IRANWATCH DAILY | JUNE 26, 2025

Overview

Cybersecurity Warning: The Islamic Republic has reportedly launched cyberattacks targeting journalists and political activists. Emails, X accounts, and Instagram pages have allegedly been targeted. Please adopt appropriate precautionary measures if you believe you are at risk.

Frail Ayatollah Declares Victory: The Supreme Leader declared "victory" against Israel and the U.S. while avoiding any mention of a ceasefire in his third video address to the nation.

IRGC Committed to 'Destruction' of Israel: The IRGC in statement released today said, "We will not stop our efforts, even for a moment, in the enduring and strategic mission to expel the occupying U.S. from the region and to bring about the destruction of the child-killing Zionist regime."

Ban on Collaboration With IAEA: The Islamic Republic's parliament (Majles) received approval from the Guardian Council on a piece of legislation banning cooperation with the IAEA, now sending it to the executive branch for implementation.

Fire at Tehran Residential Tower: A fire was reported this evening at a residential tower in north Tehran, with speculation claiming it may have been caused by a drone strike.

Russian Proposal: Russian Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Maria Zakharova today said that Russia's proposal to settle long-term hostilities between Israel and the Islamic Republic "remains on the table." According to her, the proposal has been communicated to both Israel and the Islamic Republic as well as the U.S. and entails "ensuring Iran's legitimate right to development of a peaceful nuclear program, and on the other hand taking into account Israel's security."

Trip to China: Defense Minister Brig. Gen. Aziz Nasirzadeh is visiting China to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's (SCO) meeting of member state defense ministers. He separately met with the defense ministers of China, Russia, Pakistan, Belarus, and Tajikistan on the sidelines of the summit. The defense ministers were unable to adopt a joint resolution due to a lack of consensus on usage of the word "terrorism."

Probe Into Azerbaijan Role: President Masoud Pezeshkian today called for a probe into reports of Israeli drones that may have entered Iranian airspace via Azerbaijani territory during the recent conflict with Israel. Azeri President Ilham Aliyev has denied the allegations.

Poland Assists Europeans in Iran: Poland's embassy in Tehran is handling the consular responsibilities of EU countries that withdrew their diplomatic missions during the conflict with Israel. Among the evacuees are Portuguese, Irish, German, and Bulgarian nationals.

Airspace Gradually Reopening: The Islamic Republic today reopened the eastern part of Iranian airspace to domestic, international, and overflight traffic.

Supreme Leader Declares 'Victory' in 12-Day War, Rejects POTUS Call for 'Surrender'

Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, in his third video message since the start of the recent conflict with Israel, declared "victory over the false Zionist regime and America." Khamenei did not mention the ceasefire at any point in his address.

No information has been released regarding the specific terms of the ceasefire or the mediating parties involved.

Under Article 110 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic, the Supreme Leader alone is tasked with declaring war or peace and commanding the armed forces. Yet, the Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) announced the ceasefire in a statement that made no mention of Khamenei's endorsement or involvement.

In a departure from the norm, Islamic references were greatly absent in the Supreme Leader's message, instead invoking nationalist sentiments. He used the word "Iran" 34 times and "nation" 25 times.

During his address, Khamenei also reacted to U.S. President Donald Trump calling for Tehran's "unconditional surrender" on June 17.

The Supreme Leader said, "The Americans have been at war with Islamic Iran since the [1979] revolution. They have used different excuses from human rights, to defending democracy and women's rights, or the issue of enrichment and missile production. They give various excuses, but the issue at its core is nothing but them demanding 'Iran's surrender.' This is at the core of the conflict with the United States. It is a great insult to the Iranian nation. [Surender] will never happen."

Birds can be heard chirping in the video's background, potentially indicating that the video was recorded above ground, rather than in a bunker.

Like the second video message from Khamenei, the low quality of the video was a noticeable departure from the high-resolution productions from his office. This might imply that, fearing potential vulnerabilities, his security team has prohibited digital devices in his presence.

People can also be heard speaking in the background while he delivers the message. This might be a further sign of the production being rushed, or of background audio, including the bird sound, being added in post to audiences.

In a break from the tradition usually surrounding addresses from the Supreme Leader, at 05:38 ET state media announced that a video message from Khamenei would be released "momentarily." The actual video was released at 06:59 ET.

In the video, Khamenei appeared pale plus less energetic and composed than in his last two video messages.

His previous message was released on June 18. All messages released since the conflict with Israel began have been prerecorded, not broadcast live as most addresses from the Supreme Leader traditionally are, and shot in an undisclosed location.

Potential Resumption of Tehran-Washington Talks

Key players from the U.S. and the Middle East have maintained communication with Islamic Republic officials behind the scenes, even amid the flurry of military strikes in Iran and Israel over the past two weeks, as part of an intensifying attempt to bring Tehran back to the negotiating table. As an incentive, the Trump administration has discussed potentially easing sanctions, freeing up internationally-held frozen funds, and even assisting the Islamic Republic access as much as $30 billion to build a civilian energy-producing nuclear program.

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, in an apparent reaction to the news, said that before engaging in talks, the United States needs to "define the criteria of the talks," while accusing both the U.S. and Israel of disrupting diplomacy with strikes during major rounds of negotiations.

Araghchi also added that Tehran is yet to agree to come back to the negotiating table with Washington. He added, "No arrangements, agreement, or decision have been made for negotiations with America yet. There hasn't even been any talk about it. We merely have internal discussions."

Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz today revealed, "We wanted to eliminate Khamenei, but there was no operational opportunity."

734 Iranians, Eight Europeans Arrested by Regime

Using broad "national security" charges, the Islamic Republic has arrested at least 734 people, including 8 Europeans, since the conflict with Israel started.

Today, nine Teachers' Union activists in Kerman were indicted on charges of "disrespecting religion" and "promoting anti-regime ideas." Security forces arrested Qader Golvan, the brother of a slain protester, at his home in Oshnavieh without presenting any formal charges.

Prominent activist Hossein Ronaghi was arrested on June 24 and transferred to an undisclosed location.

Yesterday, security forces raided the homes of three Baha'i citizens, seized their digital devices, and transferred them to undisclosed locations.

The Ministry of Intelligence and Security (MOIS) today warned that Mossad has allegedly launched new social media accounts to reconstruct its network in Iran. The MOIS threatened severe punishment for anyone engaging the accounts. Presumably, the threat was in reaction to Mossad launching a new account in Persian.

Following the June 22 strike on Evin Prison, Islamic Republic authorities have relocated many political prisoners to overcrowded facilities with poor water quality and no separation from non-political inmates.

The IRGC has announced the seizure of a "significant" number of Starlink satellite receivers in Hormozgan Province, near the Strait of Hormuz. The owners have been charged with "espionage" for allegedly collaborating with Israel.

→ For inquiries or more information, please contact ***k.isfahani@nufdiran.org***