam Sayyed Ali Khamenei, the great leader of the Islamic nation, and participating in his funeral is a duty because he was a great leader who remained steadfast, endured, stood against challenges and brought victory to the Iranian nation," Maliki said in remarks carried by the Iraqi News Agency.

"Everything the Iraqi people do today through their participation in the funeral of the martyred Imam Khamenei and through their other supportive positions, no matter how great or valuable, remains insufficient compared with the stature of this great figure, a figure who shaped a bright future not only for the Iranian nation but for many countries in the region," he said.

Ayatollah Khamenei was assassinated, alongside some of his family members, on February 28, the first day of the 40-day war of aggression waged by the United States and the Israeli regime against Iran. Iran's Assembly of Experts subsequently appointed Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei as the new Leader of the Islamic Revolution.

## International Desk

Huge crowds thronged the streets of Iraq's holy cities of Najaf and Karbala on Wednesday as they mourned martyred

Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei and his family members during his funeral procession in the Arab country.

Funeral in Iraq was the fifth day of the

## Iran strikes regional US bases in response to new assault

Any source of support for US army 'legitimate target': **Armed Forces**

### International Desk

Iran's Armed Forces launched retaliatory attacks against United States' military bases in regional countries on Wednesday after renewed attacks by the American forces on Iranian territory despite a ceasefire agreement reached between the two countries.

The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) said in a statement on Wednesday that it struck 85 US military targets in Bahrain and Kuwait with missiles and drones in an initial response to American aggression against Iranian territory. The IRGC said the strikes hit facilities at Port Salman, the US Fifth Fleet's area in Bahrain, and Ali Al Salem Air Base in Kuwait. It also announced the downing of an MQ-9 drone, saying the aircraft attempted to interfere with the operation before it was shot down.

The announcement came after the US launched a fresh wave of military strikes on "a number of coastal bases and non-military stations" in Iran's southern Hormozgan Province and Mahshahr, which the IRGC said "openly violated the ceasefire" and "trampled the Islamabad understanding."

On June 18, Iran and the US signed a Pakistan-brokered Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which calls for a permanent end to hostilities across all fronts and includes a commitment from both sides to hold further talks on a final agreement in the next 60 days.

Under the 14-point deal, Iran is required to ensure toll-free passage for commercial vessels for at least 60 days, with full restoration of traffic in the Strait of Hormuz within 30 days.

Iran's Foreign Ministry said US strikes on Iranian coastal monitoring facilities constitute a "flagrant violation" of the MoU that ended the recent war between the two countries, warning that Iran's Armed Forces will respond under the right to self-defense.

The ministry said the attacks constitute a breach of paragraph one of the agreement on ending the war.

US Central Command (CENTCOM) on Tuesday claimed its forces struck over 80 targets, including Iranian air-defense systems, coastal radar sites and 60 IRGC small boats in response to Iran's alleged attacks on three commercial vessels that were transiting the Strait of Hormuz

### 'Ceasefire is over'

Hours after CENTCOM's announcement, US President Donald Trump President said the interim agreement with Iran to



pause fighting is over following a series of strikes between the US and Tehran overnight.

"To me, I think it's over. I don't want to deal with them anymore." Trump said, speaking to reporters at the NATO summit in Ankara, Turkey.

"I'll speak to our negotiators. They want to negotiate. They're good people," he continued. "But they have to come back to me. As far as I'm concerned, it's just a waste of time dealing with them [Iran]." The US president later said he will likely engage in additional strikes on Iran on Wednesday night.

He also said that he is "not happy with what the Iranians are doing," adding that he does not seek regime change but that the US does not want Iran to have a nuclear weapon.

Iran's top military command, Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters, warned regional countries for their support for the US strikes, saying that any source of support for the "aggressor US army" will be considered a legitimate target for Iranian Armed Forces.

