

# Spotlight on Iran and the Shiite Axis

June 3—10, 2026

Editor: Dr. Raz Zimmt

## Key Trends

- ▶ Senior Iranian officials reiterated the link between the ceasefire on the Iranian front and developments on the Lebanese front, following missile launches from Iran toward Israel.
- ▶ Messages of Iranian support for the Palestinian “resistance” were delivered by the IRGC and the Iranian foreign minister.
- ▶ The leading militias of the “Islamic Resistance in Iraq” continue to oppose disarmament.

## Highlights<sup>1</sup>

- ▶ Iran fulfilled its threats to respond by launching missiles at Israel following an Israeli strike in Beirut, warning that if Israeli attacks continue, including in southern Lebanon, it will take measures that are more severe than those taken in the past.
- ▶ Concurrently with the attacks from Iran, the Houthis claimed responsibility for launching missiles at Israel and imposing a naval blockade on Israeli shipping in the Red Sea. The IDF announced the interception of a missile and a drone launched from Yemen.
- ▶ Iranian officials and media outlets emphasized the importance of Hezbollah as a core component of Iran’s security concept.
- ▶ The Iranian foreign minister criticized the president of Lebanon, who accused Iran of interfering in his country’s affairs. He noted that if Lebanon were a bargaining chip in Iran’s hands, an agreement in the country would have been reached long ago.
- ▶ The Iranian foreign minister spoke with senior Hamas official Khalil al-Hayya to discuss recent developments in the region.
- ▶ It was reported that two companies affiliated with the IRGC secured contracts worth billions of dollars with Iraqi companies in the electricity, energy, and construction sectors.
- ▶ The main pro-Iranian militias in Iraq announced that their weapons are vital for defending the country and that they would only hand them over to the “Hidden” Shiite Imam.

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<sup>1</sup> The weekly study includes the activities of Iran, the Shiite militias in Iraq and Syria, and the Houthis in Yemen.

## Round of Fighting between Iran and Israel

### Iran

► On June 7, 2026, Iran launched barrages of missiles at Israel following an IDF strike against Hezbollah headquarters in Beirut's southern suburb (Dahiyeh). Following the launches, senior Iranian officials stated that this was the realization of Iranian warnings to respond directly against Israel in the event of an Israeli attack in Beirut:

◆ Ali Abdollahi, commander of the Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters, issued a statement saying that despite Tehran's warnings, "the child-killing Zionist regime" crossed all red lines and attacked Beirut's Dahiyeh. He warned that if Israel does not stop its attacks in Lebanon or if it retaliates against Iran's action, it will face more powerful blows that will make it regret its actions (Tasnim, June 7, 2026).

◆ The IRGC statement noted that Iran's acceptance of the ceasefire in the war against the United States and Israel on April 8, 2026, was conditional on a ceasefire on all fronts, but the United States and Israel did not fulfill their obligations. It further stated that the missile launch by Iran was merely a warning and that if Israel continues its "aggression," the responses will be more extensive and will include all American-Israeli targets in the region (Sepah News, June 7, 2026).

◆ The Supreme Leader's military advisor, Mohsen Rezaei, stated that Iran had repeatedly made clear that it would not tolerate violations of the ceasefire or the continuation of attacks in Lebanon. He warned that any further action would be met with an even more powerful response and would exact a heavier price (Rezaei's X account, June 7, 2026).

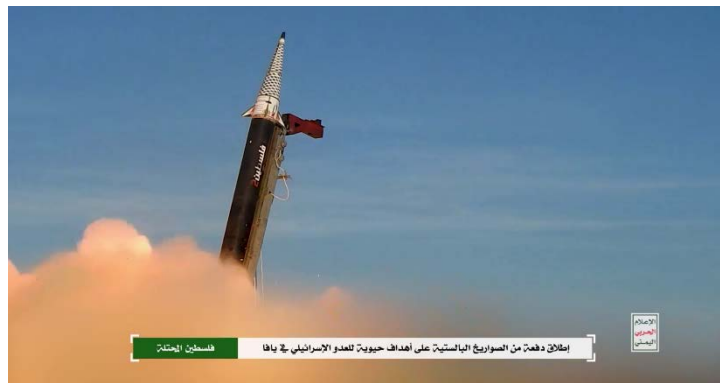
► At the end of the brief round of fighting, which also included Israeli strikes in Iran, the Iranian Armed Forces announced on June 8, 2026, the cessation of missile launches toward Israel. The Armed Forces' statement said that the "Zionist regime" and its supporters must learn a lesson from Iran's response to its "acts of aggression" in southern Lebanon and Beirut's Dahiyeh. It added that should such "aggression" continue, including in southern Lebanon, far more severe measures than those taken in the past would be adopted (Fars, June 8, 2026).

