

## What Mojtaba's rise means for Iran

REUTERS, Dubai

Iran's clerical leadership chose confrontation over compromise in appointing Mojtaba Khamenei to succeed his father, Ali Khamenei, a move regional officials say is a direct rebuke to US President Donald Trump, who had declared the son "unacceptable".

Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was killed in a US-Israeli strike at the start of the conflict, now in its second week. The appointment of Mojtaba as his successor by the Assembly of Experts locks hardliners firmly in control in Tehran - a gamble that could reshape Iran's war with the US and Israel and reverberate far beyond the Middle East.

"Having Mojtaba take over is the same playbook," said Alex Vatanka, a senior fellow at the Middle East Institute.

### FURTHER CONFRONTATION

Analysts say the choice of Mojtaba, a deeply hardline cleric whose wife, mother and other family members were also killed in US-Israeli strikes - sends an unequivocal message: Iran's leadership has rejected any prospect of compromise to preserve the system and sees no path forward except confrontation, revenge and endurance.

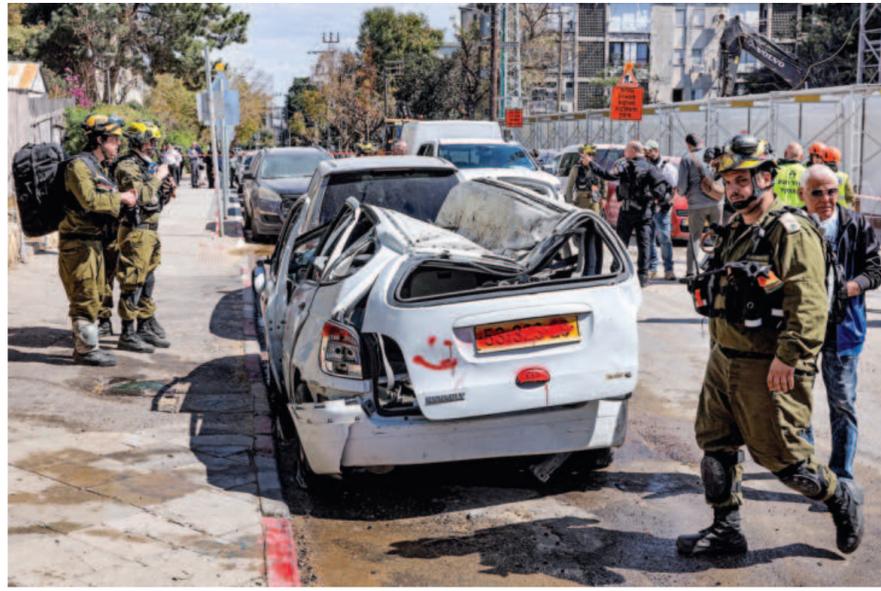
According to insiders, Mojtaba will face immense internal and external strain from a disaffected population and an escalating conflict, but is expected to move swiftly to consolidate power. "The world will miss the era of his father," a regional official close to Tehran told Reuters. "Mojtaba will have no choice but to show an iron fist... even if the war ends, there will be severe internal repression."



### NEW LEADER OPPOSED REFORMISTS

A powerful mid ranking cleric, Mojtaba, 56, has long opposed reformist groups advocating engagement with the West. He amassed influence under his father as a key figure within the security apparatus and the vast business empire it controls, operating for years as Ali Khamenei's gatekeeper and, in practice, a "mini-supreme leader", analysts say.

A Gulf source familiar with regional government thinking said of Mojtaba's appointment: "This tells Trump and Washington that Iran will not back down, they will fight on until the finish."



Israeli security forces and first responders gather near a destroyed vehicle at the site of an Iranian strike that hit a residential neighbourhood in Bat Yam, south of Tel Aviv, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Syrian Kurds warn Iran's Kurds on US ties

REUTERS, Qamishli

Kurdish residents of northeast Syria warned Iran's Kurds against aligning with the US to fight the Iranian government, citing their own experience in Syria in recent months as evidence their Iranian counterparts would be "abandoned."

