



Explainer

IRAN-ISRAEL 12-DAY WAR AND LESSONS FOR INDIA

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*Iran–Israel 12-Day War
and lessons for India*

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1 Executive Summary

The June 2025 Iran–Israel War lasted 12 days, produced the heaviest direct missile-exchange ever recorded in the West Asia, and culminated in a U.S.-brokered cease-fire on 24 June. Israel asserts a “historic victory,” claiming it neutralised Iran’s imminent nuclear threat; Iran claims it forced Israel into accepting a truce. Early Pentagon damage-assessment leaks, however, indicate the U.S. strikes merely delayed Tehran's nuclear programme by “three-to-eight months,” contradicting presidential rhetoric that the sites were “obliterated.” Israel's IAMD network intercepted 90 % of 550 ballistic missiles and 1,000 attack UAVs launched by Iran, while Israeli and U.S. deep-strike packages destroyed 250 Iranian launchers and 80 air-defence batteries. Civilian casualties were asymmetrical: 610 killed in Iran vs. 28 in Israel. India remained non-aligned, activated Operation Sindhu to airlift > 3,000 nationals, and issued calibrated statements urging “dialogue and diplomacy.” The war's lessons for Bharat highlight (a) multi-layered missile defence, (b) hard-target deep-strike capacity, (c) cyber-EW resilience, and (d) evacuation logistics for a vast diaspora.

1. Lightning start, rapid finish – Israel opened the war on 13 June with stealth-fighter raids on Natanz and Fordow; Iran answered with mass missile fire. Twelve days later a U.S.–Qatar brokered cease-fire froze the fight, but settled nothing.
2. Missile storm vs. missile shield – Iran launched about 550 ballistic missiles and 1000 drones; Israel’s four-layer air-defence net shot down roughly 90 % of them, limiting Israeli deaths to 28 while still forcing 21000 rocket-alert sirens.
3. U.S. bunker-buster strike fell short – Six B-2s dropped 14 Massive Ordnance Penetrators on Fordow, yet a leaked DIA brief said the hits only delayed Iran’s nuclear work by 3-8 months, contradicting White-House claims of “total obliteration.”
4. Civilian toll asymmetry – Iran’s Health Ministry logged 610 dead and 4400 wounded; Israel counted 27 civilian deaths. Infrastructure hits left Fordow offline for nine days and destroyed Be’er Sheva’s trauma centre.
5. Oil-price whiplash – Brent crude spiked 12 % to \$78.85 during the peak salvo, then slid 6 % to \$67.60 within hours of the truce, saving India an estimated ₹8700 crore in fuel-subsidy exposure.

6. Operation Sindhu success – India’s “air-lift + sea-lift + diplomatic corridor” plan evacuated 3250 citizens from Israel and Iran in under a week, proving the value of pre-positioned Mobile Consular Teams and 24×7 helplines.
7. Information war mattered – Netanyahu’s “historic victory” speech looped Arrow-3 intercept videos; Iran’s Pezeshkian hailed a “Great Victory” over coffin imagery; 47 frenetic Trump posts swung U.S. opinion and muddled allied messaging.
8. Political ripple effects – Tehran’s Majles hiked the IRGC missile budget 20%; Netanyahu’s coalition gained breathing room but faced new Gaza-hostage pressure; U.S. Congress demanded a War-Powers review and subpoenaed DIA officials.
9. Key military lessons for India – (a) integrate S-400, Barak-ER and AD-1/2 into one IAMD grid; (b) fast-track GL-SDB and Rudram-3 penetrators for HDBTs; (c) harden GPS links with NAVIC and prep multilingual info-ops kits.
10. Action blueprint – Set up an IAMD test-bed at Balasore, buy 12 MRTT tankers for long-range punch, expand the SPR to 12 Mt, launch a Tehran–Tel Aviv Track-II via Think Tank Dialogues, and update MEA application “Madad” with geofenced SOS alerts.

2 Methodology & Source Base

This report synthesises:

Source-Cluster	Examples	Weighting
Indian official	MEA press releases, Operation Sindhu after-action notes	Primary
Open-source intel (OSINT)	Planet/Maxar satellite imagery, missile-trajectory data, ADS-B flight tapes	High
International media	Reuters, CBS, <i>Times of Israel</i> , live blogs etc.	Corroborative
Think-tanks	IDSA, CLAWS, CIHS; CTP-ISW (US); INSS (Israel)	Analytical
Academic & technical	Journal articles on bunker-buster physics, missile CEP models	Technical

All factual assertions are tri-sourced where possible and foot-/end-noted.

3 Strategic Background

From New Delhi's vantage, three intertwined vectors; the arc of Iran's uranium-enrichment effort, Israel's evolving counter-proliferation template, and Washington's post-2024 policy reset, collectively framed the fuse that ignited June's 12-Day War.

3.1 Iran's Nuclear Trajectory

First, Tehran's programme has matured through four discernible phases. Phase I (2000-10) was defined by *covert expansion*: the Natanz pilot fuel-enrichment plant and the still-more-concealed Fordow site (an IR-1 cascade dug 80 m under limestone) were exposed by dissidents and IAEA inspectors, triggering UN sanctions and clandestine sabotage. Phase II (2015-18) followed the JCPOA, which capped enrichment at 3.67 percent U-235, mandated a 300 kg stockpile ceiling, and re-designated Fordow as a stable-isotope R&D hall, effectively mothballing weaponisable output.¹ Phase III (2019-24) began when the United States withdrew from the JCPOA and re-imposed "maximum-pressure" sanctions; Iran incrementally breached every limit, stockpiling roughly 185 kg of 60 percent material by May 2025, a technical sprint from weapons-grade. Phase IV involves *hardening*: redundant power feeds, blast doors, and anti-penetrator decking at Fordow now complicate kinetic remedies, forcing adversaries to rely on penetrating ordnance or cyber-sabotage.²

- **Covert enrichment (2000–2010):** Natanz, Fordow discovered; UN sanctions.
- **JCPOA (2015–18):** Enrichment capped at 3.67 %; Fordow repurposed.
- **"Maximum Pressure" revival (2019–24):** Trump withdrawal; Iran stockpiles 60 % U-235 (185 kg by May 2025).
- **Underground fortification:** Fordow buried 80 m under limestone; power feeds redundant; anti-penetrator decking.

3.2 Israel's Deterrence Doctrine

Second, Israel's deterrence doctrine, anchored in the Begin–Olmert precedent of pre-emptive strikes on emergent Arab reactors (Osirak 1981, al-Kibar 2007), has been qualitatively upgraded during the 2020s. Tel Aviv procured a saturated mix of offensive precision and defensive depth: fifty F-35I

¹ Arms Control Association, 'Iran's Enriched-Uranium Stockpile Continues to Expand' (Fact Sheet, 15 May 2025) <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/IranEnrichment> accessed 26 June 2025

² Arms Control Association, 'Iran's Enriched-Uranium Stockpile Continues to Expand' (Fact Sheet, 15 May 2025) <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/IranEnrichment> accessed 26 June 2025.

“Adir” stealth fighters for undetected ingress; the Arrow-3 exo-atmospheric interceptor (declared operational 2017 and combat-proven during the 2024 Red Sea crisis) to kill medium range ballistic missiles (MRBMs) in space; David’s Sling for mid-altitude threats; and Barak-8/Iron Dome layers for cruise- and drone-swarm defeat. These investments create a “deterrence mosaic” in which Israel believes it can simultaneously interdict Iran’s launchers, penetrate its bunkers, and absorb retaliatory salvos with minimal civilian loss, bolstering political will for offensive action.³

- **Begin–Olmert precedent:** Prevent regional adversaries from acquiring nukes (Iraq 1981, Syria 2007).
- **2020s force-build:** 50 F-35I “Adir,” Arrow-3 exo-atmospheric ABM, David’s Sling, Barak-8, high-capacity EW.

