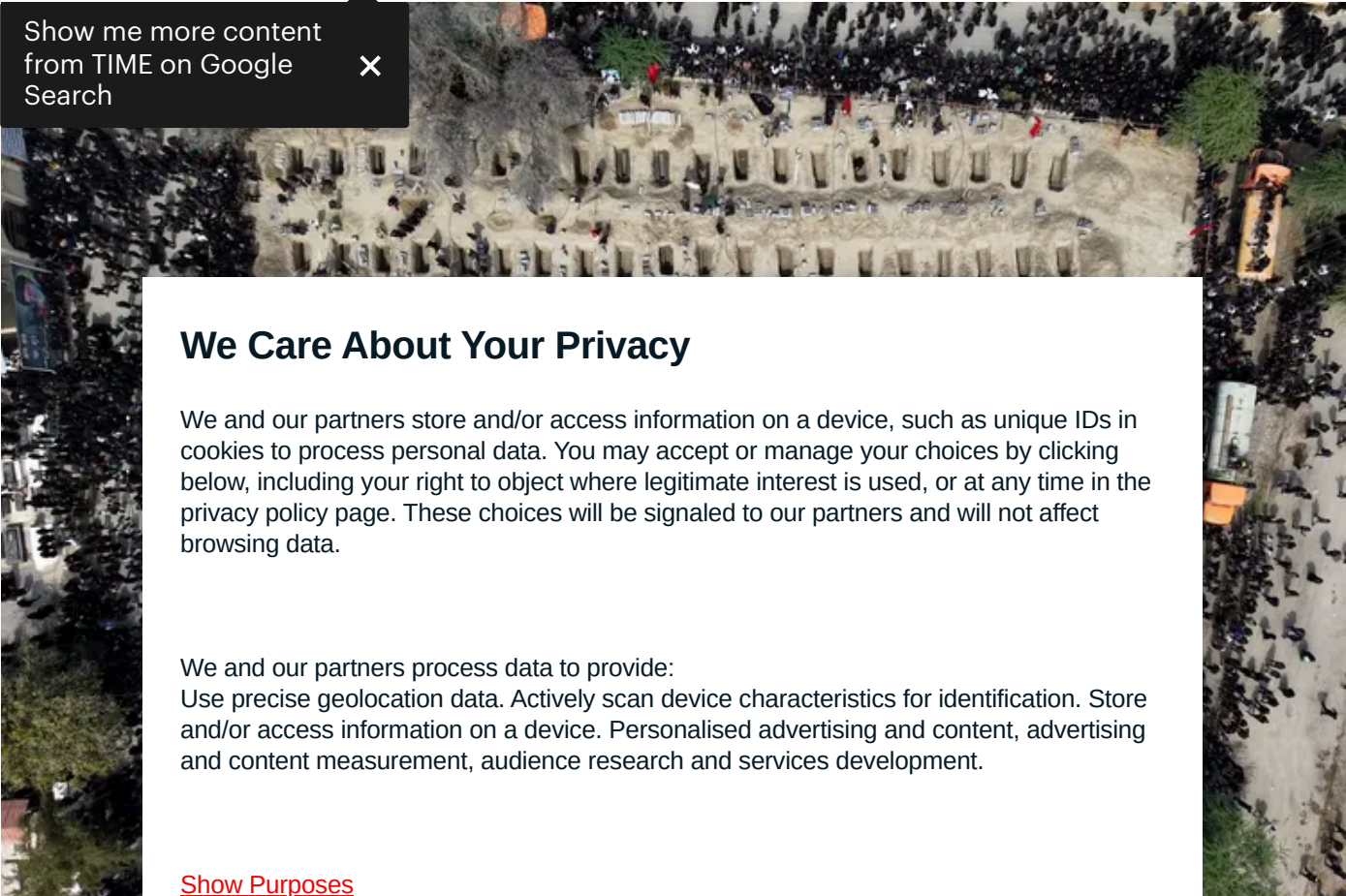


WORLD IRAN

# More Than 100 School Children Were Killed in Iran. Evidence Points to a U.S. Missile Strike

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An aerial view in a US-Israel

d were killed

by Philip Wan

MAR 11, 2026 6:

