

Ynet-News, July 26, 2020 – Sunday

07.26.20 – Su - - -

Gantz spoke of ensuring security, Hezbollah responded by Israeli drone crash

07.23.20 – Th - - - News Placed in July 26 spot – Sunday

West Bank Annex delayed as mapping earmarks land for future Palestine state

07.23.20 – Th - - -

Israel frees Hamas West Bank leader Yousef, interned since April 2 last year

07.23.20 – Th - - - News Placed in July 24 spot – Friday

Fragile partnership cannot continue if Gantz faction votes constantly oppose Likud

07.23.20 – Th - - - News

Israeli army reinforces Lebanon border deployment after Hezbollah newspaper threats

07.26.20 – Su - - - News Placed in July 25 spot – Saturday

Category-1 Hurricane Hanna torrential downpour in South Texas over 50 water rescues Saturday

07.26.20 – Su - - -

Gantz spoke of ensuring security, Hezbollah responded by Israeli drone crash

07.26.20

Israeli drone crashes in Lebanon amid tensions with Hezbollah

Army says 'no concern' that any intel was leaked following the crash, which came just hours after Gantz warned Hezbollah against retaliating for the killing of one of its fighters; terror-group's terror chief says 'retaliation rules' remain the same

Ynet,News agencies| Published: 07.26.20 , 22:31

Israel said a military drone crashed in southern Lebanon on Sunday as cross-border tensions ran high following the killing of a Hezbollah militant in an Israeli airstrike in Syria last week.

The military said the drone went down over Lebanese territory "during operational activities" along the border and "there is no concern that any information was leaked". Channel 12 reported that the drone crashed after it experienced a technical failure.

Israel has beefed up its troop presence along the borders with Lebanon and Syria since Friday's strikes on Syrian army positions. Israel says those strikes were in response to unspecified munitions fired on the Golan Heights.

The exchanges came after **Monday's air raid on Damascus** - believed to have been carried out **by Israel** - that killed five foreign fighters, including a member of the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah, which is backed by Iran.

The Israeli military issued the statement shortly after Defense Minister Benny **Gantz met with army brass** near the country's northern frontier. During the visit, **Gantz** said Israel will **continue to prevent Iran's entrenchment in Syria** and also **warned** "those who test us," hinting at **Hezbollah**.

"We will **continue to ensure our security interests**, which include **removing Iranian entrenchment in Syria**, blocking the transfer of advanced weapons, and preventing the development of **precision-guided missiles** anywhere in the region — **in Syria or in Lebanon**," he said.

According to Gantz, "the situation in Lebanon and Syria is bad - economically, coronavirus and infrastructure wise."

"I remind Syria and Lebanon that they are responsible for all that happens within their boundaries and around them, and we will demand this responsibility to be upheld," he added.

"We are not looking for unnecessary flareups, but those who test us will be met with our superior capabilities."

Hezbollah's deputy chief, however, appeared to **ignore Gantz's warnings** and remained vague on whether the group will retaliate over the death of its fighter.

"The rules for retaliation against Israel remains the same and we do not wish to change it," said Hezbollah deputy chief Naim Qasim said. "We're used to Israeli threats, they do not offer us a new political vision and we will not be dragged by them into an incident," he added.

"Should Israel decide to go to war with us, then we will confront them, with the 2006 [Second Lebanon] War for our the model of resistance," Qasim told Hezbollah's own al-Mayadeen TV.

07.23.20 – Th - - -

West Bank Annex delayed as mapping earmarks land for future Palestine state

07.23.20

Greenblatt: U.S. wants Israel to earmark land for future Palestinian state

Ex-U.S. Mideast envoy says while Trump peace plan allows Israel to apply sovereignty to some 30% of West Bank, it also commits Israel to slating lands for a Palestinian state
i24NEWS| Published: **07.23.20** , 19:34

The **United States** wants Israel to **earmark lands** for a **future Palestinian state**, former U.S. Middle East envoy Jason **Greenblatt** told Army Radio on Thursday.

