

Iran Update



Katherine Wells, Nidal Morrison, Andie Parry, Kelly Campa, and Annika Ganzeveld

Information Cutoff: 2:00 PM ET, June 29, 2025

Click [here](#) to see ISW-CTP's interactive map showing the total strikes in Iran since June 12, as well as an interactive timelapse showing the strikes day-by-day.

Key Takeaways

- Iran has likely begun to assess damage and conduct repair operations at the Fordow Fuel Enrichment Plant (FFEP). Commercially available satellite imagery captured on June 28 and 29 shows Iranian heavy equipment near two clusters of three impact points on ventilation shafts at Fordow that were caused by US GBU-57 bunker-buster bombs. A US weapons expert assessed that Iran may be filling the craters and conducting engineering damage assessments and radiological sampling.
- International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Rafael Grossi said on June 27 that Iran could resume uranium enrichment within “a matter of months.” Grossi stated that Iran could have at most “a few cascades of centrifuges spinning and producing enriched uranium” within months. US and Israeli strikes targeted centrifuge production facilities and active centrifuges, damaging and destroying thousands of centrifuges. The destruction of so many centrifuges will likely hamper Iran’s ability to enrich uranium in the near future.
- Former moderate Iranian President Hassan Rouhani argued that Iran must restore deterrence and rebuild public trust with the Iranian people as part of a revitalized national strategy. Rouhani’s call for restoring trust with the Iranian people follows a similar call by Iranian Supreme Leader Adviser Ali Shamkhani on June 28. Rouhani’s statement is also notable given recent reports that Rouhani may be attempting to use Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei’s absence to try to play a larger and more meaningful role in regime decision-making.
- Iranian Armed Forces General Staff-affiliated outlet Defa Press published an article on June 29 expressing support for the purchase of Chinese fighter jets. Defa Press argued that the Iranian Artesh Air Force “needs to employ up-to-date fighter jets” so that the Artesh Air Force can defend Iranian airspace and confront Iran's adversaries “more effectively.” The Israeli Air Force established air superiority over large parts of Iran during the Iran-Israel War, as CTP-ISW previously noted. Defa Press argued that Chinese fighter jets, particularly the Chengdu J-10, can play an “important role” in helping Iran defend its airspace and confront foreign adversaries.

Iran has likely begun to assess damage and conduct repair operations at the Fordow Fuel Enrichment Plant (FFEP). Commercially available satellite imagery captured on June 28 and 29 shows Iranian heavy equipment near two clusters of three impact points on ventilation shafts at FFEP

that were caused by US GBU-57 bunker-buster bombs.[1] Imagery from June 29 shows an excavator and crane near the northern bunker-buster bomb impact points. Imagery from June 28 showed an excavator near the southern cluster of impact points. A US weapons expert assessed that Iran may be filling the craters and conducting engineering damage assessments and radiological sampling.[2] The US weapons expert also noted that two of the six GBU-57 impact points have been covered by square slabs.[3]

Satellite imagery also shows that Iran has created at least two new paths leading to the two clusters of impacts on the ventilation shafts. Vehicles are visible along the access roads that lead to the impact points. Israel struck access roads leading to FFEP on June 23 in order to "disrupt" access to the site.[4] These strikes may delay Iranian efforts to assess and repair damage at Fordow or move materials from the site to other locations.[5]

Iranian activity at Fordow follows possible repair operations at the Natanz Enrichment Complex.[6] Commercially available satellite imagery captured on June 27 showed that Iran filled a crater that was formed by US GBU-57 bunker-buster bombs.



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Satellite image ©2025 MAXAR

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Rafael Grossi said on June 27 that Iran could resume uranium enrichment within “a matter of months.”[7] Grossi stated that Iran could have at most “a few cascades of centrifuges spinning and producing enriched

uranium” within months.[8] Iran’s highly enriched uranium stockpile reportedly “remains largely intact” following the US and Israeli strikes. CTP-ISW previously noted that the US and Israeli strikes on Fordow and other enrichment facilities could have buried enriched uranium underground to limit access to it, but could not have destroyed the material, given that uranium is an element. US and Israeli strikes targeted centrifuge production facilities and active centrifuges, damaging and destroying thousands of centrifuges.[9] The destruction of so many centrifuges will likely hamper Iran’s ability to enrich uranium in the near future. Grossi stressed that Iran had a “vast ambitious [nuclear] program” and that nuclear expertise and industrial capacity remain in Iran despite Israel’s decapitation campaign targeting nuclear scientists and US-Israeli strikes on nuclear facilities.[10]

Grossi also stressed that the IAEA needs to be allowed to resume its work in Iran. Iranian Second Deputy Parliament Speaker Hamidreza Haji Babaei announced on June 28 that Iran will no longer allow IAEA cameras in its nuclear facilities.[11] Babaei also said that Grossi is no longer permitted to visit Iran.[12] Iran’s Guardian Council approved a bill on June 26 that suspends Iran’s cooperation with the IAEA and bars inspectors from accessing Iran’s nuclear facilities.[13] The bill requires Iran to suspend cooperation with the IAEA until the IAEA recognizes Iran’s right to enrich uranium.[14] Iran has historically restricted IAEA oversight in Iran, including by withdrawing the certifications of several inspectors in September 2023 and barring other top inspectors in November 2024.[15]

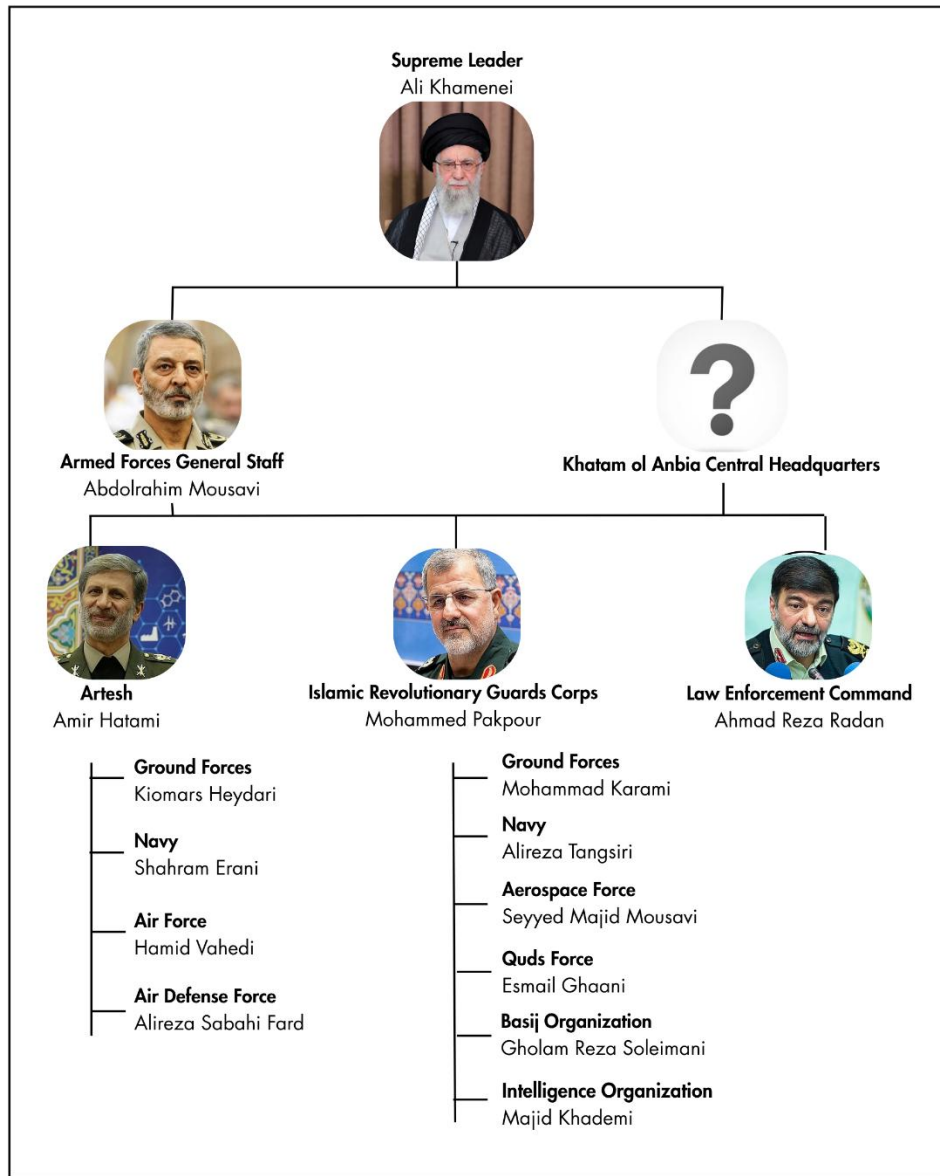
Former moderate Iranian President Hassan Rouhani argued that Iran must restore deterrence and rebuild public trust with the Iranian people as part of a revitalized national strategy.[16] Rouhani said in a public statement on June 24 that Iran’s losses in the recent Israel-Iran War should encourage the Iranian regime to “restore” and “reconstruct” Iran’s national strategy.”[17] Rouhani also cited regional developments “over the past two years,” likely referring to the significant weakening of Iran’s proxies and partners in the Gaza Strip, Lebanon, and Syria since October 7, 2023.[18] Rouhani said that Iran must rebuild its “indigenous defense power” while also “listen[ing] to the people” and “mak[ing] amends” with the Iranian population as part of this strategy.[19] Rouhani claimed that Israel and the United States attempted to weaken Iranian national solidarity and trust in the government.[20] Rouhani’s call for restoring trust with the Iranian people follows a similar call by Iranian Supreme Leader Adviser Ali Shamkhani on June 28. Shamkhani called on regime officials to resolve “disputes” with the Iranian population through “mutual understanding.”[21] Rouhani and Shamkhani’s statements come amid recent steps by the Iranian regime to securitize the country since the Iran-Israel ceasefire went into effect on June 24. Rouhani’s statement is also notable given recent reports that Rouhani may be attempting to use Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei’s absence to try to play a larger and more meaningful role in regime decision-making.[22] Moderate elements are typically sidelined by hardliners during normal times.

Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC)-affiliated outlet Tasnim News Agency confirmed on June 29 that an Israeli airstrike killed senior IRGC Quds Force Commander Brigadier General Abolfazl Nikooei (Hajj Younes).[23] Tasnim did not state where and when Nikooei was killed. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) conducted airstrikes on the IRGC Quds Force Headquarters in northern Tehran on June 16.[24] Tasnim reported that Nikooei worked in Syria on behalf of the IRGC Quds Force between 2015 and 2023 but did not specify Nikooei’s role.[25] Tasnim published pictures of Nikooei with former IRGC Quds Force Commander Qassem Soleimani, whom the United States killed in a targeted drone strike in Baghdad in 2020.[26]

Iran held funerals on June 29 for several senior military commanders who were killed during the Israel-Iran War. IRGC Deputy Commander Brigadier General Ali Fadavi and former IRGC Intelligence Organization Chief Hossein Taeb attended the funerals of former IRGC Aerospace Force Commander Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajji Zadeh and former Armed Forces General Staff Chief Major General Mohammad Bagheri in southern Tehran on June 29.[27] Hajji Zadeh and Bagheri were killed in Israeli strikes on June 12.[28] Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei appointed former Artesh Commander Major General Abdol Rahim Mousavi to replace Bagheri on June 13.[29] Khamenei appointed former IRGC Aerospace Force Deputy Commander Brigadier General Majid Mousavi to replace Hajji Zadeh on June 14.[30]

Senior Supreme Leader advisers Ali Larijani and Mohammad Mokhber attended the funeral of former IRGC Commander Major General Hossein Salami at the Shah Abdol Azim Shrine in Tehran on June 29.[31] The head of the IRGC General Command Office, Brigadier General Masoud Shanei, was also buried at the Shah Abdol Azim Shrine.[32] Salami was killed alongside Shanei in Israeli strikes on June 12.[33] Khamenei appointed former IRGC Ground Forces Commander Brigadier General Mohammad Pakpour as Salami's successor.[34]

Iranian media reported on June 29 that many Iranians attended the funeral of former Khatam ol Anbia Central Headquarters Commander Major General Ali Shadmani in Hamedan.[35] Shadmani was killed in an Israeli airstrike on June 17.[36] Khamenei appointed Shadmani as commander of the headquarters after the IDF killed former Khatam ol Anbia Central Headquarters Commander Major General Gholam Ali Rashid on June 13.[37] The regime has not publicly announced Shadmani's successor.



Iranian Armed Forces General Staff-affiliated outlet Defa Press published an article on June 29 expressing support for the purchase of Chinese fighter jets.[38] The article discussed Iranian Defense and Armed Forces Logistics Minister Brigadier General Aziz Nasir Zadeh's recent visit to China on June 26 and 27 and commented on recent rumors about Iran trying to purchase Chinese fighter jets.[39] Defa Press argued that the Iranian Artesh Air Force "needs to employ up-to-date fighter jets" so that the Artesh Air Force can defend Iranian airspace and confront Iran's adversaries "more effectively." The Israeli Air Force established air superiority over large parts of Iran during the Iran-Israel War, as CTP-ISW previously noted. Defa Press argued that Chinese fighter jets, particularly the Chengdu J-10, can play an "important role" in helping Iran defend its airspace and confront foreign adversaries. Defa Press highlighted that the Chengdu J-10 is designed for air-to-air

combat and can destroy targets “with power.” Defa Press also noted that the Chengdu J-10 is cheaper than some Russian, US, and British fighter jets. Iran has for years sought to purchase Russian Sukhoi-35 fighter jets, but Russia has yet to deliver the fighter jets to Iran.[40] Unspecified Iranian sources told Reuters on June 23 that Iran was unsatisfied with Russia’s support for Iran during the Iran-Israel War.[41]

Defa Press also reported that Nasir Zadeh visited the Chinese People’s Liberation Army Navy’s *Kaifeng* destroyer with the defense ministers of other Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) member states during his visit to China.[42] Nasir Zadeh thanked China for supporting Iran’s “legitimate position” in the Israel-Iran War while visiting the *Kaifeng*.

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Iran Update



Ria Reddy, Ben Rezaei, Carolyn Moorman, Kelly Campa, and Annika Ganzeveld

July 1, 2025 Information Cutoff: 2:00 PM ET

The Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute and the Institute for the Study of War (ISW) publish the Iran Update, which provides insights into Iranian and Iranian-sponsored activities that undermine regional stability and threaten US forces and interests. CTP-ISW publishes the Iran Update daily.

Key Takeaways

- Iran is continuing to try to assess damage at the Fordow Fuel Enrichment Plant (FFEP). CTP-ISW previously reported that imagery from June 28 and 29 showed an excavator and crane near the northern impact points and an excavator near the southern impact points at Fordow. A US weapons expert assessed on June 30 that Iran may be preparing to send cameras or personnel into the craters to conduct a downhole damage assessment.
- Satellite imagery captured on July 1 indicates that Iran has at least partially filled the three southern impact points and covered one of the northern impact points with a temporary cover. A US weapons expert suggested that Iran may seek to prevent materials and personnel from falling into the craters while Iran conducts battle damage assessments around the site. Satellite imagery captured on July 1 also shows that Iran has cleared the surroundings of a tunnel entrance near the southern impact points to enable vehicle access to the tunnel.
- The Iranian Parliament approved an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) law on June 29 that aims to close the “critical legal and operational gaps” that enabled Israel to conduct drone operations at the beginning of the Israel-Iran War. Mossad established a secret drone base in Iranian territory prior to the war that Israel used to target Iranian air defenses and missile launchers at the start of the war. The Iranian Parliament also introduced a nine-article law on June 29 that labels any intelligence, espionage, or operational cooperation with Israel, the United States, or other “hostile” actors as “corruption on earth,” which is a crime punishable by death. These security measures are consistent with CTP-ISW’s previous assessment that the Iranian regime is prioritizing regime stability following the Israel-Iran War.

Iran is continuing to try to assess damage at the Fordow Fuel Enrichment Plant (FFEP). Commercially available satellite imagery captured on June 29 and 30 showed Iranian heavy equipment, including bulldozers and excavators, near two clusters of impact points at Fordow.[1] CTP-ISW previously reported that imagery from June 28 and 29 showed an excavator and crane near the northern impact points and an excavator near the southern impact points.[2] A US weapons expert assessed on June 30 that Iran may be preparing to send cameras or personnel into the craters to conduct a downhole damage assessment.[3] The expert noted that Iran will likely access the southern

cluster of impact points first because US strikes made the ground around the northern impact points "highly unstable." The expert stated that Iran is likely using a bulldozer at the southern impact points to prepare a platform for downhole access.[4] The expert added that Iran will likely lower cameras into the crater first and then personnel, depending on the site's safety.

Satellite imagery captured on July 1 indicates that Iran has at least partially filled the three southern impact points and covered one of the northern impact points with a temporary cover.[5] It is unclear why Iran would cover or fill the craters. A US weapons expert suggested that Iran may seek to prevent materials and personnel from falling into the craters while Iran conducts battle damage assessments around the site.[6] The expert noted that Iran would need to rebuild the ventilation shafts if it sought to resume operations at Fordow.[7]

Satellite imagery captured on July 1 also shows that Iran has cleared the surroundings of a tunnel entrance near the southern impact points to enable vehicle access to the tunnel.[8] It is unclear how far vehicles will be able to travel in the tunnel system.

