



THE ASIAN TRIBUNE

International Edition

Boston, Massachusetts (US)

July 1, 2025

TUESDAY

www.asiantribune.net

Iran-Israel war changes Middle East power dynamics: Iran's nuclear facilities damaged but 'Invincible, Impregnable Israel' image also gets affected as Iranian missiles hit Tel Aviv, Haifa



Shams Ur Rehman Alavi
www.asiantribune.net

The war that began after Israel hit Iran's nuclear facilities, has ended for now, but it has brought a major shift in the power dynamics in the region. It was on June 13, that Israel attacked Iran.

The nuclear facilities at Natanz, Isfahan and Fordow were the main targets.

Subsequently, Iran said that it would respond and its missiles attacked multiple cities in Israel. Despite the 'Iron dome' and interceptions on way, Iran hit and caused damage in multiple locations in different cities in Israel.

Israel had launched precision attacks and apart from the damage to nuclear facilities, it attacked Tabriz airport as well Hamadan airbase and also killed military commanders and Iran's nuclear scientists.

Soon, Iranian missiles struck Bat Yam, Rehovot and Tel Aviv. People were killed, buildings were damaged and there was a clear sign of panic in different cities in Israel too.

As the war intensified, Israel said that its air defense system was successfully intercepting the Iranian missiles.

Houthis too fired missiles from Yemen. Though the war that led to death of hundreds of persons, caused destruction in both the countries, before it ended on the twelfth day, its aftermath will be analyzed in the days to come.

The Islamic republic's nuclear facilities suffered damages and though there was confusion as to how much the country's nuclear program was affected, but Iran remained defiant, insisting that it would continue to attack Israel. After June 15, more strikes took place from both sides. Images* of fire and explosions in cities in Israel made more news, due to Israel's 'impregnable, invincible' nation image. While Iran suffered much more in terms of deaths of civilians as well as damage to its vital installations, the fact that it responded & hit Israel, changed perceptions. [*Photo: X/Twitter, @Khamenei.ir, @Khamenei_m]



the killings in Gaza hadn't forced Arab leaders to issue tough statements, but here Iran was seen as leading in rhetoric & reality, taking on the mighty US and its ally. The supreme leader Ayatollah Khamenei's statements and the Iranian stance as well as bold attack, was clear sign in Arab world that Iran was able to fight and respond on its own, despite years of sanctions, amid hostile regimes in West Asia. The Muslim street too saw the elderly Khamenei as a leader standing up when the other influential and wealthy Arab countries were rolling red carpet to Trump and yet, failing to get concessions. Clearly, Iran's clout has risen in Arab region as well as the entire Islamic world.

The Asian Tribune, Boston

Iran's nuclear facilities got hit but its retaliatory strikes on Israeli cities & US military bases, demonstrated its capability and strength. The retaliation has raised Iran's clout, causing a dent to the US-Israel supremacy in the region. Israel achieved temporary objective, but Iran remained defiant despite US' entry in the war.

Killing people waiting for food in Gaza!



By Asad Mirza

The silence of international community is sad and shameful

NEW DELHI: Even as killings continue in Gaza on a regular basis and nearly 450 Palestinians have been killed near Aid Centres or Food Centres being run by an American relief organisation, the Arab countries and several other nations that had in the past championed Palestinian cause, remain silent.

The question is how long would the world allow these brutal and inhuman killings of hungry Palestinians by the Israeli forces.

During the Iran-Israel war, it seemed that the world had forgotten Gaza, yet again. During these 13 days as well, several reports of unarmed Palestinians being gunned down by the Israel Defence Force (IDF) appeared.

On June 17, 70 Palestinians were killed in a single day during the distribution of US-Israeli aid in southern Gaza, specifically in Khan Younis and Rafah, under the same and oft-repeated justification (sic), 'protecting US aid workers.'

Daily Times of Israel reported on June 25, that in Gaza, the Israeli forces killed around 71 Palestinians (June 24, 2025). This figure included at least 50 people who were waiting to receive aid.

Among the dead were at least 27 people killed in an Israeli strike on civilians. These people were waiting for food in central Gaza, an attack that also wounded dozens and turned a relief site into what one Palestinian official called an "open field of death."

Responding to the reported figures of deaths, the IDF later said that a gathering overnight had been identified in an area "adjacent" to its troops in the Netzarim corridor in Central Gaza where the US and Israel backed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF) aid group is known to hand out food.