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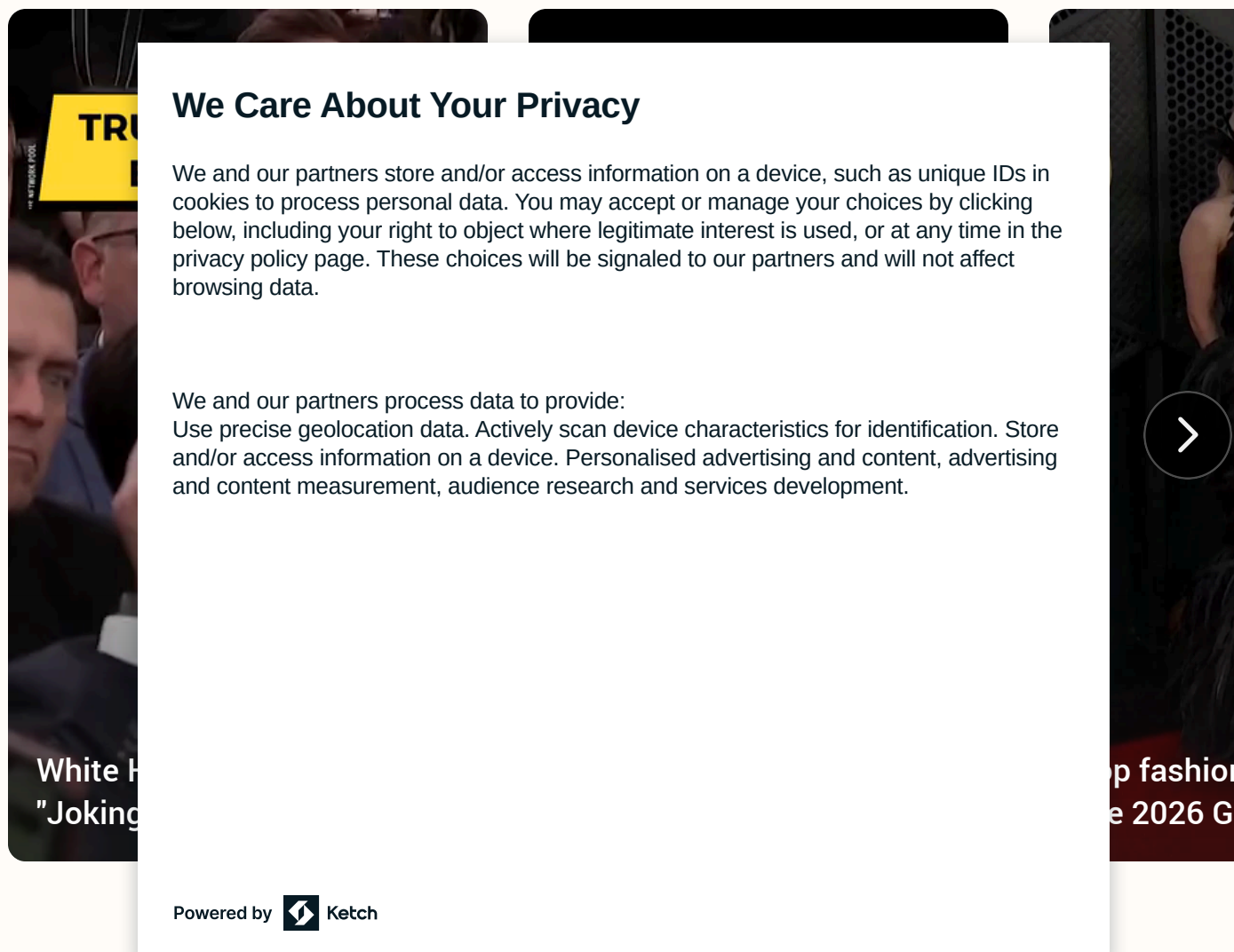
**I**t was the beginning of the week at the Shajareh Tayyebah Primary School, a two-story building painted with pink flowers and green leaves in the southern Iranian town of Minab, when the war began.

