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Argus Leader

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Strikes hit U.S. Embassy in Saudi Arabia



A plume of smoke rises after a strike on Tehran, Iran, on March 3. Secretary of State Marco Rubio predicted “the hardest hits are yet to come” against Iran. ATTA KENARE/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

U.S. personnel, citizens told to leave region

Michael Loria, Zac Anderson, Jeanine Santucci, Francesca Chambers, Kim Hjelmggaard and Michael Collins

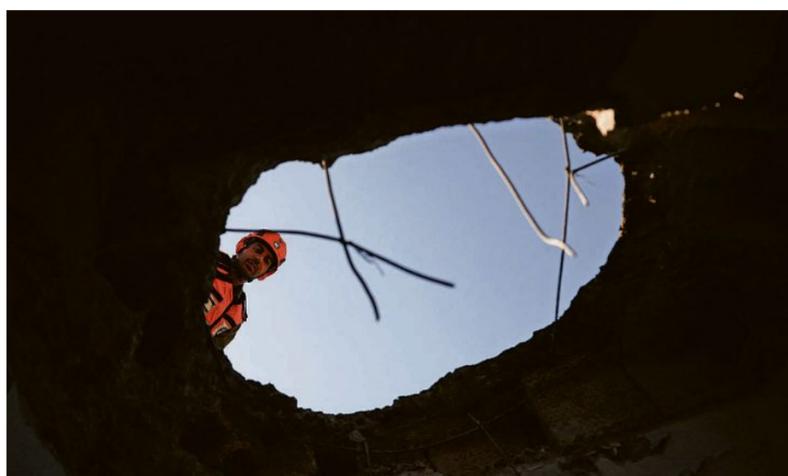
USA TODAY

The United States ordered nonemergency government personnel and their family members to leave Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Iraq and Jordan and closed several diplomatic missions across the Middle East on March 3 as the war with Iran escalated.

The move came as the U.S. Embassy in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, was hit by two drones in an attack that sparked a “limited fire and minor material damage to the building,” a Saudi Defense Ministry spokesperson announced on the Ministry’s X account.

The U.S. Mission to Saudi Arabia issued a “security alert” recommending Americans to “shelter in place immediately and avoid the Embassy until further notice.”

On March 2, the State Department urged American citizens across 16 countries in the Middle East to immediately depart the region using “available commercial transportation” without offering any U.S.-government-vouched means. The U.S. embassy in Jerusalem in a statement said it was unable to offer



An emergency personnel member works at the site of an Iranian missile strike in Petah Tikva, Israel, on March 3. RONEN ZVULUN/REUTERS

assistance to Americans trying to leave.

Reuters reported March 2 that detainee advocates said Iran is detaining at least six U.S. citizens or permanent residents, raising fears they and thousands of Americans believed trapped in the country could be used as bargaining chips in the war.

U.S. and Israeli military forces attacked Iran on Feb. 28, killing top Iranian officials and prompting retaliation against Israel and missile attacks in Arab nations with U.S. bases across the Middle East. Officials from the United States and Israel said they have launched over 1,200 strikes aimed at destroying Iran’s ballistic missile and nu-

clear development programs.

Iran’s counterattacks thus far have killed at least six U.S. servicemembers. President Donald Trump has said the fighting could last weeks.

Merz: ‘We recognize the dilemma’

Secretary of State Marco Rubio predicted “the hardest hits are yet to come” against Iran.

“The next phase will be even more punishing on Iran than it is right now,” Rubio told reporters on March 2 without elaborating. “The hardest hits are

See STRIKES, Page 2A

Questions about proposed Sioux Falls data center?

Vanessa Carlson Bender

Sioux Falls Argus Leader
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Gemini hyperscale data center proposed for northeastern Sioux Falls will not be tied to cryptocurrency or national security, according to a statement emailed from Gemini Capital founder Michael Anvar to the Argus Leader.

The announcement is the latest to come out of consultants and owners tied to the proposed project, which includes property the Sioux Falls City Council voted on Jan. 6 to rezone for project’s preliminary plan after nearly four hours of public input.

The council’s decision finalizes approval for light industrial development for the hyperscale Gemini Data Center on more than 100 acres between Sioux Falls and Brandon.

Those who opposed the Gemini data center proposal, a multi-billion-dollar

See DATA, Page 3A

How SD officials reacted to ‘massive’ US attack on Iran

Shelly Conlon

Sioux Falls Argus Leader
USA TODAY NETWORK

South Dakota’s Congressional leaders are praising President Donald Trump for his action of joining Israel for a missile-launched attack this weekend in Iran, with the intent to target and dismantle Iran’s nuclear capabilities and demand regime change.

“Our objective is to defend the American people by eliminating imminent threats from the Iranian regime, a vicious group of very hard, terrible people,” Trump said Saturday, Feb. 28, calling the strikes, “a massive and on-going operation.”

Trump has since faced scrutiny for a lack of clarity about the timeline and overall goals of the war, and acting without the direct approval of Congress, which has the power to officially declare war for the U.S. Lawmakers are also in heated debate about whether the Trump’s decision may violate the Constitution, with Democrats calling for a war powers resolution vote to stop the effort, according to multiple military outlets.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran’s supreme leader, was directly targeted, a Middle Eastern official told USA TODAY. Khamenei was killed in the attacks on Feb. 28, according to Israeli sources who told USA TODAY, CNN

See IRAN, Page 2A

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