

Haniyeh assassinated by 'short-range projectile': IRGC



The photo, published via Tasnim News Agency on August 3, 2024 purportedly shows the aftermath of an attack on a building in northern Tehran, Iran, where slain Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh was killed on July 31.

International Desk

Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) said Saturday that Israel assassinated Hamas political chief Ismail Haniyeh using a "short-range projectile" launched from outside of his accommodation in Tehran. "This terrorist operation was carried out by firing a short-range projectile with a warhead of about 7 kilograms – causing a strong explosion – from outside the accommodation area," the IRGC said in a statement. It added that Israel was "supported by the United States" in the attack. Tehran's revenge for the attack will be "severe and (taken) at an appropriate time, place,

and manner," said the statement, which blamed Israel – "the adventurous and terrorist Zionist regime" – for his assassination. Haniyeh, who was in Tehran to attend the swearing-in ceremony of Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian, was killed along with his bodyguard, in a dawn attack on July 31. The New York Times in a report claimed that Haniyeh was assassinated by an explosive device covertly smuggled into the Tehran guesthouse where he was staying. Citing seven Middle Eastern officials, the American daily claimed that the bomb had been hidden approximately two months ago in the guesthouse. The guesthouse is run and protected by the IRGC and is part of a large compound, known as Neshat, in an upscale neighborhood of northern Tehran. However, an informed source in Iran has rejected the New York Times' report, saying that it is full of lies.

No planted bomb

The source told Tasnim News Agency that initial assessment of the site of the explosion and body of Hamas leader indicates that the explosion was not caused by a planted explosive device. The source said that the latest findings show that a projectile penetrated into the building from the outside by a drone or another carrier and caused the explosion. So, not a bomb or human were involved in the assassination, but modern technologies were used in the terror act. Iran has vowed revenge for the assassination, with the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei warning the Israeli regime of a "harsh response." In a statement after the incident, Ayatollah Khamenei said that it was the Islamic Republic's duty to avenge the Palestinian resistance leader's blood. "The criminal and terrorist Zionist regime martyred our dear guest in our homeland and left us bereaved, but it also set the ground for a harsh punishment for itself," the Leader said. Iran's Acting Foreign Minister Ali Bagheri Kani has also said that Iran will use its legitimate and inherent right to punish the Israeli regime.

Iranian Jews call for revenge over Hamas leader killing

The Iranian Jewish community strongly condemned the Israeli assassination of Hamas political leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran, calling for revenge. In a statement, the community denounced Haniyeh's assassination as a terrorist crime and a blatant violation of international laws, Press TV reported. "The assassination in Tehran of Ismail Haniyeh, the head of the Hamas political office, is a terrorist crime and a clear violation of international law," the Jewish Association of Iran said in a statement. "The Mujahid martyr, who was one of the flag bearers of the Noble Quds liberation movement, had nearly embraced martyrdom on multiple occasions, but even after losing his family members, he did not stop resisting and defending the oppressed people of Gaza, and the Zionists finally martyred him with a treacherous attack on his



● MOHSEN VANAEL/IRNA

safe haven in Tehran," it said. "The Iranian Jewish community expresses its condolences to the heroic Palestinian nation and the fighters of the resistance front and the Eminent Leader [Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei] for the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh, the head of the political bureau of the Hamas movement, and impatiently looks for a decisive and appropriate response to this treacherous assassination," it added. Haniyeh, who was in Tehran to attend the swearing-in ceremony of Iran's newly-elected President

Masoud Pezeshkian, alongside other Axis of Resistance leaders, was killed along with his bodyguard, in an attack early on July 31. Ayatollah Khamenei has warned the Israeli regime of a "harsh response" for Haniyeh's assassination, calling it the Islamic Republic's duty to exact revenge for the Palestinian resistance leader's blood. "The criminal and terrorist Zionist regime martyred our dear guest in our homeland and left us bereaved, but it also set the ground for a harsh punishment for itself," the Leader said.

