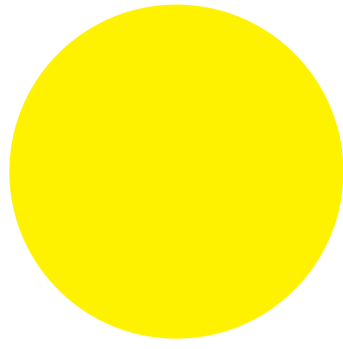


Alamut Castle reopens to visitors as UNESCO bid enters final stage



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Iran, Lebanon ceasefires interlinked with mutual impact

By Mohammad Irani
Lebanon affairs expert

OPINION EXCLUSIVE

Since the outset of the US and Israeli offensive against Iran, and the entry of Lebanon's Islamic Resistance—Hezbollah—in support of the Islamic Republic's positions, along with its clashes with the Israeli regime, the Iran and southern Lebanon files have become intertwined.

It was therefore only natural that any decision concerning Iran would also affect Lebanon.

The temporary ceasefire that took shape in Iran, coupled with Tehran's emphasis on halting hostilities in Lebanon under the proposed ten-point provisions, led to a similar situation being established in Lebanon shortly thereafter. In effect, the Iran-US ceasefire can be seen as the primary foundation, with the southern Lebanon issue functioning as a subsidiary track—effectively part of that broader arrangement.

However, the United States initially pushed back, attempting through multiple statements and releases to carve out the southern Lebanon issue from the Iran negotiation file. The convening of a meeting between Lebanese officials and the Israeli regime in Washington—through which the ceasefire was announced—thus appears to have followed a prearranged path designed to avoid tying the ceasefire directly to the Iran-US agreement. Both Washington and the Israeli regime appear reluctant to place these developments within the framework of an Iran-

US ceasefire. As such, the scenario that unfolded in Washington can be seen as a form of cover aimed at playing down Iran's role in this context. Nevertheless, most analysts believe that the underlying basis of this ceasefire lies in the Iran-US understanding.

Alongside this, another key factor was the resistance of Hezbollah fighters and the people of southern Lebanon. Over roughly 40 days following the escalation in the south, they played a decisive role. The Israeli regime had moved in with full ground and air capabilities, occupying significant

parts of southern Lebanon. It was this resistance that ultimately led to the formation of the temporary ceasefire agreement. However, there is little expectation that Israel will remain committed to such agreements. Past patterns suggest that once agreements are reached, they are often walked back as soon as conditions shift. Accordingly, both resistance forces in the south and the Lebanese population—drawing on extensive experience in dealing with Israel—are well aware that the ceasefire should not be overly relied upon.

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