



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on March 11, 2026

Report: 48-hour Cost of Iran Bombing: \$5.6 Billion. Boots on the Ground Ahead?

The Trump administration's war to overthrow the regime in Iran on Israel's behalf cost American taxpayers almost \$6 billion in munitions in its first 48 hours.

It isn't clear how long U.S. forces can expend ordnance. But the campaign as waged thus far suggests that it cannot go on for long. On Monday, President Donald Trump said the war will end "very soon."

Yet given what he and GOP Senator Lindsey Graham (S.C.) have said before, the war will go on indefinitely. Early on after he opened the attack, Trump ominously hinted that he might send American fighting men to die in Iran.



AP Images

A U.S. Tomahawk missile being fired at Iran on Feb. 28, 2026



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The Pentagon burned through \$5.6 billion worth of munitions in the first two days of its Iran assault, according to U.S. officials, alarming some on Capitol Hill over how quickly the military has depleted scarce supplies of America's most advanced weaponry. [Show more](#)



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Early Iran strikes cost \$5.6 billion in munitions, Pentagon estimates
The figure, accounting for the war's first two days, is likely to intensify concerns in Congress that U.S. forces are churning through a scarce ...

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Post Report

The estimate of the war's cost from February 28 through March 1, when the obliteration of Iran began, showed up in *The Washington Post*.

"The Pentagon burned through \$5.6 billion worth of munitions during the first two days of its military assault on Iran, according to three U.S. officials, a figure that underscores the deepening alarm among some on Capitol Hill over the speed at which U.S. forces have eaten into the scarce supply of America's most advanced weaponry," the [newspaper reported](#).

Understandably, Congress and military analysts are concerned about the expenditure on munitions in a military adventure with no end in sight, the paper continued. And the Trump administration will send a



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request to Congress for more money to continue the bombing campaign.

[Said the Post:](#)

In response to questions from The Washington Post about the state of U.S. weapons inventories, Sean Parnell, the Pentagon's chief spokesman, issued a statement saying that the Defense Department has "everything it needs to execute any mission at the time and place of the President's choosing and on any timeline."

It's unclear how long the war could last. President Donald Trump said last week that the operation could take more than a month, though on Monday he told CBS News that it is "very complete, pretty much," citing Iran's significant military losses.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Dan Caine told reporters last week that the campaign was transitioning away from its reliance on precision munitions and instead will increasingly use the more plentiful stores of laser-guided bombs as U.S. and Israeli forces push inland after establishing air superiority over Iran.

The \$5.6 billion figure highlights how costly the strikes were before that transition began, said the officials, who like some others spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the sensitive estimate. They did not specify how many and what kinds of munitions were expended in the war's opening days.

Among the weapons used to attack Iran on Israel's behalf are [Tomahawk cruise missiles](#), which cost anywhere from \$1.4 million to \$2 million each. Also used were "advanced air defense interceptors."

U.S. Central Command reported that it has used 2,000 munitions to hit 5,000 targets, the *Post* reported. On X, the command detailed the assets used in the attack.



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U.S. Central Command

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Operation Epic Fury: The first 10 days

OPERATION EPIC FURY

FIRST 10 DAYS

OPERATION EPIC FURY

FIRST 10 DAYS

OVERVIEW

U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) commenced Operation Epic Fury at the direction of the President of the United States. CENTCOM forces are striking targets to dismantle the Iranian regime's security apparatus, prioritizing locations that pose an imminent threat.

Operation Launched: 1:15am, February 28, 2026

Operation Location: Iran

Targets Struck: Over 5,000

Iranian Ships Damaged or Destroyed: 50+

OPERATION EPIC FURY

FIRST 10 DAYS

U.S. ASSETS EMPLOYED

- B-1 Bombers
- B-2 Stealth Bombers
- B-52 Bombers
- LCAS Drones
- Patriot Interceptor Missile Systems
- THAAD Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems
- F-15 Fighter jets
- F-16 Fighter jets
- F-18 Fighter jets
- F-22 Fighter jets
- F-35 Stealth Fighters
- A-10 Attack jets
- EA-18G Electronic Attack Aircraft
- Avionics Early Warning & Control Aircraft
- F-2D Advanced Hawkeye
- Avionics Communication Relay

- U-2 Dragon Lady
- P-8 Maritime Patrol Aircraft
- RC-135 Reconnaissance Aircraft
- MQ-9 Reapers
- MA-42 High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems
- Nuclear Powered Aircraft Carriers
- Guided Missile Destroyers
- Counter Drone Systems
- Refueling Tanker Aircraft
- Refueling Ships
- C-17 Globemaster Cargo Aircraft
- C-130J Cargo Aircraft
- EC-130H Compass Call
- Counter Rocket, Artillery and Mortar Systems (C-RAM)
- ... and special capabilities we can't list here!