Iranian Kurdish militias based in northern Iraq have consulted with the United States in recent days about whether and how to attack security forces in western Iran, as the United States and Israel pound

Iran with air strikes, Reuters has reported.

But Syria's Kurds warned their Iranian counterparts against partnering with Washington.

"I hope that the Kurds of Iran will not ally themselves with America, because they will abandon them," said Saad Ali, a 45-year-old resident of the northeastern Syrian Kurdish town of Qamishli. "Tomorrow, if an agreement is made between them (the US) and the Iranians, they will eliminate you. Do not make our mistakes," he told Reuters.

Syrian Kurdish fighters aligned with the US more than a decade ago to fight the Islamic State group.

But in January, Syria's new army under President Ahmed al-Sharaa captured most of the Kurdish-held areas in a sweeping offensive.

Syria's Kurds called on the US to intervene on their behalf, and felt betrayed when Washington instead urged them to merge with Sharaa's forces.

It remains a bitter experience for Syria's Kurds and a lesson they say should be heeded by Iranian Kurds.

## About 10 vessels attacked in Strait of Hormuz

### Analysts report 7 killed as rescuers come under fire

AFP, Paris

About 10 vessels in or near the Strait of Hormuz have come under attack since Iran blocked the strategic waterway in retaliation for US-Israeli strikes, data analysis groups report.

The attacks throughout the week following the outbreak of war on February 28 almost completely halted traffic through the strait, a crucial route for oil and other goods. Britain's maritime security agency UKMTO has issued around 10 alerts for attacks as well as warnings of suspicious activity, but has released few details on the vessels involved.

The IMO listed on its website Friday a total of nine attacks on ships in the strait in one week, including four incidents that killed a total of seven people.

### SEVEN REPORTED KILLED

The IMO said one person was killed in each of three attacks on the vessels Skylight, MKD Vyom and the Stena Imperative on March 2, when the Hercules Star was also hit. Between March 3 and 5 four more vessels were struck: the Libra Trader, Gold Oak, Safen Prestige and the Sonangol Namibe.

On March 6, four people were killed when the Mussafah 2 was struck. Indonesia announced Sunday that a vessel whose characteristics and last known position matched those of the Mussafah 2 sank two days earlier, but with a different toll.

Jakarta reported three Indonesian crew members missing, one injured Indonesian survivor and four survivors of other nationalities.

### RESCUERS TARGETED

Maritime security firm Vanguard said the Mussafah 2 was hit by two missiles as it tried to assist the container ship Safen Prestige, which had been struck by a missile two days earlier.

"Recent incident reporting... indicates that vessels providing assistance or salvage operations to previously targeted vessels may also face elevated risk of follow-on strikes," the Joint Maritime Information Centre (JMIC), run by a Western naval coalition, warned in a note Saturday.

Drone and missile attacks claimed by IRGC are not always confirmed by independent sources - some are confirmed only after several days, and the vessels involved are not always identified.

## Israel 'unlawfully' using white phosphorus in Lebanon: HRW

AFP, Beirut

Human Rights Watch (HRW) yesterday accused Israel of "unlawfully" using white phosphorus over residential parts of a southern Lebanese town last week.

"The Israeli military unlawfully used artillery-fired white phosphorus munitions over homes on March 3, 2026, in the southern Lebanese town of Yohmor," the New York-based rights group said in a report.

HRW added that it "verified and geolocated seven images showing airburst white phosphorus munitions being deployed over a residential part of the town and civil defense workers responding to fires in at least two homes and one car in that area".

White phosphorus, a substance that ignites on contact with oxygen, can be used to create smokescreens and to illuminate battlefields.

But the munition can also be used as an incendiary weapon and can cause fires, horrific burns, respiratory

damage, organ failure and death. Israel launched multiple waves of strikes across Lebanon since last week and sent ground troops into border areas after the Iran-backed group attacked it.