### The Houthis

► On June 8, 2026, the spokesperson for the Houthi Armed Forces, Yahya Saria, claimed responsibility for an attack against "sensitive targets" in the occupied "Jaffa" area using a "barrage of missiles." He claimed that all missiles had hit their targets accurately (Yahya Saria's Telegram channel, June 8, 2026). The IDF reported the interception of a ballistic missile and a drone launched

from Yemen, and it was reported that another missile launched at Israel fell in Saudi Arabia (IDF Spokesperson and Israeli media, June 8, 2026).

► A “Houthi military source” stated that the firing carried out by the Houthis proves they possess capabilities that present “significant military surprises” for the “Israeli enemy,” and that the weapons to be used in any future naval or aerial confrontation will be of high quality. He further noted that the early involvement of the Houthis in the current confrontation sends “more than one message to the enemy,” the most prominent of which is that the Houthis will not allow Israel “to take control of the battlefield, whether in Lebanon or Palestine” (Al-Akhbar, June 9, 2026).



**Launch of a Palestine-2 ballistic missile at Israeli territory  
(Yahya Saria’s Telegram channel, June 8, 2026)**

► Yahya Saria also announced a comprehensive and absolute ban on the movement of Israeli vessels in the Red Sea and threatened that any “enemy movement” would henceforth be considered a “legitimate target” for the Houthi Armed Forces. In addition, Saria stated that any escalation would be met with escalation and that the operations of the Armed Forces would increase in accordance with developments on the battlefield and in coordination with the “Axis of Resistance” (Yahya Saria’s Telegram channel, June 8, 2026).

► A “Houthi source” confirmed that preventing Israeli maritime traffic in the Red Sea is only the first step and that further escalation could lead to halting the navigation of any ship whose destination is Israel, as well as additional measures (Reuters, June 8, 2026). Furthermore, a “senior Houthi source” stated that although the Houthi armed forces will only act against vessels linked to Israel, they will not hesitate to attack any vessel “that interferes,” regardless of the country to which it belongs (The New York Times, June 8, 2026).

► Senior Houthi officials praised the Iranian launches toward Israel and emphasized the principle of the “unity of the arenas”:

- ◆ Nasr al-Din Amer, deputy head of the Houthi media authority, stated that “the equation of the unity of the arenas is a decision and a choice from which there is no turning back, and victory comes only from Allah” (Nasr al-Din Amer’s X account, June 7, 2026).
- ◆ The Houthi Foreign Ministry praised the Iranian strikes against Israel and stated that “the era of aggression by the Israeli enemy entity has ended” and that it understands only force. The ministry confirmed that the Iranian “operation” strengthens the “unity of the arenas” equation and undermines the immunity equation that Israel sought to establish (Houthi Foreign Ministry Telegram channel, June 7, 2026).
- ◆ Mohammed al-Farah, a member of the Houthi political bureau, stated that the Iranian strikes against the “enemy entity” had shattered the immunity equation that Israel sought to establish. He further claimed that Israel might sever its ties with the United States before Lebanon severs its ties with Iran and the Axis (Mohammed al-Farah’s X account, June 7–8, 2026).
- ◆ Hezam al-Asad, a member of the Houthi political bureau, published a statement in Hebrew: “While millions of settlers are crammed into improperly prepared shelters, under continuous fear and anxiety, Netanyahu and his wife enjoy all means of protection and comfort inside well-fortified shelters deep underground. This is a picture that illustrates the gap between those who pay the price of stupidity and foolishness and those who hide behind fortifications to evade the consequences of their policy” (Hezam al-Asad’s X account, June 7, 2026).
- ▶ In a speech delivered by the leader of the Houthi movement, Abd al-Malik al-Houthi, before the short round of fighting, he claimed that the United States is trying to embroil Arab countries in fighting for the benefit of the “Zionist enemy” and that any country dragged into the conflict risks itself. He further argued that the path of “surrender and subservience” to the United States and Israel is a trap whose purpose is to gain control over all the peoples of the region. Al-Houthi confirmed the readiness of the “Yemeni people” to confront all their enemies in any round of escalation, in full coordination with the “Axis of Resistance” (Almasirah, June 4, 2026).