Iranian nuclear safety regulators have reportedly stopped sharing information with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), according to two unspecified officials.[9] The IAEA's Incident and Emergency Center had maintained contact with Iranian regulators since June 13, but two unspecified officials told Bloomberg on July 1 that Iran has stopped sharing information with the IAEA. This report comes after Iran's Guardian Council approved a bill on June 26 that suspends Iran's cooperation with the IAEA and bars inspectors from accessing Iran's nuclear facilities.[10] Iran has historically restricted IAEA oversight in Iran, including by withdrawing the certifications of several inspectors in September 2023 and barring other top inspectors in November 2024.[11] The IAEA has not conducted any inspections in Iran since the Israel-Iran War began.

Iranian Foreign Affairs Minister Abbas Araghchi told Western media on July 1 that Iran "will not easily back down from enrichment." [12] This statement is consistent with CTP-ISW's assessment that Iranian officials have not relaxed their negotiating position on the US demand for zero uranium enrichment.

The Iranian government has imposed security measures on Iranians to counter Israeli drone warfare, but these measures are unlikely to achieve the objectives they are meant to achieve. The Iranian Parliament approved an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) law on June 29 that aims to close the "critical legal and operational gaps" that enabled Israel to conduct drone operations at the beginning of the Israel-Iran War.[13] Mossad established a secret drone base in Iranian territory prior to the war that Israel used to target Iranian air defenses and missile launchers at the start of the war.[14] Iranian Defense Ministry Spokesperson Brigadier General Reza Talaei Nik stated that Israel took extensive advantage of the "lack of effective oversight and guidance in Iran." [15] The new law prohibits foreign nationals from being involved in the production, import, export, and operation of UAVs. The law also mandates that drone owners have proper registration, permits, tracking systems, and insurance.[16] It is unlikely that Iran will be able to successfully counter drone operations in the near term, despite the new regulatory measures, because Iran still lacks an effective counter-UAV interception network and has limited experience in detecting low-signature, small quadcopters operating in its territory. Battlefield trends in Ukraine suggest that without mobile fire groups, Iran—like Russia—will likely struggle to protect critical assets from small, low-cost drones.[17]

The Iranian regime has also imposed security measures to counter infiltration and domestic political dissent, which is consistent with CTP-ISW's previous assessment that the Iranian regime is prioritizing regime stability following the Israel-Iran War. The Iranian Parliament introduced a nine-article law on June 29 that labels any intelligence, espionage, or operational cooperation with Israel, the United States, or other “hostile” actors as “corruption on earth,” which is a crime punishable by death.[18] The Iranian regime defines corruption on earth as “acts that seriously disrupt public order, threaten national security, or inflict widespread harm on individuals or infrastructure.”[19] The law also bans Starlink devices, which can help Iranians bypass censorship, and imposes prison terms for anyone who possesses, uses, or distributes these devices. The law also punishes individuals who engage in unauthorized drone activity or cyber sabotage.[20]

Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC)-affiliated media reported on July 1 that Iranian security forces arrested over 50 individuals “linked to Israel” and killed two others over the past two weeks in Sistan and Baluchistan Province.[21] The IRGC announced that it arrested “mercenary terrorist elements.”[22] Some of the detainees could include Jaish al Adl fighters operating in southeastern Iran. Jaish al Adl is a Baloch, Salafi-jihadi militant group that frequently attacks Iranian security forces in southeastern Iran. The Iranian regime has previously accused Israel of supporting Jaish al Adl.

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) intercepted a Houthi ballistic missile before it crossed into Israeli territory on July 1.[23] The Houthis have not claimed the attack at the time of this writing. The Houthis have launched hundreds of drones and ballistic missiles targeting Israel since the Houthis began their campaign to enforce an economic blockade on Israel in November 2023.[24]



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Key Takeaways

- Former President Hassan Rouhani is likely attempting to reenter Iran's political scene by presenting the post-war crisis as a chance to reform governance, restore public trust, and recalibrate the regime's trajectory. Rouhani's efforts appear to have triggered concern among his longstanding hardline rivals. Rouhani may seek to work with members of the regime who have larger power bases than himself to reassert his political influence.
- Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei reportedly appointed Ali Abdollahi Ali Abadi as the new Khatam ol Anbia Central Headquarters Commander. Ali Abadi has held leadership roles in the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps and several internal security positions throughout his career. Ali Abadi had most recently served as the Armed Forces General Staff coordination deputy since 2016. Coordination deputies in Iran serve in a capacity similar to a chief of staff in the US military.
- Iranian Foreign Affairs Minister Abbas Araghchi cast doubt on the possibility of European involvement in future nuclear negotiations. European Union Foreign Policy Chief Kaja Kallas and Araghchi held a phone call on July 1 to discuss future nuclear negotiations. Araghchi posted on X following his call with Kallas that the European Union and the United Kingdom's participation in any future negotiations is "irrelevant and therefore meaningless."

Former President Hassan Rouhani is likely attempting to reenter Iran's political scene by presenting the post-war crisis as a chance to reform governance, restore public trust, and recalibrate the regime's trajectory.^[1] Rouhani has publicly framed the crisis as an opportunity for internal reform and previously lobbied senior clerics in Qom to pressure Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei to accept a ceasefire.^[2] Rouhani issued a statement on June 24 in which he described the crisis as an opportunity to "rebuild the foundations of governance."^[3] Rouhani called for rebuilding both Iran's deterrent capabilities and its relationship with the public.^[4] Rouhani also emphasized that military strength alone is not sufficient, and that national security also depends on a "resilient economy, wise diplomacy, and mutual trust between state and society."^[5] Rouhani's messaging echoes past moderate themes, and he is likely positioning himself as a voice of pragmatism in a time of crisis.

Rouhani's efforts appear to have triggered concern among his longstanding hardline rivals. Regime hardliners, including Tehran Mayor Alireza Zakani, have circulated statements criticizing Rouhani and his moderate stance.[6] These narratives could serve to discredit Rouhani and block any political comeback.[7] Zakani-affiliated outlet Jahan News resurfaced on June 30 an old remark by IRGC Aerospace Force Commander Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajji Zadeh criticizing Rouhani's government for opposing missile tests and military exercises.[8] Rouhani criticized missile tests in 2017 that featured missiles with anti-Israel slogans because he feared that such tests would endanger the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).[9] Tabnak, which is affiliated with former IRGC Commander Mohsen Rezaei, similarly accused Rouhani on July 1 of "strategic betrayal" for canceling a Chinese fighter jet deal in favor of "worn-out" French aircraft, claiming that this decision ultimately hurt Iran during the recent war.[10] An Iranian source close to the regime told Newsweek on July 1 that, while some political factions may try to use the post-war period to push reforms, the regime is focused on "national unity, rebuilding capacities, and reinforcing strategic doctrines." [11] He added that any reforms would take place strictly within the Islamic Republic's constitutional framework and would preserve the core principles of the "Islamic Revolution and [Iran's] independence." [12]

Rouhani may seek to work with members of the regime who have larger power bases than himself. Rouhani left the presidency in August 2021, and the Guardian Council disqualified him in January 2024 from competing in the Assembly of Experts election.[13] Rouhani has relied on his relationships with the Larijani family during his political career. Former Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani pushed the JCPOA through parliament in 2015, and Rouhani appointed Ali Larijani to negotiate the Iran-China strategic cooperation agreement in 2020.[14] Rouhani, Ali Larijani, and Expediency Council Chairman Sadegh Amoli Larijani reportedly tried to contact Khamenei during the Israel-Iran War to encourage Khamenei to resume talks with the United States.[15] Rouhani could also try to work with other moderate actors in the regime, including President Masoud Pezeshkian, to try to increase his political influence in the regime. Pezeshkian, Judiciary Chief Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejei, and Armed Forces General Staff Chief Major General Abdol Rahim Mousavi, reportedly supported a pragmatic approach to the Israel-Iran War.[16]

Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei reportedly appointed Ali Abdollahi Ali Abadi as the new Khatam ol Anbia Central Headquarters Commander. [17] Ali Abadi had served as the Armed Forces General Staff coordination deputy since 2016.[18] Coordination deputies in Iran serve in a capacity similar to a chief of staff in the US military. Ali Abadi has held leadership roles in the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps and several internal security positions throughout his career.[19] Ali Abadi is originally from Gilan Province and commanded the IRGC Ground Forces 16th Quds Operational Division in the province. He also served as the governor of Gilan and Semnan provinces in northern Iran.[20] Ali Abadi later served as the Law Enforcement Command deputy chief and the Interior Ministry's deputy minister for security and law enforcement. Ali Abadi's appointment is consistent with CTP-ISW's assessment that the Iranian regime is prioritizing regime security in the wake of the Israel-Iran War. The United States sanctioned Ali Abadi in January 2020 for advancing the regime's "destabilizing objectives" and his involvement in the Iranian ballistic missile attack targeting US forces at Ain al Asad Airbase in Iraq in 2020.[21] Khamenei initially appointed former Khatam ol Anbia Central Headquarters Coordination Deputy Ali Shadmani to command the headquarters after Israeli strikes killed former Khatam ol Anbia Central Headquarters Commander Major General Gholam Ali Rashid.[22] Israeli airstrikes killed Shadmani on June 17.[23]

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Iran Update, July 3, 2025

Jul 3, 2025 - [ISW Press](#)



Avery Borens, Ben Schmida, Ria Reddy, Katherine Wells, Ben Rezaei, Nidal Morrison, Andie Parry, and Annika Ganzeveld

Information Cutoff: 2:00 PM ET

The Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute and the Institute for the Study of War (ISW) publish the Iran Update, which provides insights into Iranian and Iranian-sponsored activities that undermine regional stability and threaten US forces and interests. CTP-ISW publishes the Iran Update daily.