Earlier this month, the IDF had warned Palestinians not to approach routes leading to the GHF [Gaza Humanitarian Foundation] sites between 6 pm and 6 am, local time, describing those roads as the completely closed military zones. However, the GHF has contradictorily indicated it may be open during those hours.

In central Gaza, three witnesses told the Associated Press that the army opened fire as people advanced east toward aid trucks south of Wadi Gaza. "In fact, it was a massacre," mentioned Ahmed Halawa.

He said tanks and drones fired at people, "even as we were leaving the spot. Many people were either martyred or wounded."

Another eyewitness, Hossam Abu Shahada said drones were flying over the area, watching the crowds, then there was gunfire from tanks and drones as the people were moving eastward.

He described a "chaotic and bloody" scene as people tried to escape. He said he saw at least three people lying motionless and many others wounded.

In the southernmost city of Rafah, witnesses said Israeli troops opened fire as crowds tried to reach another food distribution site run by the foundation.

Two witnesses said Israeli troops started firing as thousands of Palestinians gathered at the Shakoush area, several hundred metres from the distribution site.

According to figures issued on Saturday by the Hamas health ministry, at least 450 people have been killed and nearly 3,500 injured by Israeli fire while seeking aid since late May 2025.

Many of these incidents had occurred near sites operated

by the GHF, according to rescuers.

GHF, a United States and Israel backed organisation, which was established to circumvent Hamas in the distribution of aid, issued a complaint Tuesday to the Israeli military over "possible harassment by Israeli soldiers directed at our convoys" heading to the Wadi Gaza site.

Israel, which said that 79 humanitarian aid trucks entered the Gaza Strip Monday via the Kerem Shalom and Zikim crossings, has acknowledged firing warning shots at suspicious people near distribution sites, but denies targeting civilians or using starvation as a weapon of war, and has accused Hamas of hijacking aid deliveries and embedding itself among civilians.

Speaking at a press conference in Geneva, UN human rights spokesman Thameen Al-Kheetan said, "Israel has militarised the humanitarian assistance mechanism." Asked if Israel was guilty of weaponising the distribution of food, he said, "the legal qualification needs to be made by a court of law. But, the weaponisation of food for civilians, in addition to restricting or preventing their access to life-sustaining services, constitutes a war crime & under certain situations may constitute elements of other crimes under international law."

The head of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees also hit out at the GHF system. "The newly created so-called aid mechanism is an abomination that humiliates and degrades desperate people," UNRWA chief Philippe Lazzarini said at a press conference in Berlin. "It is a death trap costing more lives than it saves."

"The humanitarian community, including UNRWA, has the expertise and must be allowed to

do their job and provide assistance with respect and dignity," said Lazzarini. "There is no other alternative to address the challenges of spreading hunger in the Gaza Strip."

Israel has accused UNRWA of providing cover for Hamas operatives and, earlier this year, banned the agency from operating on Israeli soil or contacting officials.

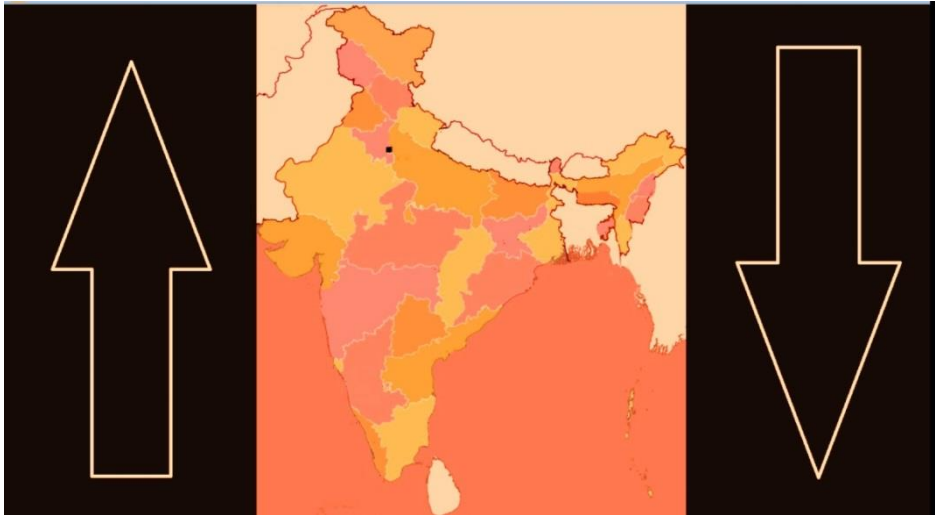
The UN and major aid groups have refused to cooperate with the GHF over concerns that it was designed to cater to Israeli military objectives. The GHF began operating in Gaza after a nearly three-month blockade Israel placed on the Strip following the collapse of the last ceasefire-hostage deal with Hamas in early March.

