Middle East: situation update as of 9 March 2026

🔴 **Key developments over the past 72 hours** (non-exhaustive selection)

- **Intensification of Israeli air raids in Iran** with the expansion of targets to include civilian infrastructure (**Tehran, Kermanshah, Isfahan, southern regions**), including fuel depots (major fires and pollution reported). Mojtaba Khamenei has been designated as Supreme Leader; a support rally was held in Tehran.

- **Iranian and proxy retaliation against Israel:** Iranian missile salvos intensified on 8 and 9 March targeting northern and central areas, triggering sirens and interception explosions in Tel Aviv (casualties reported in Tel HaShomer).

- **Arabian/Persian Gulf,** despite statements by the Iranian president on 7 March, new Iranian attacks targeted the **UAE** (attempt to saturate air defenses over **Abu Dhabi** and **Dubai**; one civilian killed by interception debris in al-Barsha area) as airspace was gradually reopening. Major drone attacks occurred in **Bahrain** against non-military infrastructure (Salman Port in **Manama**, a university building and desalination plant in **Muharraq**, a residential area in **Sitra**, and the **al-Ma'ameer** oil complex), injuring several civilians. New interceptions were reported in **Qatar** and **Saudi Arabia** (Prince Sultan Air Base, Shaybah oil complex, with a projectile striking al-Kharj and killing two civilians). In **Kuwait City**, an offensive on 8 March caused fires at the airport and in an administrative building; two soldiers were killed.

- **Lebanon and regional spillover:** two Israeli night-time ground incursions triggered deadly clashes with Hezbollah in Nabi Chit (southern Baalbek district, on 6 and 9 March). Dozens of Israeli strikes were conducted in **southern Lebanon**, including **Tyre** and **Sidon**, as well as **Beirut's southern suburbs**. An unprecedented IDF drone strike targeted suspected Iranian al-Qods Force (IRGC) officials at the Ramada Plaza hotel in **Raouché**, in central Beirut outside evacuation zones. In this deteriorating security environment, the Lebanese Parliament postponed the legislative elections scheduled for May by two years. US strikes targeted former pro-Iran Hashd al-Shaabi militiamen in **Mosul** (7 & 9). Drone interceptions were reported in **Baghdad** (Green Zone & airport) and **Erbil** on (7).

✈️ **Airspaces closed**

- **Bahrain**
- **Kuwait**
- **Israel** (repatriation flights to Israel)
- **Iraq** (at least until the 11th)
- **Iran**

✈️ **Airspaces restricted**

- **UAE / Qatar** (evacuation/repatriation flights only - Do not go to the airports without confirmation)
- **Lebanon** (almost exclusively Middle East Airlines)

✈️ **Airspaces open**

- **Saudi Arabia**
- **Oman**
- **Jordan, Syria**
- **Türkiye, Egypt**

Recommendations

Maintain regular contact with diplomatic authorities and airlines; choose reliable and official sources of information.

Gulf countries: postpone future travel. Travellers in transit in the country should prepare for departure continuing to **shelter-in-place** (home/hotel), avoid open areas and windows indoors, and follow instructions given by the authorities. Maintain contact with your security coordinator. Ensure communication means remain active and operational at all times so you can be contacted.

Lebanon: postpone travel. Within the country, avoid all travel to all regions south and east of Beirut, prepare for departure by contacting diplomatic authorities and Middle East Airlines.

Jordan: increased risk related to interceptions and falling projectiles. Limit non-essential travel and follow local alerts. Avoid the vicinity of the US Embassy.

Israel: postpone future travel. Inside the country, it is essential to take shelter at every air raid alert, also notified via the Tzofar app (Google Play & App Store).

Iraq / Syria: postpone travel (risk of strike expansion targeting US assets and indirect incidents).

Iran: major deterioration of the internal and security environment; liaise with diplomatic authorities.