Click [here](#) to see CTP and ISW's interactive map of assessed control of terrain in Syria, and [here](#) to see CTP and ISW's interactive map of Israeli ground operations. The Syria map is updated daily alongside the static Syria maps in this report. CTP-ISW ended daily maps of Israeli ground operations in February 2025.

Click [here](#) to see ISW-CTP's interactive map showing the total strikes in Iran since June 12, as well as an interactive timelapse showing the strikes day-by-day.

Key Takeaways:

- US and Israeli strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities have likely degraded Iran's ability to develop a nuclear arsenal. A nuclear analyst at a Washington, D.C.-based think tank reported on July 2 that US and Israeli strikes on Iran's uranium metal conversion facilities at the ENTC did not significantly delay Iran's nuclear timeline. The analyst stated that Iran could still produce enough uranium metal for a nuclear weapon (25 kilograms) in "weeks, perhaps even days" without these facilities. CTP-ISW previously assessed that, if Iran were to pursue a nuclear weapons program, it would likely pursue a nuclear arsenal rather than a single nuclear weapon. A nuclear arsenal would require more than 25 kilograms of uranium metal and significant amounts of highly enriched uranium.
- Israel is reportedly drafting a mechanism to prevent Iran from being able to rebuild its nuclear program following the conclusion of the Israel-Iran War, according to Israeli media. The mechanism is reportedly similar to the US-approved Israeli monitoring mechanism for the ceasefire in Lebanon that allows Israel to conduct preemptive

operations against Hezbollah if Hezbollah violates the November 2024 Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire agreement.

- Anti-regime media claimed on July 2 that former President Hassan Rouhani supports Hassan Khomeini as the next supreme leader and is attempting to play a role in succession. Anti-regime media added that former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, along with other actors, support senior cleric Javad Alavi Boroujerdi, who has previously criticized Vilayat-e Faqih, while hardliners favor Mohammad Mehdi Mirbagheri, who is a staunch anti-Western figure.
- Basij forces shot and killed two men in a vehicle in Hamedan Province, Iran, on July 1. IRGC-affiliated media claimed that security forces suspected the men of conducting drone activities. Mourners at a funeral for the men on July 3 chanted anti-regime slogans, such as “Death to the oppressor” and “The real enemy is right here, they’re lying when they say it’s America.” This incident comes amid the regime’s efforts to tighten internal control, including by passing a new law on June 29 that regulates the use of drones.

Damage to Iranian Nuclear Facilities

US and Israeli strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities have likely degraded Iran's ability to develop a nuclear arsenal. US and Israeli strikes damaged or destroyed the Fuel Plate Fabrication Plant (FPFP) and Uranium Metal Conversion Plant at the Esfahan Nuclear Technology Center (ENTC), both of which are used in the final steps of building a nuclear weapon.[1] These facilities could have supported metallization, which is the process of converting uranium hexafluoride into dense metal for an explosive core.[2] A nuclear analyst at a Washington, D.C.-based think tank reported on July 2 that US and Israeli strikes on Iran’s uranium metal conversion facilities at the ENTC did not significantly delay Iran’s nuclear timeline.[3] The analyst stated that Iran could still produce enough uranium metal for a nuclear weapon (25 kilograms) in “weeks, perhaps even days” without these facilities.[4] The analyst assessed that Iran likely already knows how to produce uranium metal, citing an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) report that stated that Iran produced over 100 kilograms of uranium metal from green salt at a laboratory in Tehran between 1995 and 2002.[5] CTP-ISW previously assessed that, if Iran were to pursue a nuclear weapons program, it would likely pursue a nuclear arsenal rather than a single nuclear weapon. A nuclear arsenal would require more than 25 kilograms of uranium metal and significant amounts of highly enriched uranium. The Institute for Science and International Security previously assessed that US and Israeli airstrikes on Iran’s main enrichment facilities, Fordow and Natanz, “effectively destroyed” Iran’s enrichment program and that it will take a “long time” for Iran to restore its enrichment capabilities to pre-strike levels.[6] Large enrichment facilities like Fordow and Natanz would likely be necessary for Iran to develop nuclear weapons at scale.

Iran would also need to miniaturize a nuclear warhead to mount it on a ballistic missile. Iran could attempt to build a simple gun-type nuclear bomb, which is similar to the one the United States dropped on Hiroshima. A gun-type nuclear bomb needs 25 kilograms of 90 percent enriched uranium. The *New York Times* reported in February 2025 that a secret Iranian team may have been working on a faster way to build this type of bomb.[7] US officials said that the design would not fit on a missile and would be less reliable than a modern warhead. Iran would have to use an aircraft or another crude delivery method with this type of nuclear weapon Iran would

also need the facilities and expertise to build even a simple gun-type bomb. Israeli killings of Iranian nuclear scientists and US-Israeli strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities likely degraded that capability.[8] A US weapons expert noted that US and Israeli strikes have “significantly” increased the time required for Iran to “build even a non-missile deliverable weapon,” such as a gun-type nuclear bomb.[9]

Chief Pentagon Spokesperson Sean Parnell stated on July 2 that US strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities delayed Iran's nuclear program by one to two years, citing Department of Defense assessments.[10] Parnell echoed US President Donald Trump’s statements that US airstrikes “completely obliterated” the Fordow Fuel Enrichment Plant, Esfahan Nuclear Technology Center, and Natanz Nuclear Facility.

US-Iran Nuclear Talks

US Special Envoy to the Middle East Steve Witkoff and Iranian Foreign Affairs Minister Abbas Araghchi will meet in Oslo, Norway, next week, according to two unspecified sources speaking to Axios on July 3.[11] There has been no indication that the United States has changed its position on zero Iranian uranium enrichment.[12] Iran has similarly retained its position that Iran can enrich uranium on Iranian soil.[13] Iran continues to demonstrate its unwillingness to adhere to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Safeguards Agreement, which requires Iran to allow the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to monitor Iranian nuclear facilities.[14] The Iranian Guardian Council, which must certify bills passed by Parliament, approved a law to suspend cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on June 26.[15] The Iranian Foreign Affairs Ministry spokesperson noted on June 30 that this law will only apply to new IAEA inspectors, not IAEA inspectors who are already in Iran.[16]

Israeli Efforts to Prevent Iranian Nuclear Reconstitution

Israel is reportedly drafting a mechanism to prevent Iran from being able to rebuild its nuclear program following the conclusion of the Israel–Iran War, according to Israeli media.[17] The mechanism is reportedly similar to the US-approved Israeli mechanism for monitoring the ceasefire in Lebanon that allows Israel to conduct preemptive operations against Hezbollah if Hezbollah violates the November 2024 Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire agreement.[18] Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz previously stated that Israel would pursue a “policy of enforcement” to prevent Iran from rebuilding its nuclear capabilities, air defenses, and missile production.[19] Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will reportedly discuss the draft mechanism with US President Donald Trump next week.[20] Israeli media added that Israel is conducting “under-the-radar” talks with Russia regarding Iran and Syria, but did not specify what Israel has discussed with Russia.[21]

Battle Damage Assessments of Iranian Missile Sites

Israel destroyed a large number of Iranian ballistic missile sites during the Israel–Iran War. An Israeli analyst reported on July 3 that Israeli airstrikes destroyed at least 20 Iranian missile bases.[22] Israel also reportedly struck several factories affiliated with Iran’s ballistic

missile program, rendering them inoperable.[23] CTP-ISW previously assessed that the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) sought to limit Iran's ability to retaliate against Israel at the start of its campaign and later also sought to disrupt Iran's long-term missile production capabilities.[24] The IDF destroyed Iranian missile launchers and bases throughout the air campaign as part of its efforts to achieve these objectives.[25] The IDF reported on June 17 that it had destroyed "about half" of Iran's ballistic missile launchers and between 35 to 45 percent of Iran's ballistic missile stockpile.[26] Israeli intelligence assessments prior to the conflict estimated that Iran had approximately 2,000 ballistic missiles.[27] These pre-war estimates suggest that Iran has between around 1,100 and 1,300 ballistic missiles left in its stockpile following the war.