Brits, Moroccans demand end to Gaza genocide

International Desk

Tens of thousands of people once again took to the streets in Britain and Morocco on Saturday to protest against Israel's genocidal war in the Gaza Strip, which has killed nearly 40,000 Palestinians over the past ten months.

In London, protesters demonstrated during the "National March for Gaza," calling to end the Israel onslaught and stop arming the regime.

The protesters were holding banners that read, "Stop arming Israel," to demand a halt to the UK government's weapons sale to Israel. Over the past ten months, huge protests have taken place in Britain's capital and

other major UK cities, demanding an immediate halt to arms sales to Israel. Data released by the government's business department revealed in June that Britain had issued more than 100 export licenses for the sale of weapons and military equipment to Israel since the regime launched its savage military offensive in the populated besieged territory in October last year. Meanwhile, Moroccans staged a massive demonstration in the capital Rabat to protest the assassination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran on Wednesday. The protesters also condemned normalization with Israel. Waving Palestinian flags, and brandishing pictures



● AFP

of Haniyeh and a cardboard coffin adorned with his image, thousands of people marched to the parliament building with black and white keffiyeh scarves, which are symbols of the Palestinian cause, draped across their shoulders. The war in Gaza "is a shame for humanity" Halima Hilali, 64, said.

The Saturday's rally was organized by the National Action Group for Palestine. Since the beginning of the Gaza war on October 7, several large demonstrations have taken place in Morocco calling for the end of normalization. Morocco established official ties in Israel in 2020 as part of the US-led Abraham Accords.

Phantom of fear ...

The Economist has reported that while these assassinations might showcase the intel and operational prowess of Mossad, they do not alter Israel's dire strategic position. Its war in Gaza has been futile for months, and, more importantly, Israel cannot indefinitely engage in battles on all fronts. Gideon Levy, an Israeli analyst, told the New York Times that the assassination of Hamas leaders and commanders is neither a victory nor beneficial for Israel. He said that Benjamin Netanyahu's aim with these assassinations is to prevent the cessation of the war and possibly expand it. However, with Iran entering the arena, the game will change. According to this Israeli analyst, contrary to Ne-

tanyahu's belief, Hamas has not been weakened by such assassinations. In fact, today, it is much stronger than before the war began, he said. Politically, Hamas has gained more popularity and acceptance in the West Bank, the Arab world, and globally, and the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh will not change anything, he believed. One of the negative consequences of the assassination of Haniyeh and Hezbollah commanders will be the halt or failure of ceasefire negotiations. Hugh Lovatt, a Middle East specialist at the European Council on Foreign Relations, in an interview with the Guardian, described the killing as a tactical victory, but a strategic defeat. "Haniyeh was a proponent of Palestinian reconciliation, and of a ceasefire.

So, taking him out of the equation has an impact on the internal power dynamics within the group by strengthening the hardliners, at least in the current term," he said. Israeli analyst Levy also predicted that indirect negotiations between Israel and the Hamas movement for a ceasefire and prisoner exchange would be halted for a long time. Talks for a cease-fire cannot continue "when you are murdering the negotiator," said Levy. "Either you negotiate or you assassinate. You can't have it both ways," he said, adding that the negotiations "may be postponed for a long time." The Islamic Republic of Iran previously targeted several areas in Israel with hundreds of missiles and drones in response to the targeting of its consulate

building in Damascus. Now that the illegal regime has once again crossed Tehran's red line, Iran will not let go of its punishment. However, when and how this punishment will take place is unknown, this has become a nightmare for Israel, which must always be on alert. According to many experts, Netanyahu's main goal in continuing the tensions is to extend the war and draw Iran into a conflict with this regime so that the US will also be forced to support Israel and enter a war with Iran. Tehran, however, has emphasized since the beginning of the Gaza war that it does not seek to escalate the conflict. Therefore, while the punishment of the criminal is certain, Iran will not compete in Netanyahu's playground.

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