

Postings will be abbreviated this month. Very Busy with family issues rdb

IDF soldier killed in Gaza fighting, bringing toll in military offensive to 430

Sgt. First Class (res.) Noam Shemesh, 21, from Jerusalem, killed in RPG attack; another soldier lightly injured in same incident

By [Emanuel Fabian](#) Today, 9:03 am



IDF Sgt. First Class (res.) Noam Shemesh (Israel Defense Force)

An Israel Defense Forces soldier was killed Saturday during fighting in the southern Gaza Strip, the military announced.

Sgt. First Class (res.) Noam Shemesh, 21, from Jerusalem, was a squad commander in the Kfir Brigade's Shimshon Battalion.

Shemesh was killed by RPG fire in southern Gaza's Khan Younis, according to an initial probe, the military said Sunday morning. Another soldier was lightly injured in the incident.

Shemesh's **death raised the death toll to 430** in the ground offensive against Hamas in Gaza and in military operations along the border with the Strip. The toll includes two police officers and three Defense Ministry civilian contractors.

His death came just over a week after four soldiers were killed, also in Khan Younis.

Israel launched its campaign in Gaza following the October 7, 2023, Hamas assault on southern Israel, killing some 1,200 people and taking 251 hostages. Terror groups in Gaza continue to hold 53 hostages, including the bodies of at least 33 confirmed dead by the IDF, and 20 who are believed to be alive. There are grave concerns for the well-being of three others, Israeli officials have said.

On Saturday, the IDF said that the Gaza war has been downgraded to the secondary arena after Israel last Thursday began strikes on Iranian nuclear sites. As the strikes continued against what Israel says is an existential threat, Iran has fired barrages of missiles at Israel, killing at least ten people overnight Saturday and injuring over 200 in the northern and central regions of the country. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-soldier-killed-in-gaza-fighting-bringing-toll-in-military-offensive-to-430/>

Extensive strikes in Tehran after IDF warns Iranians near arms plants to evacuate

5 car bombs said to detonate in Iran's capital, more nuclear scientists killed; IDF says it is hunting ballistic missile launchers aimed at Israel, and striking nuclear targets

By [Emanuel Fabian](#), [Tol Staff](#) and [Agencies](#) Today, 1:49 pm Updated at 3:29 pm

A plume of heavy smoke rises over an oil refinery in southern of Tehran, after it was hit in an overnight Israeli strike, on June 15, 2025. (Photo by Atta KENARE / AFP)

Widespread Israeli Air Force strikes were reported in the Iranian capital, Tehran, on Sunday afternoon, hours after the military issued an unprecedented evacuation warning for Iranian civilians to evacuate areas around weapons factories.

The strikes came as Israel's operation against Tehran's nuclear program and military



industries continued for a third day.

At the same time, car bomb blasts were reported in the Iranian capital, and reports said more nuclear scientists had been killed.

Strikes were also reported against Iranian military sites in Shiraz, in the south of the country, according to local media.

“All individuals currently present or expected to be present in or around military weapons manufacturing facilities and their supporting institutions must immediately evacuate these areas and not return until further notice,” the IDF’s Arabic-language spokesman, Col. Avichay Adraee, said in a Persian message on X before the strikes.

“Being near these facilities puts your life at risk,” he added, with the IDF Persian-language spokesman Master Sgt. (res.) Kamal Penhasi also issuing the same warning on the military’s Persian X account.

Explosions continued to echo across Tehran and elsewhere in the country on Sunday, but there was no update to a death toll put out the day before by Iran’s UN ambassador, who said 78 people had been killed and more than 320 wounded since the beginning of Israel’s strikes on Friday.

Footage posted online **showed large plumes of smoke rising from the capital.**

Iran’s IRNA news agency reported that **five car bombs were detonated in Tehran**. The report blamed Israel for the attacks.

Two sources in the Gulf told Reuters that at least 14 Iranian nuclear scientists had been killed in Israeli attacks since Friday, including by car bombs.

The **names of nine of the scientists were published by the IDF on Sunday**, and it said many of them were successors to Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, the “father of the Iranian nuclear project,” who was allegedly assassinated by Israel in 2020.

The **Israeli Air Force overnight bombed several Iranian ballistic missile launchers, along with air defense systems and radars, the military said, attaching footage of the strikes.**

According to the IDF, some of the launchers that were struck were used to fire missiles at Israel overnight, in barrages that killed at least 10 people.

The **IDF said it would continue to “hunt down” ballistic missile launchers** in western Iran to prevent attacks on Israel.

Air defenses and radars were also struck “as part of the IDF’s aerial superiority in Iranian airspace,” the military said.

חיל האוויר תקף באיראן לאורך כל הלילה והשמיד משגרי טילי קרקע-קרקע חמושים המוכנים לשיגור. בסגירת מעגל מהירה, חיל האוויר תקף גם משגרים ששיגרו טילים לעבר מדינת ישראל. בנוסף, הותקפו תשתיות טילי קרקע-אוויר ומכ"מי גילוי של המשטר האיראני באיראן, כחלק מהעליונות האווירית של צה"ל בשמי pic.twitter.com/s4igW92z3V

— צבא ההגנה לישראל (@idfonline) [June 15, 2025](#)

במהלך הלילה: זוהו והותקפו משגרי טילים באיראן – חיל האוויר השלים בשעה האחרונה גל תקיפה נוסף pic.twitter.com/CLB5ciRYVp

— צבא ההגנה לישראל (@idfonline) [June 15, 2025](#)

Additionally, some 80 targets in Tehran were hit overnight, according to the IDF.

The **targets in the Iranian capital included fuel depots**, the Iranian defense ministry headquarters, the “headquarters of the SPND nuclear project,” and other targets related to Iran’s nuclear program.

IAF fighter jets also hit gas infrastructure near Bandar Abbas. The military said the fuel and gas sites were used by Iran for military purposes and for its nuclear project.

The IDF releases footage of its overnight strike on Iran’s “nuclear program headquarters” in Tehran.

Earlier, the military said it hit some 80 targets in Tehran overnight, including fuel depots, the Iranian Defense Ministry headquarters, the “headquarters of the SPND nuclear...”

pic.twitter.com/sprgcGLFf9

— Emanuel (Mannie) Fabian (@manniefabian) [June 15, 2025](#)

On **Saturday, jets attacked two fuel depots in Tehran**, while Iranian media reported a “massive explosion” following an Israeli drone strike on the South Pars gas field.

The **semi-official Tasnim news agency said production of 12 million cubic meters of gas was suspended following the South Pars attack, which resulted in a fire that the Iranian oil ministry said**

was later extinguished.

Oil fields — crucial to Iran's economy — were not targeted in the first round of strikes, but a senior Israeli security official warned on Friday that if Iran were to target Israeli population centers with ballistic missiles — which it then did — Israel would target regime leaders and state infrastructure such as oil refineries.

In all, since early Friday, the IDF said it hit 720 separate assets in some 250 strikes in Iran.