Israeli airstrikes destroyed most of the infrastructure at two Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) Aerospace Force missile bases near Tabriz, East Azerbaijan Province.[28] Israel struck the Amand Missile Base and Southwest Tabriz Missile Base multiple times throughout its air campaign.[29] Commercially available satellite imagery captured on June 24 shows that Israeli airstrikes destroyed multiple missile launch sites, administrative buildings,

storage sites, and tunnel openings at the Amand Missile Base.[30] CTP-ISW previously reported that the Amand Missile Base, which is located north of Tabriz, reportedly stored Ghadr medium-range ballistic missiles.[31] The site contained several storage tunnels and launch sites.[32] Iran previously used the Amand Missile Base to launch missiles at targets in Erbil, Iraqi Kurdistan, in 2022.[33] Israeli airstrikes also destroyed most of the infrastructure at the Southwest Tabriz Missile Base. Commercially available satellite imagery captured on June 21 shows that Israeli airstrikes destroyed a central missile launch structure, one storage tunnel, an air defense battery, and two stationary launchers at the site.[34] The site contained several above-ground launch sites, two entrances to underground installations, and several underground launch facilities.[35] The Southwest Tabriz Missile Base reportedly stored Shahab-variant missiles.[36]

The Israeli Air Force (IAF) struck and damaged multiple Iranian missile bases in Kermanshah Province during its air campaign.[37] These sites' strategic location in western Iran enables Iran to launch missiles at Israel and store mobile launchers that Iran can quickly deploy on its western border.[38] Israeli airstrikes reportedly struck infrastructure at the Kamijeh Missile Base in Cheshmeh Sohrab, Kermanshah Province.[39] The Kamijeh Missile Base contains a storage tunnel with two entrances.[40] Israeli airstrikes also struck multiple tunnel openings at the IRGC Aerospace Force Kermanshah Underground Missile Facility on June 13.[41] The base reportedly supported missile deployments in western Iran and stored ballistic missiles, including the Qiam-1.[42] Israeli airstrikes destroyed most of the infrastructure at the Bakhtaran (Panj Palleh) underground missile base in Kermanshah Province. Commercially available satellite imagery captured on June 19 shows that Israeli airstrikes destroyed two tunnel openings, missile launch sites, and administrative buildings at the site.[43] The site reportedly stored Qiam-1 and Fateh-110 ballistic missiles.[44] Commercially available satellite imagery captured on June 23 showed that Israeli airstrikes also damaged ballistic missile launchers and a staging area at the Ghazanchi Missile Base.[45] Commercially available satellite imagery captured on June 23 showed that Israeli airstrikes destroyed infrastructure at the Kangavar Missile Base.[46] The IAF struck the base on June 14.[47]

Israeli airstrikes struck and damaged multiple buildings at the IRGC Imam Ali Missile Base in Khorramabad, Lorestan Province. Commercially available satellite imagery captured on June 23 showed that Israeli airstrikes damaged missile launchers, tunnel openings, and administrative sites at the base.[48] The Imam Ali Missile Base was reportedly one of two Iranian missile bases that produced Shahab-3 ballistic missiles.[49] The site contained at least eight tunnels, launch sites, a command area, air defense positions, and bunkers.[50]

Israel destroyed Iranian ballistic missile infrastructure at the IRGC Ground Forces 24th Besat Modern Warfare Group in Kafshgiran, Lorestan Province. Commercially available satellite imagery captured on June 23 showed that Israeli airstrikes destroyed several stationary ballistic missile launchers at the site.[51] Iran reportedly built approximately 10 stationary launchers at this site in 2024.[52] CTP-ISW cannot verify this claim.

Israeli airstrikes damaged multiple buildings at the Dezful Missile Base in Khuzestan Province. Commercially available satellite imagery captured on June 18 showed that Israeli strikes damaged two administrative buildings and at least two entrances near the base's northern underground complex.[53] The site reportedly contained a large ballistic missile and drone

storage facility, and at least five fortified entrances.[54] The Dezful Missile Base is located approximately 30 kilometers north of Dezful City in western Iran.[55]

Israeli airstrikes destroyed infrastructure at the Zanjan Missile Base in Zanjan Province.

Commercially available satellite imagery captured on June 18 showed that Israeli airstrikes destroyed a missile launch facility, an underground complex, administrative buildings, and other unspecified infrastructure.[56] The IAF struck the base on June 15.[57]

Israeli airstrikes destroyed ballistic missile infrastructure at the Abhar Missile Base in Zanjan Province.

Commercially available satellite imagery captured on June 18 showed that Israeli airstrikes destroyed several buildings and the missile storage facility at the site.[58] Iranian media and open-source analysts reported Israeli airstrikes and explosions in Abhar on June 17.[59]

Commercially available satellite imagery shows that Israeli airstrikes destroyed buildings at the IRGC Shahid Soltani Garrison near Eshtehard, Alborz Province.[60] Israel struck the Shahid Soltani Garrison on June 18.[61] The Shahid Soltani Garrison is an IRGC missile storage and production site that reportedly housed Shahab-3, Qiam, Fateh, and Fath ballistic missiles.[62] Iran used the site to produce and store ballistic missiles before they were shipped to members of the Axis of Resistance, including Hezbollah and the Houthis.[63] Iran expanded the facility and increased activity at the site in July 2024.[64]

Israeli airstrikes destroyed several buildings at the IRGC Aerospace Force Malard Missile Launch Site in Peyvand, Tehran Province. Israel reportedly struck the Malard Missile Launch Site on June 15.[65] Commercially available satellite imagery captured on June 20 showed that Israeli airstrikes destroyed several missiles launch facilities, air defense warning and detection systems, and command-and-control sites.[66] Iran reportedly used the base to test ballistic missiles, including the Shahab-3, Shahab-4, and Sedjil missiles.[67]

Israeli airstrikes destroyed several buildings and tunnel entrances at the Qom Missile Base in Qom Province. Commercially available satellite imagery captured on June 20 showed that Israeli airstrikes destroyed several administrative and storage buildings at the site.[68] Israeli airstrikes destroyed approximately 13 weapons storage facilities.[69] Open-source analysts reported that Israel struck the site on June 15.[70] Iran reportedly used the site as a weapons storage and logistics facility for the Artesh and IRGC.[71]

Israeli airstrikes destroyed most of the buildings at the Khomein Missile Base in Markazi Province.[72] The IAF struck the Khomein Missile Base at least twice during its air campaign against Iran.[73] Commercially available satellite imagery captured on June 20 showed that Israeli strikes destroyed most of the site's buildings.[74] CTP-ISW previously reported on June 14 that satellite imagery showed that Israeli strikes on the site damaged its drive-through facility, which allows for the efficient movement of missiles and other related equipment.[75]

The IAF struck and damaged multiple Iranian missile bases in Esfahan Province during its air campaign. Esfahan Province is home to many missile production, research, and development facilities.[76] Commercially available satellite imagery captured on June 22 showed that Israeli

airstrikes destroyed all missile launch structures and an administrative facility at the Esfahan Missile Base in Najafabad, Esfahan Province.[77] The IAF struck the site on June 17.[78] The Esfahan Missile Base is reportedly Iran's largest missile assembly and production site and manufactures solid and liquid propellants and missile components.[79] Israeli airstrikes destroyed infrastructure at the Baharestan Missile Base in Baharestan, including a command center, a missile launcher, single-entrance tunnels, and a fortified two-entrance tunnel.[80] Commercially available satellite imagery captured on June 20 showed that Israeli airstrikes also destroyed infrastructure at the Mubarak Missile Base in Baghmalek, Esfahan Province.[81] An Israeli analyst reported on July 2 that Iran likely used part of the site to erect missiles in preparation for launch.[82]

Israeli airstrikes damaged at least 12 buildings at the Northern Shiraz Missile Base in Fars Province on June 15.[83] Commercially available satellite imagery captured on June 22 showed that Israeli airstrikes damaged ballistic missile launch pads, command buildings, and tunnel entrances.[84]

Israeli airstrikes damaged facilities at the Imam Hossein Strategic Missile Base southwest of Yazd City, Yazd Province, on June 22.[85] The base reportedly housed long-range Khorramshahr ballistic missiles in underground tunnels.[86] Commercially available satellite imagery captured on June 24 showed that Israeli airstrikes damaged an administrative building, a launch preparation building, and three tunnel entrances, according to an Israeli analyst.[87]

Israeli airstrikes targeted the Shahroud Missile Assembly Plant in Semnan Province on June 22.[88] Israeli strikes damaged at least six buildings at the assembly plant. The plant housed planetary mixers and machinery that are critical for producing ballistic missile engines, according to an Israeli analyst.[89] The Shahroud Missile Assembly Plant is a development, test, and launch facility for Iranian ballistic missiles and space launch vehicles.[90] Iran previously used the site to launch two military satellites in April 2020 and March 2022.[91]

