

# Nima R. Alkhorshid: Iran Launches Missiles at Israel AGAIN

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## #Nima

What's going on with the case of the ongoing war between the United States and Iran? Before coming to this, moments ago, I think about 30 minutes ago, we learned about a new attack on Dahia. This is the southern part of Beirut, which was the main concern for the Iranians. They said, if you attack Dahia, we're going to attack you. "You" means Israel, because Israel wanted to just destroy everything, to level everything in Dahia. They announced, you know, some sort of evacuation warning to the people in Dahia to leave their homes because they were desperate in the southern part of Lebanon.

So what has happened so far, they didn't want... They really wanted to do something in Dahia because they're not capable of fighting Hezbollah in the southern part of Lebanon. So we had the Iranian response saying that if you attack Dahia, we're going to attack the northern part of Israel the same way you attack Dahia. Then something, we had the phone call between Benjamin Netanyahu and Donald Trump. Donald Trump said that they're not going to do this. I talked with Benjamin Netanyahu. I talked with Hezbollah. Nobody knows who talked with him, if he talked with Sheikh Naim Qassem, the Deputy Secretary General of Hezbollah, or someone else. I think nothing of that sort has happened.

He basically was talking about the communication he had with the Iranians, maybe, because there is no communication between the United States and Hezbollah. Then today we learned that Israel attacked a building. They called it a Hezbollah headquarters. I don't know what that means. They hit a building, and they said that they wanted to hit some of Hezbollah's commanders in Dahia, in the southern suburbs of Beirut. And then there was no one killed, no Hezbollah forces were killed based on the reports so far. It seems that the attack had something like five casualties, mostly ordinary people who were close to the building. One of them was killed, and four of them were wounded. This is the outcome.

And this is the Israeli attempt because they see something. I think they're feeling something is happening between Iran and the United States, or maybe they're close to, you know, they're close to getting some sort of deal, maybe. My understanding is not that, but maybe they're feeling it this

way. That's why they need to do that. By the way, Israelis told us on Israeli Channel 12 and 14, they said that they had the green light from the Trump administration before this attack happened. So the question would be, why would they need to do that? What is the main reason? You may say that they want to see what the Iranian response would be if they attack Beirut. What would that be? So what was the outcome? If they're not killing any Hezbollah fighters or Hezbollah forces or... It was an empty building.

Nobody was in that building. And so what is the point of that? I think they thought maybe they had some sort of false intelligence. They thought that there would be some Hezbollah forces there, the commanders, important figures within Hezbollah, that they could hit them, they could assassinate them, they could create new repercussions, new problems between Iran and the United States, between Israel and Lebanon. They assassinated just yesterday—remember what happened yesterday—they assassinated one of these generals in Lebanon, a general of the Lebanese army connected with the Lebanese government. A soldier, one of the soldiers, one of the commanders, one of the—if I'm not mistaken—one of the middle-rank commanders.

And so three of these soldiers—a general and a middle-rank commander—were killed yesterday by an Israeli drone attack. And they said it was an accident. It came shortly after the Lebanese president came out and said Iran is using Lebanon as a bargaining chip. So Iran is benefiting from the position they're taking concerning Hezbollah and acts of resistance. I don't know what sort of benefit comes out of that for Iran. For Iran, somehow it's different, I don't see, because I see the acts of resistance all connected. It's not about Iran. It's about Yemen, Iran, Iraq, and Lebanon, and Gaza, and Palestine all together. I don't see that separately. But the government in Lebanon is trying to say, no, they're different.

There is no difference. That's why, you know, I don't see that they're representing the people in Lebanon. They're representing the government in Israel, and they're representing those decision-makers of the Trump administration who are basically Zionists. So this is what's going on with the case of Lebanon. What is the Iranian reaction? Many people are asking, so what is the assessment? Many people in Iran, by the way, are arguing Iran has to respond to this. Iran has to hit some targets in Israel. But the other problem is that Iran is somehow talking with the United States, ongoing talks. You see, we had the interior minister of Pakistan going to Iran, back and forth, these messages are getting in and out.