OPERATION EPIC FURY

FIRST 10 DAYS

TYPES OF TARGETS

- Command and Control Centers
- IRGC Headquarters Buildings
- IRGC Intelligence Sites
- Integrated Air Defense Systems
- Ballistic Missile Sites
- Iranian Navy Ships & Submarines
- Iranian Air Defense Systems
- Anti-ship Missile Sites
- Military Communication Capabilities
- Ballistic Missile & Drone Manufacturing

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Before the U.S. attacked Iran on February 28, the [Post disclosed](#) that Caine was skeptical about it. During a meeting at the White House, he warned Trump that trouble might be ahead.

Sources explained the gist of Caine's remarks to Trump: "Any major operation against Iran will face challenges because the U.S. munitions stockpile has been significantly depleted by Washington's ongoing defense of Israel and support for Ukraine."

[Continued the paper:](#)

Separately, in Pentagon meetings this month, Caine also has raised concerns about the scale of any Iran campaign, its inherent complexity and the possibility of U.S. casualties, one person said. The general has said that any operation would be made all the more difficult by a lack of allied support, this person said, speaking like others on the condition of anonymity to discuss private conversations.

Trump Listened to Bibi

That advice apparently fell on deaf ears.

As [The New American reported](#) last week, Secretary of State Marco Rubio confessed to reporters that Israel forced Trump's hand to start the bombing. "We knew that there was going to be an Israeli action,



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we knew that that would precipitate an attack against American forces, and we knew that if we didn't preemptively go after them before they launched those attacks, we would suffer higher casualties, and perhaps even higher [numbers] killed," Rubios said:

And we would all be here answering questions about why we knew that and didn't act.

[Trump denied](#) that claim, [saying](#) he [might have forced](#) Israel's hand. Rubio then denied that he said Israel forced the U.S. to attack.



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Rubio Today: It's false to say I said the U.S. had to attack because Israel was going to attack. That's not what I said.

Rubio Yesterday: We knew Israel was going to strike Iran, and that would trigger attacks on U.S. forces. If we didn't act first, Americans would suffer higher [Show more](#)



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As well, [Israel interfered](#) with back-channel talks between U.S. and Iranian officials to end the devastating air raids. [Axios reported](#) last week:

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu asked the White House for clarifications earlier this week after learning Trump administration officials might be communicating with the



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Iranian regime, two sources with knowledge of the issue said.

Troops on the Ground

Graham, apparently, anticipates a drawn-out war. And that might involve sending in U.S. ground forces.

Referring to the seeming unwillingness of Saudi Arabia and other countries to join the U.S.-Israeli crusade, [Graham told](#) Fox talker Sean Hannity that “I go back to South Carolina, I’m asking them to send their sons and daughters to the Middle East.”



On Monday during a news conference, Trump said the war would end “very soon.”

“But Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps said in response ... that they ‘are the ones who will determine the end of the war,’” [Axios reported](#):

The IRGC added that Tehran would not allow the export of “one litre of oil” from the region if the U.S. and Israeli attacks continued — prompting Trump to respond with a counter-



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threat on Truth Social.

“If Iran has put out any mines in the Hormuz Strait, and we have no reports of them doing so, we want them removed, IMMEDIATELY! If for any reason mines were placed, and they are not removed forthwith, the Military consequences to Iran will be at a level never seen before,” he wrote.

That suggests the war won’t be over “very soon,” which in turn raises the strong possibility of troops dying in battle.

[Trump told](#) the *New York Post* on March 2:

I don’t have the yips with respect to boots on the ground — like every president says, “There will be no boots on the ground.” I don’t say it.... I say, “probably don’t need them” [or] “if they were necessary.”



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