

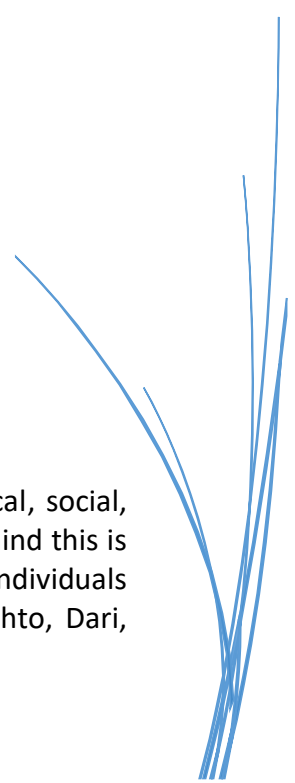
WEEKLY ANALYSIS

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THE IRAN-ISRAEL WAR: CAUSES, OBJECTIVES, AND CONSEQUENCES



Weekly Analysis is one of the CSRS publications analyzing significant weekly political, social, economic, and security events in Afghanistan and the region. The prime motive behind this is to provide strategic insights and policy solutions to decision-making institutions and individuals in order to help them design better policies. Weekly Analysis is published in Pashto, Dari, English and Arabic languages.



In this issue:

- The Iran-Israel War: Causes, Objectives, and Consequences 3
- Reasons and Objectives Behind Israel's Attack on Iran 3
- Iran's Response 6
- Prospects for Victory 6
- Possible Scenarios and Consequences of the War 7
- Impact of the Iran-Israel War on Afghanistan..... 8
- Conclusion 8
- Recommendations 9
- References..... 9



THE IRAN-ISRAEL WAR: CAUSES, OBJECTIVES, AND CONSEQUENCES

Introduction

Over the past few decades, Israel has carried out a range of military and strategic actions across the region in order to safeguard its national security and ensure its survival. One of the most significant of these actions is Israel's direct military strike on Iran, which took place on June 13 of this year. Evidence suggests that this attack was carefully planned well in advance and executed with comprehensive preparation.

This conflict is not limited to just Iran and Israel it has far-reaching implications for the security of the broader region, international political and economic relations, and the global energy market. The United States plays a central role in this war. As Israel's primary ally in the Middle East, the U.S. aims to use this confrontation to exert pressure on Iran's nuclear program.

Israel, along with the U.S. and its allies, sees Iran's nuclear ambitions as a significant threat to regional and international security. Their collective goal is to either completely dismantle Iran's nuclear program or at least restrict it to peaceful energy production.

This war, therefore, is largely aimed at halting Iran's nuclear development. However, its impact goes far beyond military confrontation. The conflict is likely to cause widespread damage—not only in terms of weapons and infrastructure, but also through forced displacement, economic instability, and disruptions to energy supplies across the region and the world. It threatens to upset the regional balance of power and undermine political stability throughout the Middle East.

Moreover, global powers are also expected to play strategic roles in shaping the course and outcome of this war. In this analytical article, we explore the key causes, objectives, and potential consequences of this emerging conflict.

REASONS AND OBJECTIVES BEHIND ISRAEL'S ATTACK ON IRAN

In its initial strike against Iran, Israel targeted key facilities related to Iran's nuclear weapons and missile programs. In addition, high-ranking military commanders, senior officials of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), and prominent scientists involved in these programs were also directly targeted.

The planning behind these operations is largely attributed to Eyal Zamir, the Chief of Staff of the Israeli Defense Forces. His strategic outlook often referred to as the "Eyal Zamir Doctrine" is based on the belief that as long as Iran's political regime remains in power, the country will not abandon its nuclear ambitions. In fact, he argues that Iran may eventually escalate its



nuclear program to a military level. According to this doctrine, Iran's missile capabilities will continue to expand and become even more powerful over time.

This perspective leads Israeli military leadership to view both Iran's nuclear and missile programs as existential threats. Consequently, Israel has concluded that weakening and destabilizing the Iranian regime is the only way to neutralize these threats. To achieve this, Israeli officials believe that a broad, multi-dimensional war against Iran is necessary.