Iranian media said Sunday that Israel attacked a facility affiliated with Iran's defense ministry in the central city of Isfahan.

"One of the centers affiliated with the Ministry of Defense in Isfahan was attacked, and possible damages are under investigation," ISNA news agency reported, quoting deputy provincial governor Akbar Salehi.

Iranian media also reported strikes on the Shiraz Electronics factory in the city of Shiraz, a company that produces radar and electronic equipment for the Iranian military, [according to a US-based watchdog](#). According to CNN, the facility was destroyed.

Iran claimed Sunday it had arrested two individuals it accused of being members of the Mossad spy agency in Alborz province while they were preparing explosives and electronic devices, the semi-official Tasnim news agency reported on Sunday.

Israel and Iran trade threats

After the IDF warned Iranians to evacuate military facilities in Iran, Defense Minister Israel Katz said Sunday the military "will strike the sites and continue to peel the skin off the Iranian snake in Tehran and everywhere, stripping it of nuclear capabilities and weapons systems."

"The **Iranian dictator is turning Tehran into Beirut** and its residents into hostages for the sake of his regime's survival," he added.

Iran's foreign minister Abbas Araghchi said that the attacks on Israel will only end once Israel halts its military campaign against the Islamic Republic.

"We are defending ourselves; our defense is entirely legitimate," said Araghchi in a meeting with foreign diplomats, adding that "this defense is our response to aggression. If the aggression stops, naturally our responses will also stop."

He said that the Israeli strikes on the offshore South Pars gas field Iran shares with Qatar were "a blatant aggression and a very dangerous act."



Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (C) gives a statement during his visit to the mausoleum of slain Lebanese Hezbollah's Leader Hassan Nasrallah, in Beirut's southern suburbs, Lebanon, on June 3, 2025. (Anwar AMRO / AFP)

"Dragging the conflict to the Persian Gulf is a strategic mistake, and it aims to drag the war beyond Iranian territory," he said.

Conflict to take 'weeks, not days,' officials say

The **conflict with Iran will take "weeks, not days," according to American and Israeli officials quoted by CNN.**



The **officials said the operation has the White House's implicit approval, with an Israeli official cited as saying the US president is on board** with the weeks-long timeframe.

A US official was quoted as saying, **"The Trump administration firmly believes this can be solved by continuing negotiations with the US," with the exact length of the conflict dependent on Iran's actions.**

IDF Home Front Command forces at the scene where a ballistic missile fired from Iran hit and caused damage in Bat Yam, central Israel. June 15, 2025. (Chaim Goldberg/Flash90)

Years of hostility between Israel and Iran exploded into open conflict early Friday morning

when Israel launched a major offensive against Iran and its nuclear program, hitting nuclear sites, missile bases and top military officials.

Israel said it had no choice but to attack Iran, and that it had gathered intelligence showing that Tehran was approaching [“the point of no return”](#) in its pursuit of nuclear weapons.

Military officials said that the IDF was preparing for heavy fire from Iran, but asserted that “at the end of the operation, there will be no nuclear threat” from the Islamic Republic.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-warns-iranians-near-arms-plants-to-evacuate-as-strikes-batter-country-for-3rd-day/>

7 dead, including 2 children, in Iranian missile strike on Bat Yam apartment building

Nearly 200 hurt, three still missing, with mayor saying 61 buildings damaged in attack; at least 42 injured in Rehovot, including mother and toddler



By [Emanuel Fabian](#) and [Tol Staff](#) Today, 9:05

amUpdated at 4:16 pm

Your browser does not support the video tag.

Footage shows emergency teams inspecting the aftermath in Bat Yam, central Israel, following Iran's strikes early on June 15, 2025. (MDA/Oren Ziv/AFPTV/AFP)

At least seven people were killed, over 100 were injured, and three were missing after an Iranian ballistic missile slammed into a residential building in the central city of Bat Yam overnight Saturday.

The barrage was Iran's second overnight attack, triggering sirens and sending residents of Tel

Aviv, much of central Israel, Ashdod and parts of Jerusalem into shelters just after 2:30 a.m., with impacts later being reported in Bat Yam, Rehovot and Ramat Gan.

Those dead in Ramat Gan included an 8-year-old girl, a 10-year-old boy, and an 18-year-old boy. Nearly 200 were wounded, rescue services said.

The missile carried a warhead of hundreds of kilograms, according to the Israel Defense Forces.

Three others were still feared missing, and soldiers of the IDF Home Front Command's Search and Rescue Brigade continued to operate at the site of the impact on Sunday in an effort to locate and extract them, the military said.

Home Front Command officials said they estimated that it would take at least a day to complete scans at the scene.

Libat Vaknin told Channel 12 news that her father was missing after he didn't make it to a bomb shelter on time. “My brother entered to take him, and then came the explosion. There was an insane shockwave. My brother was injured, my dog was injured, and they are searching for my father now,” she said.

A 50-year-old woman, identified by the initial “Gimel,” said she was searching for her dog, Joya, in the rubble of the building.

“I was at home alone. I heard the sirens and thought about going down to the bomb shelter, but first I ran to the bathroom. I heard two booms, and I thought it was over. And then, exactly as I learned that [four women had been killed](#) in the north, suddenly everything collapsed on me. The entire ceiling collapsed,” she told Ynet.

“I said to myself, that's it, I am going to die,” she continued.

Gimel said she walked down to the shelter, which was locked, but then saw a neighbor covered in blood.

“I am thinking about my parents, who can't get down to the bomb shelter. You feel like you are being buried alive,” she said.

Baruch, who lives on an adjacent street, told the Maariv daily, “I've never seen anything like this in my life.”

“I have been in wars. During the Six-Day War, I fought in the Golan Heights. But there was nothing like this. Planes flew over me. Now I feel better, I saw all the craziness and I was really scared by the power of the bomb,” he said.



Israeli security and rescue forces at the scene of a ballistic missile strike from Iran in Bat Yam, June 15, 2025. (Avshalom Sassoni/Flash90)

Bat Yam Mayor Tzvika Brot said in a statement that “61 buildings were damaged in one way or another — six of them will need to be completely demolished.”

Civilians who were inside bomb shelters in the building that was hit were unharmed, a Home Front Command search and rescue official said. Each floor in the apartment building has a shared safe room for the use of residents of that floor, and the building also has an underground shelter.

According to the Home Front Command official, everyone

who was in shelters was unharmed, while all of the casualties were outside of the shelters.

In Rehovot, at least 42 people were wounded, including two seriously and 13 moderately, MDA reported. One man, a holocaust survivor, was alive for hours under the rubble at the site of the strike, until rescuers managed to extract him, the military said.

First responders said that he was in good condition.

At the missile impact site, Golan Levy, a medic for the United Hatzalah rescue services, told the Walla news site that a one-and-a-half-year-old baby and his mother were among the injured.

“There were casualties with bleeding and fractures. Everyone was in a panic, screaming. The homes in the area — most are without bomb shelters as this is an old area — were damaged by the impact. Residents lay on the floor in front of the municipal market and waited for rescue. Some were rescued from a nearby bomb shelter,” he said.

