



SPECIAL REPORT · DEFENSE & SECURITY

30 March 2026
SPECIAL EDITION

UAE Defense Shield

Tehran to Dubai — The Race Against Time

Day 31 of Active Campaign

Since February 28, 2026, Iran has launched **414 ballistic missiles, 1,914 drones, and 15 cruise missiles** against the UAE. As of today, the shield is holding — but the math is getting harder.

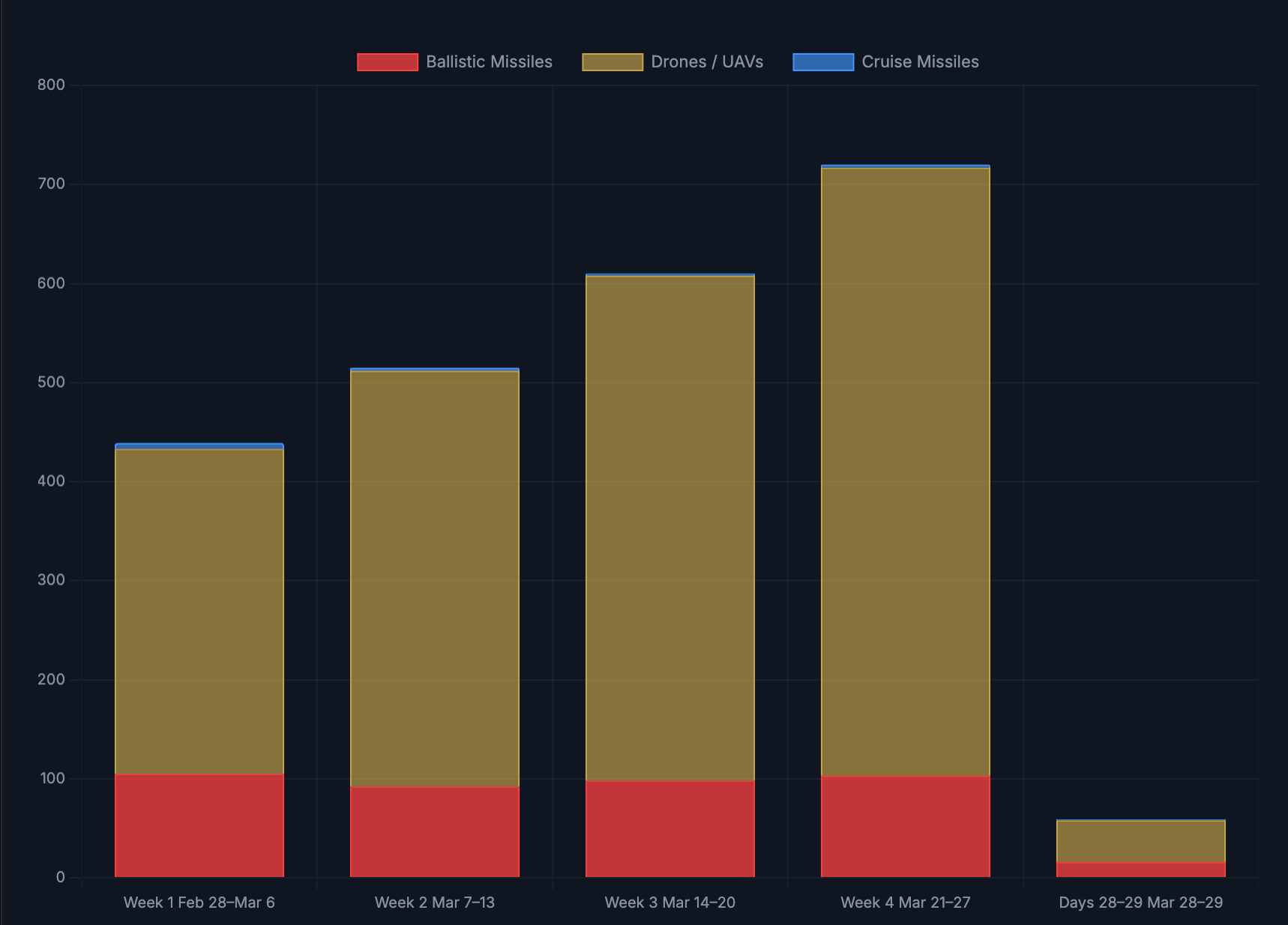
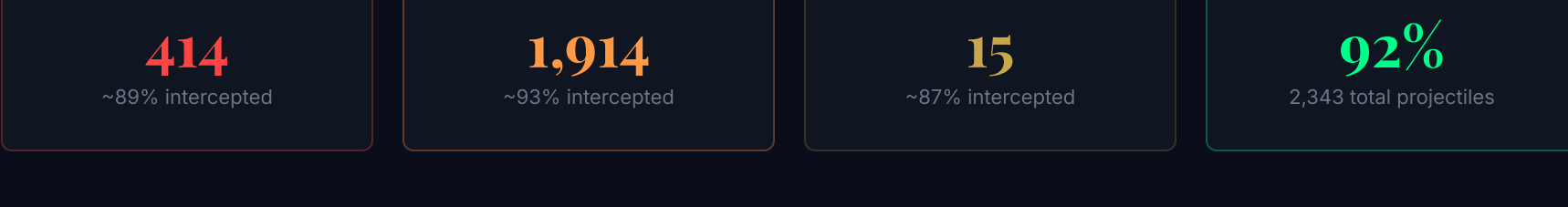
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Three Things You Need to Know