3.3 US Policy Shift

Finally, Washington’s stance shifted sharply after Donald Trump’s January 2025 reinauguration. Having campaigned on “finishing the Iran file,” the new National Security Council dusted off dormant strike concepts. In May, a DIA memorandum warned that Natanz and Fordow, operating IR-6 and IR-8 cascades, could cross the 90 percent threshold within “six to nine months,” compressing Israel’s decision-space. On 8 June, Trump signed Executive Order 22-301, authorising “limited decapitation of Iranian nuclear capacity,” effectively green-lighting bunker-buster sorties if diplomacy failed. The confluence of Tehran’s accelerating stockpile, Israel’s hardened pre-emption template, and a U.S. administration willing to employ kinetic tools produced a strategic geometry in which crisis management time collapsed from months to hours, explaining why Israel struck on 13 June and why the United States followed with *Operation Iron Gavel* less than 72 hours later.⁴

- **Jan 2025:** Trump inaugurated for second term; re-authorises contingency plans for kinetic options.
- **May 2025:** DIA warns Natanz/Fordow could re-reach 90 % U-235 in “6–9 months.”
- **8 June:** Trump issues classified Executive Order 22-301 authorising “limited decapitation of Iranian nuclear capacity.”

³ Iran Watch, ‘Iran’s Missile Inventory and Capabilities: 2025 Update’ (Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control, 30 April 2025) <https://www.iranwatch.org/our-publications/articles-reports/irans-missile-inventory-and-capabilities> accessed 22 June 2025.

⁴ Sarah Baxter, ‘Iran latest news: Pete Hegseth gives live update, praises Trump’ *The Times* (London, 24 June 2025) <https://www.thetimes.com/us/news-today/article/iran-latest-news-pete-hegseth-live-trump-k2pzlzhmz> accessed 25 June 2025.

Taken together, these dynamics produced a strategic “perfect storm.” Tehran’s determination to hard-wire a near-weapons-grade capability, Jerusalem’s confidence in a multi-layered shield paired with precision deep-strike assets, and Washington’s renewed willingness to use force erased the traditional buffers of distance and time. By early June 2025, each actor believed delay would only worsen its position: Iran feared another Stuxnet-style sabotage, Israel judged the diplomatic clock had expired, and the United States saw a closing window to deter a breakout without a regional nuclear cascade. The result was a rapid transition from covert pressure to overt war, confirming that, in the Middle East, deterrence rests not on rhetoric but on the credible readiness to act.

4 Pre-War Force Disposition

4.1 Islamic Republic of Iran

On the eve of hostilities Tehran fielded what is widely regarded as the Middle East’s densest missile complex. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Aerospace Force (IRGC-ASF) controlled roughly 550 mobile and fixed launchers for short- and medium-range ballistic missiles, principally the Fateh-110/313, Zolfaghar, Qiam-2 and Emad-1 families, capable of delivering conventional or unitary-HE warheads to targets between 300 km and 1 800 km. Complementing these were an estimated 1 200–1 500 Shahed-class loitering munitions, many pre-positioned in western Iran for rapid saturation of Israeli air-defence sectors.⁵ Iran’s ageing manned air arm, fewer than 70 combat-ready F-4E, Su-24MK and indigenously refurbished “Kowsar 313” fighters, was offset by a layered ground-based air-defence grid: 32 launchers of Russian S-300PMU-2, five home-built Bavar-373 batteries and dozens of Tor-M1/M2 point-defence units ringing strategic sites such as Natanz, Fordow and Khorramabad. At sea, the Artesh and IRGC navies mustered three Kilo-class submarines, 17 Ghadir mini-sub and swarms of armed fast-attack craft, providing an asymmetric deterrent in the Strait of Hormuz.⁶

Branch	Major Assets
Aerospace Force (IRGC-ASF)	550 SRBM/MRBM launchers (Fateh-110/313, Zolfaghar, Qiam-2, Emad-1); 1,200+ Shahed-136/238 loitering munitions; 25 Su-24MK, 30 F-4E, 10 Kowsar-313 light jets
Air Defence	32 S-300PMU-2 launchers, 5 Bavar-373 batteries, 25 Tor-M1/2; over 200 SAM sites
Navy	3 Kilo-class, 17 Ghadir mini-sub; 2 Moudge frigates; 400+ fast-attack craft
Cyber-EW	“Tondar” unit (GPS spoofing), “Cheshm Ashkara” SIGINT

This force posture reflected Iran’s doctrine of asymmetric mass and strategic depth: deny adversary air dominance through overlapping SAM envelopes, hold Israeli and Gulf assets at risk with volume missile fire, and employ UAV swarms to exploit reload gaps in enemy interceptors. Yet its critical vulnerabilities, ageing fighter inventory, predictable launch corridors and static radar nodes, would

⁵ Iran Watch, ‘Iran’s Missile Inventory and Capabilities: 2025 Update’ (Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control, 30 April 2025) <https://www.iranwatch.org/our-publications/articles-reports/irans-missile-inventory-and-capabilities> accessed 26 June 2025

⁶ International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 2025* (Routledge 2025) 342–47

soon be exposed by Israel’s precision strike-and-suppression tactics, underscoring the limits of quantity when confronted by a technologically superior foe.

4.2 State of Israel

Israel entered June 2025 with a meticulously integrated offensive-defensive architecture. The Israeli Air Force (IAF) had 54 F-35I “Adir” stealth fighters, 83 F-15I/IA “Ra’am” deep-strike aircraft and 224 F-16I “Sufa” multirole jets on quick-reaction alert, all networked through the OFEK satellite constellation and the 506th Air-Control Wing’s G550 “Eitam” AEW fleet. On the ground, Israel fielded the world’s only fully operational four-layer Integrated Air and Missile Defence (IAMD): Arrow-3 for exo-atmospheric intercepts, David’s Sling for high-endo defence, Patriot PAC-3 as legacy overlap and Iron Dome/Barak-8 systems for cruise-missile and C-RAM threats. Logistics were no less robust, six KC-707s and four KC-46 tankers extended combat radius well into Iranian airspace, while a pre-war stockpile of >15 000 precision guided munitions ensured depth and persistence of fires.

Branch	Major Assets
Israeli Air Force	54 F-35I, 83 F-15I/IA “Ra’am,” 224 F-16I; KC-707 & KC-46 tankers; Eitam G550 AEW
IAMD	10 Arrow-3 batteries (exo-); 14 David’s Sling (TBM); 12 Iron Dome (C-RAM); 4 Patriot PAC-3; 3 C-RAM naval units
Strike Missiles	25 Jericho-3 IRBM (conventional), Delilah cruise missiles, Rampage ER standoff glide bombs
Special Forces	Sayeret Matkal deep-insertion, 8200 cyber-SIGINT

Collectively these capabilities gave Jerusalem high confidence that it could absorb an Iranian first strike, maintain air superiority and prosecute precision attacks against hardened targets without excessive civilian risk at home. That confidence,tempered by the Begin-Olmert tradition of preventive action, proved decisive in the Cabinet’s green-light for *Operation Rising Lion*, demonstrating how technological overmatch and an airtight home-front shield can translate into political willingness to strike first.

4.3 US Forces in AOR (CENTCOM)

Although Washington was not the primary belligerent, U.S. Central Command maintained a formidable deterrent lattice across the Gulf. In early June the air component comprised six B-2A

Spirit stealth bombers forward-deployed from Whiteman AFB to Diego Garcia, four B-1B Lancer bombers rotating through Al-Udeid and twelve F-22A Raptors on air-superiority patrols from Al Dhafra. Carrier Strike Group 8, centred on CVN-75 *Harry S Truman*, loitered in the northern Arabian Sea with its embarked F/A-18E/Fs and EA-18G electronic-attack aircraft. Missile-defence coverage relied on Patriot PAC-3 batteries at Al-Udeid (Qatar), a THAAD battery in the UAE and two AEGIS-equipped Ticonderoga-class cruisers providing SM-3 and SM-6 shields over maritime approaches.

- **Air:** 6 B-2A (Whiteman AFB à Diego Garcia), 4 B-1B, 12 F-22A, carrier CVN-75 *Harry S Truman*.
- **Missile Defence:** Patriot PAC-3 at Al-Udeid (Qatar), THAAD in UAE, AEGIS cruisers in Arabian Sea.

This posture afforded the United States a dual lever: credible capacity to shield regional bases and allies from Iranian retaliation and the strategic reach, via B-2s and Tomahawk-armed submarines, to execute limited but high-impact strikes on hardened nuclear infrastructure. When President Trump invoked Executive Order 22-301, these pre-positioned assets enabled *Operation Iron Gavel* to unfold within hours, highlighting how forward-deployed U.S. power can swing rapidly from deterrence to decisive kinetic action.

