

Israel bombs Iran on the 100th day of the US-Israeli war as fighting spreads across Lebanon and Gaza

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Israel bombed Central and Western Iran before dawn Monday, striking air defenses, missile launchers and a petrochemical complex used by the Revolutionary Guards, hours after Iran fired a barrage of ballistic missiles at Israeli cities. Israeli strikes on Iran wounded at least 15, the country's emergency services reported.

It was the heaviest exchange since the nominal ceasefire that took effect in early April, and it fell on the 100th day of the war that the United States and Israel began against Iran on February 28.

One hundred days since the start of the war, the Trump administration has achieved none of its war aims and confronts a deepening crisis. It has neither overthrown Iran's government, crippled its military nor opened the Strait of Hormuz.

The exchange followed weeks of Israeli attacks on Lebanon and Palestine. In the past week Israeli attacks killed more than 30 people in Lebanon and more than 20 in Gaza, and Israeli troops shot dead a seven-month-old child, Sam Abu Haikal, in the occupied West Bank.

On Sunday Israel struck Beirut's southern suburbs and that night, Iran, which had said it would answer any attack on the Lebanese capital, fired its first missiles at Israel since the nominal ceasefire.

By Monday evening Iran's joint military command announced it was halting operations.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu made clear that the "pause" announced Monday was tentative and could be broken at any time. He said the fighting had stopped "after we hit the terror regime in Tehran," but promised to renew it the moment Iran fired again: "If the terror regime in Iran makes the mistake and returns to attacking us, we will respond with force." He said Israel would press on with its assault on Hezbollah

regardless.

In an interview taped at a Wisconsin farm and aired Sunday on NBC's "Meet the Press" to mark the 100th day of war, US President Donald Trump told Kristen Welker the war would end through a deal or "I'm going to blow the hell out of them, to be honest with you."

Asked how long the war would last, Trump stated on four separate occasions that it had been going on a mere three months, compared with the 19 years he said the Vietnam war lasted—a war the United States lost. He ultimately cut the interview short.

The killing in Gaza continued. Israeli strikes killed at least five people there on Monday, among them eight-year-old Jad Soleiman, hit in Jabaliya as he walked home from school. His father Yusuf told the Associated Press: "I ran to him and found him lying down with his bag still on. It's covered in his blood... He was taking his last breaths." Two more were killed in Khan Younis.

The war on Lebanon has killed more than 3,600 people since March, the Lebanese health ministry reported Monday. Among the dead are soldiers of the Lebanese army—a force Israel is not even fighting—including three killed June 6 when an Israeli strike hit their vehicle. More than a million people have fled their homes. Israeli troops occupy a swath of Southern Lebanon and have ordered the evacuation of nearly a fifth of the country, and Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz has said his forces will keep the ground they hold up to the Litani River and will not withdraw.

Significant divisions are finding expression within the US political establishment over how to deal with the

crisis triggered by the war.

The *Wall Street Journal*, speaking for substantial sections of the political establishment, demanded further escalation. In an editorial Monday headlined “Israel Fights While Trump Talks,” it complained that Washington “demands more restraint from an ally than it does from Iran” and praised the Israeli bombing as a service to US diplomacy that would “clear the path for military action.”

“If the regime won’t make a deal that meets U.S. objectives, Mr. Trump needs an alternative—and soon,” the editorial board wrote. “The war has now passed the 100-day mark, and the Strait of Hormuz is still closed... In recent weeks the U.S. position has been eroding.” It urged Trump to give Tehran “a hard deadline” and to empower Israel “to enforce the cease-fire against Iranian violations.”

The conflict between Trump and Netanyahu—and the factions of the US political establishment that Netanyahu speaks for—reflects the deepening crisis created by the failure of the war to achieve its objectives.

The recognition of the debacle reaches into the foreign-policy establishment itself. Aaron David Miller, a former State Department official now at the Carnegie Endowment, told the *New York Times* that Trump “launched a war of choice overestimating America’s military capacity and underestimating Iran’s,” calling it “a box that Trump cannot get out of right now.”

The Democratic Party offers no opposition to either course. On June 4 the House defeated a War Powers resolution to remove US forces from the war in Lebanon, 324 to 92, with most Democrats joining Republicans to kill it. House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries, Minority Whip Katherine Clark and Caucus Chair Pete Aguilar led the opposition, declaring their solidarity with the effort to “defeat Hezbollah, a violent terrorist organization that is a sworn enemy of the United States.”



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