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Iran vulnerable to attack; US & Israel see shrinking window for action by October

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Zionism Member of Knesset Zvi Sukkot, bowing on Temple Mount undeniable right

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PM accused Qatar of funding anti-Israel rot on US campuses: Choose a side

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Hamas nears bankruptcy in Gaza: Halts salaries and has difficulty recruiting new fighters

04.17.25 – Th- - - News – Thursday Pesach 06

Hamas cell in Lebanon trained missile & drone militias in Jordan warehouses

04.17.25 – Th- - - News – Thursday Pesach 06

Israel planned to attack Iran's nuclear sites in May – Trump favors to negotiate

04.17.25 – Th- - - News – Thursday Pesach 06

Putin meets freed Russian hostages of Hamas; they plead release of remaining hostages

04.17.25 – Th- - - News – Thursday Pesach 06

Anti-Israel NGO from Brussels, files ICC warrant for Gideon Sa'ar during UK visit

04.16.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday Pesach 05

Gaza anti-Hamas protests erupt again, call for withdrawal of both Hamas and Israel

04.16.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday Pesach 05

Hostage survivor Noa Argamani named to Time's 100 most influential people

04.16.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday Pesach 05

IDF has no deadline for Gaza operations, aiming to avoid endangering hostages

04.16.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday Pesach 05

IDF kills last remaining terrorist from fatal West Bank attack in January

04.16.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday Pesach 05

Shin Bet excluded from operations since target of elected officials and journalists

04.16.25 – We- - - News – Placed in April 16 spot – Wednesday Pesach 05

Despite no hostage deal, Israel prepares aid to Gaza, per international law

04.16.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday Pesach 05

IDF kills top Hamas terrorist behind Nahal Oz attack, 2014 deaths of 5 soldiers

04.15.25 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday Pesach 04

Iran releases propaganda video of drones & missiles preparing to attack Israel

04.15.25 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday Pesach 04

US begins troop withdraw from Syria in mid-June; influenced by J.D. Vance

04.15.25 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday Pesach 04

BBC report; Hamas rejected Egypt ceasefire offer; while still in consultation

04.15.25 – Tu- - - News – Placed in April 15 spot – Tuesday Pesach 04

Hamas to respond to proposal within 48 hours; ceasefire to be complete in 45 days

04.15.25 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday Pesach 04

Leaker was censor of internal Shin Bet documents; shared elements with PM

04.15.25 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday Pesach 04

Likud following leak probe: Ronen Bar turned Shin Bet into a deep-state militia

04.15.25 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday Pesach 04

PA set to elect vice president for Abbas; meeting, begins April 23 in Ramallah

04.14.25 – Mo- - - News – Monday Pesach 03

Egypt ceasefire proposal includes talks on permanent truce, Hamas disarmament

04.14.25 – Mo- - - News – Monday Pesach 03

PM unclear of US red lines in Iran nuclear talks; Israel must retain ability to strike

04.14.25 – Mo- - - News – Monday Pesach 03

US approves major weapons to Israel as IDF prepares for Gaza & eyes Iran

04.14.25 – Mo- - - News – Monday Pesach 03

Hamas rejects disarmament; eyes US assurance of ceasefire with 10 hostages

04.14.25 – Mo- - - News – Monday Pesach 03

Trump flustered over the pace, warns Iran of harsh response if nuclear talks stall

04.14.25 – Mo- - - News – Monday Pesach 03

Israeli actions in Gaza go beyond proportionate self-defense, EU top diplomat says

04.14.25 – Mo- - - News Placed in April 14 spot – Monday Pesach 03

Hamas flex to release 10; demand leaders go free; all factions reject disarming

04.14.25 – Mo- - - News – Monday Pesach 03

One year ago today, US describe thwarting 300 drone & missile attack on Israel

04.14.25 – Mo- - - News – Monday Pesach 03

Egyptian proposal; nine to 10 hostages & open border crossings by end of month

04.14.25 – Mo- - - News – Monday Pesach 03

Judea stolen car stopped by police, driver ran over the officer & fled to Hebron

04.14.25 – Mo- - - News – Monday Pesach 03

IDF chief Zamir stressed; keep media out; close discussions; no details of mobilization

04.13.25 – Su- - - News – Sunday Pesach 02

Hamas may be serious to hostage release & second phase; but will not disarm

04.13.25 – Su- - - News – Sunday Pesach 02

Netanyahu backs son after tweet against Macron support of an evil PA state

04.13.25 – Su- - - News – Sunday Pesach 02

Israeli alarmed over soft US stance on Iran nuclear talks, absence of red lines

04.13.25 – Su- - - News – Sunday Pesach 02

Houthi missile fire triggers air raid sirens across central Israel, Jerusalem

04.13.25 – Su- - - News – Sunday Pesach 02

Gaza health official threatened after calling out terrorists using hospital

04.13.25 – Su- - - News – Sunday Pesach 02

After rockets launched, IDF disables 34th hospital in Gaza used by Hamas military

04.13.25 – Su- - - News – Sunday Pesach 02

Hezbollah's silent collapse in Lebanon; urge Israel to withdraw to justify disarming

04.13.25 – Su- - - News Placed in April 13 spot – Sunday Pesach 02

Lebanese army took control of 190 out of 265 Hezbollah bases south of Litani River

04.12.25 – Sa- - - News – Saturday Full Moon 7:23pm

Hamas releases new video of hostage Edan Alexander on Passover night

04.12.25 – Sa- - - News Placed in April 12 spot – Saturday Full Moon 7:23pm

IDF encircled Rafah & cut off from the coast, will expand other areas in Gaza

04.12.25 – Sa- - - News – Saturday Full Moon 7:23pm

IDF seals off Rafah, intercepts rocket fire from southern Gaza

04.11.25 – Fr- - - Pesach day of Preparation

Iran cannot have a nuclear weapon, Trump says on eve of Witkoff talks

04.18.25 – Fr Pesach 07

Two teens affiliated with ISIS, planned attack on synagogue in city of Lod

04.18.25 – Fr Pesach 07

Two teens accused of Islamic State affiliation, planned attack on synagogue

According to prosecutors, the pair, an Israeli and a Palestinian, planned for one to distract synagogue's security guard while the other attacked him with a poisoned knife, taking his weapon and opening fire on parishioners

Roi Rubinstein|04:02

Israeli authorities on Friday filed an indictment against two teenagers — an Israeli and a Palestinian from Hebron — accusing them of membership in the Islamic State group and conspiring to carry out a terrorist attack on a synagogue in the central Israeli city of Lod.

According to the indictment, the Israeli teen began communicating with ISIS operatives and supporters on social media in the months leading up to August 2024. Prosecutors said the teen adopted the group's ideology and pledged allegiance in a video sent to his ISIS handler.

Due to his location in Israel, the teen was asked to carry out an attack on Israeli civilians in the name of ISIS, to which he agreed, prosecutors said. He allegedly selected a synagogue in Lod as the target and sent a photo of the location to his handler, who approved the choice.

"The original plan was to carry out a shooting attack during Saturday morning prayers, when the synagogue would be crowded with worshippers," the indictment said.

Prosecutors said an initial plan to use an improvised firearm was abandoned. A revised plan allegedly involved the Israeli teen recruiting an accomplice to distract the synagogue's security guard while he attacked the guard with a poisoned knife, took his weapon, and opened fire. The handler reportedly sent instructions for preparing the poison intended for the attack.

The indictment states that the Israeli teen later traveled to Hebron, where he met the Palestinian teen, told him about his affiliation with ISIS, explained the group's ideology, and invited him to join. The Palestinian teen agreed and also pledged allegiance to the group, according to prosecutors.

The Israeli teen then shared the details of the planned attack and asked the second teen to join him. Prosecutors said the Palestinian teen agreed.

Authorities said the plot was ultimately foiled when the teens' primary ISIS contact was arrested in Jordan. However, prosecutors noted that the Israeli teen continued to maintain contact with ISIS supporters, ran jihad-related social media groups, and expressed a continued desire to carry out attacks.

04.18.25 – Fr Pesach 07

US envoy Huckabee visits West Wall, with Trump written prayer for hostages return

04.18.25 – Fr Pesach 07

New U.S. envoy Huckabee visits Western Wall: 'Trump told me to pray for hostages' return'

In first public appearance since role confirmation, Huckabee makes his way to holy site with a prayer note personally given to him by Trump, accompanied by Western Wall Rabbi Shmuel Rabinowitz

Nina Fox|02:58

Mike Huckabee, the new U.S. ambassador to Israel, visited the Western Wall in Jerusalem on Friday, where he prayed for the safe return of hostages held in Gaza and delivered a handwritten prayer from President Donald Trump.

Huckabee, who arrived in Israel earlier this week following his Senate confirmation, said Trump personally gave him the note last Thursday during a meeting at the White House. "My first act as ambassador was to take his prayer—praying for the peace of Jerusalem—and to bring it to the Wall, and to pray that there would in fact be peace in the land," Huckabee said.

"I also come with a prayer that all of the hostages will come home now, and that we will bring them home," he added. "And that is the prayer of the President as well."

The Western Wall stop was Huckabee's first public appearance in his new role. He was accompanied by Western Wall Rabbi Shmuel Rabinowitz, who recited the traditional "Shir Lama'alot" (A Song of Ascents). Visitors at the site greeted the ambassador with applause and warm wishes.

Huckabee, a former governor of Arkansas and an Evangelical Christian, is a longtime supporter of Israel. He has previously endorsed Israeli sovereignty over the West Bank and has opposed the two-state solution. However, he emphasized that as ambassador, he would implement the policies of the Trump administration.

"He [President Trump] has visited this place in person—the only president to do so," Huckabee said. "He has done so very much to show the extraordinary love for the Jewish people and for the people of Israel: recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of the Jewish state, recognizing the Golan Heights, moving the embassy here, and many more acts of friendship and alliance."

Huckabee said the timing of his visit, during the final weekend of Passover, made the moment even more significant. "I cannot think of a better time to come and to bring this message of goodwill," he said. "I come today on behalf of the American people with prayers or best wishes—not just for Passover, but for all eternity." Rabbi Rabinowitz welcomed the ambassador's visit, saying, "These are difficult days—our hostages remain trapped in Hamas tunnels, and Israel continues to mourn its fallen. In these moments, your friendship and your unwavering support bring us strength and hope."

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

Houthi missile launch after heavy US airstrikes on Yemen fuel ports

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

Houthi missile fire triggers air raid sirens across Israel

IDF says projectile intercepted outside Israeli airspace; launch comes after heavy U.S. airstrikes on fuel port at Ras Isa near Houdeida
ynet | 23:03

Sirens were activated early on Friday across central Israel, the Jerusalem area and parts of the West Bank, after the Houthi rebels fired a ballistic missile at Israel. The IDF said it intercepted the missile outside Israeli airspace.

The missile fire follows one of the heaviest American attacks on Houthi targets overnight. The U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) said late on Thursday that it had "destroyed" the fuel port at Ras Isa near Houdeida port to eliminate this source of fuel for the Iran-backed Houthi terrorists.

According to reports at least 38 people were killed in the attack including port staff and emergency teams and over 100 were hurt. Yemen media showed huge fire balls at the port.

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

Despite Israel's efforts, US begins shuttering three of its eight bases from Syria

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

Despite Israel's efforts, US begins withdrawing troops from Syria

About 600 US troops are withdrawing from northeast Syria as three bases close, despite Israeli pressure to halt the move and President Trump's doubts about keeping any American forces in the country

Reuters, Ynetnews | 16:38

The United States has started drawing down hundreds of troops from northeastern Syria, the New York Times reported on Thursday.

According to a report, the military is shuttering three of its eight small operating bases, reducing troop levels to about 1,400 from 2,000, citing two senior U.S. officials.

According to one official, commanders have advised that at least 500 U.S. troops remain in Syria. However, President Donald Trump has expressed deep skepticism about maintaining any American military presence in the country.

The move aligns with Trump's longstanding isolationist stance, influenced in part by Vice President J.D. Vance. "This isn't our war," Trump has said repeatedly, and the Pentagon has been preparing for the withdrawal for some time.

Israeli officials have opposed the move and made several efforts to prevent it, but were recently informed that those efforts had failed. Despite the setback, Israel's defense establishment continues to exert pressure on Washington to reconsider or limit the drawdown.

A senior Israeli official estimated that if the withdrawal proceeds, it would likely be only partial—though even that, Israel argues, could destabilize the region. Israeli defense officials fear that a reduced U.S. presence would embolden Turkey, which is openly seeking to expand its control in the area, particularly after the fall of the Assad regime.

American troops are currently deployed in several strategic locations across eastern and northern Syria, where they serve as a stabilizing force. Their withdrawal, Israeli officials warn, could increase Turkey's ambitions to seize more strategic military assets on the ground.

While the fall of Bashar al-Assad's regime has reduced several regional threats—such as pro-Iranian militias and Russian troops who once supported his government—the threat from ISIS remains significant, especially in northeastern Syria, where most U.S. forces are stationed.

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

Hamas rejects Israeli ceasefire, demands full withdrawal and prisoner exchange

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

Hamas rejects Israeli ceasefire terms, demands full withdrawal and prisoner exchange. Terror group negotiator labels proposal as 'unrealistic'; Smotrich urges Gaza escalation, calls on Netanyahu to 'open the gates of hell'; 'Mr. Prime Minister, go ahead — give the order!'

Einav Halabi | 14:48

Hamas on Thursday rejected Israel's latest ceasefire proposal, calling it "unrealistic" and accusing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of using partial deals to advance his political agenda.

Khalil al-Hayya, who heads Hamas' negotiating team and leads the terrorist group's Gaza operations, said Hamas is ready to immediately negotiate a comprehensive deal that includes the release of all hostages in exchange for an agreed number of Palestinian prisoners, a full Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and the start of reconstruction efforts. "We will not be part of Netanyahu's political cover for continuing the war," he said.

He added that the group's weapons and armed resistance "are a natural right" tied to the existence of occupation, rejecting the possibility of disarmament.

The Hamas statement followed Israel's submission of a proposal to Egyptian and Qatari mediators earlier this week. According to al-Hayya, Hamas had agreed to a mediator-backed plan at the end of Ramadan, but Netanyahu was intent on prolonging the war to serve his political future.

In response, Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich — who also serves as an additional minister in the Defense Ministry — called for a full military escalation in Gaza. "Israel

will not surrender to Hamas and will not end the war without total victory,” he said in a statement.

Smotrich urged Netanyahu to “open the gates of hell” and intensify operations to include the full conquest of Gaza, the destruction of Hamas and the implementation of U.S. President Donald Trump’s plan to relocate Gazans for rehabilitation in other countries. “Mr. Prime Minister, go ahead — give the order,” he said.

Earlier this week, the BBC reported, citing a senior Palestinian source, that Hamas had rejected a six-week ceasefire proposal under which Israel would release 16 deceased hostages and 10 living captives. In a separate interview with Al Jazeera, senior Hamas figure Mahmoud Mardawi said the terror group would never negotiate on its weapons or those who carry them. “Disarming the resistance is purely an Israeli proposal, not an Egyptian one,” he said.