A building belonging to the Weizmann Institute for Science in Rehovot was reportedly damaged in the barrage. According to The New York Times, which cited images shared with the newspaper, there was a fire in “at least one building containing laboratories.”

The chief of the IDF Home Front Command, Maj. Gen. Rafi Milo, said the deadly missile impact in Bat Yam “is a reminder how important it is to follow the Home Front Command guidelines.”



Israeli security and rescue forces at the scene where a ballistic missile fired from Iran hit and caused damage in Rehovot, June 15, 2025. (Yossi Aloni/Flash90)

“Difficult days lie ahead, but we are determined. We have the spirit, the strength to act together with you to protect you and continue to save lives,” Milo added.

Four people were [killed](#) in an earlier barrage Saturday night when a missile impacted the northern Arab city of Tamra, east of Haifa.

Some 200 people overall were injured in the overnight attacks.

The IDF called on the public not to publish the locations or

footage of missile impacts. “The enemy monitors the footage to improve its attack capabilities,” the military said.

The enmity between Israel and Iran escalated into unprecedented open conflict in the early hours of Friday morning when Israel launched a major offensive against Iran and its nuclear program, hitting nuclear sites, missile bases and top military officials.

Israel said it had no choice but to attack Iran, and that it had gathered intelligence showing that Tehran was approaching “the point of no return” in its pursuit of nuclear weapons.

The Israeli operation was expected to last several days at least, according to military officials, who added that the IDF was preparing for heavy fire from Iran, but asserted that “at the end of the operation, there will be no nuclear threat” from the Islamic Republic. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/6-dead-including-2-children-in-iranian-missile-strike-on-bat-yam-apartment-building/>

4 Arab women – mother, 2 daughters and a sister-in-law – killed by Iranian missile near Haifa

10 injured in salvo from Islamic Republic on northern city of Tamra, where residents have warned about lack of bomb shelters

By Emanuel Fabian, Tol Staff and Agencies Today, 1:02 am Updated at 5:46 am



Fatalities in an Iranian missile attack on Tamra, northern Israel, June 14, 2025, all of whom are from the Khatib family: Top left: Manar Khatib; top right: Shada Khatib, 20; bottom left: Manar Khatib (Shada's mother); bottom right: Hala Khatib, 13 (Shada's sister). (Pictures from X; used in accordance with clause 27a of the copyright law)

Iran on Saturday night launched a barrage of dozens of ballistic missiles at Israel, with one missile impacting in the Arab city of Tamra, east of Haifa, killing four people.

The barrage was Iran's first since the early morning hours.

The salvo sent most of the country into shelters, with Home Front Command

pushing phone alerts shortly after 11 p.m., but sirens were then only activated in the north and the Haifa area, as air defenses were activated to intercept the incoming attack.

One missile struck a two-story home in Tamra, killing four women and injuring some 10 people. The women were named as Manar Khatib and her two daughters, Hala, 20, and Shada, 13, as well as another relative, also named Manar Khatib. The latter Manar Khatib was married to the brother of the father of the family.

Residents of the Arab Israeli city have long warned that there is a dearth of bomb shelters in the area, and that almost no homes have a safe room attached. By law, buildings constructed in Israel since the 1990s are required to include a bomb safe room; however, there is limited enforcement by local and national authorities.

At around 11:45 p.m., the Home Front Command gave the all-clear for people to leave shelters, though more barrages were expected overnight.



Emergency services are seen at a residential building in Tamra, northern Israel, which sustained a direct strike during an Iranian ballistic missile attack, on June 15, 2025. (Israel Fire and Rescue Service)

A video circulating on social media on Saturday night showed a Jewish family cheering as Iranian ballistic missiles fell in Tamra, sparking outrage from many officials.

"On the village, on the village!" a man could be heard shouting in the clip. He and others then broke out into singing the anti-Arab phrase "May your village burn," clapping their hands as missiles rained down on the neighboring city.

A number of politicians condemned the video and other similar social media posts.

Labor MK Naama Lazimi wrote on X that there is "nothing human, Jewish or Israeli" about lauding a strike on an Arab town — "shameful and disgusting."

Deputy Tel Aviv Mayor Asaf Zamir said such celebrations "make me nauseated and I am ashamed of you."

Hadash-Ta'al party chief Ayman Odeh wrote that such expressions were "the voices of Netanyahu, Ben Gvir and Smotrich, the warmongers and everyone who supports them." He added that "these racists should be investigated and arrested."

Other videos on social media have shown Arab Israelis cheering at the sight of missiles heading toward Jewish population centers.

Iran had launched three major barrages of ballistic missiles at Israel Friday night and early Saturday morning. Some 80 people were reported hurt in the strikes, including three people who were critically injured and later succumbed to their wounds in the cities of Ramat Gan and Rishon Lezion. According to Magen David Adom, several more people were seriously hurt. The rest were lightly to moderately injured or suffered acute anxiety.

The **three fatalities in Ramat Gan and Rishon Lezion were named Saturday** as Etti Cohen Engel, Yisrael Aloni and Yevgenia Blinder.

Iranian media claimed hundreds of missiles were fired in the first barrage late Friday, while the Israel Defense Forces estimated that the actual number in all the attacks stood at some 200.

The three waves of attacks Friday overnight each consisted of dozens of missiles, according to the IDF, which declined to provide a specific number.

The IDF has called on the public not to publish the locations or footage of missile impacts. "The enemy monitors the footage to improve its attack capabilities," the military said.

The enmity between Israel and Iran escalated into an unprecedented open conflict in the early hours of Friday morning as Israel launched a major offensive against Iran and its nuclear program, hitting nuclear sites, missile bases and top military officials.

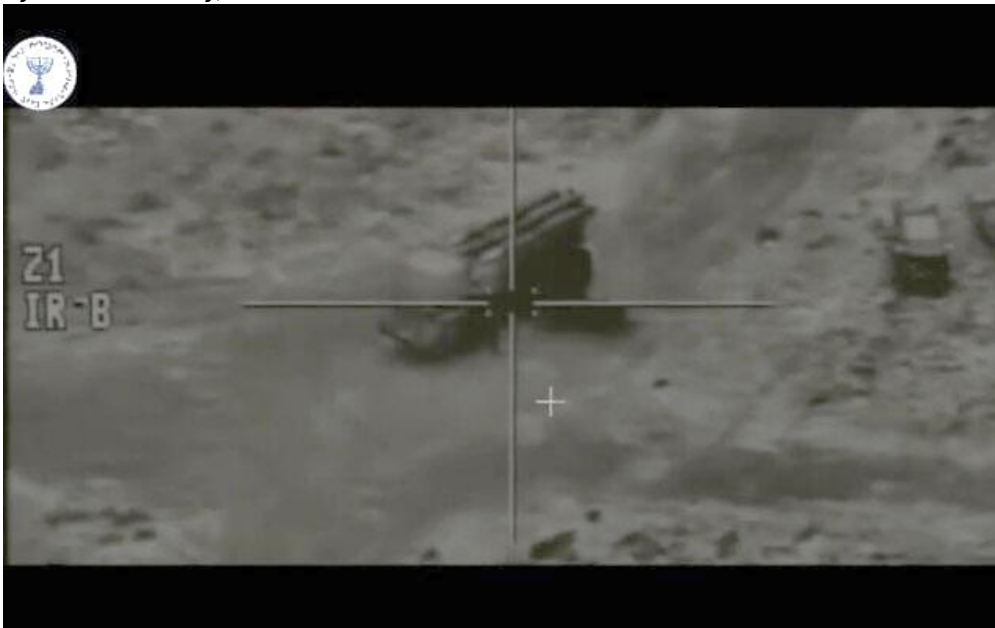
Israel said it had no choice but to attack Iran, adding that it had gathered intelligence that Tehran was approaching "the point of no return" in its pursuit of a nuclear weapon.