Even before launching this conflict, Israel had taken several steps to reduce Iran's regional influence. These included efforts to weaken Iran's allied non-state armed groups, such as Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Palestine, as well as reducing Iran's foothold in Syria. Israeli victories in battles against Hezbollah, the killing of key Hamas leaders, and efforts to undermine the Assad regime in Syria reinforced the view among Israeli military and political leaders that Iran should be their next strategic target.

At the same time, the United States appears to have a different goal in supporting this military action. Rather than aiming to overthrow the Islamic Republic, Washington seems more focused on gaining leverage in ongoing nuclear negotiations with Tehran. Following Israel's initial strikes, then-U.S. President Donald Trump clarified the U.S. position, emphasizing that the sixth round of nuclear talks with Iran should continue as planned on Sunday, June 15. He portrayed the conflict as a means of pressuring Iran to concede more in negotiations.

Iran, however, outright rejected this position. In response, it called for an immediate ceasefire and later expressed a willingness to return to dialogue. In a statement released by Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs on June 17, it declared:

"Netanyahu's true intention behind attacking Iran is to sabotage progress toward a possible agreement between the Islamic Republic and the United States an agreement we were moving toward constructively. Once again, he is trying to mislead the U.S. President and the American taxpayer."

The statement concluded:

"If President Trump genuinely believes in diplomacy and wants to end this war, the next steps are critical. Israel must halt its attacks. Otherwise, we will continue our military responses without hesitation. A single phone call from Washington is enough to silence someone like Netanyahu. That call could reopen the door to diplomacy."

From this statement, it becomes clear that Iran is only willing to return to negotiations once the war comes to a halt. Continuing both war and diplomacy at the same time is not a practical



or logical strategy. As such, the idea that talks could resume while military strikes are ongoing appears unrealistic and unlikely to succeed.

According to Eyal Zamir's military doctrine, Israel's strategy includes not only direct military strikes but also intelligence operations aimed at destroying or neutralizing Iran's missile systems, air defense capabilities, and nuclear facilities. Beyond the battlefield, the doctrine also emphasizes economic pressure, encouraging domestic unrest in Iran, and disrupting Iran's oil exports seen as key goals for weakening the country's strategic position.

However, Israel has so far struggled to fully achieve the goals outlined in the Zamir Doctrine. Interestingly, during the initial phases of the conflict, Israel appeared to avoid directly targeting Iran's oil infrastructure. This restraint may have been influenced by the position of the United States, which likely wished to prevent a major energy crisis something that could spiral out of control and have severe consequences for the global economy. Iran's oil infrastructure is considered a powerful political tool, and any damage to it could have worldwide repercussions. Yet, in the current conflict, this issue has not been a top priority.

While Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu continues to enjoy strong domestic support among nationalist groups, he is also determined to draw the United States deeper into the Israel-Iran conflict. Within Israel, there is a widespread belief that the country cannot destroy Iran's nuclear program on its own and needs full American military backing. Even with that support, there is no guarantee of success, since enriched uranium can be relocated and protected in secure locations.

Israel seems to be trying to provoke Iran into attacking U.S. military bases in the region. This would, in turn, push Washington closer to direct involvement and serve Israel's ultimate goal of toppling the Iranian regime. However, this approach clashes with the views of many regional and international powers, who are deeply concerned about the risk of a wider Middle East conflict. These countries worry that an expanded war would threaten their national interests and economic stability.

Importantly, Israel's goals go beyond just weakening Iran's military or technological capabilities whether nuclear or non-nuclear. Israel also aims to shift the balance of power in the Middle East in its favor. It seeks to expand its sphere of influence and even reshape the region's geopolitical map in a way that ensures Israel's dominance. In such a vision, no other regional power would be strong enough to challenge Israeli interests.

