



Spotlight on Iran and the Shiite Axis

June 18-25, 2025

Editor: Dr. Raz Zimmt



Highlights¹

- Prior to the ceasefire between Iran and Israel, which was announced on June 24, 2025, senior officials in the Iranian administration and the security-military leadership continued to threaten harsh responses to Israel's ongoing attacks on Iran and the American attack on three nuclear facilities in Iran. The officials called the attacks a "crime" constituting a violation of Iran's sovereignty and international law and claimed that the American attacks were intended to save Israel, which, they claimed, had failed to achieve its war objectives.
- Following the announcement of a ceasefire between Iran and Israel, senior Iranian officials presented the end of the fighting as a "victory" for Iran and warned Israel against violating the ceasefire.
- The IRGC assistant commander for coordination wrote in an open letter to the Palestinian people that "your ongoing jihad for 76 years is beginning to bear fruit," and that "the fateful day for the realization of your historic mission is approaching, and we will all stand by your side."
- Senior Houthi officials expressed support for Iran in the face of the Israeli and American attacks, but did not carry out their own attacks against Israel or American vessels. After the ceasefire, the Houthis made it clear that they would continue their attacks against Israel and escalate them. A senior Houthi official claimed that more than 82,000 volunteers had completed military training to fight Israel.
- The pro-Iranian militias in Iraq threatened to act against American bases in the country following the American attack on Iran, but there were no exceptional incidents. A senior member of one of the militias was killed in an Israeli attack in Iran alongside a senior Qods Force official and the personal security guard of former Hezbollah secretary-general Nasrallah.

¹ The weekly study includes the activities of Iran, the Shiite militias in Iraq, and the Houthis in Yemen.

► The leader of the Islamic Resistance Front in Syria said that any “aggression” against the “axis of resistance” is also “aggression” against them and threatened that “every Zionist is a target.”

The military campaign between Iran and Israel

► During the fighting between Iran and Israel, senior regime officials in Tehran continued to praise the ability of the Iranian armed forces to attack Israeli territory. They also condemned the US attack on Iran’s nuclear facilities on June 22, 2025, claiming that it was evidence of Israel’s “inability” to achieve its goals. The following are prominent statements:

◆ Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said that Iran has always sought peace and tranquility, but under the current circumstances, the only way to end the “imposed war” is to unconditionally stop the “enemy’s aggression” and provide a final guarantee that the “adventures of the Zionist terrorists” will end forever. He warned that if the “aggression” did not stop, Iran’s responses to the “enemy” would be harsher and more painful (Masoud Pezeshkian’s X account, June 20, 2025).

◆ After the American attack, Pezeshkian said that the United States had no choice but to enter the arena following the decisive and deterrent response of the Iranian armed forces and after seeing the considerable incompetence of the “Zionist regime.” He added that the American operation proved that the United States is the main cause of the “hostile actions” of the “Zionist regime” against Iran (Iranian president’s website, June 22, 2025).

◆ During a visit to one of the bases of the Revolutionary Guards’ Aerospace Force, the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, Abdolrahim Mousavi, praised the “operational performance and precise and decisive responses” of the Revolutionary Guards Air Force, saying that Iran will continue to attack any target related to the “aggressive Zionist regime” and that it sees no limitation (Tasnim, June 19, 2025). After the US attack, he said it was a very serious mistake that Iran had repeatedly warned against. He noted that Iran would continue to punish Prime Minister Netanyahu until he reached a state of helplessness and would also respond to the American action in an appropriate manner. Mousavi added that President Trump’s action was done out of desperation in an attempt to save his proxy, Israel, and especially Netanyahu personally. When President Trump saw the signs of Netanyahu’s weakness and defeat, he decided to give him artificial resuscitation through this move (Tasnim, June 23, 2025).



Abdolrahim Mousavi (Tasnim, June 23, 2025)

◆ IRGC commander Mohammad Pakpour said at the ceremony of the appointment of the commander of the Ground Forces and head of the IRGC's Intelligence Organization that the organization would continue forcefully in the path of the senior commanders who were killed in the Israeli attack. He noted that the objective is to advance the operational activity and the goals that the Revolutionary Guards aspire to achieve, and that this would be possible with the assistance of all forces (Tasnim, June 19, 2025). In a video from his command room, Pakpour declared that unity among the people is growing stronger as time passes, and that the activities of the Revolutionary Guards' air and space arm do not stop and deprive the Zionists of any sense of security (Tasnim, June 22, 2025).



