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Israel's Attack on Iran

June 2025

IPRI Updates Israel's Attack on Iran

[Updated 1500 Hours Pakistan Time – Monday, 16 June 2025]

Overview

Israel launched a massive attack on Iran in the early hours 13th June, killing the army and IRGC's (Pasdaran) top leadership, apart from the top four prominent scientists. Tehran's footages show Israel launched precision strikes, which would not have been possible without an "insider" job, especially in targeting the military commanders and scientists. And this is not new; previous assassinations of Iranian security officials and scientists by Israel have been based on espionage through Iranian moles. Iran responded to Israeli attacks through ballistic missile attacks on 14th June that according to Israeli sources were mostly intercepted and caused 3 Israeli casualties. Israel has retaliated by targeting Iran's South Pars oil fields causing widespread fire. According to Israel over 150 Iranian targets have been hit in last 24 hours.

Ser.	Israel	Iran
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Israel launches Operation "Rising Lion", a large-scale surprise airstrike campaign targeting Iranian nuclear facilities, military installations, missile defenses, and senior IRGC commanders and nuclear scientists in Tehran, Natanz, Fordow, Isfahan, and other locations [Guardian – 13 June 25]Mossad-led covert drone & sabotage operations within Iran disabled air defenses and missile launchers in coordination with the strikes [Time – 13 June 25]Israeli officials said it may be some time before the extent of damage at Natanz was clear. The above-ground pilot enrichment plant at Natanz has been destroyed, U.N.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said in a message to his nation that Israel "sealed for itself a bitter and painful destiny." [Time – 13 June 2025]Although the US denied any part in the attack, Iran claimed that Israel launched the strikes against Iran with the help of America and attacked civilian areas. [Press TV – 13 June 25]Iran reports high casualties, health authorities confirm, 224 killed and around 1,481 injured [Aljazeera – 13 June 25]Iran retaliates with Operation "True Promise III", firing barrages of missiles at Israel. The missiles struck Tel Aviv and the nearby city of Jafa [AP News – 13 June 25]

	nuclear watchdog chief Rafael Grossi told the Security Council [Reuters – 13 June 25]	
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Israel pounded Iran for a second day on Saturday and Netanyahu said its campaign would intensify, "We will hit every site and every target of the Ayatollahs' regime, and what they have felt so far is nothing compared with what they will be handed in the coming days." [Reuters – 14 June 25] "If Khamenei continues to fire missiles at the Israeli home front, Tehran will burn," Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz said [Reuters – 14 June 25] The Iranian attacks caused widespread disruption in the power distribution network in the central regions of the occupied territories and disabled part of the Israel's infrastructure [Press TV – 14 June 25] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Iran launched a wave of missiles and drones, several projectiles were visible in the sky over Jerusalem. However, many projectiles were intercepted in Jordanian air space. [Reuters – 14 June 25] Iranian FM Araghchi, in a phone call with EU foreign policy chief Kallas, said the US president's messages and statements proved that Israel's hostile measures against Iran were the result of Washington's direct support for Israel's attack [Press TV – 14 June 25] The latest round of U.S.-Iran nuclear talks scheduled for Sunday in Muscat were suspended due to Israel's attack [Reuters – 14 June 25] The Central Bank of Iran (CBI) has earmarked fresh resources to subsidize imports of basic goods during the escalating military confrontation, the lender had allocated an extra \$1 billion to imports of basic goods, adding that some \$400 million of the funding [Press TV – 14 June 25]
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Israel fired a barrage of missiles, targeting several locations, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Iran fired two separate waves of missiles and drones against Israel,

