

Special Update

March 19, 2026
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Situation Report: Epic Fury (US-Iranian Conflict) as of March 19, 2026

Executive Summary

As of the morning of March 19, 2026, the US-Israeli joint operation against Iran, Operation Epic Fury (US) / Operation Lion's Roar (Israel), has entered its twentieth day (since initiation on February 28). Overnight and early morning developments (March 18-19) include Israeli strikes on Iran's South Pars gas field (world's largest, shared with Qatar), prompting Iranian retaliation with missile/drone attacks on energy facilities in Qatar (Ras Laffan LNG hub hit, fires reported), Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Kuwait. President Trump distanced the US from the South Pars strike (claiming Israel acted alone out of "anger"), threatened to "massively blow up" the field if Qatar's LNG is attacked again, and called for de-escalation on energy sites while warning of severe US response. Gulf states condemned the escalation, with Saudi Arabia stating "trust in Iran broken." CENTCOM reports over 7,800 US targets struck, 120+ vessels destroyed, air superiority total. New Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei issued threats of "revenge" for recent assassinations (including Ali Larijani) but remains low-profile (injured early, status uncertain). US casualties ~13 killed; Iranian civilian toll >1,444-2,452+. Oil prices surged (Brent ~\$100-110+ amid supply fears); Hormuz transits near-zero. No ceasefire; Iran vows indefinite resistance, rejects talks; conflict enters "all-out energy war" phase with global repercussions.

Key Changes Overnight: (March 18-19)

Overnight shifts mark major energy infrastructure escalation and retaliatory cycle:

- **Military Actions:** Israel strikes South Pars gas field (offshore facilities in Bushehr, massive fires); US/Israel continue degrading missile/IRGC sites. CENTCOM: 7,800+ US strikes, overwhelming dominance.
- **Iranian Retaliation:** Missiles/drones target Gulf energy (Qatar Ras Laffan LNG hit, fires; Saudi/UAE/Kuwait intercepts/damage); threats of further energy attacks.
- **Leadership/Succession:** Mojtaba Khamenei vows revenge for Larijani/Soleimani killings; remains unseen (injured speculation); regime defiant.
- **US Statements:** Trump: US "knew nothing" of South Pars strike; no more Israeli attacks unless Iran hits Qatar again; threatens total field destruction; calls for de-escalation on energy.
- **Casualties:** US stable ~13 killed; Iran/region rises (Gulf civilian/energy impacts; Lebanon ongoing).
- **Economic/Global:** Oil surges (\$100-110+); gas prices spike; markets tumble; Jones Act suspended 60 days to ease shipping.
- **Other:** Gulf ministers condemn; UN warnings; Trump admin resignation (Joe Kent); Senate rejects war powers limit.

These intensify energy warfare while coalition advances decapitation/dominance.

Updated Timeline of Key Events (Focus on Overnight)

- March 18 Evening - March 19 Morning: Israel hits South Pars (fires, major escalation); Iran retaliates on Qatar LNG/Saudi/UAE/Kuwait (intercepts, damage); Trump distances US, threatens retaliation; Gulf condemnations; Khamenei revenge vow; oil volatility.
- March 19 Morning: Ongoing exchanges; Trump de-escalation call; Hegseth/Caine briefing prep; regional alerts.

Updated Casualties and Humanitarian Impacts

- US: ~13 killed, ~200 wounded.
- Iran: >1,444 official/2,452+ killed (incl. civilians); energy strikes cause shortages/fires.
- Israel and Region: Injuries/deaths from missiles; Lebanon hundreds; Gulf civilian/energy risks. Humanitarian: Displacement; energy facility evacuations; global protests; stranded shipping.

Updated Economic and Global Impacts

Oil \$100-110+/barrel (surge from energy hits/Hormuz closure); gas spikes; markets down; Jones Act waiver for 60 days; energy crisis risks escalate.

International Reactions and Statements (Updates)

- US: Trump: Distances from South Pars, threatens destruction if Qatar hit; de-escalation plea.
- Israel: Strikes on energy/military; coordination implied.
- Iran: Retaliation on Gulf; vows revenge; no talks.
- Others: Gulf condemnations ("trust broken"); UN concerns; global calls for restraint.

Conclusion

Overnight energy escalations (South Pars strike, Gulf retaliation) mark a new phase of unrestricted warfare, with Trump's mixed messaging (distancing/threats/de-escalation) amid dominance claims (7,800+ targets). Iranian persistence under Mojtaba Khamenei sustains risks of broader energy crisis, proxy intensification, and attrition. Casualties/economic shocks mount; no resolution in sight

References:

- Al Jazeera. (2026, March 19). Iran hits Qatar gas operations in response to Israeli attack.
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- Fox News. (2026, March 19). White House reports 7,800 Iranian targets struck as allies hesitate on Strait of Hormuz.
- Haaretz. (2026, March 19). Israel and U.S. Raise Stakes in Iran as Mideast Heads Into All-out Energy War.
- New York Times. (2026, March 19). Iran War Live Updates: Oil and Gas Prices Soar After Attacks on Gulf Energy Sites.
- Various X posts (March 18-19, 2026). Including updates from @EricLDaugh, @GuntherEagleman, @Grant_EOD, and others on strikes, Senate vote, and developments.

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