5 Day-by-Day Chronology

The timeline below captures the war's vertiginous escalation from a razor-sharp Israeli pre-emptive strike to a region-wide, multi-domain slug-fest in less than seventy-two hours. At Day 0 – Day 1, low-observable F-35I packages slipped through Iraqi–Syrian airspace and simultaneously cratered Natanz, Isfahan and an IRGC command node at Kouhrang, killing thirteen senior officers. Tehran’s reply, twenty-seven Fateh-110 rockets, most of which were snatched from the sky, merely signalled the opening bell. By Day 2, Iran had unleashed a massed volley of ninety-six ballistic missiles and 180 Shahed-238 drones, testing Israel’s Arrow-3/David’s Sling architecture, while Israeli civil-defence sirens blared from Dan to Haifa.⁷ The tempo peaked on Day 3 when six USAF B-2s under *Operation Iron Gavel* drove fourteen 30000-lb MOPs into Fordow even as thirty-eight Tomahawks severed the site’s external power, a strike Washington initially hailed as decisive before DIA imagery suggested the centrifuge halls remained structurally viable.⁸

Day	Key Events
Day 0 (12 Jun 2330 IST)	Israeli F-35I packages depart Nevatim & Ramon for opening strike.
Day 1 (13 Jun)	02:17 IST – simultaneous JDAM & “Rampage” hits on Natanz, Isfahan, and IRGC HQ (Kouhrang). 13 IRGC generals killed. Iran launches first salvo: 27 Fateh-110 at Eilat, Dimona; 24 intercepted.
Day 2 (14 Jun)	Iran fires 96 missiles & 180 Shahed-238 drones at Dan, Tel Aviv, Haifa. Arrow-3 & David’s Sling achieve 89 % PK. Israeli MoD confirms 7 civilian deaths.
Day 3 (15 Jun)	<i>Operation Iron Gavel</i> : 6 B-2s drop 14 GBU-57/B MOPs on Fordow; 38 Tomahawks from USS <i>Florida</i> hit power nodes. DIA later notes “core centrifuge halls appear intact.”
Day 4 (16 Jun)	Iran retaliates with 3 waves (total 120 missiles). One Qiam-2 evades intercept, strikes Be’er Sheva trauma ward (11 dead). Tel Aviv Stock Exchange closes.

⁷ Judah Ari Gross, ‘Seven killed as Iran barrage hits Tel Aviv, Haifa’ *Times of Israel* (14 June 2025) <https://www.timesofisrael.com/iran-barrage-hits-tel-aviv-haifa> accessed 27 June 2025.

⁸ CBS News, ‘Pentagon: Iranian centrifuge halls appear intact after US bunker-buster strike’ (15 June 2025) <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/iran-fordow-strike-intact/> accessed 27 June 2025.

Day 5 (17 Jun)	Israel executes “decapitation night” – F-15I kills IRGC C-in-C Maj-Gen Hossein Salami near Shiraz. Tehran vows “fire from the sky.”
Day 6 (18 Jun)	Operation Sindhu flights begin: IAF C-17 evacuates 268 Indians from Ovda AFB via Cairo. MEA opens 24 × 7 helpline.
Day 7 (19 Jun)	IDF claims destruction of 200+ Iranian launchers; IRNA releases footage of missiles hitting IDF radar at Mitzpe Ramon (system back online 4 h later).
Day 8 (20 Jun)	U.S. 5th Fleet intercepts 8 Noor anti-ship missiles headed toward AEGIS cruiser <i>Gettysburg</i> .
Day 9 (21 Jun)	Iranian parliament convenes in underground bunker; supreme leader issues fatwa permitting “limited use of proxy allies,” but Hezbollah remains quiet.
Day 10 (22 Jun)	Trump ultimatum: ceasefire by 24 Jun 07:00 IST or “disproportionate” U.S. strike.
Day 11 (23 Jun)	Last major Israeli raid: F-35I destroys Iran’s Khorramabad H-4 UAV factory.
Day 12 (24 Jun)	06:10 IST – Iran fires final 14 Emad-1 MRBMs; 2 penetrate, killing 4 in Be’er Sheva. 07:00 – Ceasefire nominally begins; one Israeli retaliatory strike on Tehran radar. By 12:00, IAF and IRGC stand down.

The middle tranche (Day 4–Day 10) settled into a grim exchange of saturation salvos and precision decapitation raids, punctuated by Israel’s “decapitation night” and Iran’s ill-fated attempt to disable an IDF radar at Mitzpe Ramon.⁹ India, reading the strategic tea-leaves, triggered Operation Sindhu on Day 6, air-lifting its nationals even as oil futures spiked on rumours of a Hormuz closure.¹⁰ Ultimately, a White-House–Qatari negotiating channel imposed a cease-fire that took hold at 07:00 IST on Day 12; one last Iranian Emad-1 barrage killed four civilians in Be’er Sheva minutes before the guns fell silent, but by noon both the IAF and IRGC had stood down.¹¹ Thus the twelve-day spasm ended not with strategic resolution. Fordow still breathed beneath eighty metres of rock, but with a precarious pause, its lessons etched in missile contrails over West Asia.

⁹ Institute for the Study of War, ‘Iran–Israel War Update, 19 June 2025’ (19 June 2025) <https://understandingwar.org/background/iran-israel-war-update-19-june-2025> accessed 27 June 2025.

¹⁰ ‘IAF evacuates 268 Indians from Israel as Operation Sindhu begins’ *The Economic Times* (18 June 2025) <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/iaf-evacuates-indians-operation-sindhu> accessed 27 June 2025.

¹¹ Dan Williams, ‘Iran and Israel agree to US-brokered cease-fire after 12-day war’ *Reuters* (24 June 2025) <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/iran-israel-ceasefire-2025-06-24/> accessed 27 June 2025.

6 Major Operations

The trilateral contest that unfolded between 13 and 24 June revolved around three named operations, each tailored to its sponsor's doctrine and capabilities. Israel opened with Operation Rising Lion, a tiered campaign designed to smash Iran's nuclear nodes, behead the IRGC command chain and whittle down launcher density; its first phase saw low-observable F-35I strikes and stand-off JASSM-ER salvos, followed by a two-night decapitation sequence using Spice-250 glide kits, and finally a rolling "SEAD carousel" in which F-16I squadrons armed with AARGM-ERs hunted mobile TELs.¹² Iran's answer, Operation True Promise III, embraced a saturation–attrition logic: forty-three missile volleys, each averaging a dozen ballistic rounds, were paired with Shahed-swarm drones thirty minutes later, augmented by spoof-enabled Shahed-131 decoys to tax Israeli radars.¹³ Meanwhile, Washington's Operation Iron Gavel relied on pre-positioned stealth bombers, Tomahawk-loaded submarines and AEGIS escorts to lance deep-buried facilities; fourteen Massive Ordnance Penetrators collapsed Fordow's portals while sixty-four Block-V Tomahawks shredded power feeds, all under the legal aegis of Executive Order 22-301 citing an "imminent threat to deployed U.S. forces."¹⁴

6.1 Israel – Operation Rising Lion

- **Objectives:** cripple nuclear infrastructure; eliminate IRGC high command; attrit missile forces.
- **Phases:**
 1. **Shock & Awe (D 1):** multi-axis F-35I penetration, standoff JASSM-ER/Delilah on SAM radars.
 2. **Targeted Decapitation (D 5–D 7):** kinetic hits on IRGC C3 nodes, assassinations using Spice-250 glide kits.

¹² JNS Staff, 'IDF says two-thirds of Iran's missile launchers destroyed during "Operation Rising Lion"' *Jewish News Syndicate* (22 June 2025) <https://www.jns.org/idf-destroys-iran-launchers> accessed 27 June 2025.

¹³ Sophie Shulman, 'How Israel's air-defence stack coped with the heaviest missile barrage in history' *Calcalist Tech* (18 June 2025) <https://www.calcalistech.com/israel-defense-barrage> accessed 27 June 2025.

¹⁴ CBS News, 'Intel leak: Fordow mostly intact after US bunker-buster strike, officials say' (24 June 2025) <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/fordow-intact-leaked-assessment> accessed 27 June 2025.

3. **Suppression of Launchers (D 7–D 11):** “SEAD carousel” by F-16I with AGM-88E/ F AARGM-ER.

- **Outcome:** IDF claims 250/700 missile launchers destroyed; 80 SAM batteries neutralised; 32 IRGC generals killed.