### **Pro-Iranian militias in Iraq**

- ▶ Kata’ib Hezbollah threatened that if the United States interferes in the confrontation between Iran and Israel, the militia will attack its bases and assets in Iraq and the region (Kata’ib Hezbollah Telegram channel, June 7, 2026).
- ▶ Saraya Awliya al-Dam, considered a cover militia with ties to Asa’ib Ahl al-Haq, condemned the absence of an “explicit and decisive” official Iraqi position regarding the “repeated violations” of Iraqi

airspace by Israel. According to the militia, the Iraqi people have a right to hear a “clear and unequivocal condemnation” regarding these “violations” and to see serious action that preserves the dignity and prestige of the state. Additionally, the militia confirmed that its forces are prepared and ready to resume their operations if the United States interferes and participates in any “aggression” against Iraq and the peoples of the region (Saraya Awliya al-Dam Telegram channel, June 8, 2026).

► Akram al-Kaabi, secretary-general of the Al-Nujaba Movement (Harakat Hezbollah al-Nujaba), congratulated Iran, the IRGC, and the Houthis on “punishing” the “criminal Zionist entity.” He also blamed the “rulers” who accepted humiliation, degradation, and insults from “global arrogance” (the United States and the West). He further warned elements in Iraq who delude themselves that they can reach understandings with “the graduates of Epstein’s Island.” According to him, one should speak to these elements only in the language of force and weapons (Akram al-Kaabi’s X account, June 9, 2026).

► “Sources close to the militias” stated that the current restraint does not constitute an abandonment of the direct confrontation option, saying that this will occur if Israel escalates its attacks. The sources added that direct confrontation against Israel remains the only way to curb the “Zionist project” to expand Israel’s influence and impose a new reality in the region (Al-Akhbar, June 9, 2026).

## **Militias in Syria**

► The “Islamic Resistance Front in Syria - Possessors of Might (Uli al-Ba’s, or UAB)” militia published an image – which may have been generated using AI – showing one of its operatives preparing a drone for an operation accompanied by the Hebrew caption: “The final touches are complete, and nothing remains for you but the end; seek shelter from now on.” A day later, the militia published another statement congratulating Iran on its response, which “crushed the strongholds of the criminal Zionist entity, as a reply to its treacherous aggression against our people in Beirut’s Dahiyeh.” It was claimed that “these blessed missile strikes” prove that the era of Israel’s “bullying” has ended and that it understands only the language of force, gunpowder, and direct confrontation. Furthermore, the militia claimed that the Iranian strikes established the “unity of the arenas” equation on the ground and shattered Israel’s illusions. The statement confirmed that the militia’s forces are ready “to break through toward the enemy and eradicate its tyranny” (Islamic Resistance Front in Syria Telegram channel, June 7–8, 2026).



Poster issued by the militia (Islamic Resistance Front X account, June 7, 2026)

## Iran amid Developments in Lebanon

► In the days preceding the Israeli attack in Beirut, senior officials and media outlets in Iran emphasized the connection between the ceasefire in Iran and the ceasefire in Lebanon, threatening to retaliate against Israel in the event of an Israeli strike in Beirut. Noteworthy examples include:

◆ Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi warned that Iran would not tolerate an attack in Beirut and that, should Israel carry out such an attack, Iran would respond by resuming the war. He added that the Iranian Armed Forces are prepared to strike targets inside Israel. He emphasized that the fate of the war between Iran and the “Zionist Americans” is inseparable from the fate of the campaign in Lebanon and that the two arenas are inextricably linked. Accordingly, Iran’s position is clear: either there will be a ceasefire both in Iran and in Lebanon, or the war will not stop at all. He added that what brought the fighting to a halt in recent days was, first and foremost, the capabilities of the “Resistance” in Lebanon and the capabilities of the Iranian Armed Forces. Araghchi further stated that Iran views Lebanon as a sister nation and a friend and has never sought to interfere in its internal politics. According to him, Hezbollah constitutes an important part of Lebanon’s political and social structure, and Iran’s support for it is separate from its conduct toward the Lebanese government. Referring to the affair involving the expulsion of the Iranian ambassador in Beirut, Araghchi said that he is currently continuing his role in Lebanon and that his legal status will be regulated in the near future (Al-Mayadeen, June 3, 2026).