The children were in class, around 10 a.m., when news of the first wave of U.S.-Israeli airstrikes was beginning to trickle through. Parents received panicked phone calls and text messages telling them to pick up their children.

There was not enough time. Less than an hour later, while many parents were at the school and others were still on the way, a missile slammed into the building, reducing it to rubble. Witnesses recounted to Iranian state media a second strike, as survivors of the first sheltered in a hall.

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Some 175 people were killed, at least 108 of them children, a representative of the Coordinating Council of Iranian Teachers' Trade Associations, a network of teachers' unions in Iran, told [TIME](#). The rest of the victims were parents and teachers.

**Read more:** [More Than 100 Reported Killed in Strike on Girls' Elementary School in Iran. Here's What We Know](#)

In the days after the deadly incident, neither Israel nor the United States military claimed responsibility. When asked by a reporter on Saturday whether the U.S. military may have been behind the strike, President Donald Trump blamed Iran.

"No. In my opinion and based on what I've seen, that was done by Iran," [he said](#). "They're very inaccurate, as you know, with their munitions."

But a growing body of evidence has emerged since—including verified video of the strike, satellite imagery, and expert analysis—that suggests the U.S. military was likely responsible.

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# Several precision strikes

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The Shajareh Tayyebah Primary School was located next to a naval base operated by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). It was attended by a mix of children of military families and locals drawn by the low tuition fees—some from the town of Minab itself, and others from outside.

The building that houses the school was once part of the same sprawling complex that houses the base, but satellite images reviewed by TIME and Human Rights Watch show that at least ten years ago, in 2016, it was walled off from the rest of the compound. Separate street entrances were created to allow school entry without passing through the compound. By August 2017, according to an analysis of satellite imagery by Human Rights Watch, the marking lines of a soccer pitch were clearly visible in the courtyard of the newly walled-off school. To anyone who would have looked, it was clearly a school.

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# Attack on primary school in Minab



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## Senators weigh U.S. role in Iran war as conflict continues

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“Over the past decade or so, there have been a range of changes in this compound that should have raised clear indications around this school being something that should have been avoided. Watch, to rights

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It was filmed from a construction site across the street from the base, according to a New York Times geolocation analysis. In the video, smoke can already be seen rising from the direction of the school.

Two munitions experts interviewed by TIME identified the munition in the video as a Tomahawk— a U.S. made precision missile. Only two other countries are known to have Tomahawk missiles: Australia and Britain, neither of which is party to the conflict. Japan and the Netherlands have also been approved to purchase the missiles.

“The video taken on February 28, 2026, conclusively shows a Tomahawk cruise missile diving almost vertically into the area of the medical clinic adjacent to an IRGC facility. The black color, ‘cruciform’ wings, and small tail fins match known imagery of Tomahawks,” John Gilbert, Senior Science Fellow at the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation in Washington D.C., told TIME.

