

# Seyed M. Marandi: Hezbollah's FPV Drones HUMILIATE Israeli Air Defenses

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## #Nima

Hi, everybody. Today is Thursday, May 12, 2026, and our dear friend, our brother, Professor Marandi, is here with us. Welcome back, Professor.

## #Seyed

Thank you, Nima. It's always a great pleasure to be on your show.

## #Nima

Let me start, Professor Marandi, with what happened yesterday. Donald Trump was waiting for Iran's response after four days. As he mentioned, Iran gave him a response that took Iran something like 10 minutes to prepare. What was in that that was unacceptable for Donald Trump?

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Well, I'm sure it didn't take 10 minutes, but obviously the Iranians delayed the response. And that was because the Americans were insisting that Iran give it as soon as possible, or that Iran give it sooner. And Iran, by delaying it, was sending the Americans a message that we don't work based on your timelines. We don't do things because you put pressure on us to do so. So, in a sense, that itself was a strong message about the entire process — that Iran is not going to be intimidated by the United States. Iran's decisions are not going to be made based on harassment or threats made by Washington. And so, in a small way, I think this was reflective of the entire process.

It sort of explains what exactly is going on in a very broad way. The Iranian response, which I haven't seen — I've heard about it and I've read about it — but it's in line with what we're all expecting, I assume. I don't think anyone who's been closely following the situation over the past few months expected Iran's response to be anything that was substantially different from before. Obviously, small issues can be discussed. Tactical issues can be negotiated. But the principles for Iran are not going to change. Iran is clear about that. First is the ceasefire, and that will have to

include Lebanon. And it will have to mean the end of the siege on the Persian Gulf, the Strait of Hormuz, and Iranian ports.

And then it would be the 10-point Iranian plan that would be negotiated. And after that, it would be the nuclear program. But the Americans don't want to believe this. I assume that Trump keeps sending these messages saying that, well, this time Iran will fold. This time Iran will back down. This time Iran will give concessions. And Western media, being used to their imperial status, assumes the same thing. Whether it's opposed to the United States or opposed to Trump or supportive of Trump, more or less that's how they depict Iran — as a country that is weak, that is vulnerable, that says one thing but means something else.

That's what we've been hearing for decades in their descriptions of Iran. But now they have to face reality, and that is that they lost the 12-day war. They lost the first 39 days of this war, which was a hot war. They've lost the—I don't know what we can call it. It's not a ceasefire—but they've been losing since the 39 days of fighting. Otherwise, they wouldn't have tried a new operation last week near the Strait of Hormuz, which failed. They can pretend that they sank tens of Iranian boats and destroyed hundreds of facilities or whatever, which is all nonsense. Not a single naval boat was struck. They struck a couple of tankers. In one tanker, they murdered five innocent people. And they struck a cargo boat, as you know, that was, I think, going from Oman to Iran, killing one person.

And they hit a couple of fishing boats, which apparently were moving to help the small cargo boat, injuring a number of people. But that failed too. And the failure is clear and can be seen by the fact that none of the ships belonging to the five countries that assisted the United States in the assault against Iran—Qatar, the Emirates, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain—their ships did not get through the Strait of Hormuz. And I think that's the ultimate test for success. So everything has been a failure. And so their expectation for Iran to concede points and give concessions to the United States under these circumstances is truly bizarre, but it fits in with the pattern of Iran being weak and vulnerable and always about to collapse, and the so-called regime is unstable. So that continues.

But what I did find fascinating was when Robert Kagan wrote his article in *The Atlantic Monthly*, basically admitting what almost no one else—well, almost no one else in the establishment—has said so explicitly. And of course, he's an opponent of Trump, and he hates Trump, and his wife, the famous Victoria Nuland, is no friend of Trump either. But in any case, he said that this is a major, this is an unprecedented defeat for the United States—and of course, the Israeli regime—because the Israeli regime is completely dependent on the United States. So I thought that was quite interesting that he would say that, or that he would admit that. But in any case, the expectation for Iran to give concessions at the negotiating table after they literally won the hot war, I think, is ridiculous.

**#Nima**

Yeah. We know that Donald Trump is going to be in China on Wednesday, tomorrow, and he's going to get back on Friday. And since the ceasefire started, we've seen Iranians using their air defense systems, testing them various times—at least, you know, three times, if I'm not mistaken—in Tehran, they were testing the air defense system. And today we've learned that Tehran's Muhammad Rasulullah IRGC Corps carried out an unannounced wartime exercise to thwart enemies' infiltration attempts.

