



Israel's Operation Rising Lion: 6/13/25 Update

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With Israel beginning Operation Rising Lion against Iranian military, nuclear, and leadership targets and Iran launching a retaliatory attack, JINSA will regularly release updates detailing their exchanges of fire. An update with information as of June 13, 2025 at 12:00 pm ET is below.

1. Strategic and Operational Insights

- Overnight on June 13, the Israeli Air Force (IAF) and Mossad began Operation Rising Lion, a coordinated campaign against Iranian military, nuclear, and leadership targets. More than 200 Israeli fighter jets [successfully struck](#) roughly 100 sites in Iran with more than 330 munitions, including the Natanz Enrichment Complex in Esfahan Province, Tabriz, multiple locations in Tehran, the Hamadan air base, Qom, Isfahan, Markazi, and Kermanshah.
 - » The Israeli operation remains [ongoing](#) and could last for several days or weeks, with IDF Spokesperson Effie Defrin, a former JINSA visiting fellow, indicating that “the operation is only beginning.”
 - » The objectives of the operation include neutralizing:
 - High ranking military commanders,
 - Nuclear engineers and facilities,
 - Iranian air defense assets to make it easier for Israeli air operations, and
 - Ground-to-ground capabilities, including drones and missiles.
 - » Israeli aircraft flew through Syrian and Iraqi airspace, with Jordan and Iraq announcing the [closure](#) of their airspace.
 - » Iranian air defenses failed to prevent Israel from striking any of the objectives it targeted, according to JINSA Distinguished Fellow Yaakov Amidror.
- During the first wave of Israel's operations, it targeted Iran's air defenses, key leadership, and ballistic missile launchers.
 - » The first mission was to destroy Iranian air defenses to establish air superiority.
 - Israeli aircraft had previously destroyed Iran's long-range air defense capabilities. The early phases of the ongoing operation focused on further degrading Iran's remaining air defenses and radars.
 - Targeted Iranian air defense systems [included](#): SA-63, SA-68, SA-69 (S-300 derivative), and SA-71 batteries.
 - Israel's [multiyear preparations](#) for the operations reportedly included smuggling precision weapons and control systems into Iran so that Mossad operatives could set up a drone base to strike missile launchers and air defenses from within Iranian territory. Mossad commandos conducted further operations that neutralized Iranian air defenses.

- Video [footage](#) appeared to show Mossad commandos operating Rafael Spike precision-guided munitions, which can provide Non-Line-Of-Sight (NLOS) strikes.
- Ukraine recently mounted a [similar operation](#) within Russian territory to strike deep inside of Russia.
- » Israel simultaneously targeted and [killed](#) at least 20 top Iranian military leadership and nuclear scientists, making it difficult for Iranian leadership to coordinate a defense or retaliatory response. Confirmed deaths include:
 - Iranian Armed Forces General Staff Chief Major General Mohammad Bagheri,
 - Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) Commander Major General Hossein Salami,
 - Khatam-al Anbiya Central Headquarters Commander Major General Gholam Ali Rasid,
 - IRGC Quds Force Commander Brigadier General Esmail Qaani;
 - IRGC Aerospace Force Commander Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh;
 - Iranian nuclear scientist and former head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran Fereydoon Abbasi, and
 - Iranian physicist and President of the Islamic Azad University Mohammad Mehdi Tehrani.
- » *Fox News's* Jennifer Griffen [reported](#) that an Israeli official told her that part of the operation involved provoking senior Iranian leaders to meet so that they could be more easily targeted. According to Griffen, Israeli strikes over 15 minutes hit 20 sites, including apartments and offices, which took out senior Iranian leaders.
- » Israeli airstrikes and Mossad operations neutralized Iranian missile launch sites and destroyed drone warehouses, limiting Iran's ability to retaliate.
- With control of Iran's skies, Israel was then able to freely target Iran's nuclear sites during later waves of strikes, including causing [heavy damage at the Natanz nuclear site](#).
- » The IAEA indicated that Israel [did not strike](#) Iran's Fordo and Isfahan nuclear sites during the attack.
 - Israel may conduct operations against these sites as its operation further unfolds. Israel reportedly [destroyed](#) the air defense battery guarding the Isfahan location in April 2024 after Iran's attack against the Jewish state.
- Iran responded several hours later by launching 100 drones at Israel. None of the drones appear to have caused notable damage in Israeli territory, but Israeli aircraft [continue](#) to shoot down Iranian drones.
- » During a JINSA webinar on June 13, JINSA Distinguished Fellow IDF MG Amikam Norkin (ret.) indicated that the Israeli Air Force was operating in close cooperation with the U.S. military and other partner militaries. The United States [coordinated](#) an air defense coalition that was key to Israel neutralizing Iran's April 2024 attack, and U.S. officials may have taken steps to reconstitute this ad hoc partnership.
 - Jordan indicated that its air force and air defenses had [intercepted](#) several drones inside its airspace.
- » However, unlike during its previous attacks against Israel in April and October 2024, it did not launch any missiles. This may be due to a combination of several factors:

- Israeli operations targeted Iranian launch capabilities, potentially neutralizing its ability or desire to mount a ballistic missile attack;
 - Israel killed Iran’s senior leadership early in the operation, including senior commanders responsible for its missile program, which may have prevented missile launches or caused remaining Iranian leadership to avoid decision-making due to disrupted command and control;
 - Iran may not have been prepared to fire its missiles shortly after the Israeli attack but it was prepared to launch drones; or
 - Iran may be preserving its ballistic missiles for a future attack.
- » Similar to Iran’s attack in October 2024, Iran’s proxies did not attack Israel during Iran’s retaliation. Israeli operations have devastated Tehran’s “Ring of Fire” proxy network throughout the Middle East, neutralizing the ability of Iran to use these groups to deter Israeli action against Iran.
- Israeli operations have severely degraded the leadership, fighters, and capabilities of Hamas and Hezbollah, removing the latter’s ability to serve as a second-strike capability that would deter an Israeli operation against Iran.
 - The Houthis remain Iran’s only proxy that has continued regular fire against Israel in recent weeks, so they may choose to participate if Iran retaliates in the future.
 - After Iran’s retaliation on June 13, Israel [intercepted](#) several drones fired from Syria.

2. Charts and Trends

- Israel has steadily expanded the scale of its operations against Iran, with the ongoing operation striking at least 400 percent as many locations so far as it did during the October 25, 2024 attack.
- Iran’s attacks against Israel have steadily decreased, with Iran only firing half as many projectiles against Israel in the latest attack as it did in October.
 - » Iran launched only one-third as many projectiles during the June 13 attack as it did during the April 13-14, 2024 attack.
- Iran also shifted the projectiles it chose to fire during the latest retaliation, relying entirely upon drones, compared to its October attack when it only fired ballistic missiles.

