

In Natanz Hit, Iran Doesn't Dare Reveal Extent of Damage

by Hugh Fitzgerald



Natanz is the site of Iran's most important nuclear facility. It is where Iran's advanced centrifuges are assembled and where they are used to enrich uranium. An Israeli cyberattack at Natanz just [here](#).

2002

An Iranian opposition group, the National Council of Resistance of Iran, held a press conference and revealed the existence of an underground enrichment plant in Natanz. Built in a heavily-fortified bunker, Natanz showed that the Iranians had learned from the mistakes of the Iraqis whose Osirak reactor, destroyed by Israel in 1981, was located above ground. The Mossad was suspected of having provided the

group with the information...

2010

Stuxnet, a virus reportedly created by Israel and the United States, infiltrates Natanz and succeeds in destroying over 1,000 centrifuges, causing significant delays to Iran's nuclear program. The Stuxnet code caused the engines in Iran's IR-1 centrifuges to increase and decrease their speed. Iran usually ran its motors at 1,007 cycles per second to prevent damage, while Stuxnet seemed to increase the motor speed to 1,064 cycles per second, causing the engines to explode.

July 2020

An explosion destroys an advanced centrifuge assembly facility at Natanz, setting back advanced centrifuge development – according to estimates – by one to two years.

The explosion was meant to send a message of determination to stop the Islamic Republic's nuclear program, The Jerusalem Post learned at the time, with the purpose of sending an unambiguous deterrent message that progress toward a nuclear weapon beyond certain redlines would not be tolerated...

April 2021

An "accident" was reported Sunday morning [April 11] at the Natanz electricity distribution network, Atomic Energy Organization of Iran spokesman Behrouz Kamalvandi told the Iranian Fars News Agency.

Based on reports, it seems that the so-called accident was caused by a cyberattack, possibly by Israel. The reported incident comes less than a month after the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) reported that Iran had restarted enrichment at the Natanz facility and less than a year after Israel was blamed by foreign reports for an alleged attack on

the facility, which reportedly impacted Iran's nuclear program significantly.

The latest attack on Natanz was not “possibly by Israel,” but was “certainly by Israel,” as all the previous attacks on Natanz’s uranium enrichment facilities have been. The timing of this latest attack is significant. While Americans in Vienna engage in their appeasement of Iran, the Israelis have acted in quite a different way. The Americans, having earlier declared that Iran would have to make the first move, recommitting partially to the 2015 deal, and only then would America reciprocate by lifting some of the sanctions, have now capitulated to Iran, declaring that the U.S. is now ready, without more, to lift all sanctions “not consistent with the JCPOA.”

The Israelis have within the last few weeks shown both Iran, and the U.S., that appeasement is not on their mind. Israeli naval commandos attached limpet mines to the hull of the Saviz, an Iranian spy-ship used by the IRGC, that has been parked for the past three years in the Red Sea just off the coast of Yemen. It was there both to supply information, and to transfer weapons, to the Houthis, and also to monitor Israeli sea traffic in that important maritime waterway that links Israel to Asia. The limpet mines caused a small explosion; they were meant to warn Iran that Israel could strike the ship in other ways, if so inclined, such as with military drones or even missiles. Israel has already struck dozens of Iranian cargo ships in the Mediterranean that were bringing oil and weapons to Syria. Now it has signaled that Iranian ships in the Red Sea can and will be targeted. It is also a signal to the Americans: you can capitulate if you wish, but our task remains the same: to defend the Jewish state, if need be by ourselves, both by preventing Iran’s nuclear program from proceeding, and to set back Iran’s regional aggressions that are designed to create a “Shi’a crescent” from Yemen to Lebanon.

Israel has also made clear, with its mid-April cyberattack on Natanz, that it will inexorably proceed with its campaign to set back Iran's nuclear program. A report on Iran's reaction is here: "'Mossad behind cyberattack on Iran's Natanz nuclear facility,'" by Yonah Jeremy Bob, Lahav Harkov, and Tzvi Joffre, [Jihad Watch](#).