

Israeli Incremental Genocide

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It goes without saying that Gaza has taught the Israeli military a new lesson: the days of swift Israeli wars are over. While mostly one-sided, Israel has never before fought a war that lasted 50 days. The Palestinians (besieged by brothers and foes) were of no military match to Israel's most sophisticated US technology. But as in 2006 Lebanon war, the human factor rendered the best technology obsolete.

There were many parallels between summer 2006 and current war. Regretfully, in both cases, Israeli wanton destruction was received with indifference from the official Arab regime system.

It is no secret that some Arab governments were more interested in seeing Hizbollah degraded in 2006 than protecting innocent Lebanese civilians. In the last two months, the official Arab regime too disliked Hamas more than they cared about Palestinian life.

This time in Gaza, and unlike the last two confrontations in 08/09 and November 2012 – Palestinians seemed united at the negotiation table and on the battlefield. Ultimately, forcing the Egyptian mediator to back off from imposing the Israeli conditions and address the core issue that caused this war: the years old Israeli military blockade on Gaza.

After reaching ceasefire, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu took the airwaves proclaiming winning the war. On the other side, Palestinians took to the streets celebrating the end of Israeli aggression and their victory.

It is definitely debatable as to who won the war. If winning is to be measured by the number of civilians killed and the damage left behind, Israel is by far the winner. If winning or losing was measured by objectives, Israel was undoubtedly the bigger loser.

For Israeli attempts to weaken Hamas has failed. Hamas which saw decline in its popularity before the war gained impressive approbation in most recent polling. The organisation was persona non grata in Egypt, but now it appeared to have reconciled with the regime.

Just like the Israeli war against Lebanon in 2006 where instead of weakening Hizbollah, the war propelled the party to become a major power-broker in local politics and emerged as a regional force to contend with.

In Gaza, the well-pampered Israeli soldiers were not prepared for the new tactics and the intricate underground fortification systems. In the face-to-face combat and as technology becomes useless, the craven Israeli soldier was of no match to the more determined Palestinian fighter.

According to eye witness accounts reported in the online Daily Beast last week, one fighter codenamed Abu Muhammad described the underground war, "First we targeted the tanks and the jeeps with IEDs. Some of our people would come out of the ground, attack the soldiers and then disappear back into a tunnel and others surprised them from empty houses."

Following heavy military losses, Netanyahu ordered his army to withdraw. He pulled his negotiation team from Cairo and insisted no ceasefire unless Israel's conditions for the invasion were met: disarmament of Gaza, return the remains of the purportedly dead Israeli soldiers and destruction of underground fortifications.

After Netanyahu's ceasefire terms were rejected, Israel intensified its air raids against civilians targeting homes of supposed Palestinian leaders and levelled large residential towers. Facing defiant Palestinians and his demoralised public, Netanyahu was forced eventually to accept a ceasefire including the easing of the military siege on Gaza.

It is delusional however to believe for a moment that Israel would honour its obligations under the ceasefire agreement. Losing in public polling, Netanyahu is predisposed to tighten, not ease the military blockade, in order to placate his right wing voters.

Meanwhile, Netanyahu lies to his people about winning a war without achieving one single objective and deceives the world with a ceasefire while maintaining a silent war of special "starvation diet" and carrying out "incremental genocide" against more than 1.7 million human beings.

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