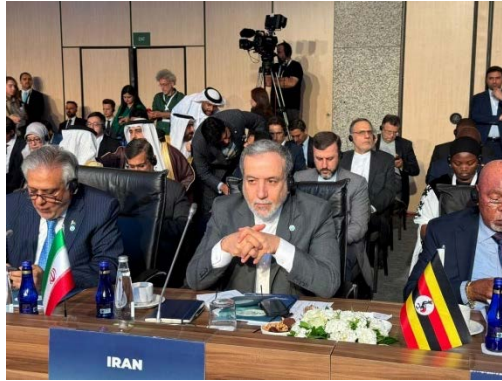
The IRGC commander (Tasnim, June 22, 2025)

◆ In response to the US attack, the Revolutionary Guards said that the attack constitutes a “blatant and unprecedented crime” that violates the UN Charter, international law, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and the basic principles of respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states. It was also noted that the dispersion and size of American military bases in the region are not a point of strength but rather a point of weakness that increases their vulnerability, and that the American attack would only

strengthen the determination of young Iranian scientists to continue advancing their nuclear program. The Revolutionary Guards warned that waves of Iranian attacks would continue in a precise, focused, and intensive manner and would be directed against infrastructure, strategic centers, and interests of the “Zionist regime.” In addition, Iran will examine options for a response that are beyond the imagination and calculations of the attackers, who should expect reactions that would cause them to regret their actions (Tasnim, June 22, 2025).

◆ According to a statement issued by the Khatam al-Anbiya headquarters, the “aggressive” operation, carried out by the “criminal regime of the United States” in continuation of its support for the “aggression of the Zionist regime” and in flagrant violation of Iran’s sovereignty, was intended to rehabilitate the “dying Zionist regime.” However, not only did it fail, but it will lead to expanding the bank of legitimate targets of the Iranian armed forces and prepare the ground for the expansion of the war in the region. The statement said that in response to this crime, the fighters of Islam would carry out powerful and precise actions with heavy, painful, and unexpected consequences (Tasnim, June 23, 2025).

◆ In his speech at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi condemned the Israeli attacks, saying that they were a “betrayal of diplomacy” and an unprecedented blow to the foundations of international law and the institution of the United Nations. He noted that his country was being attacked unjustly and aggressively, and that the world and its institutions must wake up and act now to stop the aggressor and bring to justice the criminals who continuously commit crimes in the region (Iranian Foreign Ministry website, June 20, 2025). On the sidelines of the emergency meeting of the foreign ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in Istanbul, Araghchi also met with the president of Turkey and his counterparts from Iraq, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar to discuss the Israeli attacks on Iran (Tasnim, June 21, 2025).



The Iranian foreign minister at the meeting of foreign ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (Iranian Foreign Ministry website, June 21, 2025)

► After the ceasefire went into effect on June 24, 2025, senior Iranian regime officials promoted the “victory” narrative, claiming that the Islamic Republic had inflicted severe casualties on Israel. They also stressed that they would maintain the ceasefire but would respond forcefully to any Israeli “violation.” The following are prominent statements:

◆ Iranian President Pezeshkian said that Tehran would not violate the ceasefire unless Israel violated it (Nour News, June 24, 2025). In another statement, he declared a “historic victory” in the “12-day war imposed by Israel.” He noted that the great Iranian nation demonstrated “steadfastness and resistance” and forced a ceasefire on the “enemy” in the war that was forced upon it due to the “adventurism and provocativeness of the Zionist regime.” He added that the “enemy” had completely failed to achieve its goals, and that the collapse of its image and the widespread destruction caused in Israel had sent a clear message to the world that the price of adventurism against Iran is terrible (Iranian president’s website, June 24, 2025).

