

Ynet-News, Feb 24, 2020 – Monday -

02.24.20 – Mo - - - News Placed in Feb 24 spot – Monday -

Israel prepared for large-scale war in Gaza to fundamentally change the Jihad situation on Monday afternoon

02.24.20 – Mo - - - News

Defense Minister Bennett in conference warned Gaza, Israel is on the cusp of action

02.24.20 – Mo - - - News

IDF hits military compound & underground facility in south Gaza after rocket barrage

Combined News above & below - - - News Placed in Feb 23 spot – Sunday -

Monday IDF hits south Gaza after rocket barrage & Damascus weapons from Iran

02.24.20 – Mo - - - News

Israeli rockets & jets attack Syria targets in Damascus storing weapons from Iran

02.23.20 – Su - - - News Placed in Feb 22 spot – Saturday -

Pope cautions unfair Israel, Palestine peace plans & adversity depicted as invasion

02.24.20 – Mo -

Israel prepared for large-scale war in Gaza to fundamentally change the Jihad situation on Monday afternoon

02.24.20

Islamic Jihad says military response complete, signals for ceasefire

Terror group declares mission accomplished after over 80 rockets hit Israel's south in two days; Israel imposes host of fresh sanctions on Gaza

Ynet| Published: 02.24.20 , 19:25

The Islamic Jihad's military wing has announced on Monday it has completed its military response to border clashes in the Gaza strip town of Khan Yunis and an attack on the terror group's personnel in Damascus, Syria.

"The al-Quds Brigades announces that it has finished its military response to the assassination crimes in Khan Younis and Damascus," read the statement. "It promises our people and nation that it will continue its struggle and that it will respond to any continued [aggression] by the occupation against our people and land."

The IDF Spokesperson's Unit said it had detected over 80 rocket launches from the coastal enclave fired at southern Israel during this two-day round of cross-border violence. The Iron Dome missile defense system has successfully intercepted about 90% of projectiles.

The military has also ordered to close the Erez border crossing in the northern Strip, reduce the fishing zone off the Gaza coast to six nautical miles and completely halt the entry of merchants from Gaza into Israeli territory. Exceptional humanitarian cases will be examined accordingly.

At present, the transfer of goods at the Kerem Shalom border crossing continues as usual.

Six rockets were fired in the first wave that began at around noon. Iron Dome intercepted five rockets over Sderot and Kibbutz Nir Am.

Less than half an hour later, sirens sounded in Netiv Ha'Asara and Hof Ashkelon regional council, and a second wave of eight rockets was fired from Gaza. Two of the rockets hit a children's playground and the yard of a home in Sderot.

Two people were lightly injured while running to a bomb shelter, including a 55-year-old man who was evacuated to Barzilai Hospital in Ashkelon after he fell and sustained a facial injury. The hospital said the man's condition was stable and was undergoing examination.

At least one person was treated for shock in Sderot.

The IDF struck Islamic Jihad targets in Gaza in response.

IDF Spokesperson's Unit said Israeli aircraft struck and eliminated a site used by the Islamic Jihad to launch rockets.

The Prime Minister's Office said that Benjamin Netanyahu was conducting a security consultation by phone with defense officials following the rocket attacks. It said that Netanyahu also spoke with the mayors of Sderot and Ashkelon to update them on the situation.

Netanyahu also threatened Gaza's Hamas rulers with a "war" on Monday afternoon if the new round of rocket fire continued, ramping up his rhetoric amid the final stretch of his campaign ahead of the March 2 elections.

Speaking to Army Radio, Netanyahu said he'd conveyed a message to Hamas that if it did not stop Gaza militants behind the attacks, Israel would target Hamas directly.

"If you don't shoot them, we will shoot you. I'm talking about a war," he said. "I only go to war as a last option but we have prepared something you can't even imagine."

Netanyahu's interview was interrupted with news of fresh air raid sirens warning of incoming rockets, as Palestinian militant fire resumed midday after a morning lull.

Defense Minister Naftali Bennett warned earlier Monday that Israel was on the cusp of action "to fundamentally change the situation in the Gaza Strip," the Times of Israel reported.

"We are preparing a plan to fundamentally change the situation in the Gaza Strip," Bennett told a conference in Jerusalem.

"I really understand the situation of the people of the south," Bennett said. "They deserve peace and security."

Meanwhile, Netanyahu said that the proximity of next week's elections would not deter him from taking action to protect Israeli citizens.

Netanyahu told Radio Jerusalem that he would "not compromise Israel's security for political reasons."