**The Iranian Foreign Minister (Al-Mayadeen, June 3, 2026)**

- ◆ The online newspaper Seda-ye Iran [“Voice of Iran”], published by the office of Iran’s Supreme Leader, published an opinion article emphasizing Hezbollah’s importance to Iran’s national security following Operation Roaring Lion. The article, titled “The New Security Equation: From Hormuz to Beirut,” stated that Iran would not return to the pre-war period – not with regard to the Strait of Hormuz, the US military presence in the region, or the equation governing the “Resistance” groups. It argued that the war and Iran’s resistance during it had created a strategic advantage for Iran, enabling it to advance its regional order in the fields of security, economics, and geopolitics. Accordingly, the Islamic Republic’s approach toward the components of the “Resistance,” including Hezbollah, will no longer resemble its pre-war policy but will instead be shaped by the reality created in the war’s aftermath. Consequently, Hezbollah will become part of the security equation of Iran and of those countries in the region that refuse to submit to the United States and Israel, and Iran will possess leverage in this regard. The article further stated that defending Iran is, in effect, defending the Islamic Resistance in Lebanon, and vice versa. Hezbollah is not merely a non-Iranian resistance organization but an integral component of Iran’s national interests (Seda-ye Iran, June 3, 2026).
- In an IRGC statement following the announcement of a ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon – after the round of direct negotiations between the delegations of the two countries in Washington on June 3, 2026 – it was said that the “enemy” must urgently stop its attacks on the residents of Lebanon, immediately withdraw from the occupied Lebanese territories to the international border, and recognize the territorial integrity of Lebanon. The statement further noted that “the cowardly and incapable Zionist army,” despite its equipment and means, compensates for its defeats on the various fronts by killing civilians and destroying homes, hospitals, and schools. It added that despite continuous support from the United States and European countries, “the racist regime” failed to win even the heart of one village in the occupied territory, and its entire achievement is control over

ruined lands. The IRGC emphasized in its statement that the peoples of the region will not abandon the residents of Lebanon; the Lebanese people will not allow the “occupying regime” to achieve through an enforced agreement under US auspices what it failed to achieve in war, and there will be no peace in the region without a withdrawal from the occupied Lebanese territories (IRNA, June 4, 2026).

► Qods Force commander Esmail Qaani wrote in a statement published following the announcement of the ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon that the minimum demand of the “Resistance” is the withdrawal of the “occupying regime” [Israel] to the point where it was before the start of the 40-day war (“Operation Roaring Lion”). He noted that supporting the “Resistance” in Lebanon is everyone’s duty and that removing Israel from the region is an achievable goal for Muslims, and the Lebanese jihad warriors will soon see the results of their brave “resistance” (ISNA, June 4, 2026).

► Ebrahim Azizi, chairman of the Majles National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, met with Hezbollah’s representative in Iran, Abdallah Safieddine. In a statement published by Azizi, he noted that he emphasized to the Hezbollah representative that the struggle of the “Resistance Front” will continue until the shameful withdrawal of the “Zionist regime,” and that the United States will have no choice but to surrender to the will of the Iranian people and the brave “Resistance Front” (Ebrahim Azizi’s X account, June 5, 2026).



**Ebrahim Azizi and Abdallah Safieddine (Azizi’s X account, June 5, 2026)**

► Iranian Foreign Minister Araghchi criticized the remarks made by Lebanese President Joseph Aoun in an interview with CNN, according to which Iran uses Lebanon as a “bargaining chip” in its struggle against Israel and the United States, and Lebanese citizens pay the price for its interests. In a published statement, Araghchi wrote that based on Aoun’s words, one might think that Iran is the one occupying a fifth of Lebanon’s territory, causing the displacement of a quarter of its citizens, and bombing the country daily. He added that if Lebanon were a bargaining chip in Iran’s hands, an

agreement would have been reached long ago. “Save Lebanon from its real enemy, Mr. President,” wrote the Iranian foreign minister (Abbas Araghchi’s X account, June 6, 2026).

► The former Iranian ambassador to Lebanon, Mojtaba Amani, said that Hezbollah’s entry into the war was not intended solely to support Iran. Amani noted that Hezbollah had exercised restraint since the ceasefire with Israel in November 2024, despite its continued activity in southern Lebanon, and that only after the outbreak of the "Roaring Lion War" did it seize the opportunity to attack Israel. He criticized the direct negotiations between the Lebanese government and Israel, saying that this approach had already been tried in the past by Yasser Arafat and Anwar Sadat, but had failed to achieve its objectives. He argued that the Lebanese government seeks to bring about a cessation of Israeli attacks through negotiations; however, Prime Minister Netanyahu does not distinguish between the Lebanese government and Hezbollah and is trying to stir up disputes among the political forces in the country. According to him, the main elements in Lebanon understand well that pressure to disarm Hezbollah could lead to a civil war. He added that the Islamic Republic enjoys a special status among the Shiites in Lebanon thanks to its support for them. Amani further said that strengthening unity and military cohesion between Iran and the “Resistance Front” is one of the three main achievements that Iran secured in the recent war, alongside closing the Strait of Hormuz and changing the approach of the Gulf states, which realized that Iran will not continue to demonstrate restraint toward them (SNN, June 3, 2026).