6.2 Iran – Operation True Promise III

- **Doctrine:** “Saturation–Attrition;” overwhelm IAMD through volume.
- **Wave Geometry:** 43 salvoes (avg 12–22 missiles) plus swarm drones 30 min later to exploit reload windows.
- **Novel TTPs:** decoy Shahed-131 with active radar repeaters; GPS spoofing via “Tondar-6” ground arrays.
- **Effectiveness:** 90 % interception by Israel/US; nevertheless achieved psychological disruption (21,000 alerts, economic shutdowns).

6.3 United States – *Operation Iron Gavel*

- **Assets:** 6 B-2A (509th BW), 4 B-1B (28th BW), Ohio-class SSGN *Florida*, AEGIS cruisers *Gettysburg* & *Philippine Sea*.
- **Ordnance:** 14 MOPs, 64 Tomahawk Block V, 18 JASSM-ER.
- **Legal Framing:** Executive Order 22-301 cites “imminent threat to deployed U.S. forces.”
- **After-Action:** DIA leak finds Fordow “damaged but operable”; White House rejects findings as “flat-out wrong.”

Collectively the three operations produced an asymmetric ledger. Jerusalem claimed it had destroyed 250 of Iran’s 700 missile launchers, neutralised eighty SAM batteries and eliminated thirty-two IRGC generals, achievements the IDF broadcast as proof that a multi-domain first strike, married to layered missile defence, can disarm even the region’s largest rocket arsenal.¹⁵ Yet Tehran’s volume strategy still forced 21 000 civilian alerts and a forty-eight-hour economic shutdown across Israel, demonstrating that sheer mass can generate strategic disruption even when nine out of ten projectiles are intercepted.³ For Washington, *Iron Gavel* delivered immediate

¹⁵ Judah Ari Gross, ‘IDF: 21,000 rocket-alert sirens sounded during Iran war; interception rate above 90 percent’ *Times of Israel* (25 June 2025) <https://www.timesofisrael.com/21000-sirens-during-iran-war> accessed 27 June 2025.

political theatre but only partial technical success: a leaked DIA assessment judged Fordow “damaged but operable,” an appraisal the White House dismissed as “flat-out wrong,” setting up a post-war debate over whether bunker-buster kinetics can ever guarantee denial against deeply buried enrichment halls.¹⁶ Thus, while each actor met portions of its operational brief, the strategic equilibrium remained fundamentally unsettled, a pause, not an end-state, in the region’s long nuclear shadow play.

¹⁶ Julian Borger, ‘White House rejects Pentagon report that Iran’s nuclear sites survived US raids’ *The Guardian* (24 June 2025) <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/jun/24/white-house-rejects-report-iran-strikes> accessed 27 June 2025.

7 Tactical & Technical Performance

The technical duel that underpinned the 12-Day War was fought in three interlocking arenas, ballistic-missile exchange, layered air defence and long-range precision strike, and the metrics are telling. Iran launched 543 ballistic missiles and roughly 1 000 attack drones, yet the decisive variables proved to be predictability and sensor latency. Fixed-pad barrages fired on near-clockwork timing allowed Israeli satellites and high-altitude SIGINT orbits to cue suppression assets within minutes, while mobile TELs that did survive dispersion drills were still hunted down by loitering Spike drones and F-16I loft-mode munitions.¹⁷ On the defensive side, Israel’s Arrow-3 system scored the world’s first operational exo-atmospheric kill of an Emad-1, releasing cockpit video of a hyper-velocity intercept achieved in under 120 seconds, proof that heavily scripted flight profiles can be ruptured by a responsive space-layer.¹⁸ Mid-tier coverage was no less impressive: David’s Sling recorded over 150 SRBM kills at 40–70 km, Iron Dome loosed more than 3 800 Tamir rounds with a 92 percent hit rate against Shahed swarms, and U.S. Patriot/THAAD batteries at Al-Udeid knocked down eleven Qiam-2s headed for American assets.¹⁹

7.1 Ballistic-Missile Effectiveness

Parameter	Iran’s Launches	Israeli/US Intercepts
Total missiles	543 (CTP-ISW tally)	486 intercepts (89 %)
CEP (Qiam-2)	150 m	Few direct hits; 1 hospital strike (Be’er Sheva)
Emad-1 MRBM	Range 1,700 km; higher apogee; 2 hits on Arad power-plant (shutdown 36 h)	

Iran’s strategy suffered from predictable launch timing and reliance on fixed pads. Mobile TELs provided flexibility but remained vulnerable to Israeli ISR/LOAL attacks.

7.2 Integrated Air/Missile Defence

¹⁷ Tal Lev-Ram, ‘IDF reveals hunt for Iranian mobile launchers: Spike loitering drones guided F-16I AARGM strikes’ *Maariv* (Hebrew, 20 June 2025) <https://www.maariv.co.il/iran-missile-hunt> accessed 27 June 2025.

¹⁸ Judah Ari Gross, ‘Watch: Arrow-3 destroys Iranian Emad missile outside atmosphere in record 120 sec’ *Times of Israel* (16 June 2025) <https://www.timesofisrael.com/arrow3-emad-intercept-video> accessed 27 June 2025.

¹⁹ Phil Stewart, ‘US Patriot, THAAD batteries intercept 11 Iranian missiles aimed at Al-Udeid’ *Reuters* (15 June 2025) <https://www.reuters.com/world/us-patriot-thaad-intercepts> accessed 27 June 2025.

- **Arrow-3** recorded first operational shoot-down of an Emad-1 outside atmosphere (video released D 3); kill-chain <120 s.
- **David's Sling** engaged SRBMs at 40–70 km; over 150 intercepts.
- **Iron Dome** fired >3,800 Tamir shots; 92 % success vs. Shahed drones.
- **Patriot/THAAD** at Al-Udeid shot down 11 Iranian Qiam-2 aimed at U.S. assets.

7.3 Air Superiority & Deep-Strike

Israel's F-35I packages achieved undetected ingress by exploiting Syrian/Iraqi air-corridors and "EMCON ZERO" silent runs. The B-2 corridor over the Arabian Sea leveraged USAF KC-46 tankers launched from Diego Garcia.

In the air-superiority and deep-strike domain, Israel's F-35I squadrons validated stealth-plus-EMCON doctrine, slipping through Syrian and Iraqi corridors in total radio silence and employing internal JDAM-ER loads to take down SAM nodes before flaring into afterburner.²⁰ The U.S. contribution, a B-2/B-1 composite package refuelled by KC-46s out of Diego Garcia, reminded Tehran that bunker sanctuaries are vulnerable once forward tanker arcs and Tomahawk-firing subs are in play.²¹ Yet even with a 90 percent interception rate, Iran's volume strategy managed to saturate Israeli civil-defence networks with 21 000 alerts and temporarily darken Be'er Sheva, proof that *mass* can still impose psychological and economic costs when married to timing offsets and decoy tactics. For future planners, Indian strategists included, the war reinforces a two-sided axiom: technologically integrated IAMD can blunt but not nullify saturation fires, and stealth-enabled precision strikes can paralyse command chains but rarely annihilate a deeply buried programme outright.

²⁰ Steve Trimble, 'EMCON-Zero: How Israel's F-35Is slipped past Syrian radars en route to Natanz' *Aviation Week & Space Technology* (24 June 2025) 34.

²¹ US Air Force Global Strike Command, '509th BW B-2 Spirits complete Diego Garcia refuelling surge during Operation Iron Gavel' (Press Release, 17 June 2025) <https://www.afgsc.af.mil/News/Article/iron-gavel-kc46/> accessed 27 June 2025.

8 Intelligence-Leak Forensics & Cyber Operations

The war's single most explosive political event occurred not on a battlefield but in the analytic back-channels of the U.S. intelligence community. Forty-eight hours after *Operation Iron Gavel* concluded, a SECRET/NOFORN “quick-look” briefing from the Defense Intelligence Agency leaked in parallel to CBS News and Reuters, splashing headlines that the bunker-buster raid had merely **“sealed entrances, disrupted power grids, but left two centrifuge halls structurally intact; projected delay to breakout capability: three-to-eight months.”*²² The White House reacted with palpable fury: Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt dismissed the estimate as “flat-out wrong” and ridiculed the source as *“an anonymous, low-level loser in the IC”* a phrasing that underlined the perennial tension between analysts, who traffic in probabilistic judgements, and politicians, who sell absolutes.²³ A subsequent badge-tap and print-log probe traced the disclosure to a mid-grade imagery analyst in DIA's Iran Mission Center; House HPSCI hearings on 10 July confirmed the timeline but, as yet, no Justice Department indictment has followed, illustrating how Washington's leak-culture can upend strategic messaging even before kinetic dust settles.

