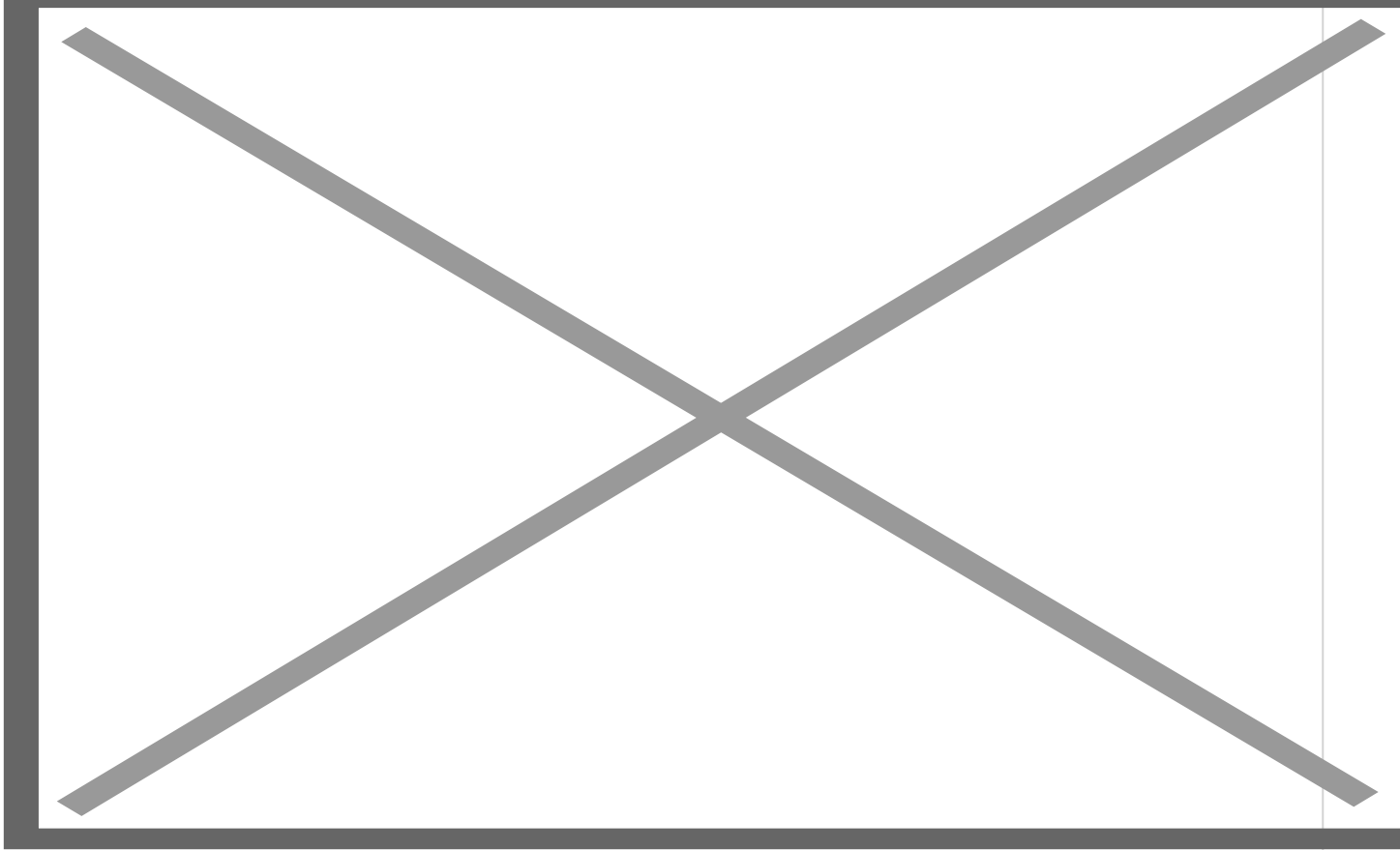


True Promise III: A barrage of Iranian missiles pounds occupied territories

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Smoke rises after a missile attack in Tel Aviv, Israel [Leo Correa/AP]

Tehran, June 13 (RHC)-- Iran has launched its retaliatory operation following a series of Israeli attacks by firing a barrage of missiles towards the occupied Palestinian territories, sending illegal settlers into shelters.

The operation began immediately after the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, delivered a televised message, saying that the "despicable" Israeli regime would be "rendered helpless" following reprisal by the Islamic Republic's Armed Forces.

In a statement on Friday night, less than 24 hours after the Israeli aggression, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) confirmed the launch of the retaliatory operation, dubbing it "True Promise III."

The public relations department of the IRGC noted that the targets numbered "dozens," including Israeli military centers and airbases. The response was described as "crushing and precise," with the Corps delivering the counterstrike in its role as "the defensive and offensive arm of the Iranian nation."

The retaliation, the statement noted, was carried out relying on "divine power, the Leader's wise guidance, and the unified demand and support of the noble Iranian people."

It came in response to the "incursion and aggressive actions by the bloodthirsty and child-killing Zionist terrorist regime," the statement added.

The operation was carried out under the code name "Ya Ali ibn Abi Talib," coinciding with the blessed occasion of Eid al-Ghadir, the statement noted. It also added that further details of the operation will be communicated to the public in a subsequent statement.

Videos circulating on social media, reportedly from Israeli media sources, show Iranian missiles penetrating multiple layers of Israeli defense systems to strike their intended targets within the occupied territories.

Israeli media reported sirens in multiple places, including Western Galilee and Central Galilee, Safed and its surroundings, Upper Galilee, west of occupied Al-Quds, Haifa and Tel Aviv.

Some media reports said dozens of military installations have been struck by Iranian ballistic missiles in the initial phase of the operation, resulting in significant casualties.

Iranian media outlets, meanwhile, reported that some of the Iranian projectiles had successfully targeted the site of the Israeli regime's military affairs ministry.

This retaliatory operation followed a series of assassinations of high-ranking Iranian military commanders and nuclear scientists by the Zionist enemy in the wee hours of Friday morning.

Among those martyred were Major General Mohammad Bagheri, Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces; IRGC Commander-in-Chief Hossein Salami; Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh, head of the IRGC Aerospace Division; and senior IRGC commander General Gholam Ali Rashid.

Minutes before the operation was launched, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution said the Zionist regime made a "big mistake, a grave error" and added that the consequences will "ruin them."

"The Iranian nation will not overlook the blood of its precious martyrs and will not ignore the aggression against its sky," he said in a televised message.

"Our armed forces are ready, and the country's officials and all segments of the people stand behind the armed forces. Today, messages with similar sentiments were issued from all the different political factions and various groups of the country. Everyone feels the need to act decisively against the malicious, despicable, terrorist Zionist identity."

Meanwhile, in a statement, the Iranian Army's public relations wing announced that its air defense force had successfully struck and destroyed two F-35 fighter jets of the Zionist regime along with several drones.

According to the report, the fate of the fighter pilots is unknown and is currently under investigation. Further information will be released in due course.

[SOURCE: AL JAZEERA and NEWS AGENCIES]

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