◆ The Secretariat of the National Security Council said that the Iranian Armed Forces demonstrated the power of deterrence and decisive response and dealt a painful blow to the “enemy.” The statement also noted that Iran was awarded a victory, which forced the “enemy” to regret it, recognize its defeat and stop its attack unilaterally, and that the Armed Forces are ready to respond decisively to any “aggressive action by the enemy”, without any trust in the enemy’s words and with their hand on the trigger (Nour News, June 24, 2025).

◆ The spokesman for the Khatam al-Anbiya headquarters warned Israel and the United States not to violate the ceasefire, otherwise Iran’s response would be harsher. He noted that Iran’s armed forces have complete distrust of the false guarantees of the “criminal

leaders of the United States and the Zionist regime,” and that Iran is 100% prepared to deal with any “aggression” by the “enemy” (Tasnim, June 24, 2025).

◆ Iranian Majles Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf said that “Iran’s wise leadership has succeeded in preventing the ‘enemy’ from achieving its goals.” He added that Iran had “shattered the image of Israel’s Iron Dome, destroyed the cities of the Zionist entity, set fire to important military and security centers, and responded appropriately to the United States” (Al-Mayadeen, June 24, 2025).

◆ The Iranian regime held a festive event in Tehran’s Revolution Square to express support for Operation Glad Tidings of Victory and the forces defending the homeland. During the celebrations, Qods Force commander Esmail Qaani was also documented for the first time since the beginning of the military campaign (IRNA, June 24, 2025).

Iran’s involvement in the Palestinian arena

► In an open letter to the Palestinian people, Mohammad Reza Naqdi, the IRGC assistant commander for coordination, wrote that “your ongoing jihad over 76 years is beginning to bear fruit.” He noted that “this day is your day, and this is the great historic opportunity that we have been waiting for together to decide the fate of the region and the Palestinian issue.” Naqdi stressed that “the fateful day for the realization of your historic mission is approaching, and we will all stand by your side.” He added, “Maybe we will join you together with a group of American prisoners, or perhaps fate will want otherwise. We will stand by your side, celebrate victory together, and pray together in Jerusalem. The day of advancement towards Jerusalem is very close” (Al-Alam, June 19, 2025).



Mohammad Reza Naqdi (Al-Alam, June 19, 2025)

The Houthis in Yemen

The direct confrontation between the Houthis and Israel

► In the past week, there have been no announcements claiming responsibility by the Houthis for attacks against Israel.

► “Houthi sources” reported that attacks from Yemen “in the depth of the Israeli entity” would escalate in the coming period, in response to “escalating occupation crimes in the Gaza Strip and the continued siege.” Additionally, “observers” estimated that the ceasefire between Israel and Iran is expected to reinforce the agreement between the US and the Houthis on mutual cessation of attacks, unless Washington takes steps that contradict the agreement (Al-Akhbar, June 25, 2025).

► Faiz al-Hanami, the official in charge of general mobilization in Sana’a on behalf of the Houthi regime, claimed that more than 82,000 volunteers completed a military training course called “Al-Aqsa Storm” designed to prepare them for fighting against Israel. He added that the second course in Sana’a has already begun, and that in total, about one hundred thousand volunteers are expected to undergo training from the capital city alone, and similar courses are being held in additional provinces under Houthi control (Press TV, June 23, 2025).

The Houthis and the military campaign between Iran and Israel

► Throughout the military confrontation between Iran and Israel, senior Houthi regime figures continued to condemn the Israeli and American attacks and expressed support for Tehran and its response against Israel and the United States. They also threatened that if the US acted against Iran, the Houthis would resume their activities against American vessels in the Red Sea. However, in practice, no new attacks were carried out. The following are prominent statements:

◆ Houthi leader Abd al-Malik al-Houthi said in his weekly speech that the “Israeli aggression” against Iran is a dangerous development for the entire region. He noted that the “aggression is failing, and the damage it causes will not achieve the goals of the US and Israel.” He emphasized that raising the possibility of Iran’s unconditional surrender is “foolish and irrational.” Al-Houthi added that the “death of a military senior figure or a specific person will not affect Iran because it has thousands of people in positions and with capabilities” (Al-Masirah, June 19, 2025).