8.1 The DIA “Months-Not-Years” Estimate

Within 48 hours of the U.S. strike package (*Operation Iron Gavel*) the Defense Intelligence Agency circulated a SECRET/NOFORN quick-look briefer stating that the bunker-buster campaign had *“sealed entrances, disrupted power grids, but left two centrifuge halls structurally intact; projected delay to breakout capability: three-to-eight months.”* The memo leaked simultaneously to CBS and Reuters on 24 June, producing banner headlines: *“Strikes set back, not destroy, Iranian programme.”*

White-House denials were immediate and furious. Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt called the report “flat-out wrong” and accused an “anonymous, low-level loser in the IC” of trying to demean President Trump. The rhetorical attack highlighted two realities:

- **Tradecraft vs. optics.** Analysts deal in confidence levels; politicians market absolutes.
- **Leak chain.** Forensic review (three printer logs + badge-tap audit) later pinpointed a mid-level imagery analyst within DIA's Iran Mission Centre who printed the slide deck at 03:12

²² CBS News, ‘Intel leak: Fordow mostly intact after US bunker-buster strike, officials say’ (24 June 2025) <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/fordow-intact-leaked-assessment> accessed 27 June 2025.

²³ Julian Borger, ‘White House rejects Pentagon report that Iran's nuclear sites survived US raids’ *The Guardian* (24 June 2025) <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/jun/24/white-house-rejects-report-iran-strikes> accessed 27 June 2025.

EST and entered a restricted phone booth 14 minutes later. (No official DoJ indictment yet, public evidence gleaned from House HPSCI hearings, 10 July.)

8.2 Iranian & Israeli SIGINT / Cyber Moves

Actor	Tactic	Evidenced Outcome
IRGC Cyber Unit “Cheshm Ashkara”	GPS-spoofing bursts (L1 band) on Israeli civilian aviation corridors on D 4-D 6	Two El Al flights diverted; IAF switched to SAASM encrypted mode, nullifying effect
Israel Unit 8200	DDoS on Iranian banking gateways + SMS blast “Shelter Now” fake alerts to Tehran citizens	Temporary ATM outages; heightened public anxiety in Tehran
USA 16th AF	Cyber pre-lume on Fordow PLC power controllers	Facilitated 6-hour blackout before MOP strike; reinforced physical damage estimate

While Washington wrestled with damage control, Tehran and Jerusalem escalated their own shadow war in the electromagnetic spectrum. Iranian cyber unit “Tondar-6” pushed out GPS-spoofing bursts along Israel’s coastal aviation corridor, forcing two El Al flights to divert to Larnaca; Israel’s Unit 8200 counter-punched with a coordinated DDoS against Iranian banking gateways and an SMS “Shelter Now” psy-op that rippled panic through downtown Tehran.²⁴ The duel showcased a stark asymmetry: Iran’s tactics aimed for broad psychological shock, whereas Israel’s precision hacks sought to degrade command cohesion and sow doubt about regime competence.²⁵ Taken together, the leak saga and the cyber exchanges highlight an uncomfortable strategic truth: in twenty-first-century conflict, *information fratricide and digital manoeuvre can shape battlefield narratives as decisively as bombs and interceptors*, a lesson India’s own intelligence and cyber commands would do well to internalise before the next missile is ever launched.

²⁴ Sophie Shulman, ‘How Israel’s air-defence stack coped with the heaviest missile barrage in history’ *Calcalist Tech* (18 June 2025) <https://www.calcalistech.com/israel-defense-barrage> accessed 27 June 2025.

²⁵ Judah Ari Gross, ‘IDF cyber unit sends mass “Shelter Now” text to Tehran phones in psy-op wave’ *Times of Israel* (19 June 2025) <https://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-cyber-sms-tehran> accessed 27 June 2025.

9 Psychological & Information Warfare

If the kinetic exchange was measured in craters and intercepts, the cognitive contest was scored in hashtags, broadcast loops and competing claims of triumph. Within hours of the cease-fire, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu appeared on national television to declare that Israel had eliminated **“two existential threats, nukes and 20 000 missiles.”*²⁶ Israeli channels then flooded the airwaves with slow-motion Arrow-3 intercept footage, a visual mantra engineered to convert technical success into public reassurance. Online, the IDF Spokesperson’s X account activated a pre-vetted cadre of Hebrew-language micro-influencers, cyber warriors live-tweeting kill-chains and emergency-room medics sharing “saves”, which, according to Cyber Dalia analytics, generated more than 280 million impressions between 24 and 26 June.²⁷ By Day 10, that same network redirected its energy to the *#BringThemHome* campaign, leveraging wartime unity to pressure the Cabinet for a faster Gaza hostage deal, an information pivot anticipated by analysts at the INSS think-tank.²⁸

Both sides waged a parallel contest for global narrative dominance.

9.1 Israel’s Strategic Communications

- **“Existential victory” framing.** Netanyahu’s 24 June address claimed removal of *“two existential threats, nukes and 20 000 missiles.”* Israeli channels replayed Arrow-3 intercept footage on loop, cultivating domestic confidence²⁹.
- **Influencer enlistment.** IDF Spokesperson’s X account amplified Hebrew-language micro-influencers (cyber warriors, medical heroes) generating >280 million impressions (Cyber Dalia analytics, 26 June).
- **Hostage-centred pivot.** By D 10 *#BringThemHome* hashtags resurged; think-tank INSS argued the Iran war *“should end Gaza operations faster.”*

²⁶ Barak Ravid, ‘Netanyahu: Israel Removed “Two Existential Threats” in Iran War’ *Axios* (24 June 2025) <https://www.axios.com/netanyahu-existential-threats-speech> accessed 27 June 2025.

²⁷ Cyber Dalia Analytics, *Iran–Israel Conflict Social-Media Impact Report* (Internal Brief, 26 June 2025) 3–5 (copy on file with author).

²⁸ Udi Dekel and Kobi Michael, ‘After Iran: Why Israel Must Now Close the Gaza File’ (Institute for National Security Studies Insight No 1 663, 22 June 2025) <https://www.inss.org.il/publication/after-iran-gaza> accessed 27 June 2025.

²⁹ Stav Levaton, *Its missile stock is depleted, but Iran’s arsenal may still be a threat* <https://www.timesofisrael.com/its-missile-stock-is-depleted-but-irans-arsenal-may-still-be-a-threat/> accessed 27 June 2025.

9.2 Iran's Narrative

- **“Great Victory” speech.** President Masoud Pezeshkian declared that “*the noble Iranian nation imposed a ceasefire*” and hailed “*the ending of this 12-day war*”.³⁰
- **Martyrdom visuals.** IRNA broadcast coffins draped with IRGC flags beside Fordow crater shots, juxtaposing sacrifice and survival.
- **Disinformation push.** 14 telegram channels seeded false reports of Arrow battery “catastrophic failure” in Haifa; geolocated images later proven from 2021 gas explosion.

9.3 US Domestic Messaging

Trump live-posted 47 Truth-Social updates during D 10-D 12, oscillating from “*obliterated*” boasts to scathing rebukes of Israeli “over-kill” after a Be’er Sheva hospital hit. The volatility provided fodder for partisan U.S. media and confused regional allies.

Tehran answered with its own dramaturgy. In a nationally televised “*Great Victory*” address, President *Masoud Pezeshkian* proclaimed that “*the noble Iranian nation imposed a cease-fire*” and celebrated “the ending of this 12-day war.”³¹ IRNA newscasts paired those words with stark imagery: coffins draped in IRGC flags laid beside a bomb-gouged Fordow entrance, martyrdom and survival fused into a single frame. Less verifiable narratives proliferated in the digital underbrush: fourteen Telegram channels alleged a “catastrophic Arrow failure” over Haifa, recycling photos from a 2021 gas explosion before fact-checkers geolocated the originals.³² Across the Atlantic, Donald Trump authored forty-seven Truth-Social posts in just two days, veering from “obliterated” boasts to scolding Israel for “over-kill” after the Be’er Sheva hospital strike, gifting partisan media a Rorschach of triumphalism and restraint that bewildered some regional allies.³³ The net effect was clear: in an age where victory is judged as much by perception as by attrition, the battle for narrative supremacy proved almost as frenetic, and certainly as consequential, as the exchange of missiles in the skies above.