It seems something like the underground, and the Iranians' assessment—they're trying to, you know, understand if something happens underground. And what is the assessment, in your opinion, on the part of the Iranians if the United States gets back to the war? Once Donald Trump gets back to the United States, is that going to be something on the ground, something like what we've seen during the 39 days of war? Is it going to be an air campaign coming in with the fighter jets? What is that? And how does Iran assess the capabilities of the United States at this particular moment? Well, different things can happen.

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It could be a short air attack and then a declaration of some victory. That's one thing. It could be something longer, and it could include land assaults against Iranian islands and on the mainland, and also maybe operations deep inside Iran, like the failed operation to take out the enriched uranium. But also, the Americans have amassed terrorists in the Kurdish areas of Iraq, in northern Iraq. The local Kurdish government in northern Iraq is an ally of the Israeli regime. It is a proxy of the Israeli and U.S. regimes, so they are allowing them to be active. They're also very worried because the Iraqi central government is completely against it. And Iran has warned them that if there is an attack on Iran from those areas, then Erbil itself will face the same punishment that regimes in the Persian Gulf did.

And they're not in a position to do anything about it. So the Americans have amassed terrorists there. The terrorists in Sistan and Balochistan, the Takfiri terrorists, they've also been prepared in Pakistan, in the sort of no man's land in Pakistan near the Iranian border. And also, the Americans and the Israelis, according to the Iranians, would try possibly to activate cells inside the country. Remember, Iran is a huge country and it has 15 neighbors. Some people say, well, why can they infiltrate? It's like in Russia. Russia is such a huge country. Sometimes you see the Ukrainians carry out operations deep inside Russia. It's because it's very difficult to control the borders. Some areas are very sparsely populated. The Israeli regime, on the other hand, is very small. There are cameras everywhere.

And, of course, they have all the tools that the Americans can provide them. So the one objective would be to activate those terrorist groups in Tehran and in other cities to cause disruption. They can't take the city, obviously. But if a thousand people or a couple of thousand people start carrying

out terrorist attacks or an assault in a part of Tehran, it would be, you know, it'd be city warfare. And during the riots we saw at the beginning a few months ago in Iran, where 317 people were killed, those in that armed insurgency were shooting at people, creating chaos.

And of course, if simultaneously the Americans and Israelis are bombing the city, and then you have terrorists coming in from Iraqi Kurdistan, and you have Takfiri terrorists coming in from the Pakistani border, of course, that makes things complicated. So they are carrying out maneuvers. They are striking terrorists inside northern Iraq. And of course, Iran has its own countermeasures. The resistance in Iraq, the resistance in Yemen, is obviously very powerful. And the Iranian armed forces on the borders, on its own borders, can be activated to move inside these territories or strike deep inside these territories too. And this maneuver was to prepare the country for a possible terror campaign inside Tehran or other cities simultaneous with the American and Israeli assault.

This, of course, is hypothetical. No one knows if there's going to be an attack. The working assumption is that there's going to be an attack, but no one knows for sure. I've been saying on your show for at least the last two weeks that an attack can happen at any time, and the same is true now. Even though it wouldn't make much sense for Trump to attack Iran right before going to China, but then again, he's Trump, and he hasn't done much based on reason and logic in the past, so we shouldn't assume that he's suddenly going to be reasonable and logical now. So Iran is, as we speak, prepared for an assault, but I would assume that if there's going to be an assault, it will have to wait till after he returns from China.

## **#Nima**

These people—yesterday Donald Trump repeated that allegation about sending—you remember he said that we've sent a lot of weapons to Iraqi Kurdistan to be sent to Iran, to those rioters in Iran. And he repeated that again yesterday. These are the same people, just for our audience—many people don't know—because Iran helped the Kurdish people during ISIS and Daesh, because we all remember what General Soleimani did in that region. Are these people the same people that Iran helped?

## **#Seyed**

Not necessarily, no. It depends on how you look at it. Iran saved the Kurdish government. When Erbil was about to fall, Barzani contacted the Americans. They ignored him. Then he contacted Iran, and General Soleimani said, okay, give me a couple of days. And he said, no, it's falling now. So he went and immediately, with his troops, pushed back. And I think he himself went there too. They pushed back on ISIS and saved Erbil. So the government of Erbil is very deeply indebted to Iran. It's been indebted to Iran since the time of Saddam Hussein, but that's a different story. When, you know, when I think it was the Anfal operation, when Saddam carried out these chemical attacks and assaulted the northern parts of Iraq, which were occupied by these Kurdish groups, about 2,000 Iraqi Kurds came to Iran—2 million, 2 million.