◆ The Houthis’ military spokesman, Yahya Saria, stated that the “Israeli enemy” seeks to achieve complete control over the region with open American support. According to him,

the “enemy” is trying to distance Iran from the confrontation because it sees it as a major obstacle in the way of achieving its plan. He threatened that if the US joined the fight against Iran with the Israeli enemy, they would attack its ships and warships in the Red Sea. Saria added that “we will not abandon our brothers in the Gaza Strip and will not allow the entity supported by the US to implement its plans in the region” (Yahya Saria’s X account, June 21, 2025).

◆ The political bureau of the Houthi movement strongly condemned the “blatant” American aggression against Iran and its nuclear facilities and claimed it was a violation of all international laws and a direct threat to regional and international security and peace. It added that the “American aggression” against Tehran would not deter it from continuing its support for the “resistance” and called on the Islamic nation “to stick to jihad as a unified front to deal with Zionist-American arrogance” (official Telegram channel of the Houthi movement, June 22, 2025).

◆ Mahdi al-Mashat, the chairman of the Houthis’ Supreme Political Council, stated that they would act to confront any participation in “aggression” against Iran “by all legitimate means.” He called on all Arab and Islamic countries “to make the same decision,” and claimed that when countries abandon their responsibility to defend international peace and security and become supporters and partners of “aggression” in the Gaza Strip, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, and Iran –the solution is a strong and united stance by all. Al-Mashat argued that “fire will reach all countries if we do not act together and stop the superpowers’ plan to violate their sovereignty” and that “our position is that we will stand against any hostile action directed at any Islamic country – as we have declared in the past” (Saba News Agency, June 22, 2025).

◆ Houthi political bureau member Mohammad al-Bukhaiti stated that the Houthis’ military response to Washington following the attack on Iran is “a matter of time,” and in the first stage, American forces in the Red Sea will be attacked. According to him, the agreement with the Americans from May 2025 on mutual cessation of attacks was formulated before the beginning of the attacks on Iran and, therefore, is not valid. He also noted that Tehran did not ask the Houthis to intervene and act alongside it, but they do not intend to wait for a request from it, and therefore they would fight “alongside our brothers in Iran against the US, the Zionist entity, and the Zionists.” According to al-Bukhaiti, there is direct communication between members of the “axis of resistance,”

and they will coordinate among themselves at the operational level. He added that “we will respond to any aggression against us or against any other Islamic country, and we will escalate and expand the scope of the conflict until this aggression ceases.” According to him, the movement sees this campaign as decisive, and it will not end except “with the liberation of Palestine and the Al-Aqsa Mosque” (Al-Jazeera, June 22, 2025).



Muhammad al-Bukhaiti in an interview (Al-Jazeera Mubasher, June 21, 2025)

◆ Hezam al-Asad, a member of the Houthis’ political bureau, issued several statements in Hebrew. The following are some of the statements as they appeared in the original: “Following the continuation of the bombardments, destruction, and fires in Tel Aviv and all the cities and settlements, and the restrictions on residents and the prohibition of photography – it is appropriate that the slogan of the settlers and their call to their government should be: ‘Open safe passages for our return to our countries of origin’”; “An Iranian missile with 20 warheads means that at least 19 of them will reach their target – even if 20 Arrow 3 missiles are fired at it. This is how you break the systems of arrogance”; “Racial discrimination within the entity does not spare even the shelters: Sephardim, Mizrahi, Falashas, Druze, and Bedouins are not allowed in the prepared shelters. Rescue – only for Ashkenazim”; “What is the meaning of Iranian experts wearing gas masks while displaying missiles? The hint is clear: even the shelters will not be safe when the air itself becomes a weapon. Netanyahu and his insane policy are leading the entity to collective suffocation”; “There is no security for the criminal Zionist occupation. The resistance lurks everywhere” (Hezam al-Asad’s X account, June 18-24, 2025).