The Israeli operation was expected to last several days at least, according to military officials, who added that the IDF was preparing for heavy fire from Iran, but asserted that "at the end of the operation, there will be no nuclear threat" from the Islamic Republic. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/three-killed-near-haifa-as-iranian-missile-barrage-targets-northern-israel/>

Ships, trucks, and suitcases: How Israel reportedly got its attack drones into Iran

Deliveries were made via commercial deals with partners who were unaware that sophisticated weapons were being transported, sources tell Wall Street Journal

By [Tol Staff](#) Today, 11:22 am



Screenshot from footage released by the Mossad showing strikes carried out by commandos of the Israeli spy agency on Iranian air defenses in Iran, June 13, 2025. (Mossad screenshot)

Israel smuggled attack drones into Iran using a variety of means, including trucks, shipping containers, and even suitcases, The Wall Street Journal reported on Sunday, citing sources familiar with the Mossad operation.

When Israel launched its shock campaign in Iran early Friday morning, it also used explosive-carrying quadcopter drones, rockets,

and other sophisticated equipment located inside Iran for precision attacks on Iranian nuclear scientists, military leaders, anti-aircraft batteries, and surface-to-surface missiles.

It was previously reported that Israel spent years preparing for the operation against Iran's nuclear and missile programs, including building a drone base inside Iran and smuggling precision weapons systems and commandos into the country.

Unnamed sources revealed more details in the Journal report, saying Israel spent months smuggling bomb-laden quadcopter drone parts into Iran via suitcases, trucks, and shipping containers. In some cases, business transactions were made with partners who were unaware of the

cargo being shipped. Mossad agents inside Iran then gathered the equipment and handed it out to teams who prepared the drones for use. Team leaders were trained outside Iran and then returned to pass on the skills to the teams on the ground.

When the airstrikes began, the teams used the weapons to take out air defense systems while also hitting surface-to-surface missile launchers as they emerged from shelters and were being set up to fire in retaliation at Israel, the sources said.

Dozens of such launchers were destroyed, one of the sources said.

The Mossad later revealed rare footage showing its actions in Iran.

Footage released by the Mossad shows strikes carried out by commandos of the spy agency on Iranian air defenses in Iran, early June 13, 2025. (Mossad) [Go to site for video rdb](#)

The operations relied on “groundbreaking thinking, bold planning and surgical operation of advanced technologies, special forces and agents operating in the heart of Iran” while evading the eyes of local intelligence,” a security official told The Times of Israel.

Iran apparently still fears further attacks from within its borders. Its intelligence services put an advisory in newspapers Saturday, including the Tasnim outlet, which is linked to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, telling people to be on the lookout for pickup trucks and other trucks that could be used to launch drones.

The Israeli operation — dubbed “Rising Lion” — has continued without pause, while Iran has responded with drones and deadly missile attacks. Israel has said it had no choice but to launch an attack on the nuclear program of the Islamic Republic, which vows to destroy the Jewish state. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/ships-trucks-and-suitcases-how-israel-reportedly-got-its-attack-drones-into-iran/>

Israel found Iran carried out key tests for nuke design ahead of strikes — report

Israel said to believe Tehran decided to build bomb after Oct. 7 massacre; intel officials told politicians Iran could be even further along in process than previously thought

By [Tol Staff](#) and [Emanuel Fabian](#) Today, 11:46 am

Ahead of its strikes on Iran, Israel discovered that the Islamic Republic’s scientists had conducted successful experiments in the design process of a nuclear weapon, bringing it weeks away from being able to produce a bomb if it chose to do so, according to a Hebrew media report Sunday.

This “golden information” was presented by intelligence officials to the political leadership before the decision was made to carry out preemptive strikes Friday, along with the concern that Israel didn’t know everything and that Tehran could be at an even more advanced stage in building a nuclear bomb than the available information showed, Army Radio reported, citing unnamed security officials.

According to the report, Iran gathered scientists and split them into several working groups to labor in secret on components of the process of weaponizing nuclear material into an actual explosive device, beginning around the end of 2023 or the start of 2024 — shortly after Hamas’s October 7 onslaught, which sparked the ongoing war in Gaza.

This aspect of designing a nuclear device ran in parallel to Iran’s enrichment of uranium to levels that have no use for civilian purposes, but are required to build a nuclear bomb. According to an International Atomic Energy Agency [report](#) at the end of May, Iran’s stockpile of uranium, if enriched further, was enough to build nine nuclear weapons.

The Israel Defense Forces managed to monitor the secret weapons process, which left Jerusalem with no doubt that Iran had decided to build a nuclear weapon after the massacre in southern Israel, Army Radio said.

A senior Israeli military official said Saturday that “all the scientists eliminated in the opening strikes had, over the years, been involved in developing the nuclear detonation device.”

Rescue teams work outside a heavily damaged building following an Israeli strike in the Iranian capital of Tehran, June 13, 2025. (AFP)



The **IDF named nine Iranian nuclear scientists it assassinated in the opening strikes, and detailed its efforts to kill them.**

They were named as: Fereydoon Abbasi, expert in nuclear engineering; Mohammad Mehdi Tehrani, expert in physics; Akbar Motalebi Zadeh, expert in chemical engineering; Saeed Barji, expert in materials engineering; Amir Hassan Fakhahi, expert in physics; Abd al-Hamid Minoushehr, expert in reactor physics; Mansour Asgari, expert in physics; Ahmad Reza Zolfaghari Daryani, expert in nuclear engineering; and Ali Bakhoue Katirimi, expert in mechanics.

“All the scientists and experts who were eliminated were significant sources of knowledge in the Iranian nuclear project, and had decades of cumulative experience in the development of nuclear weapons,” the IDF said.

It said that many of them were successors to Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, the “father of the Iranian nuclear project,” who was allegedly assassinated by Israel in 2020.

According to the military, the nine were killed in simultaneous strikes on Tehran early Friday, in the same wave of attacks that eliminated dozens of military commanders, including six top officials.