And 2 million went to Turkey. On the border of Turkey, they weren't allowed to pass through, so 2 million people were stuck on the border. In Iran, they just opened the borders and let everyone in. The 2 million people just came into Iran, just like the Afghans. So Iran has always been very friendly and supportive. But the government of northern Iraq is a proxy of the United States. It's an ally of the Israeli regime. So not much... just like the Takfiris. I mean, whoever thought that the Takfiris were independent of Western intelligence agencies—ISIS, Al-Qaeda, and the terrorist groups in Syria that are now in charge—they were closing their eyes to reality. And the same is true in southeastern Iran.

Those groups are controlled by Western intelligence agencies. There's no doubt about it. And the Pakistani government is incapable of doing much about it because it's very weak and the situation in the country is not ideal. So I would say that it is the Kurdish government—sorry, I've been ill for a few days now, so I'm mixing up words a lot—the Kurdish government in northern Iraq, they are compromised. And so they allow these terrorist groups to grow. But one thing that I should point out is that these groups do bring in weapons. It's not true that the weapons don't come in. Mossad weapons, CIA weapons, and other intelligence agencies assist organizations through northern Iraq.

They do it also through Sistan and Balochistan near the Pakistani border and possibly from elsewhere. But these Kurds don't necessarily pass on everything that they are told to pass on. But it's these Kurdish groups. So they definitely were deeply involved. And Mossad weapons and CIA weapons were used in the violent armed insurrection. But, you know, a lot of them are just like we saw the same thing in Syria. The Americans, Erdogan, Israel, these regimes in the Persian Gulf, they were all funding the terrorist groups. But a lot of that money was being stolen. A lot of the weapons were being stolen and sold on the black market. So they, for example, they draw a check.

I'm just, you know, I'm just giving this as an example. But let's say they draw a check for \$5 million, give it to one of these Takfiri terrorist leaders, and then he would take 2 million and purchase what needs to be bought and put 3 million in some account in the Emirates or somewhere in Europe for himself and his people, his friends, or his entourage. That's the Saudis when they would fund groups, and the Emiratis in Yemen, a lot of that money would go to waste. And often you would see that those groups would be fighting each other at times. Like in Syria, more often than not, they were killing each other, these terrorist groups. That's why Syria even now is quite unstable.

## **#Nima**

We've learned, at least from, you know, the Wall Street Journal reported that Israel has created or established a secret Israeli military base in Iraq to do operations. I would say basically their main objective was to invade Iran or to send weapons, these weapons that Donald Trump is talking about, or to manipulate the borders of Iran. And today we've learned from Iraqi sources that the resistance in Iraq has launched a large-scale operation named Imposing Sovereignty in the Najaf and Karbala desert of western Iraq. They want to find this sort of secret Israeli military base. How is

that going to happen? How can someone do that? Because this is so strange, you know, for Israel coming to Iraq, making a secret base. I don't know how we can understand it.

## **#Seyed**

Well, those tribes that were allied with or gave their allegiance to ISIS and were affiliated with ISIS in Syria and Iraq, and which were protected by the United States — Al-Tanf, around that area, for example — they would be more than happy to protect such assets. Remember, during the dirty war in Syria, ISIS and Al-Qaeda, Al-Nusra, and other groups had bases alongside the Golan Heights, the Syrian Golan Heights. And the Israelis would support them. They would treat their wounded. They would fund them. They would give them weapons. When the Syrian Arab Army would assault them, the Israelis would carry out airstrikes, artillery strikes, tank strikes. So they've always had a long-lasting working relationship.

And so have the Americans. So in those parts of Iraq where the central government is weak, of course, the Americans will never let the central government become strong. You know that the oil wealth goes through U.S. banks and comes to Iraq. The United States can lock Iraqi money, as they did last month, and dictate terms to the Iraqi government. So they say, we don't want this person as prime minister — you're not getting your money, your own oil money. So the Americans don't want Iraq to be stable. They want it to be fragmented, broken, exactly in line with the interests of the Israeli regime. That's the policy of the Israeli regime for the entire region.

But sadly, these five Arab family dictatorships in this war, since they have no real agency and they are proxies of the United States, allow the United States to wage war and to attempt to weaken Iran, to make Iran another Syria, to make it another Iraq. But in any case, that would ultimately bring about their own destruction. That is the foolishness of their policy — they don't know that at the end of the day, they'll have no protector. But in any case, Iraq is weak, and the Americans are trying to weaken the Hashd, the Popular Mobilization Forces, for good reason — because they can impose sovereignty, they can control the country, but the Americans don't want that.