The Israeli army has since repeatedly called on people living south of the Litani River, around 30 kilometres (20 miles) north of the Israeli border, to leave.

At least 394 people have been killed in Israeli attacks, Lebanese authorities said, registering more than half a million people as displaced. "The Israeli military's unlawful use of white phosphorus over residential areas is

extremely alarming and will have dire consequences for civilians," Ramzi Kais, Lebanon researcher at HRW, was quoted saying in the report.

"Israel should immediately halt this practice and states providing Israel with weapons, including white phosphorus munitions, should immediately suspend military assistance and arms sales and push Israel to stop firing such munitions in residential areas," he added.

Lebanese authorities and HRW have over the past years accused Israel of using controversial white phosphorus rounds, in attacks authorities say have harmed civilians and the environment.

Lebanon's National News Agency on Sunday said Israeli forces targeted the towns of Khiam and Tal Nahas "with artillery and phosphorus shelling".

Last month, Lebanon accused Israel of spraying the herbicide glyphosate on the Lebanese side of their shared border.

## Qatar arrests 313 for sharing attacks footage

AFP, Doha

Qatari authorities have arrested more than 300 people for sharing images and what they described as "misleading information" during days of attacks by Iran, the interior ministry said yesterday.

The arrests echo measures across the Gulf as Iran targets airports, military bases, energy installations and residential areas with daily drones.

Those arrested "filmed and circulated video clips and published misleading information and rumours that could stir public opinion", a statement said.

The people of "various nationalities" were held by the Department for Combating Economic and Cyber Crimes at the ministry's General Directorate of Criminal Investigations.

The announcement follows a spate of arrests elsewhere in the region. In Bahrain, four people were arrested for "broadcasting clips and spreading false news", the interior ministry said.

## CHINESE MILITARY AIRCRAFT Sharp aircraft drop near Taiwan raises alarm

AFP, Taipei

Taiwan has not detected a single Chinese military aircraft around the island for nine of the past 10 days, leaving experts puzzling over the reasons for the dramatic reduction in sorties.

China claims Taiwan is part of its territory and has threatened to use force to bring the island under its control. Beijing has stepped up military pressure on Taiwan in recent years, deploying fighter jets and warships around the island on a near-daily basis.

But since February 28, only two Chinese aircraft have been recorded in a single 24-hour period near Taiwan, according to an AFP tally of figures released daily by the defence ministry. That compares with 86 for the same period last year. It is the longest stretch of no detections since AFP began recording the figures in 2024.

Experts have been speculating about the reasons for the sharp drop in Chinese aircraft deployments, with possibilities ranging from China's

annual political gathering, known as the "two sessions", currently underway in Beijing, to its recent military purges.

Other reasons include US President Donald Trump's scheduled trip to Beijing later this month to meet his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, and the Middle East conflict.

"I didn't expect to be worried about the cessation of PLA operations around Taiwan, but the lack of a rational explanation is disconcerting," Drew Thompson, a senior fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies at Singapore's Nanyang Technological University, wrote on Substack. Another

longtime observer of the Chinese military told AFP it was "not clear at all how to read it".

Ben Lewis of the analysis website PLATracker said it was "clearly a significant disruption to routine activity".

"The longer the activity gap persists, the more concerned I will be about broader implications, but I have not seen any indications that the PRC is preparing for any major kinetic action," Lewis told AFP.