“The elimination of the scientists was made possible following in-depth intelligence research that intensified over the past year, as part of a classified and compartmentalized IDF plan,” the military said.

An Israeli Air Force fighter jet departs for strikes in Iran, early June 13, 2025. (Israel Defense Forces)



As part of the plan, the IDF said dozens of intelligence researchers “worked on a secret project aimed at tracking key nuclear scientists in Iran over the course of several years.”

The enmity between Israel and Iran escalated into an unprecedented level of open conflict in the early hours of Friday morning when Israel launched a major offensive against Iran and its nuclear program, hitting nuclear sites, missile bases, and top military officials and nuclear scientists.

Israel said it had no choice but to attack, noting that it had gathered intelligence that Tehran was approaching “the point of no return” in its pursuit of nuclear weapons.

Iran responded with ballistic missile barrages overnight Friday and then again on Saturday, killing at least 13 people, injuring hundreds, and destroying residential buildings.

Most of the missiles were intercepted by air defenses, including US systems.

The Israeli operation was expected to last several days at least, according to military officials, who added that the IDF was preparing for heavy fire from Iran, but asserted that “at the end of the operation, there will be no nuclear threat” from the Islamic Republic. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-found-iran-carried-out-key-tests-for-nuke-design-ahead-of-strikes-report/>

Top IRGC intelligence command reportedly eliminated in Tehran strike

Israel’s latest strike in Tehran kills IRGC’s top intelligence chiefs, who were trapped in the rubble; IDF chief hails operation as ‘paving the road to Tehran’; Trump reportedly vetoed plan to kill Khamenei

Yossi Yehoshua, Iskander Khabibulin, Daniel Edelson, New York 11:09

The top leadership of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) intelligence directorate was eliminated in a major Israeli airstrike in central Tehran, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu confirmed in a Fox News interview Sunday.

According to Netanyahu, the strike killed Mohammad Kazemi, head of the IRGC’s intelligence directorate, along with his deputy, Hassan Mohaghegh. The attack, which came amid a broader wave of Israeli airstrikes on dozens of targets across Tehran, marked one of the most significant blows to Iran’s internal security apparatus since the beginning of Israel’s preemptive Operation Rising Lion.

Israeli airstrike in eastern Tehran

Targets struck in the capital included air defense systems, military sites tied to the IRGC—one of which reportedly housed the intelligence officials—and ballistic missile sites, according to the IDF.

Before Netanyahu's confirmation, Iran International, a London-based opposition-affiliated outlet, reported that Kazemi and Mohaghegh were trapped under rubble following the strike on the intelligence building in Tehran. Their status was initially listed as unknown. Reuters reported separately that President Donald Trump had vetoed

an Israeli plan to assassinate Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

As the strikes unfolded, IDF Spokesperson Brig. Gen. Effie Defrin said Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir conducted a situation assessment with top Air Force officials at the underground command center, visiting both defensive and offensive control rooms. Zamir praised the execution of the operation, saying Israel's air campaign was "changing the strategic reality."

Israeli airstrike in the heart of Tehran

"These offensive actions in Iran are removing existential threats and laying the foundation for Israel's security," Zamir said, noting that the strikes were precisely targeted against regime infrastructure and nuclear assets.

He also emphasized the importance of Israel's home front resilience: "A strong home front gives us the strength to complete our mission. We will continue to act decisively, with power, responsibility, and full cooperation across our security branches, until all objectives are



achieved." <https://www.ynetnews.com/article/hy11gkunxlg#autoplay>

Israel retrieves remains of hostage Aviv Atzili from Khan Yunis

MAY THEIR MEMORY BE A BLESSING



Aviv Atzili, 49

Atzili was recovered alongside Yair Yaakov on Wednesday, but remained unidentified until now. Israel retrieves remains of Aviv Atzili from Khan Yunis, June 15, 2025. (photo credit: FACEBOOK, ILLUSTRATION)

Israeli authorities on Sunday evening identified the remains of the second hostage recovered from Khan Yunis in the Gaza Strip on Wednesday as Aviv Atzili. Atzili was recovered alongside [Yair Yaakov on Wednesday](#), but remained unidentified until now. Atzili was murdered by [Hamas terrorists in Kibbutz Nir Oz on October 7](#), with his body taken into terror captivity in the Gaza Strip.

<https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-857835>

700% spike in cyber attacks on Israel since strike on Iran - Radware

Government websites, financial institutions, telecommunications companies, and critical infrastructure are among the variety of targets for the attacks

By [JERUSALEM POST STAFF](#) JUNE 15, 2025 14:26

There was a 700% increase in cyber attacks against Israel over the past two days when comparing to the time period before June 12, cybersecurity firm Radware said on Sunday.

The data indicate a "significant escalation in malicious network activity targeting Israeli infrastructure," the firm said.

"The 700% surge in malicious activity within just two days stems from cyber retaliation operations by Iranian state actors and pro-Iranian hacker groups, including DDoS attacks, infiltration attempts targeting critical infrastructure, data theft, and malware distribution campaigns," said Ron Meyran, VP of Cyber Threat Intelligence at Radware.

JPost Videos



Iran-Israel conflict

The increase in attacks observed by Radware occurred shortly after the news of Israel's strikes on Iran became public, the firm said, adding that it saw an increase in activity by "threat actors aligned with Iran on public and private telegram channels." Pictures of those killed in Israeli strikes on Iran are displayed on a street, in Tehran, Iran, June 15, 2025 (credit: MAJID ASGARIPOUR/WANA (WEST ASIA NEWS AGENCY) VIA REUTERS)"

Iranian state-sponsored cyber groups are expected to intensify their operations aimed at disrupting infrastructure and psychological influence," the firm said.

Government websites, financial institutions, telecommunications companies, and critical infrastructure are among the variety of targets for the

attacks, the company said. <https://www.jpost.com/business-and-innovation/tech-and-start-ups/article-857790>

Trump vetoed Israeli plan to kill Iranian supreme leader, US officials state

Meanwhile, Trump wrote on social media that Israel and Iran should and will make a deal soon and called to make the Middle East great again.

yJERUSALEM POST STAFFJUNE 15, 2025 17:23Updated: JUNE 15, 2025 19:18



US President Donald Trump attends a celebration of the Army's 250th birthday on the National Mall in Washington, DC, US, June, 14, 2025(photo credit: DOUG MILLS/POOL VIA REUTERS)B

US President Donald Trump vetoed an Israeli plan to assassinate Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei since Operation Rising Lion began, two unidentified US officials told Reuters on Sunday.

Meanwhile, Trump stated that "it's possible we could get involved" in the military escalation between Israel and Iran during an interview with ABC News the same day.

During Trump's comments, he reiterated that

the US is "not at this moment involved" in the conflict.

Trump also remains open to Russian President Vladimir Putin taking a role as a mediator between Jerusalem and Tehran, saying, "He is ready. He called me about it. We had a long talk about it."