This ambition has been made clear by Prime Minister Netanyahu on multiple occasions. He has frequently spoken about the concept of a "New Middle East," and in a notable speech at the



United Nations General Assembly, he even presented two maps of the region neither of which included any reference to the State of Palestine.

IRAN'S RESPONSE

Compared to previous confrontations between Iran and Israel, Iran's response this time has been far stronger and more destructive. In this round of conflict, Iran launched advanced missiles that successfully penetrated Israel's Iron Dome and its allied defense systems, causing unprecedented destruction in several major Israeli cities.

Some of these precise strikes reportedly hit key military targets, including Israel's main defense center in Tel Aviv, and even the headquarters of its intelligence agency, Mossad. Despite these significant attacks, Iranian state media released a statement asserting that Iran had not yet used its most advanced or strategic weapons in the conflict.

If this statement is accurate, it suggests that Iran is preparing for a long-term confrontation reserving its most powerful capabilities for future use if the war escalates or if it faces a serious existential threat.

In line with a promise made by Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who declared that "Israel will not remain unpunished for this crime," Iran's military launched a wave of ballistic missiles toward Israeli targets. These attacks inflicted heavy human and financial losses, turning Israel's initial sense of triumph into widespread fear and uncertainty.

This shift in public sentiment has created internal divisions within Israel. Some citizens now advocate for renewed negotiations between the U.S. and Iran, hoping diplomacy might bring an end to the conflict. Others blame Prime Minister Netanyahu, accusing him of gambling with national security for personal political gain. Meanwhile, a portion of the population continues to support his decisions.

Given this atmosphere, the prospect of a ceasefire seems unlikely especially as long as Israel believes it has not yet achieved its strategic goals. On the other side, Iran is equally unwilling to accept any outcome that threatens the survival of its political system. Instead, it appears determined to inflict maximum damage on Israel if the war continues.

As a result, Israel's sense of vulnerability is growing, and concerns about the future direction of this conflict are deepening across the region.

PROSPECTS FOR VICTORY

At this point in the conflict, the balance of power remains unclear. On one side, Israel continues to rely heavily on advanced military and intelligence technologies provided by the



United States and the United Kingdom. Given Israel's goal of toppling Iran's political system, any internal instability within Iran is viewed by Israel as progress toward that end.

Israel's ability to successfully strike targets deep inside Iran including top military officials and prominent scientists demonstrates its strong intelligence and military capabilities. Its ongoing air operations within Iranian airspace, combined with the noticeable difference in casualties between the two sides (as of now, 657 people have been killed in Iran, including 223 civilians, compared to 14 deaths in Israel), further highlights Israel's military advantage.

On the other hand, Iran's ability to stand up to a country backed by major world powers—and to launch successful airstrikes from hundreds of kilometers away, hitting sensitive Israeli military and intelligence facilities shows that Iran, too, possesses considerable strength and resilience.

It is important to note that the war is still ongoing, and predicting its outcome remains highly uncertain. What is clear, however, is that Israel is determined to continue fighting until it reaches its strategic goals, while Iran has declared that patience is not an option in times of war. Iran has vowed to defend its land, people, dignity, and national achievements at any cost.

Given these positions, it seems likely that the conflict will persist for some time. Yet perhaps the most critical question now is: how will the United States respond?

The answer to that question may ultimately determine the future course and conclusion of this war.

POSSIBLE SCENARIOS AND CONSEQUENCES OF THE WAR

As the war between Iran and Israel continues, several possible scenarios can be anticipated:

1. Regime Change in Iran: If Israel launched this war with the goal of toppling Iran's political regime, a long and drawn-out conflict becomes highly likely. In such a case, the United States stands to benefit the most. First, it can sell advanced weaponry to Israel; second, a prolonged war would force Iran to reveal more of its military capabilities. This situation may also prompt several Arab states many of which have tense relations with Iran to purchase more weapons from the U.S., further strengthening America's strategic and economic position in the region.

2. Political Pressure Scenario: If the war was intended mainly to increase pressure during nuclear negotiations, then it may come to an end relatively soon. In this case, Iran might offer significant concessions to stop the fighting. However, doing so could weaken its regional influence and political standing, both at home and abroad.



