

Why Israel is alone in pushing for war



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PERSPECTIVE EXCLUSIVE

US President Joe Biden has cautioned Benjamin Netanyahu that the US would not take part in a retaliatory strike against Iran, which is seemingly favored by the Israeli prime minister's war cabinet following Tehran's significant drone and missile assault on the occupied territories.

Iran on Saturday launched an extensive missile and drone strike against Israel in response to its attack on the Iranian consulate building in Syria on April 1, during which seven Iranian military advisors were killed.

Iran's "punishing" operation, which was in response to Israel's repeated aggressions against the country, was carried out only after the UN Security Council failed to hold the regime accountable for its latest April 1 attack. Furthermore, it was purely to establish deterrence as Iranian top officials also stated that there is no intention to continue the operation. However, Iranian officials have warned that the country's response to any further military action by Israel "will be much greater".

As the Iran attack unfolded, Israel sent mixed messages about how it might retaliate.

The prospect of open conflict breaking out between Iran and Israel has unsettled the region, prompting appeals for restraint from international powers and Arab countries. On Monday, Europe also joined the US in urging Israel to show restraint, calling on Israeli leaders to step away from "the edge of the cliff" of escalation in the Middle East.

Biden and senior members of his



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national security team seek to contain the risk of a wider regional war. In his conversation with Netanyahu late Saturday, Biden sought to frame Israel's successful interception of the attack as a major victory. He suggested that further Israeli response was unnecessary.

However, the main reason behind Biden's reframing effort is likely to be something grander in scope: the prospect of unfavorable global economic consequences stemming from an escalation of conflict. With the expansion of war, the global price of oil would almost certainly rise, posing intense economic challenges and potentially sparking further instability. According to market watchers, oil prices could soar to \$100 per barrel and beyond.

Iran, the third-largest oil producer in the OPEC, is home to vast resources. Any disruption in its capacity to supply global markets whether due to possible punishing sanctions or due to any attack on its oil production or export facilities would drive the price of Brent

crude oil to \$100, and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz would "lead to prices in the \$120 to \$130 range," according to Andy Lipow, president of Lipow Oil Associates. As mentioned, a renewed push to reinforce sanctions against Iran would impact the global oil supply. This explains why Iranian oil exports have increased in recent years, despite earlier-imposed sanctions, with the US seemingly passively endorsing this strategy to maintain downward pressure on global oil prices.

Markets will also closely monitor for developments or the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, through which one-fifth of global oil production flows daily. At war, Iran certainly would seize any Israeli-linked ship in the key chokepoint, as the Yemeni military did in the Bab el-Mandab strait during the past months in support of and solidarity with oppressed Gazans who have been under a brutal Israeli attack.

When oil prices increase, so does the cost of virtually everything else. This near-universal rule

stems from the fact that oil is integral to the production and distribution of goods and services worldwide. And yet, higher oil prices are exactly what the troubled US and European economies are currently getting, but the situation could potentially deteriorate.

These factors will directly affect the US economy, initially leading to soaring gas prices and inflation in the world's largest economy. As a result, both at the party and personal levels, Biden will face an increased risk of losing the presidential election to Trump, who eagerly awaits exploiting the situation. Hence, Biden is unlikely to support Israel's war on Iran. Other major global powers, including China and Russia, as well as key Arab states such as Egypt, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and, notably, Saudi Arabia, have also called for restraint. The Saudi Foreign Ministry has expressed concerns regarding recent military escalations in the region and their potentially severe consequences. Emphasizing the importance of

preventing further exacerbation of the crisis, regional leaders have warned of dire consequences should the situation deteriorate. Britain, France, Germany, and the European Union's foreign policy chief all joined Washington and United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in calling for restraint. "We're on the edge of the cliff and we have to move away from it," said Josep Borrell, the EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. "We have to step on the brakes and reverse gear."

Amid the global consensus against the escalation of conflict, Israel presently appears to be prioritizing a push for sanctions against Iran over military actions. While Netanyahu's war cabinet reportedly favored retaliation during a meeting on Sunday, there is division within the panel regarding the timing and scale of any potential response. Despite this, two senior Israeli ministers have indicated that retaliation is not imminent and that Israel will not act unilaterally.

Illusion of immunity shattered



By Amir Mousavi
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OPINION EXCLUSIVE

There had been taboo about Israel's military power, seemingly unbreakable, especially given its long-standing reliance on the backing of the United States and Europe. As a result of such unwavering support a coalition has been forged against independent nations, perpetuating oppression and injustice upon the beleaguered people of Palestine for decades. Iran's military retaliation against Israel's terrorist act shattered the illusion of Israel's iron immunity.

The significance of Iran's action lies in the fact that, despite decades of conflict between Israel and Arab nations, no independent country had dared to launch a serious assault against Israel. Israel's atrocities in the Gaza Strip over the past seven months have inflicted severe damage upon the regime. Whereas previously, any critique of Zionism worldwide, particularly in Europe, was met with swift condemnation under the guise of "anti-Semitism". Now, with the veil lifted on the true nature of Zionism and its genocidal actions in Gaza, many Jews around the globe have raised their voices in protest, and condemnation of the belligerent Israeli regime has reverberated throughout Europe.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has now shattered the barrier to attacking Israel, plunging the Israelis once more into deep fear. Perhaps the taste of living in constant insecurity and terror will serve as a stark reminder that this has been the plight imposed upon the Palestinian people for decades.