**Iranian and Palestinian flags at a mass support demonstration in Sana'a
(Al-Masirah, June 20, 2025)**

► Following the entry into force of the ceasefire between Iran and Israel, the Houthis were quick to congratulate Tehran and stressed that they are committed to continuing their activity against Israel “in support” of the Gaza Strip and the Palestinians. The following are prominent reactions:

◆ The official spokesman of the Houthi movement, Muhammad Abd al-Salam, said that the movement salutes Iran for its attacks against Israel and its “sacrifices for the sake of independence and freedom.” According to him, Iran’s fight is not only against Israel, but also against the United States and other Western countries that stood by it. He stressed that “Iran’s heroic confrontation against the entity has given the Arab nation hope that it will also be able to deal with it,” and that “its attack on the region will not go unnoticed.” Abd al-Salam also said that the “enemy’s crimes” against Iran’s capabilities and its damage to the various facilities in its territory “did not help it deprive Iran of its legal rights” (Saba News Agency, June 24, 2025).

◆ Mohammed al-Bukhaiti, a member of the Houthis’ political bureau, said that “the agreement of the United States and the Zionist entity to a ceasefire with Iran emphasizes that military force is the only language they understand.” He said that “our military operations against the entity will continue until the aggression on Gaza ends and the siege is lifted” (Mohammad al-Bukhaiti’s X account, June 24, 2025).

◆ Hezam al-Asad, a member of the Houthis’ political bureau, said the “ban” on Ben Gurion Airport and Haifa port was still in effect, and that it would not be lifted until “the cessation of aggression in the Gaza Strip and the lifting of the siege” (Hezam al-Asad’s X account, June 24, 2025).

US sanctions against the Houthis

► The US Treasury Department has sanctioned four individuals, 12 entities, and two vessels that exported oil and other illegal goods to help the Houthis, the largest announcement against the Houthis' smuggling network. According to the announcement, the Houthi shell companies and their owners, as well as Zaid al-Washali, who heads the company that manages the ports of Al-Hudaydah and Ras Issa, acted to obtain profits for the Houthi regime through the sale of oil and other goods on the Yemeni black market and involvement in smuggling activities through ports under Houthi control (US Treasury Department website, June 20, 2025).

Shiite militias in Iraq in the shadow of the campaign between Iran and Israel

► On June 18, 2025, it was reported that an agreement was reached between the Iraqi government and pro-Iranian militias in the country to prevent Iraq from becoming an arena of confrontation within the framework of the campaign between Iran and Israel. It was also reported that the government in Baghdad discussed with Washington several issues, including the issue of armed militias in the country. Following this, a "Western security source" reported that senior officials of the Iraqi militias left for Iran, out of fear of being eliminated in Iraq (Al-Hadath, June 18-19, 2025).

► "Sources close to the militias in Iraq" reported that senior militia officials in the country fear Israeli attacks amid developments with Iran, and therefore took new security precautionary measures. According to them, the officials changed their place of residence and their phone numbers and replaced their headquarters. An Iraqi parliament member close to one of the militias reported that all senior officials of the militias are in Iraq, and the talk about their departure from the country is "false" (Al-Araby Al-Jadeed, June 23, 2025).

► On June 21, 2025, the militia Kata'ib Sayyid al-Shuhada announced that the head of its security unit, Haidar al-Mousawi, was killed in a "treacherous Zionist" attack on the Iraq-Iran border. He was killed together with Abu Ali al-Khalil, who was the companion and personal bodyguard of former Hezbollah secretary-general Hassan Nasrallah, and with his son, Mahdi al-Khalil (Kata'ib Sayyid al-Shuhada Telegram channel and Shafaq News Agency, June 21, 2025). It was reported that the three were killed in the Israeli attack against the vehicle in which Behnam Shahriyari was traveling. Shariyari was the head of Unit 190 of the IRGC's Qods Force responsible for transferring weapons from Iran to its proxies in the Middle East (Kan 11, June 23, 2025).

► Throughout the fighting between Iran and Israel, pro-Iranian militias in Iraq expressed their support for the regime in Tehran and accused Israel of violating Iraq's airspace. The militias also called for attacking American forces in Iraq in response to the American attack on Iran.

