Twelve Days of Conflict: Israel and Iran Declare Ceasefire Amid Rising Tensions and Conflicting Narratives

Following nearly two weeks of military escalation, Israel and Iran have announced a ceasefire, bringing an official end to a 12-day conflict that threatened to destabilize the broader Middle East. The truce, brokered by U.S. President Donald Trump, remains precarious amid mutual accusations of violations and starkly contrasting claims of victory.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared that Israel had dealt a significant blow to Iran's nuclear ambitions. "We have brought Iran's nuclear programme to ruin," Netanyahu stated, referring to a series of targeted airstrikes and cyber operations allegedly conducted by Israeli forces. According to Israeli defense officials, critical infrastructure related to Iran's nuclear development was severely damaged, though full details remain classified.

On the other side, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian delivered a national address via the state-run IRNA news agency, asserting that Iran had successfully resisted what he called an unprovoked Israeli assault. "Today, after the heroic resistance of our great nation… "We are witnessing the end of this 12-day war imposed by the adventurism and provocation of Israel," Pezeshkian said, positioning Iran's response as both defensive and resilient.

The ceasefire agreement appeared at risk shortly after it was announced, with Israel accusing Iran of violating the terms by launching missiles into its airspace. Iran's military denied the accusation, labeling it a fabrication intended to undermine the peace process. Conflicting reports from both sides created further uncertainty around the fragile deal.

President Trump, who played a central role in negotiating the ceasefire, expressed frustration with both governments during a press briefing. "Both sides violated the agreement. I am extremely disappointed," he said, before later announcing that the ceasefire remained intact following a phone call with Netanyahu. According to White House sources, Trump urged the Israeli prime minister to exercise restraint, a request that reportedly led to the cancellation of a planned escalation against Iranian targets.

Despite the ceasefire, the aftermath of the conflict is stark. Civilian areas in both Iran and Israel suffered extensive damage, with dozens reported dead and hundreds injured. Humanitarian agencies are warning of severe conditions in several affected regions, including northern Israeli cities such as Haifa and Ashkelon, as well as Iranian towns near the border.

While both nations claim strategic and political victories, independent verification of the impact remains limited. Analysts warn that the ceasefire, though welcome, may be temporary unless underlying tensions are addressed through sustained diplomatic engagement.

As the international community calls for de-escalation, the question remains: is this a lasting
peace or merely a pause before the next confrontation?