This followed a 50-minute phone conversation between Trump and Putin on Saturday, with Trump saying on Truth Social that Putin feels, as he does, that the war between Israel and Iran should end.

Kremlin insider Kirill Dmitriev said that he believed Russia could play a "key role" in mediations between Iran and Israel, Russia's state news agency TASS reported.



A photograph Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu posted from his underground war room on Saturday night prominently featured a copy of *Target Tehran*, a 2023 book by Jerusalem Post defense analyst Yonah Jeremy Bob and former editor Ilan Eviatar. (credit: GPO)

'Make the Middle East great again!'

Meanwhile, Iran and Israel "should make a deal, and will make a deal," US President Donald Trump wrote in a post on Truth Social on Sunday.

Trump compared his plan for a deal between Iran and Israel to a deal arranged between India and Pakistan, which he claimed to arrange by "using **TRADE** with the United States to bring reason, **cohesion**, and sanity into the talks with two excellent

leaders who were able to quickly make a decision and STOP!"

"Likewise, we will have PEACE, soon, between Israel and Iran! Many calls and meetings now taking place. I do a lot, and never get credit for anything, but that's OK. the PEOPLE understand. MAKE THE MIDDLE EAST GREAT AGAIN!" he added.

Trump also claimed that he was able to prevent war between Serbia and Kosovo during his first term in office, adding that former president Joe Biden "hurt the longer-term prospects with some very stupid decisions, but I will fix it, again!"

Trump also used the examples of how he claimed to intervene to negotiate between Egypt and Ethiopia's concerns over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam.

Previous statements made by Trump since Operation Rising Lion began

Trump told Reuters in a phone interview on Friday that he and his team had known that Israel's airstrikes as part of Operation Rising Lion were coming, and still saw room for an accord.

Trump insisted earlier on Sunday in a separate post to Truth Social that the [US "had nothing to do with the attack on Iran tonight,"](https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/article-857815) distancing Washington from Israel's widening Operation Rising Lion while threatening Tehran with "force never seen before" if it strikes American targets. <https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/article-857815> **[This is a terminally stupid, arrogant based demand of Trump. He so wants to be known as the "Master of the deal" that he is willing to prevent his closest ally from eliminating the head of the snake, a satanic demonic critter from being eliminated so that the people can rise up and overtake the rest of the regime and put Reza Pahlavi, son of the former Shah in power to return Iran into its former state. You can not make a lasting significant deal with and group that has never kept any previous deals. This is pure arrogance on Trump's part. If the Ayatollah is terminated as have been most of his major henchmen the war will end with an Israeli victory Not a Trump deal. - rdb**

Israeli calls to mental health hotlines spike amid Iranian missile barrages

The Health Ministry reported that it had received thousands of calls to its emotional support hotline during Iran's continued assault on Israel.

By [DR. ITAY GAL](#) JUNE 15, 2025 19:33 Updated: JUNE 15, 2025 19:37



Israelis take cover in a public shelter in Jerusalem, during a ballistic missile attack fired from Iran into Israel June 13, 2025. (photo credit: NOAM REVKIN FENTON/FLASH90)

Israel's Health Ministry reported receiving over 4,700 calls to emotional support hotlines as of Sunday evening, as Israel's health establishment battles a wave of mental health crises, in addition to the wave of ballistic missiles fired by the Islamic regime in Iran.

The ministry also reported hundreds of calls to local mental health institutions and healthcare

provides. In response, Health Minister Uriel Busso's office has enacted emergency protocols, expanding access to the ministry's services during all hours of the day and setting up additional hotlines and command rooms across Israel.

In accordance to directives issued by the IDF's [Home Front Command](#), every health institution in the country has opened its shelters to the public in case of a siren.

In addition, the ministry has launched expansive emotional support services through remote Zoom therapy sessions, immediate psychological evaluations, and a coordinated "anxiety protocol" carried out free of charge to those present at sites of missile impacts.

Delegations from the Health and Welfare ministries are sent to sites of impacts in cities such as Tel Aviv, Ramat Gan, and [Bat Yam](#) to provide initial mental aid, and connect those in need of further treatment to local support networks.



857832

IDF Home Front Command Search and Rescue teams conducting rescue operations at missile impact sites in central Israel, June 15, 2025. (credit: IDF SPOKESPERSON'S UNIT)

What do the new anxiety protocols entail?

These protocols are being carried out with the intent of limiting immediate mental health crises and long-term effects of post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD) among the Israeli populace.

Service at rehabilitation centers across the country remains unchanged, in accordance with the evolving security situation. The ministry ordered the expansion of digital services for patients who wish to remain in their homes. <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article->

Ukrainian drone attack deep inside Russia kills one – governor

The UAV strike on Tatarstan also left 13 wounded, according to Rustam Minnikhanov

15 Jun, 2025 12:55

Ukrainian drone attack in the Republic of Tatarstan in central Russia has resulted in one fatality and multiple injuries, according to the head of the region, Rustam Minnikhanov.

"During the interception of the UAV, debris struck a checkpoint building at an automotive plant in the Yelabuga district, killing a worker. Thirteen people were injured in total, with one in critical condition," Minnikhanov stated in a Telegram post on Sunday.

The crash triggered a fire at the scene, which was quickly extinguished.

In recent months, Ukrainian forces have intensified drone strikes, targeting both border regions and deeper within Russia. National air defense systems routinely intercept dozens or even hundreds of hostile drones per day, although falling debris continues to pose risks to civilians and infrastructure.

Ukraine has intensified its drone raids since mid-May, when a meeting of negotiators from the two countries took place in Istanbul, marking the first direct talks between Kiev and Moscow since 2022. The attacks peaked during the final week of May, when 2,300 UAVs were shot down, according to the Russian MOD.

<https://www.rt.com/russia/619367-tatarstan-drone-attack-uav/>

Russian exports surge despite Western sanctions – report

Last year, Moscow sold 18% more goods to its top 20 trade partners compared to 2021, the German Economic Institute has estimated

15 Jun, 2025 14:21



FILE PHOTO. © Sputnik/Vitaly Timkiv

Russia's exports have grown considerably, compared to figures recorded prior to the escalation of the Ukraine conflict and despite sweeping Western sanctions, the German Economic Institute has reported.

Back in 2022, the US, the EU, the UK, Canada, Japan and several other nations imposed massive sanctions on Russia, targeting its financial institutions, trade, and energy exports.

Moscow has consistently described the punitive measures as illegitimate and counterproductive.

In a report published on Friday, the German Economic Institute stated that *“despite all European efforts, [Russian President Vladimir] Putin’s war chest is not emptying.”* The document suggested that Moscow is *“skillfully exploiting the loopholes in the sanctions regime to expand its financial resources.”*

This is evidenced by an 18% increase in Russia’s exports to its top 20 trade partners last year, compared to 2021, the Institute’s experts wrote, estimating that the growth translated to 330 billion dollars’ worth of goods.

“The preliminary data for 2025 also shows that little has changed in this regard,” the report noted.