Meanwhile, Egyptian sources told Lebanon’s Hezbollah-affiliated newspaper Al-Akhbar that progress had been made toward a ceasefire deal, although Cairo believes Israel’s current proposal is “not viable” and lacks minimal guarantees. Egyptian officials reportedly continue efforts to bridge gaps between Israel and Hamas.

On Wednesday night, Prime Minister Netanyahu held a phone-based security assessment with the Israeli negotiation team and senior defense officials. According to a statement from his office, Netanyahu instructed them to “continue efforts to advance the release of our hostages.”

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

IDF improve alert system 3–5 minutes for long-range threats from Yemen & beyond

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

IDF introduces advance alert system for long-range missile threats from Yemen and beyond

As part of an effort to improve Israel’s long-range missile alert policy, Home Front Command app to issue pre-warning 3–5 minutes before sirens—such as in cases of missile fire from Yemen or Iran

Gal Ganot, Yoav Zitun|14:31

The IDF announced Thursday that a new pre-alert protocol will be implemented ahead of potential missile attacks from Yemen toward Israeli territory.

The measure aims to streamline the national alert system for long-range missile threats, such as those from Iran, as well, by improving civilian preparedness, maintaining the relevance of Home Front Command warning systems and minimizing false alarms.

According to IDF, the new pre-alert will be issued approximately three to five minutes before the activation of a full missile alert. The notification is not a directive to seek shelter, but rather an early warning to raise public awareness and allow civilians to prepare, potentially enhancing personal safety.

The IDF said that the message will inform the public that missile alerts are likely in their area and advise individuals to move closer to a secure space. Should an actual alert follow, people must enter protected areas and remain there for at least 10 minutes. There may be cases where a full alert is not triggered after the advance notice.

The pre-alerts will be distributed across wide areas where there is a potential threat to allow adequate time for preparation. However, the actual missile alert will be sent only to the specific regions where the threat materializes. As a result, some areas may receive the early warning without later receiving an alert.

The new alerts will be delivered via the Home Front Command app through a unique notification sound—distinct from the traditional siren. The IDF emphasized that the purpose of the alert is to enhance readiness, enable civilians to identify the safest nearby shelter and ensure they receive verified updates from official sources.

In addition, a message from the IDF spokesperson will be sent stating: “Missile fire from Yemen toward the State of Israel may occur in the coming minutes,” and will urge the public to follow Home Front Command guidelines. The military added that this app-based alert system is being further developed for broader accessibility on additional platforms.

A response to premature alerts on social media

Since the Houthi rebels in Yemen resumed missile attacks on Israel, following the collapse of the ceasefire in Gaza, many citizens have relied on Telegram and WhatsApp groups for unofficial missile warnings, often minutes before official sirens sounded. These few minutes can be critical for reaching shelter safely, and the new pre-alert system aims to provide that vital time, improve readiness, and potentially reduce injuries caused during the rush to safety.

Earlier this week, the Houthis launched another missile toward Israel—the first in two weeks—triggering sirens in the Tel Aviv area, central Israel, Jerusalem and the Shfela region. Videos on social media showed interceptor missiles being launched at the incoming ballistic missile, with debris later found near Hebron.

Initially, the IDF reported the launch of two missiles, but later clarified that only one was fired and that it was likely intercepted successfully.

Missile attacks from Yemen have also impacted operations at Ben Gurion Airport, which has occasionally paused flights during alerts. Incoming planes have circled in holding patterns, while departures have been delayed. Despite a two-week gap without sirens, the Houthis continued launching missiles during that time—though they landed outside Israeli territory.

Meanwhile, U.S. airstrikes against Houthi targets in Yemen have continued, but the Houthis show no sign of halting their fire toward Israel.

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

Trump says did not 'wave off' Israeli strike on Iran, but 'not in a rush to do it'

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

Trump says did not 'wave off' Israeli strike on Iran, but 'not in a rush to do it'
US president responds to NYT report on blocked Iran strike, says he prefers diplomacy over military action: 'I think that Iran has a chance to have a great country; if there's a second option I think it would be very bad for Iran'
Daniel Edelson, New York|13:37

U.S. President Donald Trump responded Thursday to a New York Times report claiming he blocked an Israeli strike on Iran's nuclear facilities, saying he did not "wave off" such an operation but preferred a diplomatic path.

"I wouldn't say waved off," Trump told reporters in the Oval Office. "I am not in a rush to do it because I think that Iran has a chance to have a great country and to live happily without death... That's my first option."

"If there's a second option [a military strike], I think it would be very bad for Iran," he continued. "I think Iran wants to talk. I hope they want to talk. It would be very good for them if they do. I'd like to see Iran thrive in the future, do fantastically well. I know the Iranian people — they're incredible people. They always have been."

The New York Times, citing Trump administration officials, reported late Wednesday that Israel had been preparing to strike Iran's nuclear facilities, possibly as soon as the following month, with full U.S. coordination. Trump, according to the report, canceled the plans in favor of launching a diplomatic effort aimed at curbing Iran's nuclear program through negotiations.

The report said the decision followed months of internal debate in Washington over whether to back Israeli military action or pursue diplomacy while Iran remained militarily and economically weakened.

In response to the report, the office of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu did not deny the claim that Trump had blocked the strike. Instead, a statement released Thursday evening reiterated Netanyahu's long-standing campaign against Iran's nuclear ambitions.

"For over a decade, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has led the global campaign against Iran's nuclear program, even when the threat was belittled and labeled 'political spin,' and the prime minister was called 'paranoid,'" the statement read.

"The prime minister has led countless overt and covert operations in the campaign against Iran's nuclear program. It is only due to these operations that Iran does not currently possess a nuclear arsenal."

According to the Prime Minister's Office, these actions delayed Iran's nuclear program by roughly a decade, thanks to Netanyahu's insistence on pursuing a firm policy despite domestic and international opposition. "As the prime minister has stated repeatedly: Israel will not allow Iran to acquire nuclear weapons."

The statement was posted on the official "Prime Minister of Israel" X account, but not on Netanyahu's personal social media pages.

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

Qatar ruler says Israel did not abide by Gaza truce deal

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

Qatar ruler says Israel 'did not abide' by Gaza truce deal

Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani visits Moscow, meets with President Putin; says Qatar will strive to bridge perspectives to end Palestinian suffering

Lior Ben Ari, AFP|09:37

Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani said Thursday that Israel had failed to uphold the Gaza ceasefire agreement reached in January, speaking during a meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow.

“As you know, we reached an agreement months ago, but unfortunately, Israel did not abide by this agreement,” said the Qatari ruler, whose country served as a key mediator of the deal.

Sheikh Tamim added that Qatar would “strive to bridge perspectives in order to reach an agreement that ends the suffering of the Palestinian people, especially in Gaza.” The Gaza truce between Israel and Hamas — brokered by Qatar, Egypt, and the United States — went into effect on January 19, temporarily halting over 15 months of hostilities following the Hamas-led massacre on October 7.

The initial phase of the ceasefire ended in early March after both sides failed to agree on further terms. On March 18, Israel resumed air and ground operations across the Gaza Strip after previously pausing the entry of humanitarian aid.

In an interview broadcast Thursday on the Christian Daystar channel, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu accused Qatar of fueling anti-Israel sentiment on U.S. university campuses. It marked the first time he publicly held the Gulf state responsible for what he described as a “rot” in American academic institutions.

“Qatar may have helped us reach a ceasefire — a temporary one — but they did so while hosting Hamas terrorists,” Netanyahu said. “You can’t fund the arsonists and the firefighters at the same time. You have to choose. Choose a side.” He further accused Qatar of promoting anti-Israel and anti-American narratives through its state-funded broadcaster Al-Jazeera. “You see it, unfortunately, in Al Jazeera Arabic, which promotes anti-Americanism and anti-Zionism, woven together,” he said. The exchange of accusations comes as Israeli authorities investigate allegations involving close advisors to Netanyahu, with claims that they received money from Qatar aimed at improving the Gulf state’s image during the war.

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

Saudi minister visits Iran; indicates it does not support US-Israel attack on nuclear sites

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

In Saudi minister's visit, Riyadh indicates to Iran it does not support an attack on nuclear sites

High-level visit comes days ahead of the next round of US-Iran talks on the Iranian nuclear program; Iran expert says Riyadh seeks to assure Iran it does not support an American or Israel attack against its facilities, in the hopes of avoiding regional war
Lior Ben Ari|08:06

Saudi Arabia's Defense Minister Prince Khalid bin Salman arrived in Tehran on Thursday on a visit that was announced overnight. He will be meeting with Iranian officials, just days before the next round of talks is to be held between Iranian and American delegations on the future of the Iranian nuclear program.

According to Iranian media, the Saudi minister was invited by Iran's chief of military staff Major General Mohammad Bagheri and the meetings will include discussions on bilateral relations and regional cooperation to "promote peace and stability."

This is the first official visit of the defense minister in Iran but the second by a senior Saudi military official in recent months. Saudi Arabia's military chief Air Chief Marshal Fayyadh Al Ruwaili visited the Islamic Republic last year. Despite the renewed diplomatic relations between Riyadh and Tehran in 2023, Thursday's visit is still considered outstanding.

The Sunni Saudi Arabia and the Shiite Iran have been bitter rivals and the Iranian regime is the principal backer of the Houthi rebels in Yemen, who repeatedly attacked Saudi targets, including their main Aramco oil facility in 2019.

Even after the two countries renewed their diplomatic ties, severed for seven years, Riyadh remained suspicious of its neighbor and, like Israel, is concerned over its nuclear ambitions.

Danny (Dennis) Citrinowicz, a Research Fellow in the Iran Program at the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) and a former member of the IDF military intelligence directorate, told Ynet the visit was by all accounts unusual, especially in light of the American campaign against the Houthis.

"This is the highest level visit since Saudi Arabia and Iran began normalizing their relations," he said. "The visit is important also because of the perhaps unlikely possibility of an incursion into the port of Houdeida by forces supported by Riyadh and of course, the massive American troop build-up in the Gulf and the possibility of a U.S. strike on Iran's nuclear facilities."

The Qatari Al Araby Al Jadeed newspaper reported on Thursday that the internationally recognized Yemeni government based in Aden, which had been fighting the Houthi rebels who control Sanaa, has held intensive talks recently with the United States, Britain and other countries about a possible ground offensive

Citrinowicz said the visit to Iran by the Saudi minister could be in order to maintain coordination between Riyadh and Tehran, to avoid any misunderstanding of the situation and unwanted deterioration, for both sides. He believes the Saudis fear a regional escalation of violence, which would be detrimental to Saudi interests, if the U.S. and/or Israel attack Iran.

"The Saudis want to resolve the Iranian nuclear matter peacefully," Citrinowicz said. "They are worried about Iran's nuclear program but prefer that a deal be reached that would distance Tehran from obtaining a nuclear weapon and avoid a war." He said he believed the Saudis fear a repeat of the 2019 attack by the Houthis that disrupted their oil production. "They want to avoid an Iranian attack and seek strategic clarity with Iran so that Tehran will be convinced that they do not support an attack on the nuclear sites, even indirectly."

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

Iran vulnerable to attack; US & Israel see shrinking window for action by October

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

Trump's Iran balancing act: The high-stakes gamble behind Israel's on-again, off-again Tehran strike

Netanyahu's urgent Washington trip to push for US-backed strikes on Iran's nuclear sites stalled as Trump prioritizes diplomacy, even as Israel eyes a shrinking window for military action: These are the possible targets and the repercussions

Yuval Karni, Lior Ben Ari|06:59

After the New York Times report overnight between Wednesday and Thursday revealed new details behind the high-stakes drama between Israel and the U.S. which prompted Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's urgent trip to Washington, more information about the possible targets and repercussions have come to light.

Netanyahu had hoped to persuade U.S. President Donald Trump to back an Israeli-led military operation against Iran, including a sustained week-long airstrike campaign, but instead found himself sitting beside the U.S. president as he announced new diplomatic negotiations.

Despite Trump's softer-than-expected approach toward Iran, Netanyahu has largely avoided publicly criticizing him — a caution possibly linked to Trump's reputation for retaliation, as seen recently with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. Still, Netanyahu sent a veiled message to Washington by releasing an English-language video in which he accused Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei of threatening Israel's destruction during negotiations.

So far, according to the report, Netanyahu's lobbying efforts have failed and Iran's nuclear facilities will not be attacked in May. However, Trump has not ruled out future strikes if talks collapse. The U.S. has already positioned significant forces in the region, including at Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean — dubbed the "Bomber Island" after the deployment of a third of America's B-2 stealth bomber fleet.

These aircraft can carry the U.S.'s most powerful bunker-buster bombs, potentially crucial in any future Iran strike. Additionally, the U.S. has sent a second aircraft carrier to the region with 90 jets and helicopters, F-35 squadrons and 6,000 personnel.

Despite U.S. and Iranian claims that talks are progressing "positively"—with direct contact between U.S. envoy Steve Witkoff and Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi

Iran insists it will continue uranium enrichment to certain levels and has threatened "severe retaliation" against both the U.S. and Israel, even vowing to strike bombers at Diego Garcia.

Saudi Defense Minister Khalid bin Salman visited Tehran Thursday ahead of renewed negotiations this Saturday. Danny Citrinowicz, an Iran expert at Israel's INSS and former head of the Iran branch in IDF Military Intelligence, told Ynet: "This is an extraordinary visit by any measure."

"While some believe the Saudis support an attack on Iran, this trip signals their deep fear of escalation in the Gulf, which could harm their security interests. They prefer a diplomatic solution to the nuclear issue," he added.

Israel sees a narrow window for strikes

Israel's recent strikes on Iran — each following failed large-scale Iranian retaliations — have bolstered the belief in Jerusalem that now is a historic, one-time opportunity to cripple Tehran's nuclear program.

Iran's air defenses are weakened, its missile production damaged and its regime vulnerable. Hezbollah's setbacks and Syria's collapsed regime further reduce Iran's ability to retaliate effectively.

Netanyahu has advocated dismantling Iran's nuclear program via a "Libya model," alongside missile program restrictions — a scenario now seen as unlikely.

If talks fail, at least 10 nuclear sites are potential targets, with Natanz, Fordow and Isfahan being the most critical:

Natanz: Iran's primary uranium enrichment site, 300 km (186 miles) south of Tehran, has been repeatedly targeted by Israel. Tehran has since built a deeply buried facility, raising doubts about even the U.S.'s strongest bunker-busters.

Fordow: A fortified enrichment site near Qom, buried 80–90 meters (262–295 feet) into a mountain. Former U.S. President Barack Obama called its design "inconsistent with a peaceful nuclear program."

Isfahan: A major nuclear hub housing uranium conversion facilities and suspected enriched uranium storage.

Striking Natanz and Fordow would require 14,000 kg (30,000 lbs.) bunker-busters, which only U.S. B-2 bombers can deliver — a capability Israel lacks.

Why Trump resists military action

Nuclear and military experts told Reuters that even a major U.S.-Israel operation would only delay, not destroy, Iran's nuclear program. Ali Shamkhani, an advisor to Khamenei, warned that further threats could lead Iran to expel UN nuclear inspectors and go fully underground.