**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
**Bangladesh Police**  
**Police Telecommunication Organization**  
**Police Telecom Bhabon, Rajarbag, Dhaka.**  
**Web: telecom.police.gov.bd**

### Invitation for International Tender

Sealed tenders are hereby invited from the Manufacturers/Suppliers in their official pad for Supplying, Installing, Testing and Commissioning of DMR Trunking (Tier-3) System on Turnkey Basis

1. Ministry/Division	Ministry of Home Affairs			
2. Agency	Bangladesh Police			
3. Procuring Entity Name	SP (Logistics), Police Telecom Organization			
4. Invitation for	Supplying, Installing, Testing and Commissioning of DMR Trunking (Tier-3) System on Turnkey Basis			
5. Invitation Ref. No.	44.01.0000.057.11.054.25/2162/Betar			
6. Date	09-03-2026			
<b>Key Information</b>				
7. Procurement Method	One Stage Two Envelope Tendering Method (OSTETM) - (International)			
<b>Funding Information</b>				
8. Budget and source of funds	Revenue Budget (GOB)			
<b>Particular Information</b>				
9. Tender Publication date	10 March 2026			
10. Tender last selling date	22 April 2026			
11. Tender closing date and time	23 April 2026 at 12:00 hrs.			
12. Tender opening date and time (Technical offer only)	23 April 2026 at 12:30 hrs.			
<b>Name &amp; address of the office</b>				
13. Name & address of the office	Bangladesh Police, Police Telecommunication Organization, Rajarbag, Dhaka.			
Selling tender document	ASP (Procurement), Police Telecommunication Organization, Rajarbag, Dhaka.			
Receiving tender document	Police Telecommunication Organization, Rajarbag, Dhaka.			
Opening tender document	Police Telecommunication Organization, Rajarbag, Dhaka.			
14. Place/date/time of pre-tender meeting (optional)	25 March 2026, at 12:00 hrs. at Police Telecom Conference Room (1 <sup>st</sup> Floor), Police Telecommunication Organization, Rajarbag, Dhaka.			
<b>INFORMATION FOR TENDERER</b>				
15. Eligibility of Tenderer	1) Up to date Export license (2) Written confirmation authorizing the signatory of the tender in accordance with the Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association of the Principal (3) Affidavit confirming the legal capacity and financial capability (4) Original full Brochure of products of the Principal (5) Other requirements described in the tender document (PG 5A).			
16. Brief description of goods:	Supplying, Installing, Testing and Commissioning of DMR Trunking (Tier-3) System on Turnkey Basis			
Sl. No.	Description of Good	Price of tender document (Non-refundable)	Tender security	Completion time
1.	DMR Trunking (Tier-3) System on Turnkey Basis.	10,000/- (Ten Thousand) Taka only.	TK-15,92,000/- or US\$-13,002.00	150 days from the Date of Opening L/C.
<b>Procuring Entity Details</b>				
17. Name of official inviting tender	Shahriar Bin Saleh			
18. Designation of the official inviting tender	SP (Logistics), Bangladesh Police, Rajarbag, Dhaka-1217.			
19. Address of official inviting tender	Police Telecom Organization, Rajarbag, Dhaka-1217.			
20. Contact details of official inviting tender	Phone: +880 2-8301253 FAX: +880 2-8301404, Mobile: +88 01320-020041 e-mail: splog.telecom@police.gov.bd			
21.	The tenderers shall submit their Technical and Financial offer in separate sealed envelope. Furthermore both envelopes shall be covered by an outer envelope which is sealed.			
<b>Special instructions</b>				
22.	a) No tender will be received after the deadline of submission time & date. b) The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all tenders or annul the tender process without assigning any reason. c) The Procuring entity also reserves the right to omit, increase and/or decrease the quantity of any item(s) of the tender. d) If not possible to receive/open the tender on the scheduled date for any unavoidable circumstance, the same will be received/opened on the next working date at the same time & same venue. e) Evaluation will be done by Lot by Lot basis. f) Date of financial offer opening will be duly informed to the Technically Responsive Tenderers and their local agents. g) The Tenderer must comply with all requirements as per the tender data sheet provided with the tender schedule. h) The Tender Security shall be in the form of an irrevocable bank guarantee issued by an internationally reputable bank and shall require to be endorsed by its any correspondent bank located in Bangladesh. i) The Procurement will be performed according to the Public Procurement Act-2006 and Public Procurement Regulation 2025.			



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