- ▶ **The shield is real, but not perfect.** UAE air defenses have achieved a ~92% intercept rate against 2,343 total projectiles — yet the remaining 8% hit airports, ports, and residential areas near Burj Al Arab.
- ▶ **A ballistic missile from Tehran gives you 2 minutes of warning.** THAAD intercepts at altitude before alert reaches your phone. The alert is for debris protection — not evacuation. By the time you read it, the missile has already been engaged or it hasn't.
- ▶ **Iran's strategy is economic exhaustion, not military conquest.** Each Shahed-136 drone costs ~\$20,000-\$50,000. Each THAAD interceptor costs ~\$10 million. At scale, this math favors the attacker — and Iran has 2,000+ drones in inventory.

CONFLICT — BY THE NUMBERS

30 Days of Bombardment



WEAPON	CLASS	SPEED	RANGE	THREAT PROFILE
Emad / Shahab-3	Ballistic	Mach 10-14	~2,000 km	Separating warhead — hardest to intercept
Kheibar Shekan	Ballistic	Mach 12+	~1,450 km	Maneuvering warhead — designed to evade THAAD
Al-Qiam	Ballistic	Mach 8-10	~800 km	Liquid-fueled, cluster warhead variant
Shahed-238	Drone (Jet)	~700 km/h	~2,000 km	Jet-powered — flies in altitude gap between THAAD and Patriot
Shahed-136	Drone (Prop)	~185 km/h	~2,500 km	Low-cost kamikaze, delta-wing, minimal radar cross-section
Paveh Cruise	Cruise Missile	~900 km/h	~1,650 km	Terrain-following, low altitude — evades radar coverage gaps

PHYSICS OF ATTACK

Tehran → Dubai: How Long Do You Have?

Distance: ~1,200 km (Tehran → Dubai, straight line across Persian Gulf) — at Mach 12, that's under 10 minutes from launch to impact. A ballistic missile climbs to 300-800 km altitude, separates its warhead, and descends at 3-4 km per second. By the time radar confirms trajectory, you have 90-120 seconds before impact — if THAAD doesn't intercept first.



UAE DEFENSE ARCHITECTURE

Four Layers — One Shield

L1 THAAD — Terminal High Altitude Area Defense
Hit-to-kill kinetic intercept · 6 trucks × 8 launchers = 48 interceptors · AN/TPY-2 radar · \$800M/battery · Combat-proven Jan 2022 vs. Houthi missiles
Up to 150 km INTERCEPT ALTITUDE

L2 Patriot PAC-3 MSE — The Backbone
Hit-to-kill + fragmentation warhead · 360° LTAMDS radar (2025 upgrade, eliminates legacy blind spot) · Engages THAAD "leakers," cruise missiles, aircraft
Up to 24 km INTERCEPT ALTITUDE

L3 M-SAM-II (Cheongung) — Korean Layer
\$3.5B deal signed Jan 2022 · Korea's largest defense export · 12 batteries ordered, 2 received · Fills medium-altitude gap · Integrates with THAAD + Patriot data network
Medium alt. CRUISE / UAV LAYER

L4 Fighter Interceptors — F-16 Block 60 + Mirage 2000-9
Most flexible layer · Engages drones and cruise missiles below ground-system altitudes · Response from Al Dhafra: airborne in minutes · Covers full UAE airspace
All airspace FLEXIBLE COVERAGE