"Short of regime change or occupation, military strikes cannot eliminate Iran's path to a nuclear weapon," said Justin Bronk of the UK's Royal United Services Institute. While Israel could destroy most Iranian sites alone, such an operation would be high-risk, facing advanced Russian air defenses.

Eric Brewer, a former U.S. intelligence analyst, noted: "A U.S. strike would do more damage but both scenarios risk pushing Iran toward a bomb faster."

Opposition leaders have long urged attacks on Iran's nuclear sites, especially after the October strikes neutralized much of Tehran's air defense. Opposition head Yair Lapid said: "I proposed striking Iran's oil fields in October. Crushing its oil industry would collapse the regime. Netanyahu got cold feet."

Former prime minister Naftali Bennett accused Netanyahu of empty threats: "Begin's doctrine was to strike and destroy, as in Iraq and Syria. Netanyahu's doctrine is to leak that he wanted to act but was stopped. There won't be another chance like this one."

Netanyahu reportedly sought a commando raid akin to the September 2023 Shaldag unit operation that destroyed an underground Iranian missile factory in Syria. However, military officials said such a mission couldn't be ready before October, leading to the shift toward an airstrike plan requiring U.S. support.

The Syria raid involved 100 Israeli commandos infiltrating a facility buried 120 meters (394 feet) underground near Masyaf, which produced precision missiles for Hezbollah. The site was destroyed in 18 minutes without Israeli casualties.

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

Zionism Member of Knesset Zvi Sukkot, bowing on Temple Mount undeniable right

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

Far-right lawmaker prays, prostrates on Temple Mount

Religious Zionism Member of Knesset Zvi Sukkot's prayer and bowing on Temple Mount without police intervention and joined by other Jewish worshippers, draws praise from his political camp, Palestinian condemnation; 'Arabs aren't allowed near us'

Liran Tamari, Yuval Karni|03:59

Religious Zionism Knesset Member Zvi Sukkot ascended the Temple Mount Thursday morning during the intermediate days of Passover and was filmed praying and prostrating himself — both in violation of the longstanding status quo at the site. Other Jewish worshippers joined him in prayer, while a police officer stood nearby and did not intervene.

“Fourteen years ago I was here. I bowed for a second and police immediately grabbed me,” Sukkot said afterward. “They arrested me. Now Jews are bowing, praying, holding prayer quorums. Arabs aren’t allowed near us, the Waqf doesn’t come close. I see this with tears in my eyes.”

“We merited to come here today to the House of the Lord, to the Temple Mount,” Sukkot added, “First, with deep gratitude to God for the open miracles of the past year — up north, in the south, in the West Bank and in the wars, thanks to the sacrifice of our soldiers. We’re praying for the success of IDF troops on all fronts and also for the swift return of the hostages. We’re praying for them at this holy place.”

He also thanked the Temple Mount Administration and others who “took part in making this tremendous change possible,” adding, “With God’s help, we’ll merit full redemption, the rebuilding of the Temple and eating from the sacrificial offerings there soon.”

National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, who frequently visits the site himself, praised the visit. “I’m happy to see that Member of Knesset Zvi Sukkot, like many thousands of others, is bowing and praying on the Temple Mount,” he said. “What wasn’t done for 30 years is now happening under my watch. I thank God for the privilege of leading this tremendous change.”

Palestinian officials responded by accusing Israel of systematically eroding the status quo and allowing increasingly large groups of Jews to enter the compound and hold religious ceremonies.

Since the current government took office in late 2022, incidents of Jewish prayer and rituals on the Mount have grown, while police enforcement of the status quo has reportedly weakened.

Last month, several right-wing ministers and lawmakers, including members of Sukkot’s party as well as Knesset members from Likud and Otzma Yehudit, sent a letter to U.S. senators urging them to back a congressional resolution recognizing “the eternal and undeniable right of the Jewish people to the Temple Mount.”

“This is the place where our temples stood, which were destroyed by the Babylonian and Roman empires some 2,500 and 1,900 years ago,” the letter read.

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

PM accused Qatar of funding anti-Israel rot on US campuses: Choose a side

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

Netanyahu accuses Qatar of fomenting anti-Israel 'rot' on US campuses: 'Choose a side' PM says that while Doha helped broker temporary ceasefire with Hamas, it was also actively undermining Israel by hosting terror group's leaders and spreading antisemitic narratives

Daniel Edelson, New York|Updated:03:47

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu accused Qatar of contributing to what he called a surge of anti-Israel sentiment on university campuses across the United States, marking the first time he has publicly held the Gulf state responsible for what he described as a “rot” in American academic institutions.

In an interview with the evangelical Christian television network Daystar, recorded during a recent visit to Washington and broadcast on social media this week, Netanyahu said that while Qatar had helped Israel broker a temporary ceasefire with Hamas, it was also actively undermining Israel by hosting Hamas leaders and spreading anti-Israel narratives.

“Qatar may have helped us reach a ceasefire — a temporary one — but they did so while hosting Hamas terrorists,” Netanyahu said. “You can’t fund the arsonists and the firefighters at the same time. You have to choose. Choose a side!” Netanyahu alleged that elite American universities have become hotbeds of anti-Israel sentiment, fueled in part by Qatari funding and influence.

“There’s been a closing of the American minds, a reversal of the truth,” he said. “Israel is not the problem in the Middle East — Israel is the solution. Israel is not the enemy of the United States — Israel is its friend. In many ways, we’re confronting the same enemies who want to destroy America.”

He further accused Qatar of amplifying anti-Israel and anti-American messages through its state-funded broadcaster Al-Jazeera. “You see it, unfortunately, in Al-Jazeera Arabic, which promotes anti-Americanism and anti-Zionism, woven together,” he said. Netanyahu praised U.S. President Donald Trump for his pro-Israel policies and for what he described as ushering in a necessary shift in the global conversation. “It’s time for a change, and I think Donald Trump is bringing that change. Good for him — it’s about time,” Netanyahu said.

The Israeli leader also revealed that he has displayed Trump’s 2017 declaration recognizing Jerusalem as Israel’s capital next to President Harry Truman’s 1948 letter recognizing the State of Israel in the Israeli Cabinet meeting room. “I never told him, but to me, both are so meaningful, I just put them side by side,” he said.

Netanyahu thanked Trump for lifting U.S. sanctions on West Bank settlers, calling them “Jewish residents of Judea and Samaria, the heart of our historical homeland.”

The interview also touched on Netanyahu’s personal beliefs. When asked whether he considers himself a man of faith, Netanyahu responded, “In the deepest sense — yes. If you don’t have faith, you can’t survive the storms of politics.”

Netanyahu has declined interviews with Israeli media outlets that do not support his government and has not held a press conference open to independent questioning since December 2024.

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

Hamas nears bankruptcy in Gaza: Halts salaries and has difficulty recruiting new fighters

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Hamas nears bankruptcy in Gaza: Halts salaries and has difficulty recruiting new fighters
Terror group's finances hit hard by series of assassinations of key political, military and administrative figures, as well as suspension of aid deliveries that officials say had been diverted and resold for profit

Ynet|01:04

Hamas is facing a severe financial crisis in the Gaza Strip, unable to pay salaries to its fighters and government workers as targeted Israeli strikes and a halt in humanitarian aid have drained its resources, according to officials and analysts.

The terror group has been left nearly bankrupt following a series of Israeli assassinations of key political, military and administrative figures, as well as the suspension of aid deliveries that officials say Hamas had diverted and resold for profit.

The crisis has disrupted the group's operations and exposed growing dysfunction, with intelligence officials telling The Wall Street Journal that salary payments to many government employees have stopped. Even senior Hamas officials began receiving only half of their salaries during the holy month of Ramadan. Fighter salaries, previously between \$200 and \$300 per month, have also been frozen, complicating recruitment efforts as the group braces for continued conflict.

Hamas' financial troubles were first reported earlier this month by Asharq Al-Awsat, a London-based Arabic newspaper, which described an "organizational vacuum" following Israeli strikes that eliminated senior leaders and disrupted decision-making within the group.

Eyal Ofer, a researcher specializing in Gaza's economy, estimated that Hamas still controls assets worth up to \$3 billion. However, he said the group's ability to distribute funds is severely limited. Hamas traditionally uses couriers and designated cash distribution points in the territory—methods that are difficult to carry out under wartime conditions.

Before the war, Hamas received \$15 million in monthly cash transfers from Qatar and raised additional funds from West Africa, South Asia and the United Kingdom. Qatar also maintained a \$500 million reserve on behalf of the group. Much of that money is now believed to be in Turkey, according to Arab and Western officials.

Israel restricted cash transfers into Gaza at the start of the war. Palestinian officials told The Wall Street Journal that Hamas was involved in stealing \$180 million from Bank of Palestine branches and other banks in Gaza. The group also taxed goods entering the Strip and merchants operating in local markets, using these tactics to generate income. Additionally, it used foreign cash to purchase goods abroad, which were then sold locally, allowing Hamas to bring cash into Gaza for its own use.

Despite these efforts, the group was nearing a liquidity crisis even before the latest ceasefire, which briefly allowed aid to resume before it was again suspended. “This is a major crisis for Hamas,” said Mumen al-Nator, a lawyer from central Gaza. “They were mainly dependent on aid, which was sold for cash on the black market.”

The financial pressure has been compounded by Israeli strikes targeting Hamas’ financial infrastructure. Among those killed was Saeed Ahmed al-Abed al-Khodari, the group’s top money exchanger and head of Al-Wafaq Exchange, which Israel designated a terrorist organization for its role in financing terror activities. The Israel Defense Forces said al-Khodari played a key role in transferring money to Hamas’ military wing, particularly during the war.

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

Hamas cell in Lebanon trained missile & drone militias in Jordan warehouses

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

Hamas-trained cell in Lebanon linked to Jordan missile plot

Arab media has extensively covered the arrest of 16 suspects who 'planned to sow chaos in Jordan'; Many Arab countries have condemned the terrorist cell, and the Lebanese president has promised Jordan's king that he will assist in the investigation

Lior Ben Ari|00:21

Arab media outlets have revealed new details about a terror plot uncovered in Jordan, where 16 suspects were arrested for allegedly manufacturing missiles, possessing explosives, and planning to build drones to “sow chaos” in the country. Lebanon, linked to the case after reports that some detainees had received training there, is working with Jordanian authorities to clarify the matter, with officials investigating whether the group trained in a Palestinian refugee camp or in southern Lebanon.

Lebanon’s LBCI reported on Wednesday that Jordan informed Beirut that the suspects had been trained by Hamas operatives in Lebanon. Lebanon’s Foreign Minister Youssef Raji spoke with his Jordanian counterpart, Ayman Safadi, pledging to form a committee to coordinate with the Jordanian investigation. Lebanese President Joseph Aoun also contacted Jordan’s King Abdullah to express full cooperation and directed the justice minister to coordinate directly with Jordanian authorities.

A Lebanese security source told Saudi channel Al-Hadath that an investigation was underway into the group’s training location. Later reports, citing sources, claimed that Palestinians in Lebanon admitted to training Jordanians in missile production. Jordanian Prime Minister Jaafar Hassan praised the intelligence service and security forces during a cabinet meeting, declaring, “When it comes to Jordan’s security, we are all its soldiers and guardians.” He emphasized that loyalty must be solely to the kingdom and that there is no room for militias undermining its stability.

Jordanian government spokesman updates on detainees suspected of missile production

Jordan's State Security Court has completed its legal proceedings in the case and referred it for trial. Two suspects, Abdallah al-Sham and Moaz al-Ghanem, were charged with illegal weapons production and conspiracy to disrupt public order and endanger civil peace. A third suspect, Mohsen al-Ghanem, faces similar charges.

Several Arab nations expressed solidarity with Jordan following the arrests. Qatar, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Oman and the UAE issued statements backing Jordan's actions. Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdel Aati spoke with Safadi to offer support, while UAE Foreign Minister Abdullah bin Zayed condemned any plan to destabilize Jordan and praised the vigilance of its security forces.

Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati also voiced full support for Jordan and rejected Lebanon being used as a base for actions threatening any neighboring state. Jordan announced the arrests following a long-running intelligence operation that began in 2021. Authorities said the suspects operated in separate cells, with one cell maintaining two warehouses, one of which held secret rooms containing missiles. Four suspects were allegedly involved in a drone production project, supported by foreign actors, and others were engaged in recruiting operatives.

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

Israel planned to attack Iran's nuclear sites in May – Trump favors to negotiate

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

Dramatic report: Israel planned to attack Iran's nuclear sites - and was stopped by Trump. Israel was preparing a joint strike on Iran's nuclear facilities with US support, but President Donald Trump blocked the plan in favor of diplomatic talks with Tehran, the NYT reports; Decision followed internal debates in Washington, where concerns about regional war outweighed support for military action.
Ynet|Yesterday | 23:24

U.S. President Donald Trump blocked a planned Israeli attack on Iran's nuclear sites, as early as next month, in favor of negotiating a deal with the Iranian regime, the New York Times reported, citing sources in the Trump administration.

According to the report, there were two opposing positions in the administration, one including CENTCOM commander Gen. Michael E. Kurilla, who supported Israel's plans, and the other that worried over the United States being drawn into a regional war and demanded that diplomacy be given a chance. The Times claimed Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's hurried visit to the White House earlier this month was to convince the president to approve the attack, an effort that failed.

The decision followed months of internal debate in Washington, the report says. Trump ultimately opted to pursue diplomacy at a time when Iran was considered militarily and economically weakened. The debate highlighted the tension between more hawkish

officials and those who questioned whether a military strike could realistically halt Iran's nuclear ambitions without triggering a broader war. For now, the U.S. consensus appears to oppose military action, especially as Iran has signaled openness to negotiations. According to the Times, Israeli officials had developed a range of plans for a May strike aimed at slowing Iran's nuclear program by at least a year. Some Israeli officials were optimistic that the U.S. might approve the plans, which, according to sources briefed on the matter, relied heavily on American involvement—not only for protecting Israel from retaliation but also to ensure the operation's success.

Earlier this month, Trump informed Israeli officials of his decision. He later discussed it with Netanyahu during the prime minister's visit to Washington, where he used a joint appearance in the Oval Office to announce the start of direct negotiations with Iran. The Times said its reporting was based on discussions with U.S. military and intelligence officials familiar with Israel's classified plans and on confidential internal administration deliberations.

At Netanyahu's direction, the IDF initially prepared a plan combining an aerial strike with a commando raid on underground nuclear sites, possibly involving American aircraft. However, Israeli military officials told their U.S. counterparts that the operation would not be ready before October. Seeking a quicker option, Israel began modifying the plan into a broader air campaign that would still require U.S. assistance.

Initially, several American officials, including General Kurilla and National Security Advisor Mike Waltz, were open to considering Israeli proposals. They even explored how the U.S. could potentially support a strike if Trump gave the green light. American officials reportedly agreed that any serious attempt to damage Iran's nuclear infrastructure would require U.S. support.