According to the analysis, China, India, Türkiye and Brazil are the main importers of Russian goods, consisting mainly of oil, gas, and other raw materials. Moscow has shifted its trade focus to the Global South, but according to the report, Hungary and Slovakia remain among *“Russia’s most important trading partners”* in the EU.

US Senator Lindsey Graham has been spearheading a bill calling for 500% secondary tariffs on imports from countries buying Russian oil and gas. Analysts at the German Economic Institute doubt US President Donald Trump will back the measure. The report also questions whether such tariffs are even technically feasible.

On Wednesday, US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent warned lawmakers that the imposition of such high tariffs could undermine ongoing diplomatic efforts to resolve the Ukraine conflict.

Speaking late last month at a meeting with business leaders, Russian President Putin hailed the country’s impressive economic performance across an array of sectors, despite operating in what he described as *“far from favorable and rather difficult conditions.”*

The official also cited the International Monetary Fund’s ratings, according to which, Russia is in fourth place globally by purchasing power parity (PPP).

The macroeconomic analysis metric compares economic productivity and living standards between countries by adjusting for differences in the cost of goods and services. <https://www.rt.com/russia/619368-russian-exports-grow-despite-sanctions-report/>

WATCH: Famous leftist reporter says Islamic regime in Iran has to go and suggests one name to take over

By [Joe Kovacs](#) [June 15, 2025](#)



Christiane Amanpour

Christiane Amanpour, CNN's chief international anchor who is also of Iranian heritage, says the people of Iran want to change the Islamic regime, and she suggests Reza Pahlavi, the exiled crown prince of Iran, be the one to take over power. I never thought I would agree with anything Amanpour said but she is right here. - rdb

Appearing on the BBC on Sunday, the left-leaning Amanpour said: "There is no doubt, and Pahlavi is right, and everybody who has reported, I grew up under the Pahlavis in Iran, and the people, you know, first of all chose the Islamic Republic instead of them, but now have seen that the Islamic Republic is so much harsher, is so much more punitive, gives so much fewer rights and is isolated from the world and the economy is appalling and it affects the people.



Reza Pahlavi, the exiled crown prince of Iran

"So yes, I think from all my reporting, they want to change. He's the only one with name recognition, and whether it's for transitional or permanent leadership, I don't know what he wants, but he's considered the only one with any name recognition and any kind of support inside."

On the BBC today Christiane Amanpour says that based on her reporting, the people of Iran want the Islamic Republic to go and that Crown Prince Reza Pahlavi has the most name recognition and support inside the country to lead the post-regime transition.

pic.twitter.com/4UHTbaRMnQ

— Reza Pahlavi Communications (@PahlaviComms) [June 15, 2025](#)

Pahlavi himself appeared on "Sunday Morning Futures" with Maria Bartiromo on the Fox News Channel, saying "it's just a matter of time" before Ayatollah Ali Khamenei is ousted.

"It's not a matter of if, but a matter of when," Pahlavi said, noting there is a "tremendous opportunity" now because the current regime is at its weakest point.

"As of [the] last three days, the regime is 10 times weaker than it was two weeks ago," he explained.

"So at this stage, I think the Iranian people obviously realize that the playing field has been more equalized for them to give them finally an opportunity to rise and get rid of this regime. Because we always believed that the ultimate solution to the problem is for this regime to no longer be there, not at the hand of foreign troops or countries, but at the hand of the Iranian people themselves.

"The Iranian people are the boots on the ground that we need. What they need however is solidarity from the free world to once and for all get rid of the problem."

Today, exclusively on [@Sundayfutures](#) with [@MariaBartiromo](#), Exiled Iranian Crown Prince Reza Pahlavi [@PahlaviReza](#) spoke about Iranians fighting for freedom as the regime prioritizes the pursuit of nuclear weapons over human rights. [@FoxNews pic.twitter.com/nn0EeE4OBT](#)
— SundayMorningFutures (@SundayFutures) [June 15, 2025](#)

Pahlavi continued: "This is not the Iranian people's war. It is Ali Khamenei's war and he is solely and ultimately responsible."

"What angers me further is that he's using my compatriots as a human shield while he's currently hiding in some underground tunnel like a rat. And we have had reports that senior members and officials have already had their families fleeing the country to foreign destinations, perhaps including some of his own."

"Our enemy is right here, meaning the regime," Pahlavi said. "The solution is in front of your eyes. The Iranian people are your solution, not negotiating with the regime that cannot be trusted."

"How much more time do you want the regime to catch a second breath and come back online? How many times are we going to yet again throw them a lifeline?"

Meanwhile, U.S. President Donald Trump is urging Iran to make a deal with Israel as both nations continue to escalate military action against each other.

"Iran and Israel should make a deal, and will make a deal, just like I got India and Pakistan to make, in that case by using TRADE with the United States to bring reason, cohesion, and sanity into the talks with two excellent leaders who were able to quickly make a decision and STOP! Also, during my first term, Serbia and Kosovo were going at it hot and heavy, as they have for many decades, and this long time conflict was ready to break out into WAR. I stopped it (Biden has hurt the longer term prospects with some very stupid decisions, but I will fix it, again!)" Trump [said](#) on Truth Social. **Don't break your arm patting yourself on the back with your braggadocio - rdb**



"Another case is Egypt and Ethiopia, and their fight over a massive dam that is having an effect on the magnificent Nile River. There is peace, at least for now, because of my intervention, and it will stay that way! Likewise, we will have PEACE, soon, between Israel and Iran! Many calls and meetings now taking place. I do a lot, and never get credit for anything, but that's OK, the PEOPLE understand. MAKE THE MIDDLE EAST GREAT AGAIN!"

he added.

U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, said on "Sunday Morning Futures" that America stand "unequivocally with Israel," but he doesn't think "there is any scenario where we would see American boots on the ground."

"I think it is very much in the interests of America to see regime change," Cruz said.

Senator Ted Cruz on Iran: "I think it is very much in the interests of America to see regime change." [pic.twitter.com/Li9hVgoOD6](#)

— Open Source Intel (@Osint613) [June 15, 2025](#)

"Iran is just lobbying missiles into population centers trying to kills as many Jews as they can."

"Israel's military is incredible effective, and they're the ones going to provide the boots on the ground."

Cruz concluded there is no use "redeeming the ayatollah. He is filled with hatred."

The Islamic Republic and its incompetent and criminal leaders have dragged Iran into war.

Here is my message to my compatriots: Iran belongs to you, and reclaiming it is in your hands.

pic.twitter.com/gqvr5QTkKe

— Reza Pahlavi (@PahlaviReza) June 14, 2025

Follow Joe on X [@JoeKovacsNews](https://twitter.com/JoeKovacsNews)

<https://www.wnd.com/2025/06/watch-famous-leftist-reporter-says-islamic-reigime-in-iran-has-to-go-and-suggests-one-name-to-take-over/>

Netanyahu interview with Brett Baier

Netanyahu makes SHOCKING claim about Trump assassination attempts, his own

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ceEolbNTJHw>

OP ED

Trump: On the Way to Crucial Summits

by [Amir Taheri](#) June 15, 2025 at 4:00 am



While President Donald Trump prepares for G7 and NATO summits this month, political circles and media in Europe are busy trying to cut him down to size before the two events. Pictured: Trump and other heads of state deliberate at the G7 summit on June 9, 2018 in Charlevoix, Canada. (Photo by Jesco Denzel /Bundesregierung via Getty Images)

While President Donald Trump prepares for G7 and NATO summits this month, political circles and media in Europe are busy trying to cut him down to size before the two events.