## **#Nima**

The Wall Street Journal reported that the UAE has been secretly carrying out attacks on Iran. I don't know how secret that was, because it seems that Iran knew what was going on with the UAE and the presence of Israeli forces on their soil, and how they're cooperating and assisting the Israelis in the war on Iran.

## **#Seyed**

Yes, Iran has been saying that, and the Wall Street Journal has only been saying what you've been discussing on your show, probably with multiple guests, for quite a while. After the ceasefire between Iran and the United States, the Emirati regime carried out strikes on Iran. There were a

couple of instances beforehand as well, but the Iranians hit them very hard after the ceasefire. If you recall, there were some heavy strikes on the Emirates. That was in response to these attacks carried out by them. The Iranians knew that, and it's been reported even in Iranian media that the Israeli military was present in Qatar, in their defenses.

I think that was in the media too, that they brought air defenses or the so-called Iron Dome, and that the Mossad has established they have direct flights, multiple direct flights every day. So this is an Israeli... I can't even call it an ally. It's supporting the Israeli regime. Its policies across the Horn of Africa are in line with the interests of the Israeli regime. Its policies in the Arabian Peninsula are the same. That's made even the Saudis angry. So we don't expect anything more from them. But the Iranians have warned them, they said from now on, we're going to hit you whenever we feel threatened because you are in bed with our enemy.

And we saw, I think just earlier, a tanker—I think yesterday—was struck off the coast of Jeddah. So the Iranians are telling them that, you know, without our permission, you cannot use your ports outside the Persian Gulf because you're behaving like an enemy. You are an ally of the Israeli regime. They are waging war against us. You're an ally of the Mossad and, of course, Trump. And you're encouraging war. So you have to pay the price. So the warnings that Iran is giving to Abu Dhabi, and the Abu Dhabi Emirate in particular, are very severe and very serious. And they've shown that they are serious, too. And they said that you'll be like northern Iraq, and we see what the Iranians are doing in northern Iraq.

## **#Nima**

We had one of the members of the Speaker of the Parliament tweeting that if the United States attacks Iran, Iran would consider increasing the enrichment of uranium from 60% to 90%. And how does Iran see the deterrent that they can achieve? Because after all, with all that said, with all this sort of conflict and war killing many people, civilians in Iran, Iran should reach that sort of deterrence. And that's the main objective, after all, for Iranians. And how is that going to be shaped in the minds of Iranian policymakers?

## **#Seyed**

Well, I don't know if that is going to be Iranian policy or not. He is, of course, an influential figure, but he doesn't make the final decision. He may have input in that decision-making process. But, of course, the behavior of the United States encourages Iran to make changes in its security policy. One of them is taking control over the Strait of Hormuz. It's Iranian territorial waters. It's not international waters. Iran has not signed any international agreement.

## **#Nima**

With regards to the Strait of Hormuz.

## **#Seyed**

Oman has, but in any case, Iran is saying that we will control the Strait of Hormuz from Iran. That was not something that we were discussing. That's not something that I was discussing on any of your shows before. It never occurred to me that Iran would move in that direction, but it did. So again, if you look at the article in The Atlantic, this is about Iran and an ally of the Israeli regime. This is a serious defeat for the United States and the Israeli regime. And if they continue with the war, it will get worse. It will cause havoc and damage and many people will die, but the global economy will collapse. It won't end well for them, and Iran will come out on top.

It will get worse for them. The more they push, the more they create a motive for Iran to move away from the International Atomic Energy Agency to pursue policies like we saw in the Strait of Hormuz. It's their own doing. Iran, we all recall, in 2015 signed a nuclear deal. It wasn't a great deal. It had many flaws. It benefited the United States much more than Iran. But in any case, Iran was willing to sign a deal because Iran had nothing to hide. And the United States wrecked it. Trump wrecked it. Obama wrecked it too, because he was convincing ordinary Iranians that the United States is not sincere in implementing its side of the bargain. That was one of the flaws of the deal, that the Iranians carried out their obligations.

It could have been better negotiated, and the Americans didn't. And that's one reason why now we see a very different style of negotiations in Iran. If the Americans don't implement their side of the bargain, Iran won't either. So when Netanyahu refused to accept the ceasefire in Lebanon, the Iranians said those ships from those five countries cannot use the Strait of Hormuz. That, I think, is because of our experience, at least partially, in 2015. But in any case, back then, we were willing — Iran was willing — to be open about the nuclear program. They had nothing to hide. But the American behavior is pushing people in a very different direction. And I haven't seen any polls recently, but I'm pretty sure a strong majority of Iranians would want a nuclear weapon.