According to Netanyahu, "War is a last resort, but there may be no escape from it. 'If Israel is in the position of entering a large-scale military operation, we will have to deal a bigger blow than [the three Gaza wars of the past 12 years]. It could very well be that we may have to carry out — I don't really want to say it, but — 'the mother of all operations.'"

The Monday rocket barrage came just hours after Israeli warplanes on Sunday night struck Islamic Jihad targets in Gaza and Syria, reportedly killing six people. Islamic Jihad threatened retaliation.

The IAF airstrikes followed two waves of rocket attacks from Gaza on Sunday, which themselves came after the IDF killed at least one Palestinian trying to lay a bomb on Gaza's border fence with Israel.

02.24.20 – Mo -

Defense Minister Bennett in conference warned Gaza, Israel is on the cusp of action

02.24.20

Heavy rocket barrages directed at southern Israel in fresh Gaza bout

Man lightly injured while running to bomb shelter; IDF strikes targets in Strip in response; Netanyahu threatens Hamas with 'war' if rocket fire does not abate

Ynet| Published: 02.24.20 , 17:41

Heavy rocket barrages were fired at southern Israel from the Gaza Strip on Monday afternoon, as an escalation in violence with the Iranian-backed Islamic Jihad continued for a second day.

Six rockets were fired in the first wave that began at around noon. The Iron Dome air defense system intercepted five rockets over Sderot and Kibbutz Nir Am.

Less than half an hour later, sirens sounded in Netiv Ha'Asara and Hof Ashkelon regional council, and a second wave of eight rockets was fired from Gaza. Two of the rockets hit a children's playground and the yard of a home in Sderot.

A 55-year-old man was evacuated to Barzilai Hospital in Ashkelon after he fell while running to a bomb shelter and sustained a facial injury. The hospital said the man's condition was stable and was undergoing examination.

At least one person was treated for shock in Sderot.

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Netanyahu also threatened Gaza's Hamas rulers with a "war" on Monday afternoon if the new round of rocket fire continued, ramping up his rhetoric amid the final stretch of his campaign ahead of the March 2 elections.

Speaking to Army Radio, Netanyahu said he'd conveyed a message to Hamas that if it did not stop Gaza militants behind the attacks, Israel would target Hamas directly.

"If you don't shoot them, we will shoot you. I'm talking about a war," he said. "I only go to war as a last option but we have prepared something you can't even imagine."

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The Monday rocket barrage came just hours after Israeli warplanes on Sunday night struck Islamic Jihad targets in Gaza and Syria, reportedly killing six people. Islamic Jihad threatened retaliation.

The IAF airstrikes followed two waves of rocket attacks from Gaza on Sunday, which themselves came after the IDF killed at least one Palestinian trying to lay a bomb on Gaza's border fence with Israel.

02.24.20 – Mo -

IDF hits military compound & underground facility in south Gaza after rocket barrage

02.24.20

IDF hits Islamic Jihad in Gaza after rocket barrage

Army targets training camp, weapons stores of the Iranian-backed terror group, says it will 'respond fiercely to Islamic Jihad terrorist activity that targets Israeli civilians and harms its sovereignty'

Ynet| Published: 02.24.20 , 15:44

Israel Air Force warplanes struck Islamic Jihad targets in the Gaza Strip on Monday afternoon, shortly after more than a dozen rockets were fired at southern Israel in a half-hour period.

The jets targeted a military compound in the southern Gaza town of Khan Yunis that was used for training and storing weapons, as well as an underground facility in al-Bureij refugee camp in the central Strip.

The IDF said that it would "respond fiercely to Islamic Jihad terrorist activity that targets Israeli civilians and harms its sovereignty. The IDF is at a high level of alert and will continue to act as necessary against any attempts to harm the citizens of Israel." The Monday rocket barrage came just hours after Israeli warplanes on Sunday night struck Islamic Jihad targets in Gaza and Syria, reportedly killing six people. Islamic Jihad threatened retaliation.

Six rockets were fired in the first wave that began at around noon Monday, the second consecutive day of attacks. The Iron Dome air defense system intercepted five rockets over Sderot and Kibbutz Nir Am.

Less than half an hour later, sirens sounded in Netiv Ha'Asara and Hof Ashkelon regional council, and a second wave of eight rockets was fired from Gaza. Two of the rockets hit a children's playground and the yard of a home in Sderot. Soon after, Barzilai Medical Center in Ashkelon said is moving its neonatal unit to a secure area out of the reach of rocket fire.