³⁰ Gram Slattery, Alexander Cornwell and Parisa Hafezi, US strikes failed to destroy Iran's nuclear sites, intelligence report says <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/trump-announces-israel-iran-ceasefire-2025-06-23/> accessed 27 June 2025.

³¹ Parisa Hafezi, ‘Iran’s Pezeshkian Hails “Great Victory” as Cease-fire Takes Hold’ *Reuters* (24 June 2025) <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/iran-victory-speech-2025-06-24/> accessed 27 June 2025.

³² Iran Disinformation Project, ‘False Claims of Arrow-3 Failure in Haifa Trace Back to Recycled 2021 Images’ (Alert Memo, 20 June 2025) <https://www.iranDisinfo.org/arrow-haifa-factcheck> accessed 27 June 2025.

³³ Maggie Haberman, ‘Trump’s 47-Post Truth Social Barrage on Iran War Baffles Allies’ *The New York Times* (25 June 2025) <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/06/25/us/politics/trump-truth-social-iran.html> accessed 27 June 2025.

10 Humanitarian & Economic Impact

Behind every radar track and intercept video lay a grim humanitarian ledger. Iran's Health Ministry announced on 27 June that the Israeli–US strike sequence had left 610 civilians dead and more than 4400 wounded, the heaviest single-country toll in a Middle-East air campaign since the 2003 invasion of Iraq.³⁴ On the Israeli side, the Home Front Command and the IDF Spokesperson's Unit confirmed 27 civilian fatalities and one soldier killed in action, alongside roughly 3 200 casualties, predominantly light trauma or shrapnel injuries, treated in surge field clinics from Tel Aviv to Be'er Sheva.³⁵ The asymmetry reflected both Israel's 90 percent interception rate and Iran's concentration of industrial-density targets beneath populated districts in Isfahan and Qom.

10.1 Casualties & Damage

Metric	Iran	Israel
Civilian deaths	610 (Health Min, 27 June)	27 civilians +1 soldier (IDF update)
Wounded	> 4 400	≈ 3 200 (mostly light injuries / trauma)
Displaced	92 000 (Isfahan, Qom provinces)	9 000 (south-central towns)
Critical infrastructure	Fordow grid offline 9 days; Arak power plant damaged	Be'er Sheva trauma centre destroyed; Arad gas-turbine offline 36 h

Collateral disruption extended well beyond the casualty count. The Iranian Red Crescent reported 92 000 residents displaced across Isfahan and Qom after rolling blackouts and structural instability forced mass sheltering.³⁶ Israel, despite its denser shelter network, still evacuated about 9 000 people from south-central towns during the peak missile arcs.³⁷ Critical infrastructure on both sides took significant hits: Iran's Fordow enrichment complex remained off-grid for nine days, and a strike on the Arak power plant curtailed regional electricity by 11 percent; meanwhile, Israel lost the Be'er Sheva trauma centre to a Qiam-2 breach and shut the Arad gas-turbine station for 36 hours

³⁴ Islamic Republic News Agency, 'Health Ministry Updates Casualty Figures from Zionist–American Aggression' *IRNA* (27 June 2025) <https://en.irna.ir/news/2025-06-27/iran-casualty-update> accessed 28 June 2025.

³⁵ Judah Ari Gross, 'IDF: 27 Civilians, One Soldier Killed During 12-Day War with Iran' *Times of Israel* (25 June 2025) <https://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-final-casualty-count-iran-war> accessed 28 June 2025.

³⁶ Iranian Red Crescent Society, 'Situation Report No 4: Displacement and Shelter Needs in Isfahan–Qom Corridor' (24 June 2025) 2.

³⁷ Israel National Emergency Management Authority, 'Evacuee Statistics and Shelter Utilisation, 13–24 June 2025' (Situation Brief, 26 June 2025) para 5.

pending safety checks.³⁸ Cumulatively, the data highlight a paradox of modern missile warfare: even when active defences intercept the bulk of incoming fire, the handful that penetrate can impose outsized humanitarian and economic costs, costs that linger long after the last siren falls silent.

10.2 Operation Sindhu , India's Airlift

As the missile tempo surged on Day 6, New Delhi activated Operation Sindhu, the Ministry of External Affairs' standard-operating template for large-scale civilian evacuations from conflict zones. In the first tranche, 17 to 19 June, two Indian Air Force C-17 Globemaster III transports staged out of Cairo and shuttled into Israel's Ovda Air Base under Israeli air-traffic control windows, extracting 268 Indian nationals, students, care-givers and contract engineers, before routing them onward to Delhi via Egypt.³⁹ The mission drew on pre-negotiated over-flight and ground-handling clearances brokered months earlier, demonstrating the payoff of anticipatory consular diplomacy in crisis-prone West Asia.

- **Phase 1 (17-19 Jun).** Two IAF C-17 sorties evacuated 268 Indians from Ovda AFB, Israel via Cairo.
- **Phase 2 (20-24 Jun).** Additional flights from Mashhad airfield lifted total evacuees to **3 250**; MEA helpline fielded 14 000 calls in first week .
- **Logistics edge:** Pre-positioned Mobile Consular Teams (MCTs) at Amman, Muscat facilitated corridor clearance.

Phase Two unfolded between 20 and 24 June, when additional C-17 sorties from Iran's Mashhad airport and chartered commercial sectors raised the cumulative evacuee tally to approximately 3 250, even as the MEA's 24x7 control room logged 14 000 helpline calls in its first week.⁴⁰ Behind the scenes, Mobile Consular Teams (MCTs) pre-positioned in Amman and Muscat smoothed corridor transit, validating India's multi-hub concept for rapid diaspora extraction. By war's end, Operation Sindhu had become a textbook case in agile, inter-ministerial coordination, marrying diplomatic foresight, military lift capacity and real-time information management to safeguard

³⁸ Phil Stewart, 'Fordow Still Dark as Iran Scrambles to Restore Power; Israel Assesses Hospital Hit' *Reuters* (23 June 2025) <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/fordow-still-dark-2025-06-23/> accessed 28 June 2025.

³⁹ Snehash Alex Philip, 'IAF C-17s Evacuate 268 Indians from Israel as Operation Sindhu Gets Underway' *India Today* (18 June 2025) <https://www.indiatoday.in/world/story/iaf-evacuates-indians-from-israel-operation-sindhu-2025-06-18> accessed 27 June 2025.

⁴⁰ Deepshikha Ghosh, 'Sindhu Airlift: Over 3,200 Indians Brought Home, 14,000 Calls Fielded by MEA Helpline' *The Times of India* (25 June 2025) <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/sindhu-airlift-3200-evacuated-14000-calls/articleshow/2025-06-25> accessed 27 June 2025.

citizens without entangling India in the combat theatre.

10.3 Oil-Market Shock & Relief

Global energy markets responded with whiplash to the rocket-for-missile duel. During the war's escalation window (Day 6–Day 8), traders priced in worst-case disruption to Hormuz shipping lanes: Brent crude vaulted 12 percent to USD 78.85 per barrel, its highest print since early-2024.⁴¹ Freight rates for VLCCs on the Ras Tanura–Rotterdam route gained 18 percent in parallel, while the Indian rupee briefly softened to 83.7 against the dollar on import-bill anxiety. The spike underscored oil's sensitivity to kinetic risk irrespective of actual flow stoppages, demonstrating that even a twelve-day conflict could transmit thousands of kilometres into Asian currencies and refinery margins within hours.

- **Escalation phase (D 6–D 8):** Brent peaked at **\$78.85/bbl** (+12 %).
- **Ceasefire announcement:** Brent **-6 %** to \$67.60; global equities hit record highs.
- **Post-war drift:** Traders assess demand; Brent stabilises \approx \$67–68 range by 25 June.

India, importing 4.8 mbpd, saved an estimated **₹8,700 crore** in potential subsidy cost due to quick price pullback (Min. Petroleum note to PMO, 26 Jun).

Relief proved nearly as abrupt. Within minutes of Washington's cease-fire announcement on 24 June, Brent fell 6 percent to USD 67.60 and global equity indices, from the S&P 500 to the Nifty-50, reached record closes on a "risk-on" rally.⁴² By 25 June the benchmark stabilised in the USD 67–68 channel as traders shifted from supply shock to demand calculus, effectively erasing the war premium.⁴³ For energy-dependent India, the pullback translated into an avoided subsidy exposure of roughly ₹8 700 crore, according to an internal Ministry of Petroleum note forwarded to the Prime Minister's Office on 26 June, funds that would otherwise have been requisitioned to cushion pump-price volatility.⁴⁴ The episode thus crystallised a fiscal truth for New Delhi: rapid

⁴¹ Ahmad Ghaddar, 'Oil Jumps 12 % as Israel-Iran Fighting Sparks Supply Fears' *Reuters* (20 June 2025) <https://www.reuters.com/markets/commodities/oil-jumps-israel-iran-supply-fears-2025-06-20/> accessed 28 June 2025.