**Former Iranian ambassador to Lebanon, Mojtaba Amani (SNN, June 3, 2026)**

## Iran and the Palestinian Arena

- ▶ The IRGC issued a statement on the anniversary of the death of the leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, emphasizing the need for continued “resistance.” The statement said that “resistance” will continue with full force until the complete elimination of imperialist plots, the expulsion of foreign forces from West Asia, and the liberation of Jerusalem through the annihilation of the “Zionist regime” (Fars, June 3, 2026).
- ▶ Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi spoke on the phone with Khalil al-Hayya, head of the Hamas political bureau in the Gaza Strip, and discussed with him the latest developments in the region. Araghchi provided al-Hayya with a report on efforts to end the war in the region and emphasized Iran’s ongoing support for the “legitimate resistance” of the region’s peoples, especially in “Palestine” and Lebanon, against the occupation and “aggression” of the “Zionist regime.” The senior Hamas official updated Araghchi on the situation in the Gaza Strip, praised the stance of Iran’s negotiating team regarding the need for a simultaneous cessation of fighting on all fronts in the region, and expressed gratitude and appreciation for the Islamic Republic’s support for the Palestinian people’s struggle (Alef, June 4, 2026).

## Iran’s Involvement in Iraq

- ▶ It was reported that two companies owned by the IRGC operating in the fields of energy and national infrastructure won contracts worth more than \$3 billion with Iraqi companies in the electricity sector. According to the report, the companies Mabna and Tavanir, which maintain ties with several Iraqi banks and are under American sanctions, also won contracts with the Iraqi Ministry of Oil worth billions of dollars – including a contract to operate the Karbala refinery – as well as contracts to build Iraqi government institutions. The report further stated that during the 12-day war in June 2025 (“Operation Rising Lion”) and the recent war (“Operation Roaring Lion”), political elements in Iraq transferred more than \$1 billion in cash to Iran overland. Some of the funds were reportedly delivered directly to Qods Force commander Esmail Qaani during his recent visits to Iraq (Al-Arabiya, June 5, 2026).

## Pro-Iranian Militias in Iraq

► After several Shiite militias announced that they would disarm and integrate their forces within state institutions, the leading pro-Iranian militias in Iraq continued to express opposition to the demand for disarmament:

◆ The Al-Nujaba Movement stated that its position has not changed and that its weapons will not be handed over (Al-Nujaba militia Telegram channel, June 3, 2026). A senior official in the militia, Majed al-Kaabi, emphasized that the escalation in the region and threats from Israel require maintaining the strength of the “Resistance” and its weapons to defend against and deter any possible “aggression.” He stressed that the weapons are not directed against Iraqi citizens but are intended to protect them and serve as a source of leverage in securing an agreement under which American forces withdraw from Iraq. Therefore, the weapons will not be handed over until this objective is achieved (Al-Akhbar, June 9, 2026).

◆ Kata’ib Hezbollah stated that the issue of handing over the pro-Iranian militias’ weapons to the state is a private matter for each faction or group, provided that the handover process is carried through to completion. The militia’s statement further noted that the factions that announced their decision to hand over weapons had not been part of the “Islamic Resistance” for a long time, and that the militia encourages these factions to hand over their weapons as soon as possible. The militia declared that it will not stop its activities as long as there is an “occupation” of Iraqi land, a violation of its airspace, and an expropriation of the political decisions of the local leadership. According to the militia, following the “liberation of the country,” the weapons “will be placed under an organized framework” but will not be handed over except into the hands of the Mahdi (the “Hidden” Shiite Imam). Kata’ib Hezbollah also warned Iraqi actors against “falling into the traps of the American enemy,” which it claimed is striving “with all its might” to ignite a civil war in Iraq (Kata’ib Hezbollah Telegram channel, June 4, 2026).

◆ The Ashab al-Kahf (“Companions of the Cave”) militia stressed that it will not hand over its weapons, as they constitute the “continuation of Zulfiqar” (the Prophet’s sword, which Shiite tradition holds was passed down through the line of Imams until it disappeared along with the 12th Imam) and symbolize the identity of free Shiites; as such, they will only be handed over upon the return of the 12th (“Hidden”) Imam (Ashab al-Kahf Telegram channel, June 10, 2026).



Poster by Ashab al-Kahf against giving up weapons (Ashab al-Kahf Telegram channel, June 3, 2026)