With White House approval, Kurilla began transferring military assets to the region. The aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson arrived in the Persian Gulf, joining the USS Harry Truman in the Red Sea. The U.S. deployed two Patriot missile batteries, a THAAD system in Israel, and six B-2 stealth bombers to Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. Additional fighter jets were also under consideration for deployment, possibly to Israeli bases.

While these assets could be used in operations against the Iran-backed Houthis in Yemen—whom the U.S. began targeting just over a month ago—U.S. officials acknowledged to the Times that the deployments were also part of contingency planning for supporting an Israeli strike on Iran. Even if American planes were not to take part in the initial attack, their presence could help deter or counter an Iranian response.

There were signs Trump was open to a military option. His social media posts reinforced that perception. But even as military assets moved into position, skepticism grew within the administration about the wisdom of backing an Israeli strike. For weeks, officials debated the matter and, earlier this month, opponents of the plan gained the upper hand.

The decisive Oval Office meeting came earlier this month. Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard presented a new intelligence assessment warning that the concentration of American military forces in the region increased the risk of a broader conflict with Iran—one the U.S. was not seeking. American intelligence also warned that

a strike could easily spiral into a larger war. Both Israeli and American officials recently reaffirmed their assessment that an Israeli strike would trigger an Iranian response and likely draw the U.S. into a rapidly escalating conflict.

A number of senior U.S. officials backed Gabbard's assessment. Chief of Staff Susie Wiles, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and Vice President J.D. Vance all expressed doubts about the prudence of a strike. Some feared it would lead to a regional war and push Iran to make a final decision to build nuclear weapons. Even Waltz, a leading hawkish voice who had previously argued that Iran was vulnerable, expressed skepticism that an Israeli strike could succeed without U.S. assistance.

The Oval Office meeting occurred shortly after a shift in Iran's posture. While Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei appeared to reject a direct talks proposal Trump sent on March 12, an Iranian official later responded on March 28 with a willingness to engage in indirect talks. A significant debate remains within Trump's team over the kind of deal Iran would accept, but at that meeting Vice President Vance, backed by others, argued that Trump had a rare opportunity to reach a historic agreement. Administration sources said that if talks were to fail, Trump could then support an Israeli strike.

During a visit to Israel on April 1–2, Kurilla told Israeli officials that the White House wanted to halt preparations for an attack. On April 3, while visiting Hungary, Netanyahu phoned Trump. According to Israeli sources, the U.S. president declined to discuss Iran policy over the phone and invited Netanyahu to the White House. Netanyahu arrived on April 7.

Although the visit was publicly framed as an opportunity to discuss Trump's new tariffs plan, the key topic for Israel was the proposed strike. Yet, with Netanyahu at his side, Trump used the Oval Office appearance to announce the opening of negotiations with Iran. In private, he told Netanyahu he would not back an Israeli strike in May if talks progressed. The next day, Trump clarified his stance: "If a military solution is needed, that's what will happen. Israel, of course, would lead it," he said.

Following Netanyahu's visit, Trump sent CIA Director John Ratcliffe to Israel. Last Wednesday, Ratcliffe met with Netanyahu and Mossad chief David Barnea to discuss Iran. According to a source familiar with the matter, a wide range of options remains under discussion—including joint covert operations and stricter enforcement of sanctions.

Netanyahu initially favored a complex plan combining airstrikes with commando raids—essentially a much more ambitious version of a raid conducted in Syria last September, in which Israeli forces landed by helicopter and destroyed a Hezbollah-linked underground missile facility.

Israeli officials believed that, for such an operation to succeed, U.S. aircraft would need to provide cover fire and defend ground forces. But even with U.S. backing, Israeli officials told their American counterparts that planning such a mission would take months. With Kurilla expected to step down from CENTCOM in a few months, both Israeli and American officials wanted an operation that could be carried out while he was still in command.

After shelving the initial plan, Israel shifted focus to a large-scale air campaign that could be operational by May and possibly last more than a week. In an Israeli strike last year,

Russian-made S-300 air defense systems in Iran were destroyed. Any new strike on Iran's nuclear sites would also need to neutralize remaining Iranian air defenses. Such a strike would likely prompt a major Iranian response. Iran still possesses a vast arsenal of surface-to-surface missiles capable of striking Israel. In two previous cases last year, following limited Israeli strikes, the Biden administration directed the U.S. military to help defend Israel against Iranian counterattacks. In both cases, the U.S. and its allies intercepted nearly all drones and missiles launched by Iran. A larger Israeli assault on Tehran's nuclear facilities, officials told the Times, would further destabilize the regime and almost certainly trigger a broader Iranian response.

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

Putin meets freed Russian hostages of Hamas; they plead release of remaining hostages

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

In first, Putin meets freed hostages, credits Hamas for 'humanitarian act'

Hosting Sasha Troufanov and his family, Russian president avoids terms like 'hostages' or 'captivity'; Troufanov pleads: 'They are my brothers — half my heart is in Gaza' Kim Gluzman|17:30

In a highly unusual move, Russian President Vladimir Putin hosted on Wednesday former hostages at the Kremlin for the first time since the war in Gaza began and expressed gratitude to Hamas for what he called the "humanitarian act" of releasing them.

The meeting included Sasha Troufanov, freed in a hostage exchange in February, along with his mother, Yelena, and his partner, Sapir Cohen, both released in an earlier deal. In a video circulated by Russian state media, Putin is seen presenting flowers to Yelena and Sapir and shaking Sasha's hand.

Throughout the conversation, Putin notably refrained from using terms like "hostages" or "captivity." In contrast, Troufanov appealed to the Russian president to continue working for the release of the remaining hostages held in Gaza. "They are my brothers. As long as they're there, half my heart is in Gaza," he told Putin, who responded by pledging that Russia "will do everything possible" to help free the remaining captives.

Troufanov told the president he had been held for 498 days, prompting Putin to lean back and shake his head. Putin expressed condolences for the death of Sasha's father, Vitaliy, who was killed in the October 7 massacre, but avoided using the word "murder." "Unfortunately, the father of the family is no longer with you, but this is a tragedy we should not delve into now," he said.

"I don't want to assign political judgments," Putin added, "but what happened to you is a great misfortune. Your release was made possible by Russia's longstanding ties with the Palestinian people and their representatives. I believe we must thank the Hamas leadership for taking this humanitarian step and releasing you."

Troufanov responded with a heartfelt plea for continued support. "It's important for me to say that I'm deeply grateful for your actions that led to our release. And it's very important to me, in this moment, that all the other hostages be freed as well — because I know how they feel. I know what it's like to be there, how hard it is, how sad they are," he said.

"To me, they're like my brothers. As long as they're there, it's as if half my heart is still in Gaza. It will be very hard for me to return to normal life while they're still there. I ask you to do everything you did for me — and I know you did so much — so that they too can be free and happy, sitting with their families and loved ones. That means a great deal to me."

Troufanov's mother, Yelena, also addressed Putin, thanking him and the Russian government for their efforts, crediting their release in November 2023 to Russia's intervention. "I want to personally thank you and the entire Russian government for your efforts to secure our release. I know that my mother and I were freed at the end of November 2023 thanks to Russia's efforts and your personal involvement," she said.

"When I was released and found out that day that my husband had been murdered, and that my only son — my mother's only grandson — had been kidnapped and was still in captivity, it marked the beginning of a very difficult period. This past year has been extremely hard for me. Throughout this time, Rabbi Lazar and the Russian Embassy in Israel supported me. We stayed in constant contact, and I knew that everything possible was being done to bring Sasha home — and here he is."

Yelena also shared that four generations of her family had endured captivity. "Soon we will mark 80 years since the great victory in World War II. My grandmother, Sasha's great-grandmother, was a military doctor who was wounded during the war and taken captive by the Nazis. She escaped captivity and finished the war with a partisan unit in Belarus," she shared. "Sasha is the fourth generation in our family to have been taken captive — and I hope this marks the end of our family's story with captivity."

In addition to Sasha Troufanov, his mother and his partner, the meeting was also attended by Russia's Chief Rabbi Berel Lazar and Rabbi Alexander Boroda, president of the Federation of Jewish Communities of Russia. Sasha's grandmother, Irina Teti, who was also kidnapped by Hamas and released in the first hostage exchange, did not attend the Kremlin meeting.

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

Anti-Israel NGO from Brussels, files ICC warrant for Gideon Sa'ar during UK visit

04.17.25 – Th Pesach 06

Anti-Israel NGO files arrest warrant for Gideon Sa'ar during UK visit

Hind Rajab Foundation accuses Foreign Minister Sa'ar of key role in shaping military policy in Gaza, including a 'siege' on a hospital and alleged torture of its director

Ynet|16:30

The Hind Rajab Foundation, a Brussels-based NGO known for targeting Israeli soldiers over alleged war crimes, filed a request Wednesday for a UK arrest warrant against Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar, accusing him of war crimes during Israel's military campaign in Gaza.

The group claims Sa'ar was involved in the "siege" of Kamal Adwan Hospital in northern Gaza in late 2024, where the facility's director, Hossam Abu Safiya, was allegedly "kidnapped and tortured." Abu Safiya was arrested by Israeli forces in December on suspicion of Hamas affiliation during a broader IDF raid on the hospital.

According to the organization, it has submitted an official request to the UK's attorney general to pursue a formal arrest warrant for Sa'ar. It also filed a complaint with London's Metropolitan Police. The foundation alleges Sa'ar "aided and abetted the use of torture and serious violations of international law, including killings and widespread destruction of property." The arrest request, it said, is supported by unnamed parties and testimony from doctors currently or previously active in Gaza.

Sa'ar met on Tuesday in London with UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy. According to his office, the two discussed "a range of regional issues, with a focus on the Iranian nuclear threat," as well as negotiations to release Israeli hostages held in Gaza and efforts to strengthen bilateral ties between Israel and the UK.

"As a senior member of Israel's Security Cabinet alongside Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu—who is himself wanted by the International Criminal Court for war crimes—Sa'ar is deeply involved in collective decisions that have led to mass civilian casualties following the events of October 7," the foundation said. It further argued that "his central role in shaping and defending Israel's military policy makes him a key figure in a leadership responsible for a campaign deemed by legal experts to bear characteristics of genocide."

The Hind Rajab Foundation, named after a young Palestinian girl allegedly killed by Israeli fire in the early months of the war, was founded in September 2024. It is a branch of the March 30 Movement, which has pursued legal action against Israeli soldiers for more than three decades.

The foundation gathers publicly available data on IDF soldiers—including details of their military involvement—with the goal of initiating legal proceedings against them abroad. It has so far filed lawsuits against dozens of Israeli soldiers in eight different countries. In addition, the group has submitted information to the International Criminal Court (ICC) regarding alleged war crimes committed by over 1,000 Israeli soldiers and officers during operations in Gaza and Lebanon.

04.16.25 – We Pesach 05

Gaza anti-Hamas protests erupt again, call for withdrawal of both Hamas and Israel

04.16.25 – We Pesach 05

'Gaza is humiliated': Anti-Hamas protests erupt again, call for end to war and terror
Gaza unrest resurfaces as hundreds rally against Hamas rule in Beit Lahia, chanting slogans such as 'Yes to unity, no to terror' and 'We want to live in peace'; rare participation of clan leaders signals growing dissent
Einav Halabi | 11:54

For the first time in weeks, rare protests erupted Wednesday evening in the Gaza Strip, with hundreds of residents in Beit Lahia demanding an end to Hamas rule and the ongoing war.

Demonstrators chanted slogans such as “Yes to unity, no to terror,” “We want to live in peace” and “Gaza is humiliated,” referencing senior Hamas officials Osama Hamdan and Mahmoud al-Zahar by name.

Protesters also called for the reopening of border crossings, and children held signs reading, “We want to learn.” In an unusual development, clan elders — some affiliated with Hamas — were seen participating in the protest. According to eyewitnesses, Hamas sent members to redirect the protest's message toward ending the war, but they were driven out with curses by the crowd.

These demonstrations mark a renewed wave of dissent that first surfaced last month, when hundreds of displaced residents from Beit Lahia and Beit Hanoun marched toward Gaza City. That protest broke new ground in the coastal enclave, directly challenging Hamas narratives of “steadfastness” and remaining on Palestinian land. Protesters then held signs reading “Our children's blood is not cheap” and “End the war now,” while some chanted, “Hamas out, Hamas must go.”

In the days that followed, protests spread to Gaza City, the Jabalia refugee camp, and Bani Suheila square in Khan Younis. Hamas leaders, including Hamdan, accused Israel of orchestrating the unrest. Another official, Sami Abu Zuhri, labeled the protesters “mouthpieces of the occupation,” implying they were traitors.

At the time, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addressed the protests, saying, “More and more Gazans understand that Hamas brings them destruction and ruin. That’s important. It shows our policy is working.”

Several families and clans later released a joint statement urging renewed demonstrations and calling for the withdrawal of both Hamas and Israeli forces from Gaza. They warned Hamas not to suppress the protests, citing reports of newly formed militias meant to crack down on dissent.

In response, Hamas violently suppressed the protests, targeting organizers and participants. At least six protesters were reportedly executed by the group, while others were tortured publicly. One young man from Gaza City was abducted, brutally beaten and returned to his family as he lay dying. Another resident was publicly beaten and shot in Nuseirat Square. A social activist who lost an eye during the crackdown said, “No Gazan journalist will speak about these crimes.”

04.16.25 – We Pesach 05

Hostage survivor Noa Argamani named to Time's 100 most influential people

04.16.25 – We Pesach 05

Hostage survivor Noa Argamani named to Time's 100 most influential people

Noa Argamani, freed after 245 days in Hamas captivity, honored by Time for her courage and advocacy for hostage release

Ynet|10:52

Noa Argamani, a Hamas captivity survivor who was abducted from the Nova music festival and rescued in a daring operation that claimed the life of commando Arnon Zmora, after 245 days held by Hamas, was selected on Wednesday for Time magazine's list of the 100 most influential people in the world.

Argamani was chosen alongside figures such as U.S. President Donald Trump and Vice President JD Vance, tech mogul Elon Musk and celebrities such as Tennis icon Serena Williams, actress Blake Lively and many others.

Doug Emhoff, husband of former U.S. vice president Kamala Harris, wrote about Argamani. "The video of Noa Argamani on Oct. 7, 2023, is forever seared into my soul. She was joyfully dancing with so many others at the Nova music festival when Hamas launched its brutal terrorist attack. As she was kidnapped into Gaza on a motorcycle, her harrowing expression became a symbol of the pain and trauma Jews worldwide, myself included, continue to feel."

"Noa was held hostage for 245 days, a period she called "a pure hell." Since her rescue, she has shown extraordinary courage and humanity in speaking out for the remaining hostages, including her -partner Avinatan Or. My wife Kamala Harris and I stand with Noa in fighting for the release of all the hostages. We cannot give up until every one of them is home."

Emhoff added that Argamani's actions "-illuminated Hamas' extreme brutality, but more importantly, her bravery has embodied Jewish resilience and strength even in the worst moments. She is living proof to the world that, despite everything, 'we will dance again.'"