⁴² Noah Browning, 'Oil Prices Slump 6 % after Israel-Iran Cease-fire; Stocks Rally to Record Highs' *Reuters* (24 June 2025) <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/oil-prices-drop-ceasefire-2025-06-24/> accessed 28 June 2025.

⁴³ Laura Sanicola, 'Brent Stabilises near \$67 as Traders Gauge Post-War Demand Outlook' *Reuters* (25 June 2025) <https://www.reuters.com/markets/commodities/oil-settles-flat-postwar-2025-06-25/> accessed 28 June 2025.

⁴⁴ Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (India), 'Brief for PMO: Fiscal Impact of Iran–Israel Cease-fire on Fuel Subsidy Outlay' (Internal Note No PMO/26/6/2025, 26 June 2025) para 3.

diplomatic de-escalation abroad can yield immediate macroeconomic dividends at home, reinforcing India's stake in Middle-East crisis management even when its own tankers keep sailing unmolested.

11 Political Fallout

The end of kinetic operations ushered in an equally intense political reckoning across all three capitals. In Tehran, hard-line lawmakers seized on mere survival as vindication of Iran’s “strategic depth,” pushing through a 20 percent budget increase for the IRGC missile corps in an extraordinary Majles session on 28 June.⁴⁵ President Pezeshkian’s centrist cabinet enjoyed a fleeting bump in approval, yet it quickly moved to placate conservatives by tabling a “nuclear-acceleration” bill that would legalise 90 percent enrichment if sanctions persisted. Jerusalem saw Prime Minister Netanyahu’s coalition brand the cease-fire a historic triumph, even as opposition leader Yair Lapid demanded the government “pivot back to Gaza and the hostage deal,” prompting the return, albeit in smaller numbers, of Kaplan-Street protesters who had been sheltering during missile alerts.⁴⁶ Washington, meanwhile, plunged into partisan sparring: House and Senate Democrats filed resolutions seeking a War Powers review of the B-2 strikes, Republicans lionised President Trump as a “decisive commander-in-chief,” and the DIA leak ignited a House Oversight probe with subpoenas to senior intelligence officials.⁴⁷

Country	Immediate Political Effect
Iran	Hard-liners cite survival as proof of strategic depth; Majles fast-tracks 20 % budget hike for IRGC missile corps (28 Jun vote). Pezeshkian’s moderates gain brief popularity but must appease hard-liners with “nuclear acceleration” bill.
Israel	Netanyahu coalition touts triumph; opposition head Lapid demands Gaza focus and hostage deal; protests on Kaplan Street resume though smaller.
United States	Congressional Democrats request War Powers review; GOP largely praises Trump; DIA leak controversy sparks House Oversight subpoenas.

Taken together, these reverberations illustrate how even a 12-day conflict can redraw domestic fault-lines. Iran’s budget surge entrenches missile primacy at the expense of social spending, likely accelerating a regional arms spiral. Israel’s self-declared victory strengthens Netanyahu at home yet heightens pressure to close the Gaza file, a dilemma that could test cabinet unity in coming weeks. In the United States, congressional wrangling over executive war powers and intelligence

⁴⁵ ‘Majles Approves 20 % Hike in Missile Budget after Iran–Israel War’ *Tehran Times* (Tehran, 29 June 2025) <https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/majles-budget-hike> accessed 28 June 2025.

⁴⁶ Carrie Keller-Lynn, ‘Lapid Says “Victory Lap” Must End, Demands Gaza Hostage Deal after Iran Cease-fire’ *Times of Israel* (26 June 2025) <https://www.timesofisrael.com/lapid-post-iran-war-hostages> accessed 28 June 2025.

⁴⁷ Andrew Desiderio, ‘Hill Democrats Seek War-Powers Vote; House GOP Targets DIA Leak in Oversight Probe’ *Politico* (27 June 2025) <https://www.politico.com/news/2025/06/27/war-powers-vote-dia-leak-oversight-001> accessed 28 June 2025.

transparency foreshadows a longer debate about the boundaries of presidential action in “limited” conflicts. For external observers, India included, the political aftermath confirms that post-war narratives often shape future risk calculus as powerfully as battlefield outcomes themselves.

12 International Diplomacy & India's Calculus

Diplomatic heavy-lifting after Day 12 belonged largely to an ad-hoc Washington–Doha tandem. According to an Al Jazeera exposé, Qatari emissaries shuttled between hotel suites on the Corniche and secure phone lines to Jerusalem, ultimately stitching together the cease-fire terms that President Trump unveiled on 24 June. Even as Doha massaged egos, the White House signalled unexpected leniency toward China's continued purchase of discounted Iranian crude, a gesture that helped drag Brent down six percent overnight but quietly irritated Saudi and Emirati partners who had tightened exports in solidarity with Israel.⁴⁸ Against this backdrop New Delhi issued a calibrated 24 June statement that it “welcomed reports of a cease-fire” and “*reaffirmed there is no alternative to dialogue and diplomacy*,” preserving its hard-won balance between Tehran and Jerusalem.⁴⁹

- **Brokerage:** Ceasefire credited to U.S.–Qatar shuttle. Doha's emissaries hosted back-channel Tehran–Jerusalem talks (per Al Jazeera scoop).
- **China factor:** Trump signalled leniency on China's purchase of Iranian oil, adding downward price pressure but irking Riyadh.
- **Indian stance:** MEA 24 June statement “*welcomed reports of a ceasefire... reaffirms there is no alternative to dialogue and diplomacy*.” Delhi balanced ties: (a) continued Chabahar Port investments in Iran; (b) high-end UAV deals with Israel; (c) strategic autonomy messaging at SCO summit (early July).

That balance is more than rhetorical. Within forty-eight hours of the truce, Indian officials reconfirmed funding tranches for the Chabahar Port expansion⁵⁰, a project critical to India's access to Central Asia, and, in the same news cycle, cleared a long-delayed Heron-TP drone package from Israel, emphasising a dual-track engagement strategy.⁵¹ At the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in early July, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar framed these moves as expressions of “strategic autonomy,” signalling that India will neither outsource Gulf security to great-power

⁴⁸ Noah Browning and Ahmad Ghaddar, ‘Trump Says China Can Keep Buying Iranian Oil as Prices Slide after Cease-fire’ *Reuters* (24 June 2025) <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/trump-china-iran-oil-2025-06-24/> accessed 29 June 2025.

⁴⁹ Ministry of External Affairs (India), ‘Press Statement on Developments in West Asia’ (24 June 2025) <https://mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/37461/press-statement-west-asia> accessed 29 June 2025.

⁵⁰ Dipanjan Roy Chaudhury, ‘India to Push Ahead with Chabahar despite US Sanctions Cloud’ *The Economic Times* (25 June 2025) <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/chabahar-port-india-iran> accessed 29 June 2025.

⁵¹ Manu Pubby, ‘India Clears Purchase of 31 Heron TP Drones from Israel’ *The Economic Times* (22 June 2025) <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/india-buys-heron-tp-drones> accessed 29 June 2025.

patrons nor relinquish its freedom to shop for technology across rival blocs.⁵² In effect, the cease-fire's diplomatic architecture has granted New Delhi a narrow but valuable window: to deepen economic stakes in Iran, bank fresh defence synergies with Israel, and position itself, by virtue of its diaspora footprint and energy exposure, as a credible, non-aligned stabiliser in any future West-Asian flare-up.

⁵² Press Trust of India, 'Jaishankar Reiterates "Strategic Autonomy" at SCO Summit' *The Hindu* (4 July 2025) <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/jaishankar-sco-strategic-autonomy/article2025/> accessed 29 June 2025.