Washington seeks the move in exchange for greenlighting Israel's intention to apply sovereignty over West Bank areas under U.S. President Donald Trump's Peace to Prosperity plan.

Greenblatt pointed out that while the plan does allow Israel to apply its laws to some 30% of the West Bank, it **also commits Israel to slating lands for a Palestinian state**. Greenblatt's remarks follow reports in the Israeli media that the U.S. asked Israel to hand half of Area C - a zone currently under Israeli security and civil control - to the Palestinian Authority while applying its laws to the other half.

The Trump peace plan also sees territories in the Negev, in Israel's south, appended to the coastal Gaza Strip and converted into agriculture and industry centers.

Under the coalition agreement between Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister and Alternative Prime Minister Benny Gantz, an annexation plan could have been put to a vote as early as July 1.

However, **late into July, no plan is on the table**, and the **prospects** of the move are **unclear** as multiple **reports** suggested it is **not on the immediate agenda** for the government.

07.23.20 – Th - - -

Israel frees Hamas West Bank leader Yousef, interned since April 2 last year

07.23.20

Israel frees Hamas West Bank leader from detention after 16 months

Terrorist group's co-founder, who has been arrested multiple times in the past, **released** from Ofer Prison; suspect released from previous 10-month term of imprisonment in October 2018

AFP| Published: **07.23.20** , 19:10

Israel on **Thursday freed** a senior **leader of Hamas** in the West Bank after **imprisoning** him **without trial for 16 months**, his son said.

Hassan Yousef, a co-founder of the Palestinian Islamist group, was **arrested on April 2 last year** at his Ramallah home.

"My father was released from the Israeli prison in Ofer, he is now at home and is in good health," his son Owais Youssef told AFP.

Following his arrest, Yousef, who is considered a top spiritual leader in the terrorist faction, was **handed a six-month detention order** that was **extended** for **another six months** and **then for a further four**, his son told AFP.

The 65-year-old, who has been arrested multiple times, had been released from a previous 10-month term of imprisonment in October 2018.

Israel's administrative **detention system allows the internment of prisoners for renewable periods** of **up to six months each**, **without bringing charges**.

Israel says the procedure allows authorities to hold suspects and prevent attacks while continuing to gather evidence, but critics and rights groups say the system is abused. Around 350 Palestinians were being held under administrative detention orders at the end of May, the latest data currently available, according to Israeli human rights organization B'Tselem.

The group said the evidence against detainees was not disclosed.

A member of the now-defunct Palestinian parliament, Hassan Yousef is estranged from his eldest son, Mosab Hassan Yousef, who for 10 years spied against his father's movement.

07.23.20 – Th - - -

Fragile partnership cannot continue if Gantz faction votes constantly oppose Likud

07.23.20

'Wake up!' Rivlin blasts government for postulating election amid virus

President says Israel is not a 'rag doll' for politicians to 'drag around' after Likud chair warned the partnership with Blue & White could not continue after they voted to ban gay conversion; PM tells Litzman he'll do anything for bill not to pass

Itamar Eichner | Published: 07.23.20 , 11:54

President Reuven Rivlin on Thursday blasted the coalition government for postulating having another election in the midst of the coronavirus crisis.

The president's remarks came less than a day after Likud officials said the coalition partnership with Blue & White could not continue after Benny Gantz's party voted in favor of outlawing gay conversion in the Knesset plenum, enraging Haredi parties in the government.

"I follow with great concern the developments in the Knesset, which repeatedly shake the already fragile partnership among the coalition factions," Rivlin said in a statement.

"Wake up! Stop the talk about early elections."

He called the possibility of another election as "terrible" and harshly criticized the conduct of the coalition partners. "The State of Israel is not a rag doll for you to drag around behind you, while you are constantly fighting," he said.

"Our citizens, all of us, need you focused and working to resolve the unprecedented crisis in which Israel - and all of humanity - have found themselves in."