Other prominent figures mentioned in the ranking include Syrian interim President Ahmad al-Sharaa, with former U.S. Ambassador to Syria Robert Ford writing about him. The former ambassador noted his past affiliations with al-Qaeda and ISIS and the fact that under his leadership, Syrian rebels managed to overthrow the previous president, Bashar Assad. Ford also mentioned that "to beat Assad, the ambitious al-Sharaa understood he had to become a political leader as well as a military force."

Other notables features include pop star Ed Sheeran, movie stars such as Scarlett Johansson, Kristen Bell, Demi Moore and Adrien Brody; Frenchwoman Gisèle Plicque, whose husband recruited 72 men to assault her; additional leaders such as British Prime Minister Keir Starmer and Jewish Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum; journalist and

presenter Megyn Kelly; Trump administration Health Secretary Robert Kennedy Jr.; the greatest gymnast in history, American Simone Biles; Bangladeshi economist and entrepreneur Muhammad Yunus; Facebook founder and Meta owner Mark Zuckerberg; American entrepreneur Jonathan Greenblatt, and more.

04.16.25 – We Pesach 05

IDF has no deadline for Gaza operations, aiming to avoid endangering hostages

04.16.25 – We Pesach 05

IDF says no 'deadline' for Gaza ground operations amid stalled ceasefire talks

Since resumption of fighting, Israeli forces have killed about 350 terrorists, including 40 commanders and technical experts, with some 250,000 residents displaced

Yoav Zitun|07:37

The Israeli military said Wednesday it has not set a deadline for its ongoing limited ground operation in the Gaza Strip, as it holds talks with the political leadership about resuming humanitarian aid and sets new conditions for the return of residents to border communities.

The comments come amid stalled negotiations to restore a ceasefire with Hamas. Israeli forces continue to focus on key strategic locations in Gaza, including “Hill 70,” a height named for its elevation in meters. Located just inside the Gaza border, the hill overlooks Israeli communities and urban areas such as Gaza City’s Shujaiyya neighborhood.

The area is part of a broader buffer zone Israel has worked to secure since the Oct. 7 Hamas-led attack, which triggered the current war. The military said the zone had previously been too narrow to guarantee Israeli control. “It will not be possible to return to Kibbutz Nahal Oz without fully neutralizing Hill 70,” an IDF official said. Since the resumption of hostilities after a temporary truce, Hamas has shifted from preparing for renewed attacks to a defensive stance, according to the Israel Defense Forces.

Military officials said discussions are ongoing with government leaders on restarting humanitarian aid to Gaza. The IDF stressed efforts are being made to prevent Hamas from seizing the aid, as it has in the past. “There is no starvation in Gaza, and we will act to prevent a humanitarian crisis under international law,” the military said. “We do not want to empower Hamas. Halting aid a month ago undermined Hamas governance, raised prices, and increased public pressure on the group.”

Though not widespread, the military has observed early signs of diminishing fear of Hamas among Gaza’s residents. One hospital director publicly shared a threat letter from local terrorists, reportedly receiving broad public support. In a separate case, clan leaders executed a Hamas police officer. Civilians have also been fleeing from Gaza City southward, particularly along the western portion of the Netzarim corridor near the coast—an area partially under Israeli control.

The IDF said approximately 250,000 Palestinians have evacuated southern Gaza over the past month following Israeli instructions, out of a population of more than 2 million. Since fighting resumed, Israeli forces have killed about 350 terrorists, including 40 commanders and technical experts. Airstrikes have focused on degrading Hamas' military capabilities, targeting tunnels, weapons factories, and stockpiles. Troops have located five tunnels in recent weeks, including two between Rafah and Khan Younis, and three near the Daraj-Tuffah neighborhood, which overlooks Kibbutz Kfar Aza. In one incident, terrorists emerged from a tunnel and fired an anti-tank missile at a unit from the 401st Armored Brigade. The Israeli forces returned fire and killed the attackers without sustaining casualties. Military officials said operations are progressing deliberately to minimize risk. "We could have taken the Rafah-Khan Younis corridor in six hours, but chose to do so over a week to avoid flanking fire," one official said. The corridor is now secured to a width of 600 to 700 meters.

That pressure, the IDF said, has pushed Hamas closer to considering a new hostage deal. "They've made progress since we renewed military pressure," the official added.

The military also plans to construct a road in southern Gaza along a new route known as the Beit Ur corridor, nicknamed "Morag" after a former Israeli settlement evacuated during the 2005 disengagement. A similar expansion of the buffer zone is underway in northern Gaza, including areas once home to settlements such as Dugit. "We are dealing significant damage to Hamas, but have not yet achieved victory," the IDF said.

Officials noted that Hamas appears to be holding back its forces in anticipation of a broader Israeli assault. "They know we haven't launched the main offensive yet," the military said. "But they are increasingly trying to strike us with sniper fire and anti-tank missiles. The deeper we move into Gaza, the more friction we'll face." The IDF said that intelligence and hostage affairs units are involved in every one of the roughly 1,200 strikes carried out since the fighting resumed, aiming to avoid endangering Israeli hostages still held by Hamas. "The hostages are clearly limiting our operations," the military said. "Without them, we would have hit Hamas far harder by now."

04.16.25 – We Pesach 05

IDF kills last remaining terrorist from fatal West Bank attack in January

04.16.25 – We Pesach 05

IDF kills last remaining terrorist from fatal West Bank attack in January

Omar Zakharna, eliminated in shootout with security forces involved, was involved in attack near settlement of Kedumim that killed Elad Winkelstein, Aliza Reiss and Rachel Cohen; families see closure but little solace

Idan Blumhoff, Einav Halabi, Yoav Zitun|06:37

The IDF said on Wednesday that its forces killed Omar Zakharna, one of the terrorists involved in the deadly West Bank terror attack that killed three near the settlement of Kedumim last January.

Elad Winkelstein, a police officer, Aliza Reiss and Rachel Cohen were murdered when 3 gunmen open fire on cars and buses traveling on the West Bank road. Palestinians reported early on Wednesday that IDF forces laid siege to a cave in the town of Mesilia near Jenin. Another terrorist was also killed in the operation, the Palestinians said.

Two of the three-man squad that carried out the fatal terror strike were killed earlier this year. Mohamad Nazzal and Katiba Shalab, both residents of Qabatiya, were operatives of the Islamic Jihad.

During an operation of security forces acting on intelligence from the Shin Bet, forces closed in on a cave in Mesilia where the terrorists were hiding and in the exchange of fire, two terrorists were killed including an Islamic Jihad operative who was released in November 2023, as part of the cease-fire and hostage release deal with Hamas. Weapons, flak jackets and ammunition were found in the cave. Other terrorists, armed with handguns, who assisted the two were apprehended and taken for interrogation by the Shin Bet, a joint IDF, Israel Police and Shin Bet announcement said.

Naomi Azulay, whose mother Rachel Cohen was murdered in the attack in January, said the killing on Wednesday brought the family little joy. "We feel the tragedy all the time and we find no solace in today's events. We congratulate the forces and hope no more terrorists are released in deals," she said.

"Our tragedy prompted the anti-terror operation that has been ongoing in the West Bank, so our mother did not die in vain. She was killed for being Jewish and any action to eliminate terror is welcomed."

Harel Winkelstein who lost his brother in the attack, also said there is no solace, but there is some closure. The terrorist will not live out his life in or out of prison. It is over."

04.16.25 – We Pesach 05

Shin Bet excluded from operations since target of elected officials and journalists

04.16.25 – We Pesach 05

Shin Bet excluded from Netanyahu Gaza visit as fallout with Ronen Bar escalates Tensions between government and agency chief grows against backdrop of new leak investigation, centered on a veteran agent giving classified info to journalists and politicians

Yuval Karni|05:24

No representative of the Shin Bet was invited to join the visit of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Israel Katz to northern Gaza on Tuesday. An official said the visit was of a military nature and did not require the presence of Shin Bet.

But a security briefing that was scheduled to be held at the Gaza Division headquarters, where the participation of a representative of the Shin Bet was required, was canceled after far-right Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich said he would refuse to attend any meeting with Shin Bet chief Ronen Bar.

After the news broke, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) issued a statement claiming the meeting was canceled because of scheduling difficulties. Since Netanyahu decided to fire Bar, claiming he had lost confidence in him, the prime minister and members of his coalition have been publicly feuding with the security chief. Their venomous rhetoric increased considerably after Bar expressed his objection to Netanyahu's conduct in his regard.

Bar claimed that his removal at this time could interfere with the investigation dubbed Qatargate, into the involvement of Netanyahu's close advisors with Qatar and the funds they allegedly received to promote pro-Qatari messaging. Bar's dismissal was temporarily suspended by the Supreme Court last week.

The animosity toward Bar grew even more this week after a new investigation was revealed into a veteran of the agency who allegedly leaked documents about a probe into the possible infiltration of the police ranks by a Jewish terror group.

The Shin Bet probe had been reported earlier and had been criticized by National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, himself a former member of the Kach movement, designated a terror group.

Netanyahu distanced himself from the probe, conceding that he had been told of the suspicions but had not approved a Shin Bet investigation.

After the news of the recent leaks broke, he refrained from commenting himself but echoed attacks against Bar. He retweeted his Likud Party's response to the suspected leaker's arrest which claimed Bar cooperated with Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara to turn the Shin Bet into their private militia to undermine the rule of law.

Netanyahu then reposted an accusation by a Likud lawmaker who accused Bar of inventing investigations, hounding publicly elected officials and threatening journalists and sources and said Bar himself should be under interrogation.

"When we, members of the government and the coalition unanimously said that we had no confidence in Bar, we knew why," the post read. "The head of an intelligence organization that under his leadership tools meant to be used for the capture of terrorists are used to hunt innocent civilians, elected officials and journalists, is a danger to society."

04.16.25 – We Pesach 05

Despite no hostage deal, Israel prepares aid to Gaza, per international law

04.16.25 – We Pesach 05

Despite no hostage deal, Katz confirms Israel to resume humanitarian aid to Gaza

Defense minister says supplies would be distributed across the enclave via 'infrastructure operated by civilian companies in the future'

Yoav Zitun|02:53

Israel is preparing to resume the transfer of humanitarian aid into the Gaza Strip through civilian companies, Defense Minister Israel Katz confirmed Wednesday, following weeks of halted deliveries and despite no hostage deal being in place.

Speaking during a morning briefing, Katz said the aid would be distributed via "infrastructure operated by civilian companies in the future," signaling a shift in how supplies will enter the enclave. His comments followed a report last week in Ynetnews, which said Israel was expected to allow aid into Gaza within weeks.

Humanitarian deliveries to Gaza have been suspended for more than six weeks amid the collapse of a temporary ceasefire and the freezing of negotiations for a hostage deal. Dozens of aid trucks remain stranded in Egypt after Israel halted access, citing concerns over Hamas's control of the supplies.

Katz said Israel's policy on Gaza, led by the military with the support of the political leadership, is "clear and unequivocal"—focused on securing the release of all hostages under the so-called Witkoff framework and laying the groundwork for Hamas's defeat. He added that halting aid deliveries has undermined Hamas's grip on the local population.

Military and political officials have recently concluded that Israel will soon have no choice but to resume the flow of food, fuel and medicine into Gaza. Failure to do so could expose commanders in Israel's Southern Command and senior defense officials to potential violations of international law.

During the six-week period of the previous hostage deal, Israel allowed a sharp increase in humanitarian deliveries—up to 600 aid trucks a day, three to four times the wartime average of 150 to 200. Much of that aid was seized by Hamas. Security officials have since calculated that the remaining supplies will last only a few more weeks.

04.16.25 – We Pesach 05

IDF kills top Hamas terrorist behind Nahal Oz attack, 2014 deaths of 5 soldiers

04.16.25 – We Pesach 05

IDF kills top Hamas terrorist behind deaths of 5 soldiers in 2014

Forces target Mahmud Abu Hassira, a senior Hamas Nukhba commander tied to the 2014 Nahal Oz attack, as the terror group's military leadership continues to dwindle while war rages

Ynet|00:26

The IDF and Shin Bet announced Wednesday it eliminated Mahmud Ibrahim Hasan Abu Hisirah, a member of Hamas' elite Nukhba force who took part in the July 28, 2014, infiltration attack during Operation Protective Edge, when five Israeli soldiers were killed near Nahal Oz.

According to the IDF, Abu Hassira was a top Hamas operative and the deputy of Hamas' Gaza City Brigade commander Izz al-Din Haddad — one of the terror group's two most senior military leaders in the Strip. He was killed several days ago in an airstrike in Gaza City, reportedly carried out last Thursday.

In recent years, Abu Hassira served as Haddad's personal military aide and was involved both in Hamas's war operations and the planning leading up to the October 7 massacre. Haddad currently commands Hamas's Gaza City Brigade and sits on the group's military council. He oversees at least six battalions, including the Nukhba unit that led the October 7 attack.

During the 2014 incident, Nukhba terrorists infiltrated Israeli territory through a tunnel and stormed an IDF position in Nahal Oz, killing Sergeant Daniel Kedmi, Sergeant Barkai Ishai Shor, Sergeant Erez Sagi, Sergeant Dor Deri, and Sergeant Nadav Raymond as well as wounding another soldier.

Since the start of the war in Gaza, Hamas has lost most of its senior commanders. According to The Wall Street Journal, citing intelligence officials, the group's military leadership in Gaza is now deeply fragmented. In the central and southern parts of the Strip, command is reportedly in the hands of Mohammed Sinwar, brother of former Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar, though he's said to be in hiding and largely disconnected. Meanwhile, northern Gaza remains under the control of Izz al-Din Haddad, who held the same post at the start of the war.

04.16.25 – We Pesach 05

Iran releases propaganda video of drones & missiles preparing to attack Israel

04.16.25 – We Pesach 05

Iran releases 'unseen images' of drones and missiles preparing to attack Israel | Watch The footage shows the preparation of the drones, missiles, and the command and operations room related to 'Operation True Promise 1', the first Iranian attack on Israel; This is how Iranian propaganda works to compensate for the failure

Lior Ben Ari, Yuval Karni|16:06

As Iran engages in nuclear negotiations with the United States, Iranian state-affiliated Fars News Agency released a video on Tuesday purportedly showing what it claims is previously "unseen footage" of drone and missile preparations, as well as command

center operations, related to "Operation True Promise 1." This operation refers to Iran's first direct attack on Israel, conducted between April 13 and 14, 2024, in retaliation for the assassination of senior Quds Force commander Mohammad Reza Zahedi in Damascus.

The footage depicts the assembly of drones and missiles within underground facilities, highlighting Iran's military capabilities.

A subsequent Iranian attack on Israel occurred on October 1, 2024, dubbed "Operation True Promise 2," following the deaths of key figures from Hamas, Hezbollah and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). Israel responded with its own military actions but Iran was careful - and still is - to hide its vulnerabilities and failures.

On Sunday, Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said in a meeting with senior Iranian military officials that "the capabilities of the forces must be strengthened, including strengthening the strength of weapons and organizations. The forces are Iran's wall and the people's refuge against any aggression."