	<p>including the capital Tehran, a Foreign Ministry building there, a military base of the Defence Ministry in Isfahan, and an aerial refuelling aircraft at Mashhad Airport [Al Jazeera – 15 June 25]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The Israeli military will strike these sites and will continue to peel away the Iranian snake's skin in Tehran and everywhere — targeting nuclear capabilities and weapons systems," Defence Minister Katz said in a statement referring to all weapons factories. [Reuters – 15 June 25] 	<p>including one that struck Tamra, while a larger salvo hit Bat Yam, Rehovot, Tel Aviv, and Jerusalem [Al Jazeera – 15 June 25]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iran has told mediators Qatar and Oman that it is not open to negotiating a ceasefire with the U.S. while it is under Israeli attack [Reuters – 15 June 25] • Israeli strikes reportedly killed the intelligence chief of Iran's Revolutionary Guards, Mohammad Kazem [NDTV – 15 June 25]
4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The arrogant dictator of Tehran has become a cowardly murderer who targets the civilian home front in Israel to deter the IDF from continuing the attack that is collapsing his capabilities," Defence Minister said in a statement. "The residents of Tehran will pay the price, and soon." [Reuters – 16 June 25] • IDF claimed that the Air Force identified and eliminated Iran's surface-to-air missile launch troops seconds before they reached a launcher south of Tehran [NDTV – 16 June 25] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iranian missiles struck Israel's Tel Aviv and the port city of Haifa before dawn on Monday, destroying homes and fueling stores [Reuters – 16 June 25] • IRGC spokesperson said, the latest attack employed a new method that caused Israel's multi-layered defence systems to target each other and allowed Iran to successfully hit many targets [Reuters – 16 June 25]
International Response		

5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pakistan stands in complete solidarity with Iran as expressed by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. The PM condemned the Israeli attacks against Iran, citing them as a violation of its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and a complete violation of the UN Charter and international law [Dawn – 14 June 25] • As per a senior U.S. administration official, the US president vetoed an Israeli plan in recent days to kill Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei [Reuters – 15 June 25] • Despite active mediation by Qatar, Oman, Cyprus, and pressure from the G7 and U.S., diplomatic efforts remain stalled as both Iran and Israel prioritize military objectives [Reuters – 16 June 25]
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Assessment of the Issue

Timing of Attack

Why Israel chose now to attack Iran's nuclear facilities is important. Based on an "insider" tip-off, Israel (and the U.S.) may have concluded that Iran may have reached the threshold of weapons-grade enrichment giving Israel the casus belli to carry out a pre-emptive attack on Iranian nuclear facilities. President Trump writing in Truth Social claimed no US part in the attacks but confessed that he knew about the attacks. U.S. evacuation of its nationals from Iraq and other Gulf states indicates that it had prior knowledge of the forthcoming Israeli attacks. Interestingly, Israel did not attack the Bushahar nuclear power plant constructed by Russia as Russia controls its fuel under the IAEA safeguards.

Iran's Response

Iran failed to intercept over 200 Israeli planes targeting almost all major nuclear sites and buildings housing Important security officials and scientists. Iran has launched over two hundred drones, but as per Israeli accounts all were intercepted. The firing of around 200 ballistic missiles at Israel also resulted in no major damage to Israel except few casualties and some damage to residential buildings. It however has caused panic and scare amongst civilian population in Israel, especially Tel Aviv. The three-tiered Israeli Air Defence system comprising Iron Dome (4-0 kms), David Sling (40-300 kms), THAAD (200 kms), Arrow 2, (150 km), and Arrow 3 (2400 kms). Overall, Iran cannot match the military prowess of Israel despite trying to produce missile and drone technologies within the country. According to latest reports Israeli leadership has hurled warning that "if Iran does not stop missile attacks Tehran will burn".

Israeli (U.S.) Objectives

- First, by decimating Iran's defence system and top military leadership, Israel (and the U.S.) may be intending to pave the way for regime change. For the time being, it may seem far-fetched due to the absence of a viable alternative. Iranian opposition lives in exile, and within the country, opponents of the regime are not strong enough to bring a change. In doing so, the U.S. would lend full support to any attempts aimed at regime change.
- Second, promote Greater Israel's agenda and compel the remaining Arab states to recognize Israel; Saudi Arabia may come under greater pressure to recognize the Zionist regime.