Aid deliveries to Gaza were allowed by Israel on May 19, after a pause since March 2. Since then, 2,033 trucks have entered the Strip. BBC reported that without including the latest deaths, the UN has said that more than 410 Palestinians are reported to have been killed by Israeli gunfire or shelling since the GHF began work in late May. However, one wonders that where are the so-called Islamic countries, while this mayhem continues. None of them has voiced sincere condemnation on the killings or came out with an aid plan involving them. Organisation of Islamic countries, OIC is more concerned about the plight of the Indian Muslims, than those being killed nearer home to it. Dalia Abu Ramadan, in a first person account written for the website, Truthout.org says that the humanitarian crisis in Gaza is not merely a human tragedy but a catastrophe.

editor@asiantribune.net

Tough times ahead for the nation: Statistical trends, data point towards a difficult future

States and Union territories ranked on the basis of their performance in environment, agriculture, public health, human development and public infrastructure. Andhra Pradesh, Sikkim & Goa bag top spots.



The Asian Tribune
www.asiantribune.net

NEW DELHI: The analysis of yearlong data and statistics on environment and development in India shows that the numbers paint a grim picture of the future.

Releasing the analysis in the form of an e-compendium of statistics titled State of India's Environment in Figures 2025, it was revealed that India's most populous states – Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh – that are together home to 49 per cent of the country's population, rank low on the themes that the analysis has focused on. This means large segments of the country's population remain vulnerable and exposed to multiple threats.

CSE DG Sunita Narain and Richard Mahapatra, managing editor of Down To Earth, were present and spoke at length. They used 48 indicators clubbed under 12 sub-categories to assess all the 36 states and UTs. Though the statistical and data gaps remain a major concern,

it joins the dots and interprets whatever data is available and existing to make a factual statement on environment and development.” Mahapatra adds: “Besides this, the report also brings out the key trends, such as the occurrence of extreme weather events and declining landholdings in agriculture.” Andhra tops the rankings in the ‘environment’ category, having excelled in managing its forests and biodiversity and for its efforts to contain the impacts of climate change. “However, Mahapatra points out, “it continues to struggle with its sewage treatment and management of polluted river stretches.” In ‘agriculture’, Sikkim scores the highest with its strong performance in agricultural inputs and sustainable land-use practices; but it lags behind in farmer welfare and agricultural economy. Goa is at the top spot in the thematic areas of both ‘public health’ and ‘human development and public infrastructure’. It is the only

where all registered deaths are medically certified with a known cause of death.

At the same time, Goa has a shortage of hospital beds per 1,000 people, and also lags behind in per capita power availability and the number of women in its labour force. 2024 was the warmest year on record for India; it was also the period in which 25 states recorded their monthly highest 24-hour rainfall in the last 123 years.

Presenting the CSE- Down To Earth analysis, R Sengupta, associate editor of the magazine and one of the authors of the study report, said: “Extreme weather events occurred on 88 per cent of the days in 2024, marking a sharp rise in both frequency and impact since 2022.

As many as 13 Indian capital cities, including Delhi, have faced polluted air on at least one out of every three days. The impact is severe, with 18 of 28 state capitals experiencing greater life expectancy loss from air pollution than their state averages.

expectancy of an Indian was estimated to have shortened by three years and six months due to air pollution. The National Capital Territory of Delhi faces the worst scenario--its population loses seven years and nine months of life expectancy.

In terms of public health, the report notes that nearly five years after the pandemic began, its impact still lingers in the country. Government data estimates 3.06 million excess deaths in 2020 and 2021 -- over six times the official COVID-19 toll. India continues to grapple with weak health infrastructure, needing 36 per cent more Community Health Centres, which face an 80 per cent shortfall in specialist doctors. Out-of-pocket healthcare spending (direct payment for healthcare by individuals which may or may not be reimbursed) rose 24 per cent to Rs 2,600 per person in 2021-22, making up 45.1 per cent of health costs – thus surpassing government spending and highlighting the heavy financial burden on individuals.