While the Israeli regime had previously issued threats against the Islamic Republic, Iran's missile and drone strike against this regime clarified Tehran's deterrent power to both Israel and its allies. Hence, it can be inferred that Iran has accomplished its primary objective of punishing Israel and showcasing its deterrent capability. Presently, it appears the Israelis are not contemplating a direct attack on Iran, as US diplomatic efforts have been concentrated on dissuading Israel from retaliating against Iran's strike.

Since October 7, Israel's allies, spearheaded by the US, have provided full military and political support to Israel, including deploying warships and aircraft to the region as a warning to Iran against engaging in war with Israel. Although Iran had stated from the outset its lack of intent to initiate conflict, Israel's transgression of crossing the red line by targeting the Iranian consulate in Syria compelled Tehran to deliver a decisive response to Netanyahu. Following Iran's strike, Israeli sources have attempted to downplay the impact of the blows inflicted upon them, perhaps as a means to rationalize their reluctance to retaliate against Iran's attack. They are well aware that the April 14 assault merely showcased a fraction of Iran's defense capabilities, utilized not to wage war against Israel but to administer punishment.

Iran a significant maritime might throughout history



By Rear Admiral Hamzeh Ali Kaviani
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PERSPECTIVE EXCLUSIVE

Iran is among the ancient countries to have had a navy and has used it to achieve its goals throughout history. The rich and ancient background of the Iranian Navy can be categorized in three separate periods: Ancient, early modern, and post-Islamic Revolution (1979) eras.

In ancient times, due to its strategic and historical significance, the Persian Gulf was recognized as one of the world's earliest enclosed seas, and the security of the sea was occasionally a concern of the Iranian kings. The Achaemenid navy was the first real naval force in history. The initial efforts to build warships and establish a modern fleet took place during the Safavid era (1501-1747) to expel the Portuguese from the island of Hormuz and the Persian Gulf. Due to British intervention, these efforts did not

succeed, and the first modern Iranian navy was established by Nader Shah Afshar (1688-1747). He successfully founded the Iranian navy by purchasing several ships from England and the Netherlands.

During the Qajar dynasty, Nasereddin Shah (1848-1896) purchased a 650-ton ship equipped with four cannons from Germany, and named it "Persepolis." The arrival of the Persepolis steamship in the Persian Gulf in 1885 marked the beginning of the modernization of the navy.

In the years following, during the Pahlavi era (1925-1979), with the increase in oil revenues and Iran's membership in the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) naval force agreement, rapid development occurred. Iranian students were dispatched to various parts of the world. Additionally, during this period, infantry and naval commando units, as well as training centers, were established in the northern coastal areas of the country, and a ship repair center was created in Bandar Abbas in the South of Iran. However, due to American dominance over Iran during the Pahlavi era, the

navy operated within security arrangements after World War II under American auspices, aiming to prevent the Soviet Union from penetrating southern Iran. In practice, naval officers and commanders lacked decision-making power.

After the Islamic Revolution in Iran on February 11, 1979, a transformation occurred in the navy. The sending of students abroad was halted, and the Imam Khomeini Naval University was founded in 1980 to train students in necessary fields.

During the Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988), the Iranian navy, alongside the army, was not caught off guard by the Iraqi invasion. Instead, it engaged in operations such as Operation Morvarid, which destroyed the Al-Bakr and Al-Amiya oil platforms and the complete naval blockade of the ports of Basra, Faw, and Umm Qasr. Throughout the eight years of the war, the navy escorted over ten thousand merchant and oil tankers to Iranian ports with minimal damage, earning a notable reputation in naval warfare.

Following the end of the war and the establishment of the

Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy alongside the Islamic Republic of Iran Navy (IRIN), Iran's naval strategy underwent changes to effectively utilize naval power.

IRIN, named a strategic force by the Iranian Leader, focuses on a proactive presence in oceans and seas, maritime diplomacy, and combating maritime piracy. In recent years, the IRIN has demonstrated its permanent and effective presence in maritime areas, especially in the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea, by deploying more than 97 important missions of these naval groups includes combating piracy, escorting domestic and foreign ships, protecting the national interests of the Islamic Republic of Iran, participating in political ceremonies, conducting maneuvers and exercises for sustainable security, and maintaining maritime security, promoting a message of peace and friendship.

Despite maximum pressure from threats, Iran's ability to design, build, and deploy various types of missile boats, wave-class destroyers, naval bases, and submarines, as well as its presence in remote wa-

ters, showcases its resilience and strength.

Iran's presence at sea requires new technologies in various dimensions, which IRIN has successfully achieved in recent years, including indigenous developments in artillery, missiles, and communication systems, demonstrating a full-fledged and powerful naval force. With the guidance of the Leader of Islamic Revelation Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khomeini, IRIN's efforts are focused on maximizing power.

Ultimately, Iran is a maritime country, with 95% of its imports and 85% of exports being conducted via the sea. Geopolitically and economically, the Islamic Republic of Iran enjoys unique geographical advantages. With a maritime area of 190,000 square kilometers, 5,800 kilometers of coastline, 2,800 kilometers of beachfront, and over one-third of the 8,700-kilometer borders being maritime, security and commerce are of utmost importance. Ensuring maritime security for sea trade necessitates a fully capable and robust naval force, which IRIN is working towards achieving under wise leadership measures.