

# Iran's high-stakes game of chicken

*When the bluff is called on world powers and red lines prove to be blurred lines, it becomes open season for rogue states*



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Barack Obama's 2013 failure to police his own red lines following the gruesome murder of about 1,400 civilians with chemical weapons is widely perceived as the moment when the course of the Syrian conflict altered irretrievably. As Western credibility and relevance withered and died, Russia established itself as the dominant broker, using uncontested air power to allow shattered regime forces and Iranian proxies to regain control of core areas of Syria; with an incalculable cost to civilian lives.

In retrospect, Donald Trump's dithering over whether to respond to multiple Iranian provocations — including the unprovoked shooting down of an unmanned US military aircraft — may be the moment when American credibility became fatally undermined, further emboldening the ayatollahs towards consolidating their regional dominance, safe in the knowledge that they could strike foreign targets with apparent impunity.

It is not yet clear whether a reported US cyberattack against Iranian missile deployment systems had a significant impact. However, the Stuxnet virus attack against Iranian nuclear installations, discovered in 2010, was a principal motivator behind Iran's own shift into cyberwar-

fare, with Tehran now boasting the capability to attack the critical electronic infrastructure of states around the world. So the unfortunate net impact could be to shift this conflict into indiscriminate attacks against a far broader spectrum of targets.

If the downed drone had been an isolated incident, then perhaps Trump's incoherent musings that this was the act of a "loose and stupid" junior officer might have made some kind of sense. However, that theory was shot down in flames when Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) commander Hossein Salami proclaimed: "The downing of the American drone is an open, clear and categorical message... This is the way the Iranian nation deals with its enemies."

The IRGC and Iran's foreign proxies have been unleashed to test US resolve on multiple fronts. In recent weeks, there have been attacks against six oil tankers in the Gulf. Missiles have been fired at oil installations in Basra, near the US Embassy in Baghdad, and against other American bases in Iraq, including Camp Taji (north of Baghdad) and a compound near Mosul. The Iran-backed Houthis have claimed a succession of strikes deep into Saudi territory — one hitting the arrivals hall of a civilian airport, along with attacks on oil pipelines — with these forces now claiming the use of Iran-supplied cruise missiles. A car bomb in Kabul that targeted American troops has been linked to Tehran. The



Commander Hossein Salami speaks at a p

regime does all this, then hubristically declares that "firing one bullet" at Iran will set the region on fire.

The Islamic Republic habitually expresses itself through violence, and its quasi-Mafioso messages don't get any clearer than this: The regime is inviting — daring — US retaliation. Tehran's warmongers and ayatollahs will be jubilant that they forced the leader of the free world to blink first.

Iran is playing a high-stakes game. Sanctions are crushing the life out of its economy. Ayatollah

## Yoga: A science of peace and

*Yoga believes that peace starts from within and can be extended outward to others and the community*

Today, the world is witnessing several problems like terrorism, religious fanaticism, racial prejudices and hatred. In the atmosphere of uncertainty, distrust and fear caused due to terrorism and religious hatred, yoga seems to be the only answer to restore peace in mind, body and spirit.

The International Day of Yoga is being observed to bring harmony and peace for the humanity across the entire world. Peace has therefore, become a necessary condition for man's survival.

Yoga has a unique capability to mould one's behaviour, awaken potentials, perfect his attitudes and perception, set standards of social, emotional, mental and intellectual life and bring changes in the outer and internal world.

Yoga is practised not only to achieve perfect health but also to achieve professional, personal, social and spiritual excellence in life.

Yoga is derived from a Sanskrit word "yujir" meaning to yoke, to bind, to unite. Here the word union represents the best and the highest union so that human being can live, move and act in Health, Harmony and Happiness. It aims at the melodious progress of the mind, body and the soul.

Yoga believes that peace starts from within and can be extended outward to others and the community. When we suffer, we tend

to be more willing to inflict pain and misery upon others and ourselves, whether through words, actions, and energy.

Creating a practice of non-violence towards oneself and others allow each individual to gain a stronger sense of well being, thus reducing their negative impact on the world. The ultimate impact is the realisation that we can each contribute to creating a more peaceful, healthy global society by becoming more peaceful and healthy.

Yoga is a science that tries to understand the root cause of all sufferings facing the human race, offers a sound philosophy and different practices to bring to an end to all sufferings -physical, mental, emotional, social, professional and spiritual. The ancient scriptures claim that yoga is practised to bring an end to all kinds of sufferings.

The essence of humanity is based on peace. Humility, gratitude; forgiveness, compassion, and honesty are virtuous qualities of a peaceful and harmonious life. Humility is cultivated in yoga by being noncompetitive and not seeking to create the perfect posture, but to admit fragility and taking care of your body and mind.

Inner peace does not mean merely a state of inner being, which ignores the reality of human suffering. Rather, holistic



Yoga is a science of the self in relation to outer world.

peace is seen as encompassing an individual compassion for human need, coupled with a sincere attempt at identifying with and helping to transform the suffer-

ing of others. Yoga follows the inner path of spirituality dropping aside all rituals and rites, bringing all religions to one single platform.

Yoga is a universal science and technique. It is an agreement between the individual and the universe. It is universal in its approach and applies to all hu-