The IAF struck at least one building at the Garmsar Missile Fuel Production Facility in Semnan Province on June 15.[92] Commercially available satellite imagery captured on June 22 showed that IAF strikes damaged the facility, with at least one of the buildings at the site sustaining heavy damage.[93]

Israeli airstrikes targeted the Khojir Military Complex in Hajarabad, Tehran Province, on June 17.[94] The Khojir Missile Production Complex is a research, development, and manufacturing facility for solid- and liquid-fuel missiles.[95] Israel previously struck planetary mixers at the Khojir Military Complex in October 2024. Planetary mixers are used in the production of solid-fuel ballistic missiles.[96] Commercially available satellite imagery captured on June 25 showed that Israeli airstrikes damaged or destroyed 21 buildings within the complex.[97]

Israeli airstrikes struck the Qazvin Underground Facility, which is also called "Site 311," near the Karaj-Qazvin Highway, according to an Israeli analyst.[98] Commercially available satellite imagery captured on June 25 revealed that Israeli strikes damaged two tunnel entrances and destroyed a bunker at the site.[99] It is unclear when the IDF struck the facility. An Israeli

analyst claimed that the site may be an Iranian nuclear or ballistic missile facility. CTP-ISW cannot independently verify this claim.[100]

Internal Iranian Dynamics

Anti-regime media claimed that senior Iranian officials are maneuvering to have their preferred candidates succeed Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei.[101] Five unspecified Iranian sources told Reuters on June 23 that an Assembly of Experts committee accelerated succession planning and identified Ali Khamenei's son, Mojtaba Khamenei, and the grandson of former Supreme Leader Ruhollah Khomeini, Hassan Khomeini, as leading candidates.[102] The *New York Times* separately reported on June 21 that Khamenei named three clerics as potential successors during the Israel–Iran War but excluded Mojtaba Khamenei from the list, according to unspecified Iranian officials.[103] Iran International claimed on July 2 that former President Hassan Rouhani supports Hassan Khomeini as the next supreme leader and is attempting to play a role in succession.[104] Iran International added that former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, along with other actors, support senior cleric Javad Alavi Boroujerdi, who has previously criticized Vilayat-e Faqih, while hardliners favor Mohammad Mehdi Mirbagheri, who is a staunch anti-Western figure.[105] Vilayat-e Faqih is a core tenet of Iranian governance that enshrines the position of a senior cleric at the head of the regime. CTP-ISW cannot independently verify these claims. These developments are consistent with earlier reports about regime discussions about succession during the war, however.[106]

Former Iranian President Mohammad Khatami framed the post-war period as an opportunity for diplomacy and national reconciliation on July 3.[107] Khatami urged the Iranian government to alleviate the “worries and fears” of the Iranian public.[108] Khatami added that Iran should pursue negotiations with the United States. Khatami's remarks echo recent statements by former President Hassan Rouhani and Supreme Leader Adviser Ali Shamkhani. Rouhani described the post-war period as an opportunity to rebuild public trust and promote pragmatic diplomacy, while Shamkhani called for resolving disputes between the regime and Iranian people through “mutual understanding.”[109]

Basij forces shot and killed two men in a vehicle in Hamedan Province on July 1.[110] IRGC-affiliated media claimed that security forces suspected the men of conducting drone activities.[111] Security forces fired warning shots and ordered the vehicle to stop before opening fire. The Armed Forces Judicial Organization in Hamedan announced a formal investigation.[112] Mourners at a funeral for the men on July 3 chanted anti-regime slogans, such as “Death to the oppressor” and “The real enemy is right here, they're lying when they say it's America.”[113] This incident comes amid the regime's efforts to tighten internal control, including by passing a new law on June 29 that regulates the use of drones.[114]

Hezbollah Reconstitution

The IDF conducted an airstrike on July 3 targeting IRGC Quds Force operative Qassem al Husseini near Beirut International Airport.[115] Husseini was reportedly involved in weapons smuggling between Iran and Lebanon.[116] This strike comes after the IDF killed two

IRGC and Hezbollah members on June 21 and 25 who were responsible for transferring Iranian weapons and funds into Lebanon.[117]

US Sanctions

The United States sanctioned seven senior officials connected to al Qard al Hasssan, which is one of Hezbollah's main banking and financial arms, for helping Hezbollah access formal financial systems and evade sanctions.[118] The United States sanctioned the following al Qard al Hassan officials:

- Auditing and Business Departments Manager Nehme Ahmad Jamil
- Equipment Supply and Procurement Chief Issa Hussein Kassir
- Management Division Coordinator and Administrative Director Samer Hasan Fawaz
- Evaluation and Storage Department head Imad Mohamad Bezz, who was responsible for gold transactions
- Purchase Department head Ali Mohamad Karnib
- Tyre Branch Manager Ali Ahmad Krisht
- Nabatiyeh Branch Deputy Director Mohammad Suleiman Badir

The United States also sanctioned Tashilat SARL, which is a company jointly owned by Jamil that provided mortgage loans after the 2006 Israel-Lebanon War. These officials collectively managed millions of US dollars in transactions, opened formal bank accounts, coordinated logistics, and handled gold purchases to support Hezbollah's operations while circumventing international sanctions.

The United States sanctioned a network of companies and vessels operated by Iraqi-British businessman Salim Ahmed Said for smuggling Iranian oil since 2020.[119] Said's network disguised Iranian oil as Iraqi oil through forged documentation to evade sanctions and generate revenue for the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps Quds Force (IRGC-QF). Said bribed Iraqi government officials with "millions in kickbacks" and used UAE-registered companies to conduct ship-to-ship transfers. Said blended Iranian oil with Iraqi oil before selling it to Western buyers. The United States also sanctioned multiple vessels, including Cameroon-flagged *Vizuri*, Comoros-flagged *Fotis*, and Panama-flagged *Themis* and *Bianca Joysel*, which collectively transported "tens of millions" of barrels of Iranian oil worth "billions of dollars." [120] Additional sanctions targeted supporting entities in multiple countries, including Singapore-based piloting services, Seychelles shipping management companies, and UK-based companies linked to Said's network.

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Tags

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Iran Update



Johanna Moore, Ben Rezaei, Avery Borens, Katherine Wells, and Brian Carter

Information Cutoff: July 4, 2025, 2:00 PM ET

The Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute and the Institute for the Study of War (ISW) publish the Iran Update, which provides insights into Iranian and Iranian-sponsored activities that undermine regional stability and threaten US forces and interests. CTP-ISW publishes the Iran Update daily.

Click [here](#) to see CTP and ISW's interactive map of assessed control of terrain in Syria, and [here](#) to see CTP and ISW's interactive map of Israeli ground operations. The Syria map is updated daily alongside the static Syria maps in this report. CTP-ISW ended daily maps of Israeli ground operations in February 2025.

Click [here](#) to see ISW-CTP's interactive map showing the total strikes in Iran since June 12, as well as an interactive timelapse showing the strikes day-by-day.

Key Takeaways

- Senior Iranian leaders have continued to underscore that they will not stop uranium enrichment and that the United States will need to “convince” Iran that the United States will not resort to force with Iran again. It is unclear what will be required to “convince” Iran.
- Israel struck an Iranian facility on June 16 that is tied to Iran’s nuclear and chemical weapons programs. The Israeli strikes probably destroyed areas used for plastic explosives production.
- Likely Iranian-backed Iraqi militias launched one drone, probably targeting US forces at Erbil International Airport in Iraq. No militia has claimed the attack.

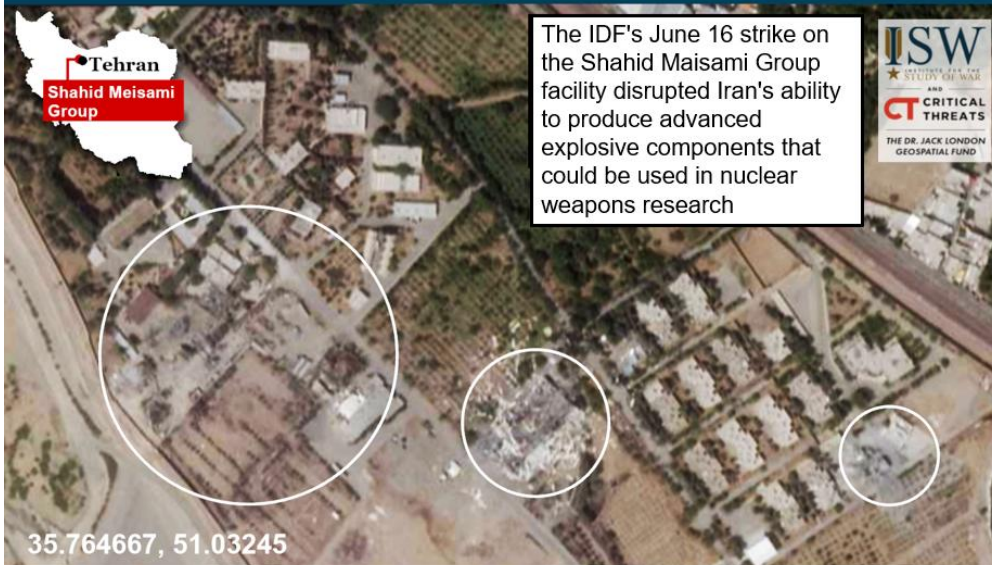
Senior Iranian officials are reiterating red lines for Iran’s nuclear program ahead of planned nuclear negotiations with the United States. Iranian Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Majid Takht Ravanchi told NBC News on July 3 that Iran is open to resuming nuclear negotiations but “has no plans to stop uranium enrichment.”[1] Ravanchi noted that the United States will have to “convince” Iran that it will not use force before Iran agrees to engage in talks.[2] White House Envoy Steve Witkoff is expected to meet with Iranian Foreign Affairs Minister Abbas Araghchi in Oslo, Norway, next week, according to two unspecified sources familiar with the discussion cited by *Axios*. [3] A Tehran-based Western news correspondent reported that preparations are underway for “indirect” negotiations between Witkoff and Araghchi’s meeting, but noted that the meeting has not been finalized.[4]

Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz stated on July 3 that Israel must maintain its air superiority in Iranian airspace to prevent Iran from rebuilding its nuclear and ballistic missile programs.[5] This

statement does not appear to suggest imminent Israeli strikes because Iran would need to acquire new air defense systems to replace those lost to be able to deny Israel control of the air. It is improbable Iran could have acquired or built new systems since the ceasefire on June 24, though it is possible Iran could conduct some redeployments if there are surviving air defenses in the northeast. Katz announced on June 27 that he would pursue a policy of “enforcement” to prevent Iran from rebuilding its nuclear or ballistic missile programs.[6] Araghchi warned on June 26 that Iran would respond to any Israeli violation of the ceasefire and noted that “Iran is not Lebanon.”[7] Israel has conducted airstrikes on Hezbollah across Lebanon since November 2025 as part of a stated effort to prevent Hezbollah from reconstituting and threatening Israel under the Israel-Lebanon ceasefire agreement.[8] Araghchi is suggesting that he believes Israel will attempt to conduct similar strikes in Iran to prevent Iran from reconstructing its nuclear and ballistic missile programs.

Israel’s June 16 strike on an Iranian facility involved in nuclear weapons testing disrupted Iran’s ability to produce advanced explosive components. Satellite imagery captured on July 1 showed that Israel’s airstrikes destroyed multiple buildings at Iran’s Shahid Meisami Group in Karaj, Alborz Province.[9] The Shahid Meisami Group is an Iranian chemical engineering and research group that is involved in Iran’s chemical weapons program.[10] The group is subordinate to the Organization of Defensive Innovation and Research (SPND), which played a leading role in the Iranian nuclear weapons research program before 2003.[11] The damaged facilities included a large hangar-type building constructed between 2021–2024 that was reportedly used to produce plastic explosives and advanced materials for nuclear detonation testing, suggesting that the Shahid Meisami Group is involved in both the nuclear weapons and the chemical weapons programs.[12] The Institute for Science and International Security posted satellite imagery captured in July 2022 during construction, which showed a concrete pit on the ground floor and assessed that the pit could support casting operations for plastic explosives.[13] Plastic explosives are used to initiate a nuclear explosion in implosion-type nuclear weapons.[14] ISIS suggested that the facility could have been used for producing the hemispherical explosion systems used for implosion-based nuclear weapons to initiate a nuclear explosion.[15]

Post-Strike Damages at the Shahid Meisami Group June 26, 2025



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Satellite image ©2025 Planet PBC

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) withdrew all IAEA inspectors from Iran, which effectively ends international oversight of Iran's nuclear program.[16] The IAEA reported on July 4 that its inspectors left Iran due to safety concerns.[17] Iranian officials and regime-linked media have repeatedly threatened IAEA Director Rafael Grossi, including by issuing death threats, in recent weeks.[18] Iran's Guardian Council approved a law on June 26 that suspends cooperation with the agency and bars inspectors from nuclear facilities.[19] The bill requires the IAEA to recognize Iran's right to enrich uranium as a precondition before Iran allows the IAEA to resume inspections.[20] Iranian Foreign Affairs Ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baghaei accused the IAEA on June 30 of "mistakes" that had "consequences" and made "bilateral cooperation...irrational." [21]

Iranian media published footage on June 30 showing construction crews working to repair the runway at the Artesh Air Force 2nd Tactical Airbase (TAB) in Tabriz.[22] Repairs to the base, which sustained at least eight bomb hits on its runway and taxiways on June 12 and 13, should be completed very quickly.[23] The airbase houses three Iranian squadrons: the 21st, 22nd, and 23rd Tactical Fighter Squadrons, that fly the MiG-29 and F-5 fighter jets, according to open-source watchers on social media and the *Aviationist*. [24] Israeli airstrikes on runways and taxiways enable Israeli air superiority by inhibiting Iran's ability to launch aircraft to defend against Israeli operations. Iranian aircraft like the F-5 or MiG-29 are unlikely to be able to challenge Israeli air superiority because, if launched, both aircraft types would not be able to detect stealthy Israeli F-35s.

Likely Iranian-backed Iraqi militants launched a one-way drone that probably targeted the Erbil International Airport in Erbil, Iraqi Kurdistan Region, on July 3.[25] The Kurdistan Regional Government's Counter-Terrorism Group reported that the drone was intercepted near Erbil International Airport on July 3.[26] Erbil International Airport hosts US forces that are part of the US-led anti-ISIS coalition.[27] The drone did not cause any casualties or damage.[28] No group

has claimed or commented on the attack at the time of this writing. Likely Iranian-backed Iraqi militias have conducted multiple one-way drone attacks targeting US positions across Iraq between June 12 and 24.[29] Iranian-backed Iraqi militias have not claimed any attacks during this period, which suggests that the militias may suffer from a lack of discipline among lower-ranking fighters who attempted to independently launch drone attacks on Israel. Militia leadership may also allow fighters to conduct attacks without publicly sanctioning them.



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Iran Update



Ben Schmida, Johanna Moore, Ben Rezaei, Nidal Morrison, and Brian Carter

July 5, 2025, Information Cutoff: 2:00 PM ET

An unspecified high-ranking Iranian official cited by Amwaj Media on July 4 reported that Iran plans to resume indirect nuclear negotiations with the United States, but the conditions that Iran will reportedly present would require unspecified guarantees that the United States would not strike Iran.[1] Such a guarantee would be inconsistent with the Trump administration's stated position on future strikes on Iran's facilities. The unspecified Iranian official told Amwaj that Iran is seeking a guarantee in negotiations that the United States will not conduct any additional strikes on Iran."[2] The official added that "a lack of confidence and ... mistrust" with the United States following the Israel-Iran Twelve Day War are core obstacles to future negotiations.[3] Iranian Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Majid Takht Ravanchi stated on July 3 that the United States will have to "convince" Iran that it will not use force before Iran agrees to engage in talks.[4] US President Donald Trump has previously suggested that the United States could strike Iran if Iran attempted to rebuild its nuclear program, but he said on July 4 that Iran wished to resume negotiations.[5] Trump noted that the negotiations would not be successful unless Iran agrees to inspections and zero enrichment.[6] Senior Iranian officials have repeatedly rejected US demands for zero enrichment and recently ended cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Trump has warned that the United States would not allow Iran to restart its nuclear program in a new location in Iran.

European officials are concerned that Iran may try to develop a nuclear weapon to deter future attacks and that Iran may be able to build a weapon in secret unless a nuclear agreement enables the IAEA to resume inspections.[7] These concerns understate the significant challenges Iran's nuclear program faces in terms of Israeli penetration and weaponization. Three unspecified European officials cited by *The Washington Post* assessed that US strikes on Iran have likely strengthened hardline Iranian leaders' belief that Iran must develop a nuclear weapon to deter future foreign intervention.[8] A former European diplomat suggested that Iran would attempt to develop a nuclear weapon "as secretly as possible." [9] The IAEA did not have access to all Iranian facilities before the strikes, including multiple facilities associated with the pre-2003 Iranian nuclear weapons program.[10] Israeli intelligence has consistently provided exclusive information about Iran's nuclear program that the IAEA has not provided (at least publicly).[11] For example, Israeli intelligence—not the IAEA—revealed that Iran was using computer modelling for research at Parchin Military Complex, a site that is linked to the nuclear program and that the IAEA has had difficulty accessing in the past.[12] Computer modelling can be used to model different nuclear weapon designs before producing an arsenal. Israeli intelligence, not IAEA inspections, drove Israeli concerns about Iranian weaponization and the Israeli decision to strike. The loss of IAEA inspections in Iran will

certainly decrease the availability of open-source information on Iran's nuclear program, but it is far from clear that the loss of these inspections would make it possible for Iran to build a weapon in secret.