There were no injuries reported, but at least one person was treated for shock in Sderot. The Prime Minister's Office said that Benjamin Netanyahu was conducting a security consultation by phone with defense officials following the rocket attacks. It said that Netanyahu also spoke with the mayors of Sderot and Ashkelon to update them on the situation.

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Netanyahu's interview was interrupted with news of fresh air raid sirens warning of incoming rockets, as Palestinian militant fire resumed midday after a morning lull. Defense Minister Naftali Bennett warned earlier Monday that Israel was on the cusp of action "to fundamentally change the situation in the Gaza Strip," the Times of Israel reported.

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"I really understand the situation of the people of the south," Bennett said. "They deserve peace and security."

02.24.20 – Mo -

Israeli rockets & jets attack Syria targets in Damascus storing weapons from Iran

02.24.20

Israeli jets attack Islamic Jihad targets in Syria

Syrian media claims missiles were fired at the Damascus area from the Golan Heights; The UK based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the attack that targeted Iranian assets near the Damascus airport while Israel in a rare move claimed its planes attacked Islamic Jihad 'research and development of armaments' sites

Daniel Salami, Itay Blumenthal , agencies | Published: 02.24.20 , 01:18

Israel struck multiple targets near the Syrian capital late Sunday, triggering anti-aircraft fire from the country's air defenses that shook Damascus. It was the latest attack by Israel on the war-ravaged country.

A Syrian military statement reported an Israeli attack near Damascus International Airport and said its air defenses confronted Israeli rockets coming from the direction of the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights. It said the defenders intercepted or shot down most of them.

In a rare acknowledgment of operations in neighboring Syria, Israel said its warplanes attacked targets of the Palestinian militant Islamic Jihad group south of Damascus in addition to sites in the Gaza Strip. It said the sites attacked were used for "research and development of armaments" that are manufactured in Syria and the Gaza Strip. It said the sites also produce dozens of kilograms of rocket fuel each month.

The military said the attacks "were carried out in response to the attempted attack this morning on the security fence (in Gaza) and the launching of rockets from the Gaza Strip at Israel."

According to Syrian media reports, explosions were heard in the Syrian capital as missiles were fired from the area of the Golan Heights.

The UK based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said Israel was behind the attack that targeted Iranian assets near the Damascus airport.

A Syrian airforce cargo plane arrived in Tehran Sunday and later returned to Damascus. Israel issued a ban on civilian aircraft in the Golan Heights region to fly over 5,000 feet as of Sunday and through the end of the month.

This is not the first time this month that airstrikes in Syria have been attributed to Israel. Satellite images released last Monday showed significant damage to warehouses and office buildings at Damascus International Airport, following airstrikes the previous Thursday attributed to Israel.

The photographs released by ImageSat International show that several warehouses, apparently used to store weapons that were flown into Syria from Iran, were destroyed in the strikes along with multiple buildings used as headquarters for the operations at the site.

In addition, a hangar was damaged during the attack.

ImageSat says the shelter was "probably used for storing ammunition or missiles."

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which monitors the war, said seven people were killed in the attack that targeted posts for Iranian-backed militias in the area between the Damascus international airport and the Sayeda Zeinab neighborhood, south of the capital.

02.23.20 – Su -

Pope cautions unfair Israel, Palestine peace plans & adversity depicted as invasion

02.23.20

Pope cautions against 'unfair' Middle East peace plans

Although the head of the Catholic Church did not mention any specific proposals by name, it appears he was referring to Trump's 'Deal of the Century' that allows Israel to annex all of its settlements along with the strategic Jordan Valley

Associated Press| Published: 02.23.20 , 14:13

Pope Francis has cautioned against "unfair" solutions aimed at ending the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians.

In a **speech Sunday** during a visit to the **Italian southern port** city of Bari to reflect on peace in countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea, Francis lamented the many areas of war and conflict, including in the Middle East and Northern Africa.

Francis spoke of "the still unresolved conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, with the danger of **not fair solutions**, and, thus, presaging new crises."

The pope didn't cite any specific proposals.

A new U.S. peace plan would let Israel annex all of its settlements along with the strategic Jordan Valley. It would give the Palestinians limited autonomy in several chunks of territory with a capital on the outskirts of Jerusalem, but only if they meet stringent conditions.

**In the same speech**, Francis took a swipe at populist politics. "**It scares me when I hear some speeches by some leaders** of the new forms of popularism," he said. He also lamented that waves of **refugees** fleeing conflicts, **climate change** consequences **and other adversity** are "**depicted as an invasion.**"

Among the prelates gathered for his speech in Bari's Pontifical Basilica of St. Nicholas were churchmen from the Balkans, Jerusalem and Algeria.