Earlier, Likud chair Miki Zohar, said the political partnership with Blue & White will not be able to continue if Gantz's faction doesn't change its ways.

"The current situation leads to the government's instability, which causes the coalition members to do whatever they please without discipline," Zohar said. "It's time to make a decision: passing the budget, having a stable government and a functioning coalition or go to the polls."

In addition, Likud sources said Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called United Torah Judaism chair and Housing and Construction Minister Yaakov Litzman following the Knesset vote, to tell him "he will do everything" for the bill not to pass in the second and third readings.

07.23.20 – Th - - -

Israeli army reinforces Lebanon border deployment after Hezbollah newspaper threats

07.23.20

Israeli army reinforces Lebanon border after Hezbollah threats

IDF's spokesperson says the military is bolstering infantry troops after sources in the Iran-backed group tell Asharq al-Awsat newspaper they will retaliate for the group's fighter killed in alleged Israeli attack in Damascus on Monday

Daniel Salami| Published: 07.23.20 , 10:43

The Israeli military said Thursday it was reinforcing the country's northern border with infantry troops after the Hezbollah terror group threatened to retaliate for the killing of one of its fighters in an alleged IDF raid in Syria earlier this week.

The IDF Spokesperson's Unit said the additional deployment is done "in accordance with the situational assessment" and that life of local farmers and holidaymakers is not expected to be affected.

Hezbollah sources told the London-based Asharq al-Awsat newspaper that there was a decision to retaliate for the killing of its fighter in Damascus on Monday.

"The response will be in line with [Hezbollah chief] Hassan Nasrallah's promise to respond from the Lebanese soil to any harm done to Hezbollah members in Syria," said the source.

In a statement on Monday, Hezbollah confirmed that member Ali Kamel Mohsen was killed by the "Zionist aggression" on the outskirts of Damascus.

On Wednesday, the IDF announced it would be canceling a naval drill scheduled to have taken place in the area.

Last time there was a flare-up on the Israel-Lebanon border, the Iran-backed Shi'ite organization launched anti-tank missiles at IDF post and military vehicles near the town of Avivim in the north, on September 1, 2019. The incident ended with no casualties to Israeli troops.

On Monday, according to multiple reports, Israel attacked sites belonging to Hezbollah and several other organizations backed by Iran, south of the Syrian capital.

Israel did not comment on the strike and generally refrains from discussing its activities in neighboring Syria. But it is believed to have carried out hundreds of strikes against pro-Iranian forces during the nearly decade-long civil war.

Tehran has sent thousands of Iran-backed fighters over the recent years to fight alongside Syrian government forces.

Israel views Iran as a regional menace and has vowed to prevent any permanent Iranian military buildup in Syria, particularly near its frontier.

07.26.20 – Su - - -

Category-1 Hurricane Hanna torrential downpour in South Texas over 50 water rescues Saturday

07.26.20 – Hurricane Hanna – Texas – Category-1 devastation to virus-ravaged Rio Grande Valley
Michael Rodriguez - July 26, 2020

There's 2020, and then there's 2020 in the Rio Grande Valley, where devastation has struck on two fronts in a perfect storm of disaster — all before summer's end.

While no one in the Valley needs a reminder that the area has endured a pandemic of biblical proportions for more than a month, things became shockingly worse Saturday as the region incurred a storm that only added to the suffering. Leaving some to wonder when the hordes of locusts and frogs and boils will arrive, and how long the people of the Valley can endure the torment of a year that doesn't give The Monitor much opportunity to print good news.

Whether by coincidence or fate, Hidalgo County Judge Richard F. Cortez said a "tsunami" was coming long before Hurricane Hanna rained down a torrential downpour on the Valley for what seemed like an eternity Saturday evening. A deluge that for the fourth time in nearly as many years flooded our communities, and left structural damage and power outages affecting thousands in its wake.