Iran also faces challenges if it tries to weaponize because Iran will need large-scale production facilities to build a nuclear arsenal. Iran, if it chooses to weaponize, will almost certainly pursue a nuclear arsenal instead of a single nuclear weapon, as CTP-ISW has long assessed.[13] The development of a nuclear arsenal would require extensive rebuilding of Iranian facilities amid a major counterintelligence campaign that will undoubtedly create friction within the nuclear program. The scale of the facilities and time required for their development would make it very difficult for Iran to weaponize in secret. There are also additional challenges associated with miniaturizing a weapon so that it can be used on a nuclear-tipped ballistic missile, rather than deploying the weapon as a bomb. Any Iranian progress to weaponize will presumably be slowed by major Iranian counterintelligence investigations within the program, which could make it more difficult for surviving Iranian nuclear scientists to do their work.

Key Takeaways

- An unspecified Iranian official reported that Iran plans to resume indirect nuclear negotiations with the United States, but the conditions that Iran will reportedly present would require unspecified guarantees that the US would not strike Iran. Such a guarantee would be inconsistent with the Trump administration's stated position on future strikes on Iran's facilities.
- European officials are concerned that Iran may try to develop a nuclear weapon to deter future attacks and that Iran may be able to build a weapon in secret unless a nuclear agreement enables the IAEA to resume inspections. These concerns understate the significant challenges Iran's nuclear program faces in terms of Israeli penetration and weaponization.
- Iranian officials emphasized the importance of Azerbaijani airspace to successful Israeli operations in northern Iran and near Tehran. This discussion within the Iranian information space is indicative of Iran's long-standing concerns about perceived Azerbaijan-Israel cooperation and the threat it poses to Iranian security.
- Sources familiar with deliberations claimed that Hezbollah is conducting a review of its strategy in Lebanon. This rethink is probably driven by Hezbollah's losses in the October 7 War and regional changes since October 7 and does not represent a fundamental change in Hezbollah's strategic aims.

Iranian media reported on July 6 that Shahid Madani International Airport in Tabriz, East Azerbaijan Province, resumed operations after 23 days following Israel's strikes during the 12-day war.[14] Iranian media released footage on June 30 showing repair work at the Iranian Artesh Air Force 2nd Tactical Airbase (TAB). Israeli aircraft struck the base with multiple bombs. The base is co-located with the civilian airport.[15] The restoration of Tabriz Airport likely reflects Iran's need to repair critical infrastructure rather than an indication that Iran is prioritizing its ability to launch fighter aircraft from the base.[16] Israeli airstrikes on runways and taxiways enable Israeli air superiority by inhibiting Iran's ability to launch aircraft to defend against Israeli operations. Iranian aircraft like the MiG-29s and F-5s stationed at the base are unlikely to challenge Israeli air superiority, however, because neither can detect Israeli F-35s.

Iranian officials emphasized the importance of Azerbaijani airspace to successful Israeli operations in northern Iran and near Tehran. Iranian officials and regime-linked media continue to emphasize the vulnerability of airspace over northwestern Iran. Hardline media outlet *Kayhan* claimed on June 29 that most Israeli strikes on Tehran and Alborz Provinces originated from the direction of the Caspian Sea and “utilized Azerbaijani airspace,” and warned that Iran must find a solution “to avoid similar future situations.”[17] An Iranian international relations professor claimed on July 2 that Israeli drones have a maximum range of 1,000 km, which “clearly shows they came from Azerbaijan, not Israel.”[18] He also claimed that Israeli drones that crashed in Iran were identical to drones Azerbaijan used in the Karabakh war and argued that Israel and Azerbaijan had jointly produced the drones.[19] This discussion within the Iranian information space is indicative of Iran's long-standing concerns about perceived Azerbaijan-Israel cooperation and the threat it poses to Iranian security. IRGC-affiliated media in February 2025 called the Israeli-Azerbaijani alliance a direct threat to Iranian national security and warned that Israel uses Azerbaijani territory for intelligence operations and exploiting ethnic tensions inside Iran.[20]

The Kurdistan Regional Government said that an unspecified group “linked” to the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) launched one-way attack drones at an unspecified site near Erbil.[21] CTP-ISW assessed on July 4 that likely Iranian-backed Iraqi militias launched a one-way drone attack targeting Erbil International Airport in Erbil, Iraqi Kurdistan Region.[22] The PMF is an Iraqi state security service primarily comprised of Iranian-backed Iraqi militias who nominally report to the Iraqi prime minister.[23] Iraqi media reported on July 3 that US forces co-located at Erbil International Airport shot down at least one drone near Erbil International Airport.[24] Likely Iranian-backed Iraqi militias have conducted multiple one-way drone attacks targeting US positions across Iraq between June 12 and 24.[25] Iranian-backed Iraqi militias have not claimed any attacks during this period, which suggests that the militias may suffer from a lack of discipline among lower-ranking fighters who attempted to independently launch drone attacks targeting US forces in Iraq. Militia leadership may also allow fighters to conduct attacks without publicly sanctioning them.

Sources familiar with deliberations cited by Reuters on July 4 claimed that Hezbollah is conducting a review of its strategy in Lebanon.[26] This rethink is probably driven by Hezbollah’s losses in the October 7 War and regional changes since October 7 and does not represent a fundamental change in Hezbollah’s strategic aims. An anonymous official familiar with Hezbollah’s internal deliberations reported that Hezbollah has formed small working groups since November 2024 to discuss the group’s leadership, structure, political role, social and development work, and weapons stockpile. A separate, unspecified source reported that Hezbollah is considering scaling back its role as an armed faction without disarming completely. Sources cited by Reuters suggested that Hezbollah has identified its large weapons arsenal as a liability. These sources reported that Hezbollah has turned over “a number” of weapons depots in southern Lebanon already and is considering turning over additional depots across Lebanon in exchange for Israel’s withdrawal from southern Lebanon. The IDF has remained in five “key” strategic positions in southern Lebanon since February 2025 to support Israeli operations to prevent Hezbollah reconstitution in southern Lebanon under the November 2024 Israel-Lebanon ceasefire.[27] The sources noted that Hezbollah would keep light arms and anti-tank missiles to resist future attacks. Hezbollah used these systems in addition to drones and mortars to launch attacks into northern Israel between October 2023 and November 2024.

Hezbollah may prioritize the development and maintenance of its light arms and anti-tank missiles because these systems are far easier to acquire and maintain compared to expensive, advanced missiles, some of which were built in Syria and Iran. Israeli operations in Lebanon showed that Hezbollah's missile systems were insufficient to seriously alter Israeli decision-making and operations.[28] The Israeli campaign also badly weakened Hezbollah's ground forces and killed many key leaders.[29] This setback would have been less grievous had Syria's Assad regime not collapsed in December 2024. Hezbollah long used Syria as its primary supply route and connection with Iran, and the loss of Assad meant that Hezbollah could not as easily reconstitute itself.[30] Iran's losses in the 12-Day Israel-Iran War also mean that Iran will need to prioritize rebuilding Iranian missile stockpiles and other assets, constraining Iran's ability to fund Hezbollah.

The Israeli campaign in Lebanon, the fall of Syria, and the Israel-Iran War have rapidly altered Hezbollah's strategic picture and appear to be prompting a rethink, even if the group's overall goals have not changed. Hezbollah could seek to decrease its stocks of missiles to secure Israeli withdrawal and then use the space provided by an Israeli withdrawal to rebuild its power in southern Lebanon, for example. Hezbollah's main deterrent concepts against Israel—missile fire, drone attacks, and cross-border fire—all failed to deter Israel and thus require an overhaul. It does not follow that Hezbollah will rebuild itself in the same way it built itself before the October 7 War, and a future Hezbollah could use different operational concepts in pursuit of its pre-existing strategic aim of destroying the Israeli state.

Hezbollah's rethink is an expected response as it attempts to learn, evolve, and survive as an organization, and is not a reflection of changing Hezbollah's strategic objectives. Hezbollah Secretary General Naim Qassem has reiterated fundamental Hezbollah positions, like its unique status in Lebanon that enables it to retain its weapons to fight Israel, for example.[31] Qassem also threatened to resume attacks on Israeli forces if they failed to withdraw from southern Lebanon by February 2025, but has not followed through on those threats.[32] CTP-ISW continues to assess that Hezbollah is likely reticent to resume attacks while it attempts to rebuild and reconstitute its forces.[33] Hezbollah's reported deliberations are consistent with this assessment because Hezbollah is seeking to use political levers to secure Israeli withdrawal, rather than military attacks. Hezbollah's rethink would enable Hezbollah to identify and implement lessons learned from its war with Israel and account for resource constraints.



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