

Special Update

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Situation Report: Epic Fury (US-Iranian Conflict) as of March 09, 2026

Executive Summary

As of the morning of March 9, 2026, the US-Israeli joint operation against Iran, Operation Epic Fury (US) / Operation Lion's Roar (Israel), has entered its ninth day (since initiation on February 28). Overnight and early morning developments (March 8-9) include the announcement of Mojtaba Khamenei (son of the late Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei) as Iran's new Supreme Leader by state media and the Assembly of Experts, despite prior delays and Israeli/US warnings of targeting any successor. Escalation features first major strikes on Iranian oil facilities (storage depots, refineries, transfer centers in Tehran and Alborz provinces, causing massive fires, black smoke, and reports of toxic "oily rain"), Iranian retaliatory missile/drone waves (e.g., 29th wave toward Israel injuring 6 civilians; intensified attacks on Gulf states including Bahrain desalination plant, Kuwait airport/social security building, UAE intercepts of 117+ drones/16+ missiles), and US confirmation of an eighth service member death from prior wounds. Over 3,000+ targets hit in the first week-plus; Iranian missile/drone output down ~90%; navy largely neutralized (43+ vessels sunk/destroyed); near-total air superiority claimed. Oil prices surged (Brent ~\$108-120/barrel amid Hormuz threats and supply fears); global markets volatile. Trump reiterated demands for unconditional surrender, mutual decision with Israel on war end, and potential influence over Iran's leadership. No de-escalation; IRGC warns of "energy war" phase; conflict risks uncontrolled regional spiral with proxy fronts active.

Key Changes Overnight: (March 8-9)

Overnight developments center on leadership transition, energy infrastructure targeting, and sustained asymmetric retaliation:

- **Leadership Succession:** Mojtaba Khamenei named new Supreme Leader (announced early March 9 via state TV/Assembly of Experts); pledges of allegiance from military/political figures; hard-line continuity expected despite war pressures and external threats (Israel vows strikes on successor; Trump opposes hereditary choice, demands US role in selection).
- **Military Actions:** US/Israel struck Iranian oil assets for first time (multiple depots/refineries in Tehran/Alborz; large fires, black smoke, toxic fallout risks); additional waves on IRGC facilities, bunkers, aircraft (e.g., F-14s at Isfahan); total targets exceed 3,000+; B-2/B-1B strikes on missile sites; air/sea dominance reinforced.
- **Iranian Retaliation:** Fresh missile/drone barrages (e.g., toward Israel injuring 6; Gulf hits on desalination/refineries causing fires/damage in Bahrain/Kuwait/UAE/Saudi); IRGC claims hits on US bases/radars; threats to escalate energy targets regionally.
- **Casualties:** US death toll to 8 (latest from wounds); Iranian >1,300-1,332+ (incl. civilians); regional rises (Lebanon ~300+; Gulf incidents).
- **US Statements:** Trump: War ends via mutual US-Israel decision; unconditional surrender required; regime "decimated"; open to influencing successor. Hegseth/CENTCOM: Overwhelming superiority; phase advancing decisively.
- **Economic/Global:** Oil at \$108+ (surges 19%+); heating oil/gasoline spikes; Asian markets down sharply; Hormuz threats persist (Iran vows no harm to neutrals unless used against it); Bahrain declares force majeure on shipments.

- Other: Hezbollah exchanges continue; IAEA notes no nuclear material damage; Gulf leaders (e.g., Qatar PM) urge Iran to stop attacks; protests in US/Europe.

These advance prior gains (missile/naval degradation, air control) while introducing energy warfare and formal succession amid defiance.

Updated Timeline of Key Events (Focus on Overnight)

- March 8 Evening - March 9 Morning: US/Israel hit oil depots/refineries (Tehran/Alborz fires, toxic rain warnings); Iran launches waves (Israel injuries; Gulf damages/intercepts); Mojtaba Khamenei announced Supreme Leader; Trump: Mutual end decision; US death toll to 8; IRGC energy war warning.
- March 9 Morning: Pledges to new leader; continued exchanges; oil surges; regional condemnations.

Updated Casualties and Humanitarian Impacts

- US: 8 service members killed (latest from prior wounds).
- Iran: >1,300-1,332+ killed (incl. civilians/schools); energy strikes cause blackouts/shortages/toxic risks.
- Israel and Region: 6+ injured in Israel; ~300+ in Lebanon; Gulf civilian/energy impacts (fires, damage). Humanitarian: Displacement in Lebanon/Iran; evacuations; mourning/chaos under new leadership; global protests.

Updated Economic and Global Impacts

Oil prices at \$108-120/barrel (19%+ surge); gasoline/heating oil spikes; markets slide (Asia down 3-7%); Hormuz near-halt/force majeure; energy panic risks in import-dependent regions; potential prolonged costs.

International Reactions and Statements (Updates)

- US: Trump: Mutual end with Israel; unconditional surrender; influence leadership. CENTCOM: Overwhelming progress.
- Israel: New phase surprises; target successor; control skies.
- Iran: Mojtaba Khamenei pledges; IRGC energy war; no surrender; retaliation continues.
- Others: Gulf (Qatar PM: Stop attacks); UAE intercepts; UN concerns; Russia intel reports; global calls for restraint.

Conclusion

Overnight milestones include Mojtaba Khamenei's ascension (hard-line continuity) and first oil infrastructure strikes (energy phase escalation), with Iranian persistence via Gulf/Israel barrages. Coalition dominance (3,000+ targets, air/sea control, missile reduction) advances objectives, but succession, energy hits, and proxies heighten risks of wider war, economic crisis, and attrition. Casualties rise (US to 8; Iran >1,300+); no off-ramp visible. Situation highly fluid as of March 9 morning.

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- Various X posts (March 8-9, 2026). Including updates from @spectatorindex, @GuntherEagleman, @gideonrachman, and others on oil surges, leadership, and strikes.

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