INDIAN LAW: How personal are the personal laws?

As India navigates this complex terrain, the goal should not be to erase diversity but to ensure that no citizen is forced to trade their rights for their identity.

By Shahid Parvez Sayed
editor@asiantribune.net



India's personal laws, governing marriage, divorce, inheritance, and succession, are often described as 'personal' because they are rooted in religious or community identity. But how "personal" are they really?

The term suggests autonomy and choice, yet in practice, these laws often bind individuals to rigid frameworks dictated by birth, leaving little room for dissent or secular alternatives.

The recent Supreme Court case filed by a Kerala woman—who sought to have an exemption from Sharia inheritance laws, has reignited old debates about the true nature of these laws and their compatibility with constitutional rights.

Personal laws in India trace their origins to colonial-era classifications, where the British codified religious customs into legal systems for Hindus, Muslims, Christians, and the others.

After the country gained independence, India still retained this plural legal structure, ostensibly to protect religious freedom. However, this system has created a paradox, too.

While personal laws are meant to reflect community identity, they are enforced by the state, making them less about individual choice and more about the collective imposition.

The key examples include the Muslim Personal Law that governs the inheritance, marriage and divorce based on Islamic principles and The Hindu Succession Act.

This is the Act which Regulates property rights for Hindus, Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists, as well.

Besides, there is the Christian Marriage Act that oversees matrimonial norms for Christians. Critically, these laws apply automatically to individuals based on their religious identity at birth, regardless of personal belief or dissent.

India's Constitution guarantees fundamental rights to equality (Articles 14–15), freedom of religion (Article 25). Yet personal laws operate in a contested space where religious freedom clashes with gender justice and individual liberty and equality.

Article 25 protects the right to practice and propagate religion, but courts have clarified that this does not extend to practices that violate constitutional morality. For instance, in *Shayara Bano v. Union of India* (2017), the Supreme Court struck down instant triple talaq, calling it unconstitutional and arbitrary. Similarly, the Kerala woman's case questions whether religious identity should dictate legal rights after renunciation.

The Kerala petitioner's argument hinges on the "right to exit"—a facet of religious freedom. If someone renounces their faith, should they remain bound by its laws? The Supreme Court's ruling could affirm that personal laws are not an irrevocable life sentence but a choice.

Personal laws are far from truly personal in practice. **Gender Discrimination:** Many religious laws are not generous towards woman believers when it comes to sharing property or in familial disputes. **No Opt-Out Mechanism:** Individuals cannot freely choose secular laws (e.g., the Indian Succession Act or the Special



Marriage Act) without the navigating bureaucratic hurdles or societal stigma.

Courts and governments enforce these laws, blurring the line between religious practice and state authority.

Indian courts have increasingly challenged the absolutism of personal laws:

Firstly, the *Triple Talaq Judgment* (2017): Declared instant divorce as completely unconstitutional.

Second in the *Joseph Shine v. Union of India* (2018): Decriminalized the adultery & emphasizing the individual autonomy over patriarchal norms.

Thirdly, *Indian Young Lawyers' Association v. State of Kerala* (2018).

It opened Sabarimala Temple to women, asserting that religious practices must comply with the constitutional rights.

These rulings underscore that personal laws cannot override fundamental rights.

The Kerala woman's case could extend this logic, allowing individuals to sever ties with religious laws upon renouncing faith.

The Kerala women's case has a unique potential to usher into a paradigm shift in interpreting the personal laws of various communities and to make individual as the key element of legal jurisprudence justice

rather than the entire communities.

The Kerala case highlights three critical reforms:

Legal frameworks must let individuals opt for secular laws without disenfranchisement.

Gender-Just Interpretation i.e. Courts should reinterpret religious laws through the lens of equality, as seen in the Hindu Succession Act reforms. Personal laws, in their current form, are more about communal identity than personal choice. The Kerala woman's petition is a reminder that justice demands respect for individual agency—whether in matters of faith, property, or dignity. For personal laws to be truly "personal," they must evolve from rigid, birth-based mandates into systems that honor constitutional rights and the freedom to choose.

As India navigates this complex terrain, the goal should not be to erase diversity but to ensure that no citizen is forced to trade their rights for their identity. After all, in a democracy, the most "personal" law of all is the Constitution itself.

The question is not whether personal laws should exist, but whose "person" they truly serve. When laws become bridges to justice, India will realize the promise of its founding ideals: liberty, equality & fraternity.