So I think the smart response on the part of Iranians, on the part of the acts of resistance, which may happen as we talk, could be a response from Yemen. Iran is not going to get there, because you remember it wasn't just Iran saying, if you attack and destroy Dahieh, we're going to respond, we're going to hit the northern part of Israel. We had Yemenis as well talking the same way. They said that they're going to hit Israel. So it's going to be something like that—something with Iran just keeping or maintaining its position in this sort of fake ceasefire they have between Iran and the United States, which, there is no ceasefire happening. But let's talk a fake, or Israeli-type, as Ambassador Chas Freeman puts it perfectly, in my opinion—it's an Israeli-type of ceasefire. So they

have their own ceasefire. Let's do it. Let's maintain that same sort of conditions they have. So Yemen comes in and attacks Israel.

That may happen as we talk. I think this is what is happening considering the acts of resistance. But when it comes to the negotiations between Iran and the United States, the main problem still is the case of Lebanon. Iran is not using Lebanon as a bargaining chip. Lebanon is part of the acts of resistance, and Iran doesn't see itself outside of the acts of resistance. Iran sees itself as part of the acts of resistance. So you cannot separate one from another. You cannot separate the Iraqi resistance from the Yemeni resistance. I think they are all considering the same sort of mindset. They are resistant. They're prepared to fight back.

And that's why I don't—maybe in Israel, maybe even in Lebanon with the president of Lebanon—he doesn't understand what's going on. He doesn't understand the mindset of the people. He's talking about "my people." Who are your people in Lebanon? These are not your people. These are the residents of Lebanon. These are citizens of Lebanon, Lebanese people. They're not your people. And you're a representative of the Lebanese people, but you're not representing them. You actually represent the Israeli government. And that's the problem. You're making it—literally what the government in Lebanon is doing these days is inching, little by little, moving the society towards some sort of civil war.

And if that didn't happen so far, it's because Hezbollah is so smart. What they're trying to do is diminish the tensions within the society and focus on Israel in the southern part of Lebanon. You remember the agreement, that fake agreement between the government in Lebanon and the Israelis. They said Hezbollah is not going to attack Israel south of the Litani River, which is part of Lebanon. They're occupying Lebanon, and the Lebanese government is saying, no, we're not going to defend ourselves against your occupation of our land. We're going to limit our society. This is just amazing, what's going on with the government. So they said that Hezbollah is the enemy of the state in Lebanon.

But you don't see that sort of, you know, attacks coming from Hezbollah toward the government. You see the government is attacking Hezbollah, but Hezbollah is controlling the tensions. They don't want the tensions to grow within the society. Their main focus is on Israel, and they're doing this perfectly. Just today we've seen one of these, you know, air defenses—they're using missiles to hit the targets. And today we've seen one of the footages that came out just moments before coming to this live, and Hezbollah launched a surface-to-air missile. Here is what is the main objective on their part: they don't want to confuse everything.

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They understand the differences within Lebanese society. They know how influential the United States together with Israel is. And unfortunately, the new government, which is supported by Turkey and Syria, is trying to manipulate Lebanese society, putting a lot of pressure. Many of these people

who were in the southern part of Lebanon are going to the north or the central part of Lebanon, and they're putting a lot of pressure, mostly because these people have to go somewhere, and the government is not providing them with anything important to help them, to support their lives, to facilitate this process of forced immigration by the Israelis. Just imagine what Israel is doing to your people in the southern part of Lebanon, and instead of supporting them, you're attacking the only force in Lebanon that is fighting back.

This is beyond just—it's fantasy on the part of the government in Lebanon. I don't see them being a viable sort of choice or option for the Lebanese people as time goes by. They're going to topple this government sooner or later. That will happen. But Hezbollah doesn't want that at this particular moment. They want to see what is happening between Iran and the United States. That's the big picture that's happening. So I think this is the first part, the first line of the Iranian argument to have some sort of agreement with the United States, which is Lebanon—it's so complicated, as we've been witnessing so far. Then coming to Iran and what's going on between Iran and the United States, there are two stories coming out of that. One of them is what Donald Trump is talking about.

He had an interview just moments ago, or hours ago. He said that they're not going to release Iranian frozen assets or lift any sanctions on the Iranian economy. And when he's talking about lifting the sanctions, he's not talking about those sanctions that are related to the American Congress, because there are a lot of sanctions. For 46 years of sanctions, you can imagine how many sanctions they have on the Iranian economy. But basically, he has some sort of power to reduce the sanctions there on the Iranian energy sector. This is the main target for Iran in these sorts of messages that are going back and forth between the two sides. But Donald Trump came just hours ago and said he's not going to release the Iranian frozen assets, nor lift the sanctions on the Iranian energy sector.

