

Israel attacks civilian infrastructure in Iran as Netanyahu calls for regime change

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15 June 2025

Israel's onslaught on Iran, which began Friday night, entered a new phase on Sunday. Having destroyed large portions of Iran's air defenses, attacked military and nuclear facilities, Israel has now shifted its targets to civilian infrastructure, including water treatment facilities and energy infrastructure.

The Israeli military reported striking more than 80 targets in Iran overnight Saturday and Sunday. "Tehran residents reported the heaviest wave of attacks yet on Sunday afternoon, with explosions ringing out every half hour," the *Washington Post* reported.

Among the targets were water treatment facilities in northern Iran, whose destruction sent waves of sewage flowing in Tehran's streets. On Saturday, Israel attacked the main oil refinery in Tehran and South Pars, the world's largest natural gas field.

On Sunday, Israel expanded its strikes to airports, manufacturing plants and police stations.

Commenting on the shift, the *Post* wrote, "The targets appear to indicate an expansion of Israel's war aims... By striking Iranian industry and infrastructure, Israel is aiming to degrade the Iranian state, further damage the country's already-reeling economy, and possibly trigger regime change, according to analysts and former officials."

Richard Nephew, a former State Department and White House official, told the *Washington Post*, "It sure does feel like this is a regime change ending, rather than taking out the nuclear program." He added, "Israel may have decided that the best way to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon was to topple the Iranian regime."

In an interview with Fox News Sunday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was asked whether "regime change" in Iran was a goal of his government. Netanyahu replied that it "could certainly be the result

because the Iranian regime is very weak."

Netanyahu stressed the degree of cooperation between the US and Israel. "I've been in constant contact with President Trump... we informed our American friends and President Trump, our great friend, ahead of time, we did. He knew about it."

Netanyahu emphasized the degree of American involvement in the war, saying, "American pilots are shooting down drones that are headed towards Israel, as do our pilots. American THAAD missile batteries are helping defend Tel Aviv and the greater Tel Aviv area. American Aegis ships are in the Mediterranean."

The same day, John Bolton, one of the architects of the Iraq war, called for the US to seek regime change in Iran in an op-ed published in the *Wall Street Journal*.

Bolton declared, "The 1979 Islamic Revolution retains power in Tehran, and it could rebuild its nuclear and ballistic-missile programs and terrorist networks. The only lasting foundation for Middle East peace and security is overthrowing the ayatollahs. America's declared objective should be just that."

On Sunday, Israeli strikes killed the intelligence chief of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), Iran's national news agency confirmed.

To date, over 224 people have been killed since Israel began its attacks on Iran Friday. Iranian retaliatory attacks have killed 14 people in Israel.

Further reporting in the press has underscored the perfidy and criminality of the Israeli attack, which was enabled by fraudulent US calls for negotiation. Just hours before Israel launched its onslaught on Friday night, the Trump administration announced a new round of nuclear negotiations in Oman that very weekend.

Citing "officials close to Iran's leadership," the *New York Times* reported that Iranian leaders "never

expected Israel to strike before another round of talks that had been scheduled for this coming Sunday in Oman.”

As a result, on “the night of Israel’s attack, senior military commanders did not shelter in safe houses and instead stayed in their own homes, a fateful decision. Gen. Amir Ali Hajizadeh, the commander of the Revolutionary Guards’ aerospace unit, and his senior staff ignored a directive against congregating in one location.”

The Trump administration was clearly intimately involved in Israel’s aggression, including its act of perfidy of promoting nuclear talks as the cover for the first round of attacks. Now, there are increasing calls within the US political establishment for the US military to directly join in the bombing of Iran.

In an editorial published Sunday, June 15, the *Wall Street Journal* called for direct US bombing of Iran, declaring, “Central to an Israeli strategic victory will be whether it can destroy Iran’s main nuclear-weapons sites, and that effort deserves American help.”

It writes that the effort to destroy Iran’s nuclear reactors is “where the U.S. comes in. Israel lacks the deep penetrating bombs, and the heavy bombers to deliver them, that could do more damage to buried sites. The U.S. has both, and Israel would like U.S. help in taking out those nuclear sites.”

It declares, “Now that the war is underway, the U.S. has a strategic and moral interest in destroying Iran’s nuclear threat and a rapid Israeli victory.”

On Saturday, Trump opened the way for direct US involvement in the attack on Iran, saying that if the US were “attacked in any way, shape, or form by Iran, the full strength and might of the US Armed Forces will come down on you at levels never seen before.”

The Democratic Party is, meanwhile, openly backing the illegal Israeli assault on Iran. In an interview on NBC Sunday, Democratic Congressman Adam Schiff endorsed the attack on Iran, saying, “I think [Israel] found this the opportune moment to go after a nuclear program that was coming closer and closer to fruition. So I support those actions. And I support the administration’s actions in helping Israel defend itself.”

Schiff opened the door to supporting the US bombing of Iran, saying, “if Iran attacks the United States, when the administration has made it very clear that we have

not been part of the offensive operations against Iran. If they should respond by attacking us, then we should respond by defending ourselves. And then I think Iran opens itself up to potential attacks on Fordow [uranium enrichment refinery] or elsewhere.”



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