## **#Nima**

I think many people are arguing that these points that Iran is asking for — basically about removing sanctions, you know, releasing frozen assets, and the new nuclear agreement — it's not going to be totally in the hands of the Trump administration, Donald Trump himself as the president of the United States. But it seems to me that Iran knows what it's talking about because they had that experience with the JCPOA, which was literally signed by the president of the United States, not ratified by Congress. That was the main problem. On the other hand, Iran is seeking negotiations between two countries, not two presidents. It's about the future. If something should be agreed on, it should be between the two countries. The next president could come in and say, "I don't agree," as Donald Trump did before. That's why Iran is asking for the removal of sanctions and the release of frozen assets. Is that the plan?

## **#Seyed**

Yes, but I think that the Iranians are not very optimistic about the United States ever moving in that direction. At most, we'll have a ceasefire and some limited agreement on some things to sort of take us to decrease tensions in the region. I think the United States is not capable of negotiating in a way which is reasonable. Iran's demands are all reasonable. Nothing in the demands — they're not irrational. They're the same: we need, we want reparations. Of course, it was an unprovoked war. They killed, they slaughtered kids, they destroyed hospitals, they destroyed pharmaceutical factories, they've destroyed thousands of homes, civilian infrastructure. They have to pay reparations. Americans are, like, shocked, and Western media says this is not serious. Why? Because Western journalists and Western politicians and Western elites say, "We don't pay reparations. We wage war, we murder, we slaughter, we..."

## **#Nima**

It seems that we've lost Professor Marandi. I hope he's going to be back. Let's see what has happened with the connection. Yeah, I think the situation with Iran is that Iran knows what's going on with the United States. In my opinion, that's why they're asking for the removal of sanctions, the release of frozen Iranian assets — basically, they're not in the United States, they're in other countries, in Qatar, in South Korea. And the other point is the case of Hezbollah. What I want to talk about and continue with Professor Marandi is the case of Hezbollah and how Hezbollah is changing everything and the calculations on the part of the Israelis.

Netanyahu, Benjamin Netanyahu, said the war is not over. If you remember, in his latest interview on 60 Minutes, he said that we are months away from putting an end to the war between the United States and Iran. Yeah, here, Professor Marandi. I know that you don't feel well, Professor Marandi, and the internet somehow is not helping us. But just to wrap up this session, Professor Marandi, just a little bit about what Hezbollah is doing, because I think it's so important what they're achieving right now, because they're hitting the air defense system of Israel with FPV drones. Your understanding of the position of Hezbollah?

## **#Seyed**

Well, they are extraordinary. And those who support the resistance are extraordinary. The Israelis and Al-Qaeda and ISIS and the U.S. puppets in Beirut all are conspiring to destroy them. They're preventing the refugees from finding proper places to stay. The government of Lebanon is trying to do that, and the Syrian government is trying to blockade them as well. But despite that, despite the harassment, despite the provocations from inside Lebanon and from Syria, you see that these people are fully behind the resistance. And that despite the culture, they're fighting for Lebanon. So they used to call on Iraq, Iran, to help families — families who no longer have any homes. They can't get money from Iraq or anywhere. They're surrounded.

But despite all that, despite the fact that there's a conspiracy to impose misery upon the supporters of the resistance, the families, the community, the majority of the Lebanese who support the resistance, they're hitting the Israelis back hard. And they are punishing them. And while they are punishing the Israeli military, of course, the Israelis take their revenge by bombing apartment blocks, families, slaughtering women and children, because that's what they do. And here, you know, we should compare what's going on in Gaza and Lebanon. In Lebanon, Western media always pretended that they could not confirm everything because they said, "We don't have a presence." In Lebanon, they do have a presence.

There are more Western journalists in Lebanon than in any other Arab country. They don't know the truth. They will look away. They will try to justify the Israeli regime narrative. They'll call these areas Hezbollah strongholds or Hezbollah targets when they know that families are being massacred and that the government of Lebanon is trying to strangle the supporters of Hezbollah, and so are ISIS and Al-Qaeda. So Western media, whether they're present or not, it doesn't make a difference. Those journalists are mainstream Western media. Those journalists are agents of empire. They've exposed themselves enough over the last two, three years. They're stenographers, and they will do whatever the Epstein class wants them to do.

## **#Nima**

Yeah. Thank you so much, Professor Marandi, for being with us today. I hope you feel better soon.

## **#Seyed**

Thank you, Nima. It's always a great pleasure and an honor to be on your show. See you soon.