**Upscaled Iran-Israel Conflict**

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The recent wave of high-intensity attacks on Iranian interests in the Middle East, coupled with strikes on symbols of power and authority within Iran itself, has left the entire Iranian nation and its leadership in a state of shock and mourning. Just as Iran was beginning to grapple with the devastating loss of lives following the missile strike on its embassy in Damascus, which claimed the lives of seven high-ranking officials, including the esteemed Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Zahedi and his deputy General Mohammad Hadi Hajriahimi, another brutal blow struck. This time, it was a merciless terror attack on the Rask Police Headquarters in Iran’s Southeastern region, resulting in the deaths of 11 Iranian officials and leaving several others wounded.

The gravity of these assaults cannot be overstated. They have rocked the foundation of Iranian sovereignty and authority, leaving the nation reeling in disbelief and anguish. The Iranian people are struggling to come to terms with the enormity of these losses, while their leaders, both spiritual and formal, are grappling with the profound implications for national security and stability.

These events have injected a sense of urgency and determination into Iran’s response. The nation finds itself at a critical juncture, faced with the imperative to defend its interests and protect its people against further aggression. Yet, amidst the chaos and uncertainty, there remains a steadfast resolve to stand strong in the face of adversity and to seek justice for those who have fallen victim to these cowardly acts of violence.

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These attacks are allegedly perpetrated and masterminded by Israel, when logically, Israel should contain the spread of war in the Middle East, where it is fully engaged in war against Hamas and its affiliates in Gaza and the West Banks, Hothies in Yemen, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and Daesh in Syria, and therefore it should have avoided bringing Iran into the war theater.

However, it appears that Israel has larger plans and is a part of a larger conspiracy to draw Iran into the conflict by employing provocative tactics to force it into the war zone whether it wants to or does not. This could later give Israel a real and legitimate excuse to launch a full-scale attack on Iran.

Israel, confident of its military might, bolstered by the US’s unquestionable diplomatic, political, financial and military support has perhaps fully determined to deal with Iran’s looming threats once and for all.

Like it has killed around 40,000 Palestinians in Gaza and continuing unabated with total impunity, it seems hell bound to neutralize Iran’s nuclear threat once and for all, eliminate its missiles, rockets and drone capabilities, and bring it down to a point where it can no longer seriously jeopardize Israeli safety and security besides, lessen Iran’s ability to disrupt the global food and oil supply chain and eradicate its influence and reach in Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, and Yemen.

Iran on the other hand enraged by the unprovoked attack on its Embassy in Syria, and later terrorist attack in Rask, while it was still in mourning mode after the twin bomb attack in January 4, in Karman province this year, which had killed over 100 people and wounded many more including many high ranking Iranian official, vowed a harsh revenge after every such deplorable attacks.

Soon after the attack in Karman on Jan 4, Iranian reaction was swift. On January 16, using a combination of ballistic missiles and drones, Iran struck targets in Syria, Iraq, and Pakistan allegedly associated with Israeli intelligence and anti-regime terrorist groups. Unlike the other two countries, Pakistan did not wait, and after 24 hours launched a proportional, highly precise and finally calibrated intelligence based strikes, against hideouts of armed groups in the Sistan-Baluchestan province of Iran and restored geopolitical and security balance.

But Israel was waiting patiently to respond to the Iranian barrage of ballistic missiles and drones attacks on Israeli assets in Syria and Iraq, until it responded today with lethal attacks on the Iranian Embassy in Damascus and masterminding the terrorist attack in Rask, prompting, Iranian leadership to pledge once again a harsh and befitting response, but this raising the stakes by adding a severe warning, that the time has now come to teach Israel a bitter lesson.

Previously, the sworn foes of Iran and Israel had shown prudence and avoided attacking each other directly, instead focused on attacking each other’s proxies in the third countries. However, the level of tension has now increased to the point where in the near future, the world may experience elevated geopolitical tension due to impending direct actions by Iran against Israel or retaliation by Israel against Iran.

This could lead to a dangerous expansion of the Middle East War theater to other parts of the world, causing supply chain disruptions, a spike in the price of petroleum, an increase in the price of commodities, and a general lack of certainty and predictability that would particularly harm the countries with the weakest economies like Pakistan.

Pakistan, which has committed numerous military and civilian resources to secure its borders with Afghanistan (2670 km) and India (3320 km) and is dealing with a serious threat of cross-border terrorism, will be particularly impacted if the Middle East War Front expands along its border with Iran (959 km).

Given the likelihood of increased hostilities between Iran and Israel and the potential impact on the nation’s security, sovereignty, and safety, the Pakistani government should take these growing threats very seriously. If these assumptions come to pass, it should use all available diplomatic, political, and international communication resources to protect the country’s vital interests.

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