The following are prominent statements:

◆ Akram al-Kaabi, secretary-general of the Nujaba Movement, addressed US President Donald Trump and threatened that “if the Americans touch even one hair of Iran's leader, Ali Khamenei, they, their allies, and those dragged after them will be pursued by us and harmed by fire throughout the region, and no soldier or diplomat will be safe.” He added that in such a case, anyone holding American citizenship in the region, as well as all American interests, direct and indirect, would be “legitimate targets” (Akram al-Kaabi's X account, June 19, 2025). Following this, the movement published a threat video under the title: “If the US enters the war, US bases will be within the missile range of the Islamic Resistance in Iraq.” The video showed several bases housing American forces in Syria and Iraq under crosshairs (official Telegram channel of the Nujaba Movement, June 18, 2025).

◆ The Nujaba Movement condemned the American attack against nuclear facilities in Iran and claimed that US President Trump is “a puppet operated by the Zionists at the expense of US interests.” The statement said that “this crime and violation of international laws, along with ignoring the world, were intended to drag us into a war that will leave nothing.” It was also stated that “Iran is not alone – all free people in the world are with it in its war” (Al-Nujaba Telegram channel, June 23, 2025).

◆ Abu Ali al-Askari, the spokesman for Kata'ib Hezbollah, warned that US entry into the campaign would bring “unprecedented disasters and destruction” and that “threats against Iraq will not deter us.” In another statement, he said that if the US entered the war in Iran, President Donald Trump “will lose all the billions he dreamed of obtaining from the region.” He added that in such a case, American bases throughout the region would become “duck hunting grounds, the Strait of Hormuz and Bab al-Mandeb will be closed, and oil ports along the Red Sea will stop operating, not to mention the unexpected surprises that await American planes in the skies” (Abu Ali al-Askari's Telegram channel, June 19, 2025).

◆ Ali al-Fatlawi, a senior official in the Al-Fatah Alliance and Ansar Allah al-Awfiya, addressed the Israeli attacks on Iran and stated that “this aggression does not concern Shiites only, but they are the ones confronting it.” He warned that a possible attack

against Iran's leader Ali Khamenei is "an attack against Islam" and noted that "if the situation escalates even further, a jihadist fatwa might be issued, and in that case, the US and Israel will be in great danger" (Shafaq News, June 19, 2025).

► After the US attack on Iran on June 22, 2025, a US official said that military and intelligence officials had identified signs that pro-Iranian militias were preparing to attack US bases in Iraq and possibly Syria. According to the report, Iraqi officials worked vigorously to dissuade the militias from doing so (New York Times, June 22, 2025). On June 23, 2025, it was reported that unidentified rockets were fired at the American base of Qasrak, located in northeastern Syria. According to the report, it is not known where and by whom the missiles were launched. They appear to have been intercepted in the base area. The US Central Command (CENTCOM) and the Syrian Kurdish Democratic Forces (SDF) did not comment on the incident (North Press News Agency, June 23, 2025). Moreover, there were no reports of attacks or attempted attacks against American interests by the militias.

► Following the ceasefire, Qais al-Khazali, secretary-general of the Asa'ib Ahl al-Haqq militia, congratulated Iran on its "victory and steadfast stance against the largest military force in the world represented by the United States and the Zionist entity." He said Iran had managed to confront all the "forces of evil" on its own, and without Israel having achieved its goals, including regime change or damage to its missile and nuclear capabilities (Shafaq News, June 24, 2025).

The militias in Syria

► The leader of the "Islamic Resistance Front in Syria – Possessors of Might" (Uli al-Baas, or UAB in short) issued a statement in which he noted that they were following the "dangerous Zionist escalation," referring to "daily attacks on Gaza and the West Bank; systematic assassinations in the heart of Beirut and southern [Lebanon]; the blockade of Yemen, the prevention of the entry of ships, and attacks against ports and airports; and a direct attack against the Islamic Republic of Iran." He warned that "aggression" against Tehran, Beirut's Dahiyyeh, the Gaza Strip, Sana'a, or Baghdad is "aggression against us," and that although they are part of the "axis of resistance," they make their own decisions. He added that "Syria is not an arena but a front, and the blood of Syrians is not a price in the framework of the regional bazaar." In addition, the front leader, who did not disclose his name, warned that "every Zionist, whether on our land or outside it, is a target" and that any raid by the Israeli forces would be met with

readiness on their part (Telegram channel of the Islamic Resistance Front in Syria – Possessors of Might, June 24, 2025).