

Following Israeli strikes, Iran ‘exposed’ with weak aerial defense

Jerusalem had faced pressure from the Biden administration to avoid targeting Iran’s nuclear and oil infrastructure

By Lahav Harkov / October 27, 2024

Israel’s strikes against military targets in Iran early Saturday morning aimed to send a clear deterrent message: that the IAF can strike in the heart of the Islamic Republic should it choose to attack Israel again, while limiting the mission to parameters put forward by the Biden administration.

[...]

Danny Citrinowicz, senior researcher at the Institute for National Security Studies, told *Jewish Insider* that the choice of targets was meant to “fulfill the American request not to strike nuclear or oil [sites] because the administration doesn’t want a regional war on the eve of an election.”

At the same time, Israel wanted to “draw a line for the Iranian leaders, that it won’t accept missile strikes on Israel. It’s a response and a deterrence ... because it damaged Iran’s ability to respond to Israel,” he said.

The message of Israel’s strikes on Iran, according to **Citrinowicz**, is that “we want to end this, but if you respond, we will strike more targets, and your ability to attack us is significantly lessened.”

[...]

Citrinowicz said that Iran underestimated the impact of Israel killing the entire senior leadership of Hezbollah, which served as Tehran’s “shield.”

“Israel didn’t attack Iran before, not because of Iranian capabilities, but because of Hezbollah,” he said. “The situation is such that Israel feels very free. Operationally, it has the ability to attack wherever it wants in Iran.”

The strikes also show that Israeli fighter jets are capable of reaching Iran on their own, which increases the chance of an attack on nuclear sites, **Citrinowicz** said, while acknowledging that challenges remain in terms of coordination with the U.S., which does not want Israel to attack Iranian nuclear facilities, and the weapons Israel has at its disposal.

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