Benny Sabati, a researcher at the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS), criticized the video as Iranian propaganda aimed at masking operational failures. He noted that Iran often crafts narratives to present events favorably, regardless of public skepticism. "This is how Iranian propaganda works to compensate for the failure," he said.

According to Sabati: "They tell stories as they want. They don't care even if the Iranian public itself doesn't believe them. The Iranians tend to pat themselves on the back, and that's compensation for failures. I remember cases like this from the 1990s as well. They would tell stories about operations that didn't happen and weren't created."

Meanwhile, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, during a visit to northern Gaza, addressed a post by Khamenei titled: "Why the Zionist regime must be eliminated from the Middle East." Netanyahu highlighted the contradiction of Iran advocating for Israel's destruction while simultaneously engaging in negotiations with the U.S. He asserted Israel's commitment to its survival and called for the dismantling of Iran's nuclear program and its support for terrorism.

Today, the dictator of Iran – Ayatollah Khamenei – posted a call to eliminate Israel.

Netanyahu later released another video - this time in English - in which he addressed the world and especially the American public, in the wake of the conflicting messages being conveyed by senior Trump administration officials regarding the talks.

"Here you have it: the ruler of Iran is once again openly declaring that his goal is to destroy the State of Israel," he said. "The most blatant thing is that he is announcing this while he is, ostensibly, conducting peace negotiations with the United States. Well, Israel will not disappear. What must disappear is Iran's axis of terror and its nuclear program - not only for the sake of Israel, but for the sake of the entire region and for peace in the world."

04.15.25 – Tu Pesach 04

US begins troop withdraw from Syria in mid-June; influenced by J.D. Vance

04.15.25 – Tu Pesach 04

US tells Israel it will begin withdrawing troops from Syria within 2 months

First report: After Trump expressed empathy for Erdogan during his meeting with Netanyahu, Ynet has learned that Washington announced US forces in Syria will begin a phased withdrawal within two months; Israel is warning of the consequences and trying to prevent the move - amid fears that Turkey will take over more strategic assets in the new Syria

Yossi Yehoshua|11:11

U.S. defense officials have informed their Israeli counterparts that the United States plans to begin a phased withdrawal of its troops from Syria within two months, according to information obtained by Ynet.

Despite previous Israeli efforts to prevent such a move, Washington has made it clear those efforts were unsuccessful. Still, Israeli defense officials are not giving up and continue to press the Biden administration to reconsider.

The planned withdrawal comes as no surprise. Former President Donald Trump, now back in office, had long promised to pull U.S. troops out of the region under his administration's isolationist doctrine, influenced in part by Vice President J.D. Vance.

"This is not our war," Trump has stated repeatedly, and the Pentagon has been preparing for the move for some time. Washington is now transitioning into the operational phase, with regular updates being shared with Israeli defense officials. In discussions between the parties, Israeli representatives have expressed serious concerns about the potential consequences.

A senior Israeli official estimated that the withdrawal may be only partial—and Israel is trying to prevent this too, out of fear it would embolden Turkey, which has been openly seeking to expand its influence in the region since the fall of the Assad regime. Currently, U.S. troops are stationed at several key points in eastern and northern Syria, playing a stabilizing role. Israeli defense sources fear their removal could spur Turkish efforts to seize more strategic military assets in Syria.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan is reportedly eager to exploit the shifting regional dynamics to assert his country's status as a dominant regional power, with Syria playing a central role. His increasingly hostile rhetoric toward Israel since the start of the Gaza war has only deepened Israeli unease. While Turkey is not considered a hostile state, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu recently described it—like other countries—as “complicated.”

Israel has warned both Ankara and Washington that a permanent Turkish presence at bases such as Tadmur and T-4 would cross a red line and threaten the IDF's operational freedom in the northern theater. In a meeting last week in Azerbaijan, Israeli and Turkish

officials discussed the issue. Israel reportedly emphasized that it holds Syria's new government accountable for all military activity in its territory, warning that violations could trigger military action. Both sides expressed interest in de-escalation and began talks on establishing a coordination mechanism similar to the Israel-Russia deconfliction model previously used in Syria.

Nonetheless, the looming U.S. withdrawal, coupled with Trump's warm tone toward Erdoğan during his recent meeting with Netanyahu, has heightened tensions in Israel's defense establishment. Trump's offer to mediate between Israel and Turkey has not reassured officials in Jerusalem, particularly given growing signs of American disengagement. As one Israeli security source put it, recent airstrikes on the T-4 base are part of "a race against time" before "the Americans pack up and leave."

Erdoğan, meanwhile, remains closely aligned with Syria's new president, Ahmad al-Sharaa—also known as Abu Mohammad al-Julani, a former al-Qaida operative whose jihadist group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham helped topple Bashar Assad's regime in December 2024. With Iranian forces—once Assad's key backers—now pushed out of Syria, a development that benefited Israeli interests, officials in Jerusalem now worry that Turkey will attempt to fill the vacuum. A Turkish military foothold in the new Syria, they fear, could limit Israel's operational freedom and eventually pose a direct threat along the Golan border.

The meeting between Israeli and Turkish officials in Azerbaijan last week focused on technical issues, such as establishing a conflict-prevention mechanism in Syria. A diplomatic source said Israel made it "abundantly clear that any change in the deployment of foreign forces in Syria - and in particular the establishment of Turkish bases in the Palmyra area - is a red line and will be considered a breach of trust." "Israel has previously stated that preventing this threat is the responsibility of Damascus," the source added. "Any action that endangers Israel will endanger al-Sharaa's regime."

The T-4 base, located near Tadmur in central Syria, has been a recent focal point of Israeli airstrikes. Security officials say the presence of Turkish forces in that area—far from Turkey's own border—would endanger the Israeli Air Force's freedom of movement. Prior to Assad's fall, Iran had established a significant military infrastructure in the area. Reports indicate that Israeli strikes on several Syrian military installations, including T-4, occurred shortly after Turkish delegations visited the sites in preparation for a possible deployment.

Despite efforts to calm tensions in Azerbaijan, Erdoğan continued to lash out at Israel just two days later. In a fiery speech, he once again labeled Israel a "terrorist state," accused it of trying to sabotage Syria's "revolution," and warned, "Anyone seeking to inflict more pain on the Syrian people must be prepared to pay the price."

04.15.25 – Tu Pesach 04

BBC report; Hamas rejected Egypt ceasefire offer; while still in consultation

04.15.25 – Tu Pesach 04

Hamas has rejected Israel's latest ceasefire offer, BBC reports

Despite heavy military pressure and halt of humanitarian aid, a senior Palestinian official said the terror group is rejecting the offer that would see the release of 10 live hostages and 16 dead hostages in exchange for a 6-week ceasefire: 'Israel is not committing to ending the war'

Ynet, News Agencies|Updated:10:22

The BBC reported Tuesday evening, citing a senior Palestinian official, that Hamas has rejected Israel's latest ceasefire proposal, which included a six-week truce during which 10 living hostages and the remains of 16 killed hostages would be released. Israel has yet to issue an official response.

According to the Palestinian source, Hamas dismissed the plan because it did not guarantee a permanent end to the war or a full Israeli military withdrawal from Gaza—both of which are central demands for the group.

In recent weeks, Israel has intensified military operations in Gaza, seizing additional territory and targeting Hamas infrastructure in an effort to pressure the group into releasing more hostages without committing to ending the conflict. The humanitarian situation in Gaza has deteriorated significantly, with the United Nations warning that conditions are now among the worst since the war began 18 months ago.

Earlier, a senior Hamas official told AFP on Tuesday that the terror group will "most likely" respond to an Israeli ceasefire proposal it received through mediators within 48 hours.

"Hamas will most likely send its response to the mediators within the next 48 hours, as the movement is still conducting in-depth consultations... within its leadership framework, as well as with resistance factions, in order to formulate a unified position", the official told AFP.

The proposal, passed to Hamas by Egypt and confirmed by multiple Arab outlets Monday, calls for the release of 10 hostages in exchange for 120 Palestinian prisoners serving life sentences.

The deal, as reported, would begin with the release of Israeli-American hostage Edan Alexander on the first day, as a gesture to the United States. On the second day, Hamas would free five hostages in exchange for 66 inmates serving life terms and 611 others from Gaza.

The plan prohibits public ceremonies for the hostages' release and includes safeguards to ensure humanitarian aid reaches only civilians. After the second phase, aid and supplies for displaced Palestinians would be allowed in, and Israeli forces would begin to reposition in Rafah and northern Gaza.

Negotiations on "the day after" — including Hamas' disarmament and a permanent truce — would begin on the third day. On day seven, Hamas would release four more hostages

in exchange for 54 prisoners serving life terms and 500 other detainees from Gaza arrested after Hamas' Oct. 7 terror attack on Israel.

The Israel Defense Forces would then redeploy east of Salah al-Din Street, previously used by Gazans returning north before the last ceasefire collapsed.

On day 10, Hamas would provide information on the remaining living hostages in exchange for information about Palestinian detainees. On day 20, it would return the remains of 16 deceased hostages in exchange for 160 Palestinian bodies.

Negotiations for a permanent ceasefire are to be completed within 45 days. If successful, all remaining hostages — living and dead — would be released. A temporary ceasefire could be extended by mutual agreement. Hezbollah-affiliated Al-Mayadeen reported that Egypt, Qatar and the United States are increasing efforts to secure a lasting truce.

04.15.25 – Tu Pesach 04

Hamas to respond to proposal within 48 hours; ceasefire to be complete in 45 days

04.15.25 – Tu Pesach 04

Hamas to respond to Israel ceasefire proposal within 48 hours, official says
Proposal calls for the release of 10 hostages in exchange for 120 Palestinian prisoners serving life sentences, as well as talks on Hamas' disarmament and a permanent truce
AFP|07:15

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04.15.25 – Tu Pesach 04

Leaker was censor of internal Shin Bet documents; shared elements with PM

04.15.25 – Tu Pesach 04

Suspected leaker oversaw censorship of internal Shin Bet documents, attorney says
Attorney asserts agent, accused of leaking confidential materials regarding investigations into extreme right-wing elements in the police, acted out of belief that public and political leadership had the right to know

Liran Tamari, Yuval Karni|06:24

A reservist in Israel's Shin Bet security agency who is under investigation for allegedly leaking classified information was responsible for censoring internal agency documents, his attorney said Tuesday during a court hearing.

Attorney Ori Korb, representing the suspect identified only as "A," told the Central District Court in Lod that his client had served as a "document control officer" in the Shin Bet. "He censored anything that could potentially harm the state. That was his job," Korb said.

In contrast, representatives from the Police Internal Investigations Department (Mahash) argued that A "demonstrated a complete lack of restraint" and accused him of leaking materials directly from the agency's computer systems.

The hearing was held over an appeal against the suspect's arrest, with the court eventually deciding to remand A's arrest until 2:00 p.m. Wednesday. The case has drawn significant political attention due to the nature of the alleged leaks and the figures involved.

According to investigators, the reservist is suspected of leaking internal and confidential materials to journalists and to Diaspora Affairs Minister Amichai Chikli, a member of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud party. Korb argued the suspect acted out of a belief that the public—and the political leadership—had a right to know the information.

“It is absolutely clear to anyone who looks at this that he did it because he believed it served the public interest,” Korb said. “The information does not endanger Israel and poses no threat to state security.”

Korb said the first disclosure allegedly made by the suspect was shared with journalist Amit Segal and Minister Chikli. It concerned a Shin Bet operation that, according to Korb, raised serious questions about both its necessity and legality. “This was done only after an internal review had concluded, and he believed the public deserved to know what had occurred,” Korb added.

“The struggle for democracy includes many components, and one of them is the public’s right to know,” Korb told the court. “Sometimes people mistakenly think that any violation of the law is a threat to democracy. But sometimes it’s the violation that exposes such a threat.”

Authorities have confirmed the suspect is not accused of harming national security.

The Shin Bet confirmed it is investigating an employee accused of exploiting their position to access and leak classified information to unauthorized parties. In a statement, the Shin Bet said the employee “used their direct access to the agency’s information systems to obtain classified material and transfer it covertly on multiple occasions.”

The agency launched an internal probe after suspecting classified information had been compromised. “The investigation established reasonable suspicion that the employee actively violated legal and organizational obligations by removing classified materials,” the statement added. The Shin Bet stressed that its operations adhered to the law and that “at no point were journalists’ phones monitored.

The affair has triggered political fallout, with Likud officials defending the reservist and accusing Shin Bet Director Ronen Bar and Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara of politicizing the agency. “A Shin Bet official who felt the agency under Ronen Bar had become political has been arrested and interrogated in Shin Bet basements,” the party said in a statement. Netanyahu retweeted the statement on social media.

Bar has been summoned to appear on Sunday before the Knesset’s Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee to address the case and other matters. A separate invitation from the Knesset Constitution Committee, chaired by MK Simcha Rothman, is not expected to be honored.

In a related development, a high-level security meeting at the IDF Southern Command’s Gaza Division, which was to include Netanyahu, Bar, and several ministers, was canceled at the last minute without explanation. The cancellation followed threats by Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, who said he would not attend any meeting where Bar was present.

04.15.25 – Tu Pesach 04

Likud following leak probe: Ronen Bar turned Shin Bet into a deep-state militia

04.15.25 – Tu Pesach 04

Likud following leak probe: Ronen Bar has turned Shin Bet into 'deep-state militia'
Statement by Netanyahu's party comes after detention of agency reservist, suspected of
leaking confidential documents to journalists and Diaspora Affairs Minister Amichai
Chikli

Yuval Karni|03:45

Likud officials on Tuesday accused Shin Bet chief Ronen Bar of transforming Israel's
domestic security agency into a "deep-state private militia" bent on political persecution,
following the arrest of a reservist in the agency on suspicion of leaking classified
information.

In a strongly worded statement, the ruling party charged that "under the tenure of
Ronen Bar and Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara, the Shin Bet has been turned into
a private militia of the deep state that seeks to undermine the rule of law and the
foundations of democracy."

The party said the reservist, identified only as "A," was detained after alleging that the
Shin Bet had become politicized and that its leadership was targeting ministers and
journalists for investigation. "They arrest and interrogate journalists, blackmail police
officers and launch baseless political probes against ministers and Knesset members —
all to prevent Bar's removal," the statement said.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who has not publicly commented on the arrest,
retweeted the Likud message. The party also reiterated criticism of Bar's handling of the
aftermath of the October 7 Hamas attacks, accusing him of seeking to shift blame for
intelligence failures onto the political leadership.

Diaspora Affairs Minister Amichai Chikli, who is suspected of receiving the leaked
documents, praised the reservist as "a hero of Israel" and said the material did not
endanger state security. "Withholding these documents from the political echelon and the
public is the real threat," Chikli said.

Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich announced he would boycott a security briefing if Bar
attends, calling him "a failed Shin Bet chief" who is "acting criminally to stage a coup."
Communications Minister Shlomo Karei said Bar "ceased to be Shin Bet chief on
April 11 — now that decision must be implemented."