We had Scott Besant yesterday talking about how we're going to release those frozen assets, but we're going to give them to the Arab states, GCC countries, because of the Iranian attacks on them and the damage these attacks have caused to these countries. And looking at what has happened during the war, what were the damages to these countries? Basically, Iran has hit each and every American base in these countries. And somehow, in some countries like Qatar, they leveled everything. Nothing is there—some buildings are there that are not anymore in use. So they want to rebuild, they want to reconstruct their bases using Iranian frozen assets? That's the meaning of what Scott Besant is talking about?

All those big, beautiful bases that were destroyed during the war were constructed, were built by Arab states' money. They paid for everything on their soil. Right now they're destroyed, and they want to reconstruct the bases using Iranian frozen assets by giving them—we're going to give it to Saudi Arabia, we're going to give it to Qatar. And because Iran attacked them? Or what would be the use of those frozen assets? Oh, they're going to build American bases again on their soil. So this is the rhetoric. And coming back to, I think there is an important interview. I don't know if you watched that interview.

We had one of the main military advisors to the Iranian Supreme Leaders—the former Iranian Supreme Leader and the new Iranian Supreme Leader. He was the advisor to Ayatollah Khamenei, who was the former Supreme Leader of Iran and the new Supreme Leader of Iran. He still has the same position. And he said in his interview on CNN, Iran is not going to—you know, the first step for Iran, the very first step for Iran, would be \$24 billion of frozen Iranian assets. If the United States is serious to start with these negotiations—these talks, these are not negotiations, by the way, but these sort of messages—they have to show some sort of seriousness. That's the first step. Let's start with that.

These are not American, you know, these are not American assets. These are Iranian assets. And the United States has to release them. Then we had Scott Besson saying that. So is there any sort of sign for us, a positive sign? No. To be honest, I don't see any sort of positive sign happening. Is Lebanon—do you see any positive sign in Lebanon between Israel and Lebanon? No. Is there any sort of sign with the case of frozen assets or sanctions or anything, any sort of willingness on the part of the Trump administration to concede or to decide about something substantial for the Iranian side? That hasn't happened so far. So, the other point is, what are we learning from the Pakistanis? I don't know.

These leaks are coming from Pakistan recently. They're talking about Iranian nuclear weapons. And right now, some sources—there are some leaks coming out of negotiators. Basically, in Pakistan, they're saying there is a huge difference between what Donald Trump is telling or trying to sell to the American people or to the international community, and the way he's talking about frozen assets, sanctions, everything, and what Donald Trump is asking Iran behind the scenes, or those letters that he's sending, those documents that he's sending to the Iranians. If that's the case, that could bring some sort of difference to the scene, or maybe there could be some sort of deal.

I don't know how credible these sorts of reports are. My opinion is, if nobody's talking about it officially in Iran, nobody's talking about it officially in the United States, then they don't exist. It doesn't matter what Pakistan is talking about, because these are not important. It's not a Pakistani official officially talking about it; it's some rumors talking about Donald Trump. There is a huge difference between what Donald Trump is talking about and what he's communicating with Iranians. So that possibility is in the background. We have to consider that could be the case, but it's not. I would argue today, if I were to mention how likely that is, I would say maybe 4%, 3%, 2%, less than 10%, that possibility.

And coming back to the war, what are the options for Donald Trump? The only way for me to understand what's going on between Iran and the United States is to look at the reality of the war today between Iran and the United States. Because the Trump administration was so capable of manipulating the oil market. This manipulation—you look at the price of oil going down, up, going

down—and people are saying these are fake numbers. It seems that the market is somehow getting tricked by Trump's attitude or the way he's trying to manipulate the market. The market is so sensitive to what Donald Trump is talking about.

But there is a point that was mentioned, I would say, four weeks ago by the head of the Iranian parliament. He said, don't look at the numbers that you see they're putting out when it comes to the oil price and all of this. He said the price of oil is beyond what has been reported on the market—the real price of oil, what he's talking about, it's not in the documents. He said paper, you know, the paper sort of price of oil. But the real price of oil, the price of oil that everybody is getting, apparently, is far greater than what is reported on the market. And here is what Robert Kagan said about that in his interview two days ago.