LAYER 4 — AERIAL HUNTERS

The Jets That Intercept Iranian Drones

<p>F-16E/F Block 60 *Desert Falcon* — Built exclusively for UAE · Most advanced F-16 ever made</p> <p>Engine: GE F110-GE-132 · 32,500 lbs thrust</p> <p>Speed: Mach 2+</p> <p>Radar: AN/APG-80 AESA · 200km range</p> <p>EW Suite: Falcon Edge LEWS · active jamming</p> <p>Missiles A/A: AIM-9X Sidewinder + AIM-120 AMRAAM</p> <p>Range: +40% via built-in CFTs</p> <p>Combat Role: Primary drone hunter · Shahed-136/238</p>	<p>Mirage 2000-9 French platform, UAE-customized · Interceptor + deep strike</p> <p>Engine: SNECMA M53-P2 · 95 kN w/ afterburner</p> <p>Speed: Mach 2.2</p> <p>Radar: Thales RDY-2 · 140km · tracks 24</p> <p>EW Suite: IMEWS (classified)</p> <p>Missiles A/A: MBDA MICA EM + MICA IR · fire-and-forget</p> <p>Strike Weapon: Black Shaheen cruise · ~500km range</p> <p>Combat Role: Intercept + potential deep strike on Iran</p>
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March 3, 2026 — Confirmed Combat Action: UAE MoD confirmed F-16 Block 60 and Mirage 2000-9 aircraft conducted a **four-day interception operation** neutralizing Shahed-136, -107, -238 drones and Al-Qiam ballistic missile fragments. The Black Shaheen cruise missile gives the Mirage 2000-9 a *reach into Iran* if the conflict escalates to offensive operations — a capability Iran is very aware of.

ALERT SYSTEM

What Happens in Your Phone



<p>~2 min</p> <p>BALLISTIC MISSILE WARNING</p> <p>Alert arrives as missile is already engaged. No evacuation possible — shelter in place, avoid windows, await all-clear.</p>	<p>~15 min</p> <p>DRONE WARNING (SUBSONIC)</p> <p>More time to reach interior room. Stay low, away from windows. Do not go outdoors.</p>	<p>~10 min</p> <p>CRUISE MISSILE WARNING</p> <p>Terrain-following path makes detection late. Alert lead time varies by geography.</p>
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<p>✓ DO</p> <p>Move indoors immediately — lowest floor, fewest exterior walls Stay away from all windows and glass Wait for official all-clear from NCEMA/Mol Follow only official government channels</p>	<p>✗ DO NOT</p> <p>Film or photograph interceptions — illegal, criminal prosecution Touch fallen debris (unexploded ordnance risk) Rush outdoors or into traffic Share unverified information or videos</p>
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DAMAGE ASSESSMENT

What Got Through (The 8%)

<p>Emirates Global Aluminium (EGA) INDUSTRIAL — ABU DHABI Massive fire. IRGO claimed credit, called it "US-linked aerospace industry target."</p>	<p>Dubai International Airport CIVIL AVIATION Drone debris, flight disruptions, minor structural damage. Operational with delays.</p>
<p>Zayed International Airport, Abu Dhabi CIVIL AVIATION Interception debris, injuries reported, temporary closures.</p>	<p>Jebel Ali Port + Fujairah Port STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE Fires reported. Jebel Ali — world's 9th busiest port — partially disrupted.</p>
<p>Al Dhafra Air Base US / UAE MILITARY Primary target of early waves. US Air Force assets present. Defenses activated.</p>	<p>Residential Areas CIVILIAN — DUBAI & ABU DHABI Interception debris. Windows shattered. Burj Al Arab vicinity affected.</p>

<p>FATALITIES</p> <p>11</p> <p>2 Emirati military · 1 Moroccan contractor · 8 foreign civilians</p>	<p>INJURED</p> <p>178</p> <p>29 nationalities affected</p>
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UAE RESILIENCE — WHAT'S HOLDING

<p>92% Intercept Rate Most sophisticated missile defense in the Arab world — and it's working under live fire conditions</p>	<p>Economy Operational ADGM, DIFC, real estate transactions, and business activity continuing. Capital safe haven status reinforced</p>	<p>Dubai International Open DXB operating with disruptions — not closed. Airlines adjusting routes, not abandoning the region</p>
<p>Diplomatic Response Embassy in Tehran closed, Iranian ambassador summoned. UAE positioned as victim, not aggressor — strong international sympathy</p>	<p>Regulatory Continuity No emergency restrictions on banking, property transfers, or business licensing. Rules unchanged</p>	<p>US Military Umbrella Al Dhafra hosts USAF ISR, satellite coverage, AWACS — UAE does not defend alone. That matters enormously</p>

ARK STRATEGIC ANALYSIS

Three Scenarios — Next 30 Days

<p>55%</p> <p>Sustained Attrition</p> <p>Iran continues current pace — 10-20 missiles + 50-100 drones/day. UAE defense holds above 90%. Slow economic damage. Ceasefire negotiations ongoing in background. No major escalation.</p>	<p>30%</p> <p>Escalation — New Weapon</p> <p>Iran introduces Fatah-1 hypersonic missile (Mach 13-15, maneuvering warhead). THAAD not optimized for this profile. Success rate drops. US responds with direct strikes. Conflict broadens.</p>	<p>15%</p> <p>Interceptor Depletion</p> <p>Saturation campaign depletes THAAD/Patriot stockpiles faster than resupply. UAE requests emergency US interceptor transfer. High economic impact. Regional evacuation pressure increases.</p>
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