"The repetition of illegal attacks against Iran, alongside last night's decision by the US Treasury to revoke the license for Iran's oil sales, which the US government had committed to under paragraph 10 of the memorandum of understanding, the violation of Iranian arrangements in the Strait of Hormuz, as well as the continuation of the Zionist regime's military aggressions and terrorist acts against Lebanon, have rendered important and fundamental parts of the memorandum of understanding on ending the war ineffective," the statement said.

### Dangerous consequences

"The responsibility for the dangerous consequences of this escalation rests with the treaty-breaking US regime," it added.

The headquarters also reiterated that the only safe route for commercial ships and oil tankers in the Strait of Hormuz is the path designated by Iran, and that Tehran will not allow any interference in the management of the Strait.

This is not the first time that the United



Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps fires missiles at US bases in regional countries from an undisclosed location in Iran on July 8, 2026.  
● TASNIM

States has targeted Iranian soil since the reaching of the agreement between Tehran and Washington in June.

Iran's Armed Forces have responded to each instance with decisive retaliatory strikes against strategic and sensitive American targets across the region.

The US president also claimed that the US could "take over" Kharg Island, a strategically important island off Iran's coast, and that there would be "nothing" Iran could do about it.

Army Chief of Staff and Deputy Coordinator Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari said any attempt by hostile forces to land troops on Iran's coasts would turn the country's shores into "hell" for invading forces, warning that anyone who undertakes such an operation would find "no way out"

Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf also lambasted the US for committing major violations of the MoU, stressing that Washington's "era of bullying and extortion" is over.

Citing breaches involving the Strait of Hormuz, the reinstatement of oil sanctions, attacks on southern Iran, and continued Israeli military aggression in Lebanon, Qalibaf stressed on Tuesday night that Washington's violations will fail to weaken Iran's resolve.

### China warns against 'reigniting' war

China denounced the sharp escalation in hostilities, with Beijing's Foreign Ministry warning both sides against "reigniting" the war in West Asia.

"Reigniting the war is not in the interests of either side, and military means cannot solve the fundamental problems," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told a news conference, when asked about the strikes.

Qatar, a key intermediary in talks between Iran and the US, also reacted to the renewed tensions, calling for diplomacy.

In a Foreign Ministry statement posted on X, Qatar said it "emphasizes the need to spare the region the consequences of these unjustified attacks."

Doha also stressed the need to "pursue the path of dialogue and diplomacy, to de-escalate tensions, and to build upon the progress achieved under the memorandum of understanding."

## Pezeshkian: Iran will stand firmly for own rights despite US bullying

### International Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said the US has turned the 2026 FIFA World Cup into another arena for bullying and political pressure, stressing that, "We stand firmly for our rights."

In a message posted on social media platform X on Wednesday, Pezeshkian said the US government's conduct as World Cup host reflected its long-established foreign policy.

"The US government's conduct as World Cup host follows its familiar foreign policy: bending rules, humiliating rivals, creating obstacles, and cheating. This is their MAGA playbook. Iran rejects such games. We stand firmly for our rights," he wrote.

Washington imposed sweeping travel restrictions on Iran's national team, forcing the squad to remain at its training base in Tijuana, Mexico throughout the tournament.

The team was allowed to enter the US only shortly before matches and was required to leave within 24 hours after each game, restriction that no other participating nation faced.

Iran strongly condemned both the US and FIFA over the measures, saying the restrictions violated the principles of fairness and equal treatment expected of a World Cup host.

Washington also came under heavy criticism after US President Donald Trump personally interceded with FIFA Presi-



Masoud Pezeshkian  
● president.ir

dent Gianni Infantino over the suspension of US striker Folarin Balogun.

Balogun was ultimately cleared to play against Belgium despite having received a red card, a decision that sparked condemnation from football officials and observers.

More than 30 members of the European Parliament called for an investigation into possible pressure from the Trump administration over FIFA's handling of the Balogun case, saying that the organization's political neutrality and the integrity of the World Cup have been compromised.



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