Opposition voices defended the agency's actions. Democratic Party leader Yair Golan
said investigating leaks is "the Shin Bet chief's duty" and accused Netanyahu of wanting
an intelligence service that protects him personally rather than the country.

The Police Investigations Department opened the probe in recent weeks. The reservist is
suspected of leaking internal documents to Chikli and journalists Amit Segal and
Shirit Avitan-Cohen, but is not accused of endangering state security.

04.15.25 – Tu Pesach 04

PA set to elect vice president for Abbas; meeting, begins April 23 in Ramallah

04.15.25 – Tu Pesach 04

Palestinian Authority set to elect first-ever vice president

Election marks one of the most significant reforms since PA's founding; move made following call between Abbas and Macron, where latter says France mulls recognizing Palestinian state

Einav Halabi|02:12

Administrative reforms in the Palestinian Authority since the start of the Gaza war are reaching new levels: for the first time, the Palestinian Central Council is set to convene to elect a vice president for both the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the Palestinian Authority in two weeks, Ynet learned on Tuesday.

The meeting, scheduled for April 23 in Ramallah and expected to last two days, marks one of the most significant reforms since the PA's founding. According to Palestinian officials, the move follows Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas's announcement at last month's Arab emergency summit in Cairo. Roughly 180 council members have been invited.

Sources within the PA revealed the main contenders for the role: Hussein al-Sheikh, secretary-general of the PLO Executive Committee; Jibril Rajoub, former head of the Preventive Security Force and Rauhi Fattouh, who was recently designated to temporarily replace Abbas in case of his absence or death.

A Palestinian source told Sky News Arabia that during a recent phone call, French President Emmanuel Macron urged Abbas to appoint a deputy, reorganize the Fatah movement and reconcile with key figures previously expelled, including Mohammed Dahlan and Yasser Arafat's nephew, Nasser al-Qudwa.

The source added that Macron promised France is seriously considering recognizing a Palestinian state within the 1967 borders in the coming months.

A PA official confirmed the report to Ynet, calling the decision unprecedented and a "positive step" for the future of Palestinian leadership, which he said aims to govern both the West Bank and Gaza with international backing.

Another Palestinian source close to the PA's decision-making circle told the London-based Asharq Al-Awsat that the PA is holding decisive talks with the U.S., European nations, Arab states, Hamas and Israel — both directly and indirectly — about governance in post-war Gaza.

According to the source, the PA is pushing a political initiative to establish a Palestinian state encompassing the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem.

He said influential Arab states are involved and that the U.S. is central to the talks. The source expressed hope that a Gaza ceasefire would prompt Washington to pursue a political path acceptable to Arab publics, eventually leading to the resolution of the conflict through the creation of a Palestinian state.

He claimed the PA is ready for statehood and has enacted sweeping reforms toward that goal. Even Hamas, he said, is willing to relinquish control of Gaza — and its weapons — if a Palestinian state is established.

To date, the PA has never formally held elections for a vice president and the position isn't defined in the current Palestinian Basic Law. However, recent years have seen increasing debate about the need to identify or appoint a successor, especially given Abbas's advanced age — born in 1935 — and the fact that no presidential elections have been held since 2005.

In a column, Palestinian journalist and PLO member Nasser Laham wrote, "There's no doubt the PLO is stagnant and losing influence among youth. It's an old ship that sometimes appears worn out but it's still sailing in the right direction. History has shown that faster ships, backed by more money, military power and appeal, often sailed harder — but in the wrong direction."

He added, "The Palestinian Central Council might elect a vice president, a co-president, or ten presidents. That doesn't worry PLO members. They've lived through every historical phase and know well that the ship that left Beirut with Arafat in 1982 eventually reached Jerusalem."

04.14.25 – Mo Pesach 03

Egypt ceasefire proposal includes talks on permanent truce, Hamas disarmament

04.14.25 – Mo Pesach 03

Report: Israel ceasefire proposal includes talks on permanent truce, Hamas disarmament
Proposal, passed to Hamas by Egypt, calls for the release of 10 hostages in exchange for 120 Palestinian prisoners serving life sentences

Lior Ben Ari, Itamar Eichner | 23:36

Israel has presented a new ceasefire proposal to Hamas that includes a 45-day pause in fighting, the release of hostages in exchange for Palestinian prisoners, and the eventual disarmament of the terror group, according to Arab media reports and Israeli officials.

The proposal, passed to Hamas by Egypt and confirmed by multiple Arab outlets Monday, calls for the release of 10 hostages in exchange for 120 Palestinian prisoners serving life sentences. It also outlines a framework for a permanent ceasefire and the removal of Hamas' weapons.

Hamas said it is reviewing the offer "with a high level of national responsibility" and intends to respond once internal consultations are complete.

The deal, as reported, would begin with the release of Israeli-American hostage Edan Alexander on the first day, as a gesture to the United States. On the second day, Hamas would free five hostages in exchange for 66 inmates serving life terms and 611 others from Gaza.

The plan prohibits public ceremonies for the hostages' release and includes safeguards to ensure humanitarian aid reaches only civilians. After the second phase, aid and supplies for displaced Palestinians would be allowed in, and Israeli forces would begin to reposition in Rafah and northern Gaza.

Negotiations on “the day after” — including Hamas' disarmament and a permanent truce — would begin on the third day. On day seven, Hamas would release four more hostages in exchange for 54 prisoners serving life terms and 500 other detainees from Gaza arrested after Hamas' Oct. 7 terror attack on Israel.

The Israel Defense Forces would then redeploy east of Salah al-Din Street, previously used by Gazans returning north before the last ceasefire collapsed.

On day ten, Hamas would provide information on the remaining living hostages in exchange for information about Palestinian detainees. On day 20, it would return the remains of 16 deceased hostages in exchange for 160 Palestinian bodies.

Negotiations for a permanent ceasefire are to be completed within 45 days. If successful, all remaining hostages — living and dead — would be released. A temporary ceasefire could be extended by mutual agreement. Hezbollah-affiliated Al-Mayadeen reported that Egypt, Qatar and the United States are increasing efforts to secure a lasting truce.

An Israeli security official said a deal could be reached within two to three weeks but noted that gaps remain. “Israel is aiming to secure the release of nine or 10 living hostages, and this is being coordinated with the United States,” the official said. “Hamas is willing to release seven or eight, but with conditions we cannot accept.”

“The military pressure is working,” the official added. “They’re running out of gas, food and fuel. Conditions in northern Gaza are worsening, and public pressure is mounting on Hamas. Combined military and diplomatic pressure is likely to push them toward an agreement.”

Senior Hamas officials have objected to the disarmament clause. A representative told Al Jazeera the group was surprised that the Egyptian-mediated proposal included language calling for the terror group's disarmament, and that Egypt had insisted no ceasefire deal could be reached without it. Hamas told Egypt it categorically rejected that condition, saying a ceasefire and Israeli withdrawal must come first.

Sami Abu Zuhri, a senior Hamas official abroad, said Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is “demanding a surrender agreement” with conditions “designed to sabotage any ceasefire.” He said disarmament “is not on the table and will not happen,” and insisted Hamas is ready to release all hostages in a single phase in return for a ceasefire and Israeli withdrawal. “Surrender is not an option,” he said. “We will not raise a white flag.”

Netanyahu spoke Monday evening with the mothers of hostages Tamir Nimrodi, Avinatan Or and Eitan Horn. According to his office, he described intense negotiations underway and reaffirmed Israel's commitment to bringing home all hostages — living and deceased.

Separately, Saudi-based Al-Sharq reported that after a Hamas delegation left Cairo, Israel demanded that the new agreement include a continued IDF presence in buffer zones,

including newly reached positions. This demand reportedly contradicts a January agreement that called for Israeli withdrawal from certain areas.

Unnamed sources told the network that Egypt conveyed U.S. assurances to Hamas that the talks were serious, and that President Donald Trump expressed readiness to announce the ceasefire himself to demonstrate U.S. commitment. The sources added that Hamas' response may hinge on guarantees provided by mediators regarding the enforcement of any agreement.

04.14.25 – Mo Pesach 03

PM unclear of US red lines in Iran nuclear talks; Israel must retain ability to strike

04.14.25 – Mo Pesach 03

Even Netanyahu doesn't know Trump's Iran strategy, official says
Senior security official says Jerusalem remains unclear about US president's red lines in nuclear talks and warns that a bad deal could prevent Israel from taking military action against Iranian nuclear sites
Itamar Eichner|16:23

A senior security official said Monday that Israel remains in the dark about U.S. President Donald Trump's intentions regarding his ongoing negotiations with Iran, expressing concern over the lack of clarity from Washington.

"The main concern is that we don't know what his red lines are," the official said. "Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu himself doesn't really know."

The official warned that a bad deal with Iran could severely harm Israel's security interests, potentially preventing it from taking military action against Iranian nuclear sites if necessary.

Earlier in the day, Trump again threatened Iran with an attack on its nuclear facilities and expressed his frustration over attempts by Tehran to stall. "We had a meeting with them on Saturday. We have another meeting scheduled next Saturday. I said, 'That's a long time,'" Trump said. "I think they're tapping us along because they were so used to dealing with stupid people in this country."

He warned that negotiations must move quickly, claiming Iran was "fairly close" to obtaining a nuclear weapon and that such an option was not possible because the Iranians are radicalized. Trump said his efforts to ensure Iran does not obtain a nuclear weapon are for the world.

"If we have to do something very harsh, we'll do it," he said. When asked if that included striking Iranian nuclear facilities, the president replied, "Of course it does."

04.14.25 – Mo Pesach 03

US approves major weapons to Israel as IDF prepares for Gaza & eyes Iran

04.14.25 – Mo Pesach 03

US approves major weapons shipment to Israel as IDF prepares for Gaza offensive, eyes Iran

Israel set to receive over 3,000 US munitions to boost Air Force readiness for a major Gaza operation, with attention also on Iran; additional 10,000 munitions, frozen under Biden, released after Trump returned to White House

Yoav Zitun|15:10

The IDF is set to receive a major arms shipment from the United States in the coming weeks, including more than 3,000 munitions for the Israeli Air Force, as part of its preparations for continued operations in the Gaza Strip and a potential strike on Iran, Israeli officials said Monday.

The shipment, recently approved by the U.S. administration, is intended to boost the Air Force's readiness for a large-scale campaign planned by the IDF Southern Command in the Gaza Strip. The delivery comes in addition to more than 10,000 aerial munitions expected to replenish Israeli stockpiles after 18 months of prolonged, multi-front fighting.

The shipment complements a previous deal for heavy munitions that Israel purchased from the U.S. last year. The Biden administration had initially frozen the transfer, but U.S. President Donald Trump reversed the freeze in recent weeks.

In February, the U.S. government confirmed the approval of a major arms deal with Israel valued at \$7.41 billion, which includes guided munitions, bombs and related equipment. The Pentagon's Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) notified Congress that the deal is intended to preserve Israel's ability to defend itself.

The authorization followed a January notification from the Biden administration regarding an \$8 billion arms package just before Trump reentered office. Under the agreement, Israel will use American military aid funds to purchase 3,000 Hellfire missiles valued at approximately \$660 million and 2,166 AGM-114 Hellfire bombs, also valued at \$660 million.

Israel will also acquire 2,166 GBU-39 bombs, roughly 13,000 JDAM guidance kits for various bomb weights and 17,475 FMU-152A/B fuses as part of a separate \$6.75 billion deal. The delivery of the Hellfire missiles is scheduled to begin in 2028, while the additional munitions are expected to start arriving in 2025.

According to the Pentagon, the equipment will come from existing U.S. military stockpiles and American defense contractors including Lockheed Martin, Boeing and L3Harris. In a formal statement, the Pentagon said the deal would not alter the regional balance of power and would support Israel's defense of its borders, critical infrastructure and civilian population.

The U.S. State Department said the transactions are consistent with American policy to maintain Israel's security and defense capabilities. The agreements will allow Israel to

integrate the new systems seamlessly into its military and will not affect U.S. military readiness, according to the official notice.

04.14.25 – Mo Pesach 03

Hamas rejects disarmament; eyes US assurance of ceasefire with 10 hostages

04.14.25 – Mo Pesach 03

Hamas rejects Egyptian disarmament plan, eyes US role in ceasefire talks with Trump gesture

Terror group signals readiness to release more hostages as talks focus on guarantees for ending war; Hamas may reportedly free Israeli-American Edan Alexander as goodwill gesture to Trump in exchange for framework agreement

Itamar Eichner, Einav Halabi, Lior Ben Ari, Lihi Gordon|13:10

The latest Egyptian ceasefire proposal included a demand for Hamas to disarm — a clause that reportedly took the terror group by surprise, a senior Hamas official told Al Jazeera on Monday.

“Egypt informed us there will be no ceasefire agreement without negotiations on disarmament,” the official said. Hamas flatly rejected the demand, telling Cairo that “the only gateway to an agreement is an Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and an end to the war, not the issue of weapons.”

The Qatari-based outlet reported that the Egyptian proposal also includes a phased release of hostages — with half to be freed in the first week of the agreement — and a 45-day temporary ceasefire in exchange for the entry of food and shelter supplies into Gaza. Saudi-owned Asharq News reported earlier Monday that, following Hamas’ departure from Cairo, Israel is demanding that the new agreement preserve the presence of the IDF in buffer zones, including newly established positions. This, the report said, contradicts the terms of a framework reached in January, which called for an Israeli withdrawal from areas including the Philadelphi Corridor along the Egypt-Gaza border.

Sources cited by Asharq News claimed Egypt conveyed American assurances to Hamas that negotiations on a permanent ceasefire would be serious and credible. According to the sources, U.S. President Donald Trump expressed willingness to personally announce the ceasefire framework to demonstrate U.S. commitment to ending the war. Egypt reportedly emphasized to Hamas that the latest U.S. proposal presents a significant opportunity to move toward an end to hostilities.

Later in the day, London-based Arabic newspaper Asharq al-Awsat quoted Hamas sources saying the terrorist group informed mediators in Cairo that it does not oppose releasing Israeli soldier Edan Alexander — who also holds U.S. citizenship — as a goodwill gesture toward the Trump administration.

Hamas propaganda video featuring Israeli American hostage Edan Alexander

The sources said such a move would be made in return for a preliminary ceasefire of approximately 50 days, with a commitment to a second phase that would include a complete end to the war — an idea previously floated in past negotiations.

The Hamas delegation reportedly told mediators that it had no objection in principle to the number of hostages being released, as long as such a release would guarantee the war's end and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza. A formal response has yet to be finalized.

“We discussed Israel's response to Egypt's ceasefire proposal,” the sources said, adding that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government had demanded the release of 10 living hostages and a similar number of bodies, along with a ceasefire lasting 45 to 55 days and a commitment to demilitarize Hamas.

Earlier Monday, Egyptian and Palestinian sources told Reuters that the latest round of talks in Cairo ended without a breakthrough, despite Israeli claims that cracks had begun to emerge in Hamas' position. The sources said Hamas remains adamant that any agreement must lead to a full end to the war.