## **#Guest**

If you needed to buy a barrel of oil today, it costs something like \$150 or \$140, because that's what the actual price of oil is. The oil prices we're looking at are oil futures. And I'll tell you one thing that Donald Trump has been an absolute genius at—and he gets an A-plus for it—is manipulating the market, and manipulating market expectations, and watching oil future prices go up and down based on whether Donald Trump says there's going to be an agreement or not has been pretty amusing, because Donald Trump has now pulled the, you know, Lucy and Charlie Brown football trick about seven times.

The market goes for it every single time. So these prices are not reflective of reality. And now you even see major figures like Exxon top executives warning that the inventory levels, the world oil inventory levels, which have been basically keeping supply going—there was a lot of oil out there in the system—and there were, of course, the strategic oil reserves of various countries, including the United States, which have been drawn down heavily. I think Japan's is drawn down as far as it's ever been.

And what the energy experts are warning is that we're going to hit a point in the next two or three weeks where the inventory is really gone, and that's the point at which they're anticipating oil price shocks. Some people say 150, some people say 200 a barrel, and we're definitely talking, in any case, about gas prices in the United States potentially hitting six dollars a gallon. Yeah, this is the reality that Donald Trump is facing, and this guy is not making things up for his sort of—because we know that he's the main supporter of what's going on in the Middle East, and he's...

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I would say the ultra-Zionists in the United States who are making this sort of argument that we have to go to war, we have to do something in the case of Iran because they're getting so dangerous in West Asia. But right now he sees the reality of what's going on. And Donald Trump's position, it doesn't matter how big he goes out to manipulate the market. The price is not what is

reported on the market on these sorts of boards. Then the other point that he mentioned, it is so important—the oil reserves in the United States and Europe, they're running out. And the United States is using its oil reserves to balance the market. How long is Donald Trump going to continue with what he has been doing since the war started? This is the main question right now.

And he, in my opinion, is getting a lot of problems because of the American economy, because of what's going on with the global economy. And the economy of the United States is totally connected with a big chunk of the global economy. It's not about Donald Trump's argument about "we are independent, we don't need the oil, we don't need the gas coming to the United States because we produce everything here." He said we don't need anything, but basically that's a big lie. The United States needs it because there are a variety of sorts of oil in the market—the heavy, the light—each one of them has its sort of use, and the diesel comes out of the heavy oil, which the United States doesn't have.

That's why they have to buy it from outside. It could come from Venezuela. The complexity of the oil from Venezuela is that it's too heavy or it's so thick that the process of refining this sort of oil—they may not have the process, the system to do this. That's why you remember when the United States tried to put pressure on China. One of the main problems in the case of China was that they wanted to put pressure on China not to buy Iranian oil. If they want to shift to other countries like Venezuela or others, they have to redefine the whole system of the refinery. And it's not going to happen overnight. It takes time to do that. So you cannot do these sorts of modifications overnight.

That's why the United States is trying to do this. That's why Europe is running out of energy. The situation in Europe is so dire. I don't know what the communications are between the United States and Europe. There has to be something. And for the United States, the option of getting back to the war is going to be a larger war. Because so far... Two things, when it comes to the Iranian capabilities, I think, are so important. What are they? These two things are so important for the continuation of the war if the United States decides to go in that direction. One of them is the capabilities of Iran in terms of conventional weapons. Conventional weapons—we're talking about drones and missiles. And again, the air defense systems in Iran.

What is the situation with those weapons? Iran has improved drastically. In the case of missiles—short-range missiles, mid-range missiles, and long-range missiles—you, I think, if you have access to Iran, to Persian media, you can go back 10 years, 12 years, 16 years ago, you can see that the reason Iran doesn't have, you know, missiles, or at least officially doesn't have the missiles that can hit targets, for example, in Diego Garcia or maybe in Greece, that they're using to attack Iran, is because Iran has defined by choice—they have defined the range of their missiles. If they decide tomorrow to change that policy, they can do it overnight. They have the capabilities. I can confirm to you that they have the capabilities of increasing the range of their missiles.