Likely War Scenarios

- **Scenario One.**

Israel's attacks continue with the aim to break the will of the Iranian leadership forcing them to capitulate and accept the US proposals for renunciation of the uranium enrichment and concomitant nuclear weaponization. Iranians respond with their ballistic missiles and drones and having exhausted their military stockpile keep defying the diktat of the Israel and USA and continue with their covert nuclear enrichment and weaponization. This will result in a long conflict where the Iranians may resort to closure of the Hormuz straits and disturbance of Bab ul Mandab straits through Houthi proxies. The scenario is fraught with the possibilities of Israeli and American attempts at fomenting unrest in Iran through disaffected segments of population putting additional pressure on the beleaguered Iranian leadership with the ultimate objective of a regime change. Russia, China, and the allied Muslim countries do not intervene except routine diplomatic support.

- **Scenario Two.**

Israel's attacks result in serious damage to nuclear and energy infrastructure resulting in curtailment of military options for Iran along with choking of its oil-based economy. The attempts at closing of Hormuz straits might also elicit aggressive response by oil exporting countries further isolating Iran diplomatically and forcing its leadership to sue for peace from a position of weakness. Iran might concede to US and Israeli demands of rolling back and renunciation of uranium enrichment, effectively abandoning the nuclear program. Iran might buy time to live and fight another day by conceding to those demands, keeping the present governing structure intact.

- **Scenario Three.**

Israel's attacks continue and Iran continues defying the attacks through conventional as well as non-conventional means frustrating Israel and USA and economically inconveniencing the oil exporting as well as oil dependent economies. This might draw countries like China and Russia in the fray that might pitch their support with Iran demanding ceasefire. The Gulf countries, Turkey, BRICs, and few EU countries may also put their support behind this

initiative exerting diplomatic as well as physical pressure through material and humanitarian support to Iran. Israel despite the US support might not find the continuance of the war profitable in the cost-benefit equation, having failed to militarily eliminate Iranian nuclear capability. Iran might emerge out of the conflict considerably weakened but having retained its nuclear development options.

- **Scenario Four.**

Israel continues attacks and Iran implodes internally in the face of that implacable wave of attacks with China and Russia and EU remaining no committal to active intervention in the conflict in support of Iran, probably due to secret aversion to another power acquiring the nuclear capability. The internal implosion and the external attacks result in a regime change where the US and Israel try and fill the leadership slots with their favoured factions. Russia and China intervene then ensuring the installation of a truly representative government in Iran not allied to any global political bloc.

Implications.

The prospects of scenarios one and two emerging as distinct possibilities rank high in order of priority due to Russian and Chinese preoccupation with their own geo-political and economic priorities and lack of desire and capability of the Muslim countries to alter the outcome in favour of Iran.

Pakistan has strongly condemned the Israeli attack and has expressed solidarity with Iran and its right to defend its sovereignty under Article 51 of the UN Charter. A lingering dispute may have negative consequences for Pakistan. The following deserve attention:

- First, as a direct neighbour, Iran would expect support from Pakistan in the diplomatic realm and, potentially, military assistance (even if covert).
- Second, the supply of food and other logistics through land borders would be crucial.
- Third, the U.S. would pressure Pakistan not to support Iran and share intelligence about Iran.
- Fourth, if Pakistan does not comply with the U.S. demands, the latter may encourage BLA and other Baloch dissident organizations to enhance their activities. Dissidence in Iranian Balochistan may also gain momentum. India will be too happy to chip in. Such a scenario may be detrimental to the interests of Pakistan and Iran. Therefore, both countries will need to take joint action to defeat dissidence.

Recommendations

- Pakistan should closely consult with China to formulate a comprehensive strategy to tackle the consequences of the Iran-Israel war.
- Pakistan should keep supporting Iran diplomatically displaying fidelity to established norms of international law and showing solidarity with Iran.

- Border controls should be tightened and the implications of disruption of the informal oil trading/smuggling on the restive border belt along the Pak-Iran border to be evaluated and prophylactic measures taken.