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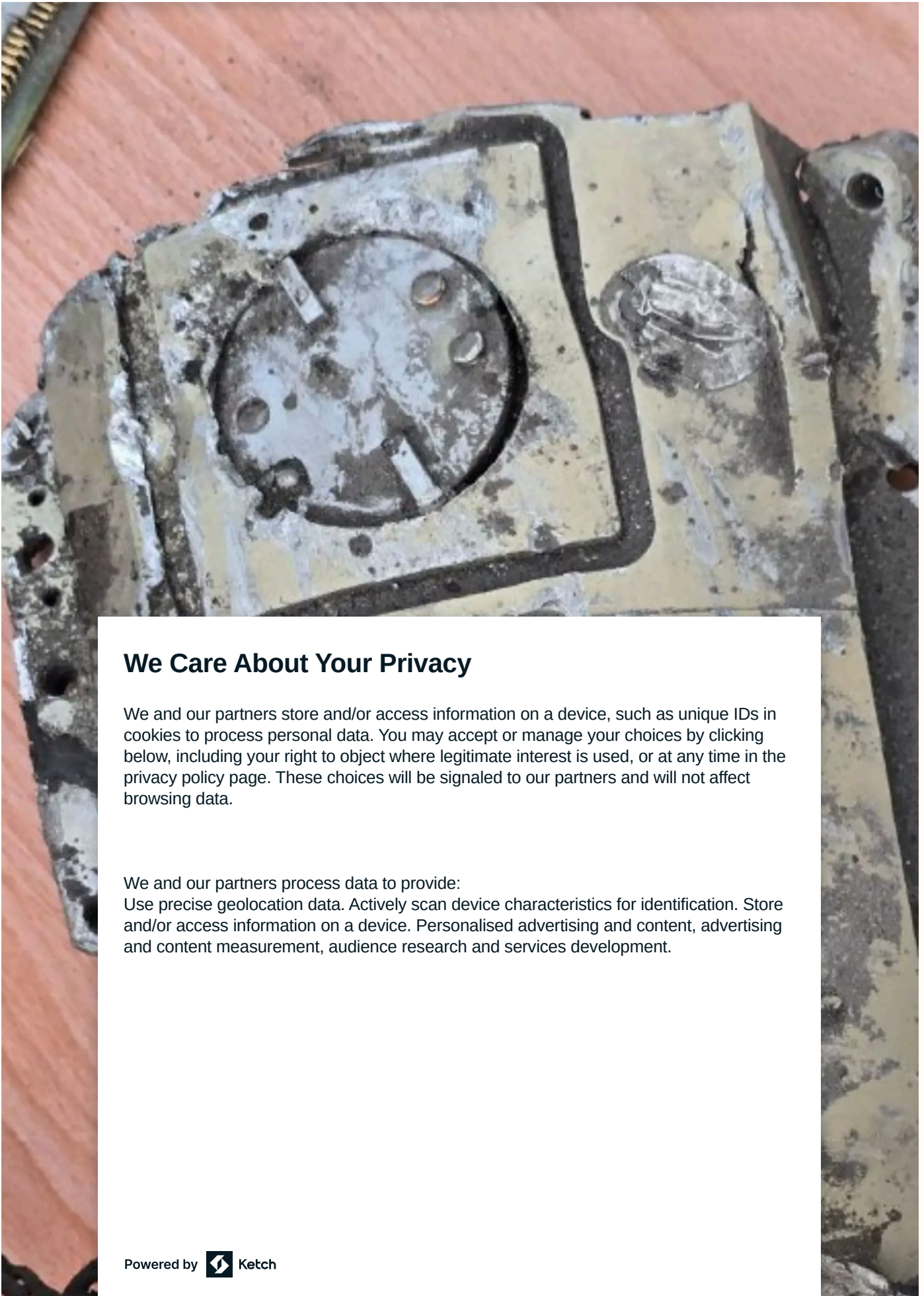
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Photos from state media showed weapon remnants displayed near the ruins of the Shajarah Tayyebah elementary school. *IRIB*

TIME cannot independently verify the images or where the fragments were collected from, but among the remnants were components consistent with a Tomahawk missile, according to expert analysis by the New York [Times](#) and [CNN](#).

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In addition to the visual evidence and remnants gathered from the scene, the Pentagon has published video and [images](#) of warships firing Tomahawk missiles at Iran on Feb. 28, the day the school strike took place.

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“No stupid rules of engagement, no nation-building quagmire, no democracy building exercise, no politically correct wars,” he said.

In the aftermath of the attack, numerous lawmakers and rights groups have called for an investigation into the strike to determine what mistakes may have led to the school being included on the list of targets.

On Monday, ten U.S. Democratic senators released a joint statement saying they were “horrified” by analysis that “credibly suggests the strike may have been conducted by U.S. forces, which if true, would make it one of the worst cases of civilian casualties in decades of American military action in the Middle East.”

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Page, also with HRW, said the Trump Administration’s removal of key protocols for civilian protection in wartime may have also played a role.

“The U.S., under the Trump administration, has weakened all of these protections. They've terminated senior military lawyers, they've loosened the targeting protocols, they've removed what are called civilian environment teams, and red teams, from the operational chain of command,” he said.

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“All of those are really essential safeguards in place if you are going to carry out this large-scale countrywide campaign over a country of 92 million people,” he said.

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