At that time, March 31, the judge was referring to COVID-19 and the challenges that he knew lay not far ahead for the region. He's since delivered that ominous warning on several more occasions, at times begging the public and the state for help in mitigating the spread of the disease.

Between now and then, lockdown measures that at one point seemed to slow infections were lifted by the state. Holidays rolled around, and cases have skyrocketed by nearly 600% in about a month's time, with so many deaths now that the bodies of Valley residents rest in refrigerated trucks, hospital morgues and funeral homes in alarming numbers.

The remains of at least one such individual was found inside his home late Saturday evening amidst the hurricane, a man who found himself in the eye of both storms, and the victim of one of them.

Now the region is on its knees again, this time wading through floodwater, looking for a way out of a storm that's testing a historically resilient community that has survived devastation before, in the forms of Hurricanes Beulah and Dolly, but hasn't faced one when crippled by a pandemic.

There are 231 people in Hidalgo County fighting COVID-19 in intensive care units. The Valley, it seems, needs intensive care as well.

Even the minimal damage Hanna brought with her Saturday is potentially life-threatening to an already-vulnerable region, which has for weeks been holding its breath for a field hospital or an army of nurses or a miracle — anything that could substantially relieve our healthcare institutions overwhelmed with coronavirus patients and the bodies of those who never recovered.

The Valley awaits the state's help on that front. Meanwhile, rescue crews and officials and residents are scrambling to pick up the pieces while simultaneously attempting to social distance, fearful that helping one another — the silver lining during the region's previous hurricanes — may also turn deadly.

Therein lies another dilemma: Hanna can still kill due to COVID-19 complications.

Power outages, for instance, are not an inconvenience. They're a threat that could kill the unprecedented amount of people relying on emergency medical equipment. High winds and flooded roads do the same, grounding ambulances and slowing doctors and nurses from reaching their patients.

Having COVID-19 at home is dreadful, surely. Having COVID-19 at home, in the dark, alone, while the sheets of rain pelt your roof and tree limbs fall outside and the water creeps up the driveway is the stuff of nightmares.

Already, Hidalgo County alone has incurred hundreds of virus-related deaths, casualties to a disease that has claimed 149,000 in the U.S., 5,002 in Texas, and 456 in the Rio Grande Valley — people who, if not for the coronavirus, would be waking to another form of devastation Sunday morning with their neighbors.

Meanwhile, as Valley residents fear another tsunami taking shape, local emergency management officials have opened nine shelters in Hidalgo County, which were at capacity by Saturday evening with space so limited that at least one family had to sleep inside a local police station's hallway.

Two-hundred water rescues, with more necessary, were already conducted by midday Sunday, with reports of heavy flooding in Edinburg, the Mid-Valley, Mission and much of Hidalgo County.

In Edinburg, specifically, police there reported more than 250 calls between 6 p.m. Saturday and 11 a.m. Sunday, responding to nine accidents involving 18-wheelers, three

of which were rollovers on U.S. Highway 281, as [most major intersections remain underwater](#).

There were downed electrical wires, [over 50 water rescues](#), and the police department itself in Edinburg sustained damage to its roof, with water leaking into the building.

There were little inconveniences too — broken flower pots, damaged cars, mighty old trees ripped down in the front yard. Not being able to make a cup of coffee Sunday morning because the power never came back on.

Little inconveniences, but the latest in a string of trials and tribulations every person in the Valley has put up with for most of 2020. More little hardships added to the ledger of a very hard year.

Such was [Hanna's fury Saturday](#) that it also knocked out the power at The Monitor's and Valley Morning Star's McAllen and Harlingen offices, [delaying](#) the print production of their Sunday editions in addition to The [Brownsville Herald](#) — newspapers which would have otherwise shown tangible evidence that morning of these times, with eight pages of obituaries and dozens more death notices combined.

Readers can still view them via the newspapers' online editions, available at their respective websites — themonitor.com, brownsvilleherald.com, and valleymorningstar.com.