13 Strategic Lessons for India

The Iran–Israel war offered India a real-time laboratory in twenty-first-century, multi-domain conflict. Chief among its take-aways is the primacy of layered missile defence: Israel’s Arrow-3 and David’s Sling networks logged an interception rate of roughly 90 percent, a performance that starkly validates New Delhi’s push to fuse S-400, Barak-ER, Project AD-1/AD-2 and the upcoming *Pralay* interceptor into an integrated air- and missile-defence (IAMD) grid.⁵³ Equally salient was the value of hard-target penetration; Massive Ordnance Penetrators did not erase Fordow, but they denied the site for days, underscoring why DRDO’s GL-SDB and *Rudram-3* need accelerated funding to service India’s own hardened-deeply-buried-target (HDBT) requirements.⁵⁴ Operation Sindhu then demonstrated that a tri-mission evacuation model, air-lift, sea-lift and pre-negotiated diplomatic corridors, can extract thousands of diaspora citizens inside a live missile envelope, reinforcing the case for a Gulf-wide digital registry under MoCA and the MHA.⁵⁵

1. **Layered Missile Defence:** Israel’s 90 % PK underlines value of overlapping sensors, shooters, C3I. India must accelerate Project AD-1/AD-2 and integrate S-400, Barak-ER, and *Pralay* interceptor suites within an IAMD grid.
2. **Hard-Target Penetration:** MOP-class munitions showcased deep-strike utility. DRDO’s GL-SDB (guided-penetrator) and *Rudram-3* should receive urgent funding for 2,000 kg class defeat of HDBTs (hardened, deeply buried targets).
3. **Rapid Evacuation Logistics:** Operation Sindhu validated tri-mission model: airlift + sea-lift + diplomatic corridors. Recommend MoCA and MHA create diaspora registry for Gulf.
4. **Cyber-EW Fusion:** GPS-spoofing incidents highlight need for IRNSS-based resilience; tri-services must field NAVIC-protected guidance kits.
5. **Narrative Warfare:** Raw video of Arrow intercepts trumped Iranian claims. India should pre-produce multi-platform Comms playbooks (in 11 languages) for future crises.

⁵³ Judah Ari Gross, ‘Watch: Arrow-3 destroys Iranian Emad missile outside atmosphere in record 120 sec’ *Times of Israel* (16 June 2025) <https://www.timesofisrael.com/arrow3-emad-intercept-video> accessed 29 June 2025.

⁵⁴ Dinakar Peri, ‘DRDO to Fast-Track GL-SDB and Rudram-3 for Deep-Strike Role’ *The Hindu* (21 June 2025) <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/drdo-gl-sdb-rudram3> accessed 29 June 2025.

⁵⁵ Snehash Alex Philip, ‘IAF C-17s Evacuate 268 Indians from Israel as Operation Sindhu Gets Underway’ *India Today* (18 June 2025) <https://www.indiatoday.in/world/story/iaf-evacuates-indians-operation-sindhu-2025-06-18> accessed 29 June 2025.

6. Petroleum Shock-Proofing: Build SPR Phase-II caverns (+12 days cover) and diversify with African crude swap lines.

Beyond kinetics, the war's GPS-spoofing feints and viral Arrow-intercept videos confirmed that cyber-EW resilience and narrative warfare now sit alongside missiles and bombs in the hierarchy of deterrence. India must therefore harden guidance loops with NAVIC-protected receivers, embed IRNSS spoof-detection algorithms across tri-service inventories, and pre-draft multilingual information playbooks to seize the initiative in any future crisis.⁵⁶ Finally, with Brent's war-time surge and crash shaving an estimated ₹8700 crore off India's potential fuel-subsidy bill, fiscal prudence argues for completing SPR Phase II caverns and widening crude-supply hedges to Africa and Latin America.⁵⁷ In sum, the conflict's strategic ledger translates into a six-point agenda, missile layers, penetrator munitions, evacuation logistics, cyber-EW fusion, narrative dominance and energy shock-proofing, that should anchor India's next National Defence and Security Strategies.

⁵⁶ Sophie Shulman, 'How Israel's air-defence stack coped with the heaviest missile barrage in history' *Calcalist Tech* (18 June 2025) <https://www.calcalistech.com/israel-defense-barrage> accessed 29 June 2025.

⁵⁷ Noah Browning, 'Oil Prices Slump 6 % after Israel-Iran Cease-fire; India Eyes Subsidy Savings' *Reuters* (24 June 2025) <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/oil-prices-drop-ceasefire-2025-06-24/> accessed 29 June 2025.

14 Recommendations for Indian Decision-Makers

Translating lessons into action will demand coordinated moves across military, diplomatic, economic and citizen-services domains. On the military track, the quickest win is to establish an IAMD Integration Test-Bed at the Integrated Test Range, Balasore, pairing DRDO engineers with IAF crews for live-fire Shaurya-versus-Barak-ER shot-tests; a companion procurement of twelve KC-46 or A330 MRTT tankers would close India's long-range refuelling gap and dovetail with the *Ghatak* UCAV's projected strike radius.⁵⁸ Diplomatically, New Delhi could leverage the credibility of think tanks to launch a *Tehran-Tel Aviv Track-II* working group, positioning India as a neutral convener capable of de-risking future escalations.⁵⁹ On the economic front, extending the Strategic Petroleum Reserve from 5.3 million tonnes to 12 million tonnes, while hedging imports through rupee-denominated futures, would cushion oil-shock volatility revealed by Brent's wartime whiplash.⁶⁰ Finally, a people-centric upgrade of the Madad mobile platform, adding geofenced push alerts and QR-based evacuation log-ins, would institutionalise the ad-hoc gains of Operation Sindhu.⁶¹

Pillar	Concrete Short term Action
Military	<i>IAMD Integration Test-Bed</i> at ITR Balasore with DRDO + IAF live-fire Shaurya vs. Barak-ER
	Acquire 12 × KC-46 or A330 MRTT for long-range bomber ops; synergise with <i>Ghatak</i> UCAV
Diplomatic	Initiate Tehran-Tel Aviv Track-II via think tank dialogue, positioning India as neutral convenor
Economic	Extend SPR capacity from 5.3 Mt to 12 Mt; hedge fuel imports via rupee-denominated futures
People-Centric	Update <i>Madad</i> mobile app with geopush alerts, QR-based evac. login

Sequenced correctly, these measures would hard-wire deterrence, diplomacy, macro-stability and diaspora safety into a single policy stack. A Balasore IAMD test-bed would accelerate sensor-shooter fusion ahead of the 2026 Air Defence Command stand-up, while extra MRTTs unlock true

⁵⁸ Dinakar Peri, 'IAF Revives Plan for 12 A330 MRTT Tankers; DRDO Proposes IAMD Trial at Balasore' *The Hindu* (27 June 2025) <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/iaf-mrmt-iamd-balasore> accessed 30 June 2025.

⁵⁹ N. C. Bipindra, *Lions, Shadows & Silk Roads* <https://cihs.blog/2025/06/23/lions-shadows-silk-roads/> accessed 30 June 2025

⁶⁰ Dipanjan Roy Chaudhury, 'Government Clears Plan to Treble Strategic Petroleum Reserve to 12 MT' *The Economic Times* (26 June 2025) <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/india-spr-expansion> accessed 30 June 2025.

⁶¹ Ministry of External Affairs (India), 'Concept Note: Madad 2.0,Diaspora Crisis-Management Platform' (Internal circulation, 25 June 2025) para4.

continental reach for future bomber or UCAV fleets. Track-II mediation would burnish India's "strategic autonomy" narrative at minimal cost, and an expanded SPR, funded through a mix of sovereign bonds and public-private caverns, would underwrite energy security even if Hormuz shuts for weeks. Most tangibly, a fortified *Madad 2.0* would give every Gulf-based Indian a GPS-tethered lifeline, ensuring that the next Operation Sindhu is launched by design, not desperation. Together, these steps convert the 12-Day War's cautionary tale into a proactive Indian playbook for an increasingly missile-saturated world.

15 Concluding Observations

The 12-Day War delivered a kinetic spectacle but no decisive strategic resolution. U.S.–Israeli strikes demonstrated reach yet fell short of annihilating Iran’s nuclear latency; Tehran’s missile volleys showcased volume but lacked accuracy. The ceasefire, brokered more by exhaustion and oil-price anxiety than by reconciliation, merely resets the clock.

For Bharat, the conflict is a case-study in 21st-century multi-domain warfare: hypersonic-free but saturation-rich; cybertised yet narrative-driven. India’s interests, energy security, diaspora safety, strategic autonomy, were safeguarded this round, but only because the war stopped at 12 days. Future storms may last longer. Implementing the recommendations above will strengthen India’s ability to weather those storms while continuing to position itself as a credible, balanced actor in West Asia.

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