3. Israeli Victory: If Israel emerges victorious, it may pursue further territorial expansion and take aggressive actions to seize land from neighboring countries. Armed resistance against Israel across the region would likely weaken, and the Palestinian issue could be settled on terms favorable to Israel. In the long run, this would strengthen Israel's strategic, intelligence, and regional dominance, positioning it as the most powerful state in the Middle East.

4. Iranian Victory: If Iran wins the war, it would not only mark a defeat for Israel but also a major blow to the United States. Domestically, a victory would boost the legitimacy of Iran's political system and contribute to continued political stability. Iranian-aligned groups across the region would also be emboldened, intensifying their efforts to challenge and possibly dismantle Israel's power. Iran's regional influence would likely grow, and its role in Middle East security dynamics would become more prominent. Arab countries that currently have strained relations with Iran may begin seeking dialogue or cooperation with Tehran.

IMPACT OF THE IRAN-ISRAEL WAR ON AFGHANISTAN

Like any major conflict, this war is affecting not only the countries directly involved but also neighboring states Afghanistan being one of them. As a neighbor of Iran, Afghanistan imports part of its energy needs, including oil and gas, from Iran. If Israeli strikes damage Iran's energy infrastructure, production and exports could decline, causing a sharp rise in global energy prices. Afghanistan, in turn, would face economic pressure due to higher fuel costs.

Beyond oil and gas, Afghanistan also imports electricity, food supplies, and construction materials from Iran. The war could disrupt these imports, directly affecting daily life and worsening economic hardship for ordinary Afghan citizens.

From a security perspective, the conflict could destabilize the border region between Iran and Afghanistan. For example, the conditions could allow terrorist groups, drug traffickers, and human smugglers to become more active. Key trade routes could also become insecure, disrupting Afghanistan's regional connections especially with the Middle East and India, many of which depend on land routes through Iran.

Additionally, the war could trigger population movements. Large numbers of Afghan refugees currently living in Iran might be forced to return home, and there is also the possibility of a new wave of Iranian refugees entering Afghanistan. Both scenarios would strain Afghanistan's fragile economy and public services even further.

CONCLUSION

In the Middle East, Israel has often acted as a proxy for U.S. interests, especially in military conflicts. The current war between Israel and Iran is no exception it reflects



Washington's broader strategic aims. In simple terms, this war resembles the old saying: *"Threaten with death to accept the pain."* The United States has pushed Israel into the battlefield, championing the call for regime change in Iran, not necessarily to achieve that goal, but to gain leverage in ongoing nuclear negotiations.

Despite its public stance, the U.S. does not seem interested in fully toppling Iran's government. In reality, the existence of Iran's current regime provides justification for U.S. arms sales to several Arab states and helps maintain American political and economic influence in the region.

Afghanistan, as Iran's neighbor, is deeply connected to it not only through trade and imports, but also through regional transit and economic ties. A prolonged war could disrupt these connections, creating economic challenges and sparking a wave of refugees and asylum seekers. In light of these risks, it is essential that both Iran and Israel seek peaceful and diplomatic solutions rather than continuing the cycle of violence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. United Islamic Response: As Israel continues to expand its influence in the region a development viewed by many as a threat to the broader Islamic world it is crucial for Muslim-majority countries to unite. A shared political strategy is needed to counter Israel's expansionist agenda.
2. Afghanistan's Economic Readiness: The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan should proactively explore alternative trade and energy routes to reduce its vulnerability to regional instability, especially in the event of prolonged conflict.
3. Preparedness for Refugee Influx: If the war escalates, the Islamic Emirate should be ready to provide temporary shelter for Iranian refugees and establish early response plans to manage potential population movements.
4. Regional Humanitarian Role: Given its shared border with Iran, Afghanistan could serve as a temporary refuge hub for citizens of other affected countries. The Islamic Emirate could also coordinate with international actors to facilitate safe transit.

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