"Trump will come empty-handed," says one commentator. "None of the things he announced with fanfare has been achieved."

Other commentators use such phrases as "deflated

balloon" and "bogged down in the mess he created."

At first sight, it looks certain that he has not scored big on any of the dramatic goals he announced.

His tariff campaign is stalled in a maze of zigzags.

His peace-making gambit in Ukraine has led to him humiliating Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and labelling Russian President Vladimir Putin as "quite mad".

Worse still, scores of US judges have lined up to block some of his dramatic measures, including the crackdown on illegal immigration.

His purge of bureaucracy has also been stalled, and the federal government is desperately rehiring many of the staff that Elon Musk fired as "do-nothing parasites."

In another register, the Gaza tragedy continues, and the ceasefire promised seems as remote as ever.

The cherry on the top of all that is the riot triggered by illegal immigrants in Los Angeles, leading to the deployment of the National Guard and the US Marines, a rare move in American history.

Even on the personal side of things, his success in securing business contracts for Trump holdings plus a 747 jet is counterbalanced by the acrimonious split with his most ardent backer, Elon Musk.

With such a tableau, Trump's favorite words "amazing" and "wonderful," used to describe his first 100 days in office, sound hollow.

Well, what can one make of all that?

At the start of Trump's second term, I suggested that the sky hasn't fallen and advised those who saw the events as an end-of-time catastrophe to take a deep breath and not judge Trump by what he says he might do, but wait and see what he does.

At the time many Trump critics overestimated his power, indeed the power of any president of the United States, and assumed he could do what he likes by fiat or ukase. This time they may be underestimating the United States as the indispensable world power.

That misunderstanding is due to the fact that the American model doesn't easily fit into concepts such as democracy and republic.

What became the United States was the fruit of a rebellion against a system in which concentration of power contained the threat of tyranny.

For the Founding Fathers, therefore, the priority was to set up a system of checks and balances, learned from Xenophon in his "Cyropaedia" and Montesquieu in "The Spirit of Laws," in order to prevent any one person or institution of the state to monopolize power.

Thus, the US couldn't become a state modeled on Athenian democracy, in which the "people", which in fact meant a small minority of free male citizens, could do whatever they liked with the power won through elections.

Nor could the US become a republic modeled on the Roman Republic or the more recent Venetian version, where power was wielded by narrow patrician elites.

To complicate matters further, the system the founding fathers designed included elements both of democracy and republic.

It is a democracy because almost all public positions are filled through elections. However, those elected face a series of constraints both in having their election confirmed and when exercising the power delegated to them. Worse still, the art of winning an election isn't the same as the craft of governing. In other words, a genius in winning elections may turn out to be a dunce in governing.

In that system the Leviathan, Hobbes' symbol of state power, is heavily chained down. The aim of those who designed it was to make sure it did as little as possible. In what could be a constitutional republic, democracy is more of a point of moral reference than a blank cheque to exercise power.

This is why President Barack Obama, a closet collectivist, was unable to implement his agenda and inject a heavy dose of socialism into the American economy and foreign policy.

George Shultz, one of the wisest American politicians of the last century, noted that no political battle in the US is ever won or lost forever. The US is a giant cruiser set on its course by mystical elements and couldn't be suddenly put on another course wished by the captain of the moment and his crew.

Politicians, therefore, are either swimming with the tide or, as L.H. Mencken charged, "brothers in pillage."

According to Shultz, the American system doesn't allow radical changes; its reform could only be incremental. A passing revolutionary mood may help you win an election. Soon, however, you shall find out that you are in office but not in power to implement your promised revolutionary agenda.

The American system is designed to slow down decision-making to avoid both tyranny and anarchy. The ideal government in that model is one that doesn't do anything, thus allowing individuals who make up the society to shape their lives in a framework of laws that guarantees freedom.

The key concept in the American system is consent which, if and when achieved, could allow changes of course, innovations and what is branded as reform.

The political set-up against which Trump led his "revolution" was the fruit of a consent that started with President Lyndon Johnson's "Great Society" reforms and took almost half a century to shape the status quo that Trump challenged.

The Trump "revolution" was also the fruit of a new consent that took decades to shape as a challenge to the status quo created by the previous consent in its many forms including positive discrimination, political correctness, globalism and, more recently, wokism.

But, once the revolutionary mood ebbs, reality strikes back with people who wish to light the chimney without setting their home on fire. Though the fruit of a rebellion dressed as a revolution, American society has always been deeply conservative in politics.

In some cases, political power comes with a heavy dose of personal attributes.

Nero wasn't satisfied with just being Roman Emperor, and fancied himself as a great musician and poet. Although he had a squeaking voice, he was convinced he was the best singer in the empire. Commodus believed he was a descendant of Hercules and showed his strength by strangling savage beasts in the forum.

More recently, Obama saw himself as a magician to conjure a new American rabbit out of his top hat while reforming the Islamic world.

The Caesar may be able to tame the whole world, but is unable to rule his own inner self. That task is always performed by reality, which obeys no Caesar.

Thus, the best option is to wait until that golden rule of history is applied to Trump, who continues to represent a desire by many Americans, perhaps still a majority, to put the giant cruiser on a new course. Reality will teach them that the American system allows only incremental changes of course.

The Trump-Musk falling out may not be a mere lovers' tiff, but is also unlikely to be as final as it seems. Love cools, friends fall away, brothers divide; this belongs to theater. In politics, a Cato cannot re-script his role as a Brutus.

The Trump-Musk duel may turn out to be a palatial version of the professional wrestling popular in the US, in which adversaries seem to be killing each other with incredibly violent attacks, but which turn out to be harmless show-off gestures. These are known as "kayfabe" in wrestling circles and regarded as an art form.

Let us return to George Shultz.

He believed that a US president could regard himself as immensely successful if he manages to implement 10 percent of his agenda. Mencken, for his part, noted that all US presidential terms end either with a scandal or a sense of dissatisfaction. Well, who knows, maybe the system is so designed to produce only such outcomes.

Amir Taheri was the executive editor-in-chief of the daily Kayhan in Iran from 1972 to 1979. He has worked at or written for innumerable publications, published eleven books, and has been a columnist for Asharq Al-Awsat since 1987.

Gatestone Institute would like to thank the author for his kind permission to reprint this article in slightly different form from Asharq Al-Awsat. He graciously serves as Chairman of Gatestone Europe.

<https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/21685/trump-summits>