

## Ballistic missiles hit Iraq's Erbil Iran claims responsibility, says attack targeted Israeli site

AFP, Arbil

Iran claimed responsibility for a missile strike yesterday on the northern Iraqi city of Arbil, saying it targeted an Israeli "strategic centre".

Authorities in Iraq's autonomous Kurdish region had earlier said 12 ballistic missiles rained down on Arbil in a pre dawn attack targeting US interests that slightly wounded two civilians and caused material damage.

The missiles came from beyond Iraq's eastern border, Kurdistan's counter-terrorism unit announced -- in effect saying they were fired from Iran, a nation which wields considerable influence over Baghdad.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards later confirmed they fired the projectiles, claiming they were targeting sites used by Israel, a top ally of the US.

A "strategic centre for conspiracy and mischiefs of the Zionists was targeted by powerful precision missiles fired by the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps", the Guards said in a statement.

The assault comes nearly a week after the Guards vowed to avenge the death of two of their officers killed in a rocket attack in Syria they blamed on Israel. Iran backs the government in Syria's civil war.

There was no immediate reaction from Israel to yesterday's missile attack and Kurdish authorities insisted that the Jewish state has no sites in or anywhere near Arbil.

Kurdish authorities said the target of the attack was the Arbil consulate of the US. Washington said there was "no damage or casualties at any US government facility".

COVID-19 SURGE  
China slaps lockdown on millions

AFP, Beijing

Millions of people across China endured lockdowns yesterday as virus cases doubled to nearly 3,400 and anxiety mounted over the resilience of the country's 'zero-Covid' approach in the face of the worst outbreak in two years.

A nationwide surge in cases has seen authorities close schools in Shanghai, lock down southern tech powerhouse of Shenzhen as well as whole northeastern cities, as almost 18 provinces battle clusters of the Omicron and Delta variants.

Shenzhen, home to 17 million people, was put under a citywide lockdown yesterday after it reported 66 new coronavirus cases.

The city of Changchun -- an industrial base of nine million people -- was locked down Friday, while at least three other small cities have been locked down since March 1.

## Arms shipments legitimate target

Kremlin warns West; at least 1,300 Ukrainian troops dead; French and German talks with Putin fail

AGENCIES

Russia has said it will treat arms shipments to Ukraine from Nato countries as "legitimate targets" for military action in a dangerous new escalation of tensions as the United States stepped up arms supply to Ukraine.

The warning from the deputy foreign minister, Sergei Ryabkov, came as supporters of Ukraine, including the UK, Germany and the United States have been urgently shipping thousands of anti-tank and anti-aircraft missiles to Kyiv in response to Moscow's aggression.

The United States on Saturday said it would rush up to \$200 million in additional small arms, anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons to Ukraine.

Ryabkov said that Russia had "warned the US that pumping weapons from a number of countries it orchestrates isn't just a dangerous move, it's an action that makes those convoys legitimate targets".

Volodymyr Zelenskiy, the Ukrainian president, disclosed that at least 1,300 of his country's troops have been killed in the conflict so far in

the first estimate of Ukraine's combat losses after almost three weeks of fighting. Ukraine has claimed to have killed some 12,000 Russian troops.

The French president Emmanuel Macron and German chancellor Olaf Scholz reported that Vladimir Putin showed no willingness to end the war after a phone call between the leaders in which they renewed a call for a ceasefire and negotiations. A statement from the office of the French president described the conversation with Putin as "very frank and also difficult".

In his call with Macron and Scholz on Saturday, Putin spoke about "issues related to agreements under discussion to implement the Russian demands" for ending the war, the Kremlin said without providing details. Among other things, the Kremlin has previously demanded a promise by Nato never to accept Ukraine as a member and for the alliance to pull back from countries such as Poland, Romania and Bulgaria.



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GD-497



Police officers detain a woman during a protest against Russian military action in Ukraine, in Manezhnaya Square in central Moscow, yesterday. Reports said Russia yesterday detained 268 people from 23 Russian cities for protesting Moscow's "military operation" in Ukraine.

PHOTO: AFP

### TERRORISM CHARGES

Saudi Arabia executes 81 in one day

AFP, Riyadh

Saudi Arabia said Saturday it had executed a record 81 people in one day for terrorism-related offences, exceeding the total number killed last year and sparking criticism from rights activists.

All had been "found guilty of committing multiple heinous crimes", the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA) reported, saying they included convicts linked to the Islamic State group, al-Qaeda, Yemen's Houthi rebel forces or "other terrorist organisations".

Of the 81 people killed, 73 were Saudi citizens, seven were Yemeni and one was a Syrian national.

Saturday's announcement of 81 deaths marks more than the total of 69 executions in all of 2021.

Up until Saturday, Saudi Arabia in 2022 had executed 11 people convicted of various crimes, AFP reported.

**The Russian invaders cannot conquer us. ... They do not have such spirit. They are holding only on violence. Only on terror.**

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky

**Sonia stays as Congress chief**  
Leaders rally around Rahul after poor show in state polls

AGENCIES

The Congress Working Committee, the highest decision-making forum of India's main opposition yesterday met in New Delhi to discuss the debacles it suffered in recent assembly elections in five states amidst calls by leaders and workers for return of Rahul Gandhi as party chief.

After a mammoth four-and-a-half-hour meeting amid demands of a change in leadership, the party decided to continue with Sonia Gandhi as the party's interim president, NDTV reported.

Ahead of the meeting, party workers gathered nearby the venue and voiced support for Rahul to return as the party's full-time president, a post he quit soon after the defeat in national elections in May, 2019.

Senior Congress leader and Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, expressing his support for Rahul, said no one takes on Prime Minister Narendra Modi as Rahul Gandhi does.

A group of Congress leaders from Delhi, including Alka Lamba, backed Rahul to lead the party and raised slogans in his and Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's favour, reported our New Delhi correspondent.

Rahul and Priyanka were among the senior leaders who attended the CWC meeting. Dissident leaders, who have demanded organizational reforms, also participated in it.

The Congress lost the poll in Punjab to Aam Aadmi Party and failed to win against Bharatiya Janata Party in three other states Uttarakhand, Goa and Manipur. The Congress' tally of seats in politically crucial Uttar Pradesh fell to its lowest – two out of total of 403 seats.

While Sonia Gandhi has not been actively taking part in the poll campaign for quite some time, Rahul, along with Priyanka, campaigned extensively in the polls in the five states.

Chattogram Veterinary and Animal Sciences University				
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673136	CVASU/EO/Dev/ESC/PGD-4/21-22	Procurement of Scientific Machinery and Other Equipment for Faculty of Veterinary Medicine under Establishment of Second Campus Project of CVASU.	10-Apr-2022 15:30	

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Date: 13/03/2022

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Engineering Office  
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