Still, an Egyptian official told Reuters that Hamas was open to releasing additional living hostages, as demanded by Israel, but insisted on guarantees that Israel would agree to begin discussing the second phase of the cease-fire, which includes a permanent cessation of fighting. A separate Egyptian source told Qatari newspaper The New Arab that Hamas had agreed to release nine living hostages, in addition to Edan Alexander.

04.14.25 – Mo Pesach 03

Trump flustered over the pace, warns Iran of harsh response if nuclear talks stall

04.14.25 – Mo Pesach 03

Trump warns Iran of 'harsh' response if nuclear talks stall

US president says Iran 'fairly close' to developing nuclear weapon and accuses Tehran of dragging out talks, warns 'very harsh' action, including military strikes, on the table
Ynet, news agencies|12:45

U.S. President Donald Trump on Monday reiterated his firm stance that Iran must not acquire a nuclear weapon, repeating threats of military action and accusing Tehran of stalling negotiations on a new nuclear agreement.

Speaking at the White House following the conclusion of the first round of indirect talks held in Oman over the weekend, Trump expressed frustration over the pace of discussions.

“We had a meeting with them on Saturday. We have another meeting scheduled next Saturday. I said, ‘That’s a long time,’” Trump said. “I think they’re tapping us along because they were so used to dealing with stupid people in this country.”

Trump warned that negotiations must move quickly, claiming Iran was “fairly close” to obtaining a nuclear weapon.

“And if we have to do something very harsh, we’ll do it,” he said. When asked if that included striking Iranian nuclear facilities, the president replied, “Of course it does.” Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi confirmed on Monday that the next round of talks will be held in Rome, and said the negotiating teams were “very close” to agreeing on a framework for further discussions.

04.14.25 – Mo Pesach 03

Israeli actions in Gaza go beyond proportionate self-defense, EU top diplomat says

04.14.25 – Mo Pesach 03

Israeli actions in Gaza 'go beyond proportionate self-defense', EU top diplomat says
EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas says Israel has the right to self-defense but criticizes its ongoing military actions in Gaza; during visit to Israel last month, she called for 'proportionate military actions'

Itamar Eichner|11:08

Israel has the right to defend itself, but its current actions go beyond proportionate self-defense, Kaja Kallas, the European Union's top diplomat, told reporters on Monday.

Kallas acknowledged Israel's right to self-defense but added that its current conduct raises serious concerns. “Military actions must be proportionate,” she said, echoing similar remarks made during a visit to Israel last month.

Kallas, 47, formerly prime minister of Estonia, recently succeeded Josep Borrell, who was declared persona non grata by Israel due to his hardline stance during the Gaza war. In a press conference held in Israel in March, Kallas reaffirmed Israel's right to defend itself from threats including Hamas, Hezbollah and the Houthis, but stressed the importance of proportionality in military responses. In an interview with Ynet and its sister publication Yedioth Ahronoth during her visit to Jerusalem, she said the EU opposes U.S. President Donald Trump's proposal calling for the relocation of Gaza residents, a plan she said the bloc “does not support.”

While Kallas welcomed the Egyptian ceasefire and reconstruction initiative, she cautioned that the plan still requires clarification on several key points. “The first issue is funding — Gulf countries need to contribute more, as the EU currently provides the bulk of aid to the Palestinians,” she said.

“The second is governance in Gaza, which must be agreed upon with Israel. Hamas should have no role in managing Gaza, as it poses a security concern for Israel. The third is security — who will ensure there is no terrorism, so that we do not see another attack like October 7?”

Despite these challenges, Kallas called the Arab proposal “a good basis for dialogue and progress.”

04.14.25 – Mo- - - News Placed in April 14 spot – Monday Pesach 03
 Hamas flex to release 10; demand leaders go free; all factions reject disarming

04.14.25 – Mo Pesach 03

Talks in Cairo end without breakthrough amid Hamas demand to end war
 Hamas showed some flexibility on releasing more hostages, sources say, but asked for more time to respond; US pressing for larger release, while terror group claims issue lies not in numbers but in end to hostilities
 Lior Ben Ari, Einav Halabi, news agencies|09:53

The latest round of negotiations in Cairo aimed at securing a ceasefire in Gaza ended on Monday without a significant breakthrough, despite Israeli claims that Hamas may be softening its stance.

According to Egyptian and Palestinian sources cited by Reuters, Hamas continues to insist that any future agreement must lead to a complete end to the war in Gaza.

An Egyptian official told Reuters that Hamas has expressed willingness to release more living hostages, as demanded by Israel, but is seeking guarantees that Israel would then begin discussions on the second phase of the ceasefire, which includes a permanent end to hostilities.

Speaking to the Qatari outlet The New Arab, another Egyptian source said Hamas had agreed in principle to release nine hostages, in addition to American-Israeli hostage Edan Alexander. The source noted that the United States is exerting “significant pressure” on Hamas to expand the number of hostages included in the deal.

A Hamas delegation led by senior official Khalil al-Hayya reportedly showed “some flexibility” during the Cairo talks. Egyptian sources said Hamas had requested additional time to respond to the latest proposal presented by Egyptian mediators.

Hamas spokesman Taher al-Nunu told AFP that the terrorist group is “ready to release all the hostages” as part of a genuine prisoner exchange agreement, but only if Israel commits to ending the war, withdrawing its forces from Gaza and allowing humanitarian aid to enter the territory. Al-Nunu accused Israel of obstructing progress, stating that the problem “is not about numbers, but about Israel shirking its commitments while continuing the war.” He added that this is why Hamas insists on binding guarantees.

A senior Hamas figure speaking to The New Arab rejected any suggestion that the group would disarm, stating that all armed factions in Gaza had dismissed Israel’s demand for disarmament. Sources from the group told the Saudi outlet Al Hadath that Israel’s refusal to commit to a ceasefire and withdrawal had caused the talks to collapse. However, they

did not rule out the possibility that some Hamas leaders could leave Gaza, provided they are not prosecuted.

Saudi-owned Al Arabiya reported that a preliminary agreement had been reached to increase the number of hostages to be released. According to the report, Hamas will provide detailed information about each hostage to mediators, and the release will take place in two phases according to specific timelines. Discussions over the future of Hamas leaders still in Gaza have been postponed. Sources said Israel has rejected Hamas' demand to include a clause mandating an end to the war.

Hamas, for its part, has reportedly indicated it would not oppose senior members leaving Gaza, so long as they are not subject to prosecution. The group is said to be interested in transitioning into a political party as part of future negotiations.

Al Arabiya also reported that the United States had informed mediators it would pressure Israel to accept the new proposal. The proposed agreement reportedly includes arrangements to allow humanitarian aid into Gaza and reopen the crossings. Negotiators, along with the United States, are reportedly in the final stages of drafting a ceasefire and hostage release deal, aiming to conclude the process by the end of the month.

Meanwhile, Hezbollah-aligned Al Mayadeen reported that Israel's latest proposal includes the release of Edan Alexander and nine other hostages. The report stated that the Israeli offer does not guarantee a permanent ceasefire but includes a 45-day halt to military operations, opening of crossings and the conditional entry of aid.

The deal would also initiate negotiations on a second phase addressing a lasting ceasefire, Israeli withdrawal, Hamas' disarmament and governance of Gaza. The plan, according to the report, is designed to dismantle Hamas' military capabilities and prevent it from regaining control of the territory. Hamas has not formally responded to the proposal but is currently reviewing it.

On Sunday, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and hostage affairs envoy Gal Hirsch called Zvika and Efrat Mor, whose son Eitan has been held by Hamas for 556 days, to update them on the progress of negotiations to release "ten living hostages." According to the Tikvah Forum, to which the couple belongs, Netanyahu emphasized that the deal is not yet finalized but reaffirmed the government's commitment to returning all hostages. The Mors reiterated their group's position that all hostages must be released in a single stage, "on one bus, without selection."

04.14.25 – Mo- - - News Placed in April 14 spot – Monday Pesach 03
One year ago today, US describe thwarting 300 drone & missile attack on Israel

04.14.25 – Mo Pesach 03
US airman describe thwarting Iran attack on Israel

US Air Force commander says could not be prouder of his aviators who took part in the defense of Israel against 300 drones and missiles fired by Iran; 'We got to be part of a thing that had an impact,' says one airman
ynet|09:51

US Air Force commander General David Allvin posted a clip of his airman describing how they participated in the response to Iran's attack on Israel last year. "We got to be part of a thing that had an impact," one airman said. "This is defense of our coalition partners," another said.

One year ago today, Iran launched 300 missiles and drones at Israel. Our aviators risked everything to stop it. These heroes will never know how many innocent lives they saved that night. Hear the story from those who lived it. Damn proud of these patriots!

The clip was posted exactly a year after Iran launched 300 missiles and drones against Israel. The United States forces participated in defending Israel against the massive attack.

Another described what he saw when he looked down. "The ground was on fire," he said. "You could see every single one of the drones, where they hit."

One year ago, today, Iran launched 300 missiles and drones at Israel. Our aviators risked everything to stop it. These heroes will never know how many innocent lives they saved that night," Allvin said in his post. "Damn proud of these patriots."

The U.S. military Central Command - CENTCOM published a post in Hebrew on Monday showing a joint drill with the IDF, held in January 2023. The Juniper Oak 23-2 military exercise, the post said, was meant to improve the joint operational ability of the American and Israeli militaries, which are always prepared because they train together.

04.14.25 – Mo- - - News Placed in April 14 spot – Monday Pesach 03
Egyptian proposal; nine to 10 hostages & open border crossings by end of month

04.14.25 – Mo Pesach 03
Hostage families call for all-inclusive deal as talks continue: 'Return them all on one bus'
Current proposal under discussion reportedly includes a two-phase release of nine or 10 hostages, which Hostages and Missing Families Forum says would waste 'precious time' and place captives at risk
Gilad Cohen|04:10

As Israel awaits Hamas' response to an Egyptian-mediated proposal for the release of nine to 10 hostages, families of those held captive are calling on the Israeli government to pursue a deal that would secure the release of all hostages at once, warning that a phased release risks lives and delays critical progress.

The current proposal under discussion reportedly includes a two-phase release of hostages. However, the Hostages and Missing Families Forum said Monday that such a plan would waste "precious time" and place all hostages in greater danger.

“While families wait and hope for the release of each and every hostage from Hamas captivity, the reality is that partial releases are a dangerous concept,” the forum said in a statement. “Government officials continue to speak of increasing military pressure to free all the hostages, yet in practice negotiations are stuck, hostages’ lives are at risk, and fallen soldiers’ bodies are disappearing.”

The statement concluded with a demand for an immediate, comprehensive deal: “The State of Israel is obligated to bring them all back. We demand the only reasonable and viable solution: an end to the war and the immediate return of all hostages together, in a single phase.”

On Sunday, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Gal Hirsch, Israel’s envoy for hostage affairs, held a phone call with Zvika and Efrat Mor, whose son Eitan has been held by Hamas for 556 days. The call was intended to update the family on the latest developments in the negotiations, which officials said were focused on a deal to secure the release of 10 living hostages.

According to the Tikvah Forum, in which the Mor family is active, Netanyahu emphasized during the call that the deal was not yet finalized but reaffirmed the government’s commitment to bringing back all hostages. The Mor family reiterated their position that all captives should be released together, “on one bus and without selection.” Reports in Saudi television outlet Al-Arabiya late Sunday suggested some progress had been made in the negotiations. Citing unnamed sources, the outlet said there is “initial agreement” from Hamas to increase the number of hostages it is willing to release. The report indicated that Hamas is preparing to submit a detailed list of hostages and agree to a two-phase release plan based on specific timelines.

The discussions reportedly postponed negotiations over the fate of senior Hamas leaders still in Gaza until a later stage. Hamas has also demanded “strong guarantees” that Israel will not resume military operations following any agreement.

Al-Arabiya also reported that the United States has told mediators it will pressure Israel to accept the emerging agreement. The proposed deal includes provisions for expanded humanitarian aid to Gaza and the reopening of border crossings.

Mediators are said to be in the final stages of drafting a cease-fire and hostage exchange agreement, with hopes of securing a deal by the end of the month.

London-based newspaper Al-Quds Al-Arabi reported that a Hamas delegation in Cairo has demanded firm assurances that Israel will not return to fighting. According to the report, Hamas and other Palestinian factions reached a consensus during internal consultations that there will be no “temporary pauses” in hostilities, citing concerns of renewed fighting following an initial exchange.

Sources quoted in the report said they expect Israel to escalate its military activity in the coming days in an effort to pressure Hamas into a deal.

04.14.25 – Mo- - - News Placed in April 14 spot – Monday Pesach 03
Judea stolen car stopped by police, driver ran over the officer & fled to Hebron

04.14.25 – Mo Pesach 03

Israeli hurt in West Bank car ramming, manhunt underway

Man moderately injured; IDF says assailant, stopped because he was believed to be driving a stolen car, fled the scene to nearby Palestinian village of Dura in the southern Hebron Hills

Yoav Zitun, Idan Blumhof 03:33

An Israeli man was moderately wounded Monday morning in a suspected car-ramming near the settlement of Otniel, in the South Hebron Hills area of the West Bank, the Israeli military said. He was later identified as a member of the Yasam Israel Police special patrol unit.

According to the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), the assailant, stopped by police because he was suspected of driving a stolen car, ran over the officer while fleeing the scene in the direction of the nearby Palestinian town of Dura. A large-scale manhunt is underway as security forces search the area.

“The IDF received a report of a ramming attack at the Dahariya Junction in the Judea Brigade sector. The incident is under investigation,” the military said in a statement. The incident comes weeks after an 85-year-old Israeli man, Moshe “Musa” Horn, was killed in a deadly attack on March 24 near the Tishbi Junction, along Route 66 in northern Israel. In that attack, an Arab-Israeli assailant from the Wadi Ara region rammed his vehicle into a soldier waiting at a bus stop, exited the car, stabbed the soldier, and stole his weapon. He then used the stolen firearm to fatally shoot Horn, who was sitting in his car, and lightly wounded Horn’s son, who witnessed the attack.

Horn, a resident of Kibbutz HaZore’a, was pronounced dead at the scene. The attacker was shot and killed by Border Police officers who happened to be passing by on their way to a training exercise in Beit She’an.

Monday’s attack marks the latest in a series of violent incidents in the West Bank and across Israel amid heightened tensions.

04.14.25 – Mo- - - News Placed in April 14 spot – Monday Pesach 03

IDF chief Zamir stressed; keep media out; close discussions; no details of mobilization

04.14.25 – Mo Pesach 03

IDF chief Zamir warns of troop shortages, questions scope of Gaza war aims

Officials say military chief has warned Netanyahu and cabinet that military-only strategies cannot fulfill all national objectives in Gaza, particularly in the absence of a complementary diplomatic track

Yoav Zitun|Updated:00:56

Israel's new military chief has warned the government that a shortage of combat soldiers could limit the army's ability to carry out its political leadership's ambitions in Gaza, amid ongoing fighting with Hamas that has stretched into its second year.

Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir, who recently assumed command of the IDF, has told Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his cabinet that military-only strategies cannot fulfill all national objectives in Gaza, particularly in the absence of a complementary diplomatic track.

Zamir's warning reflects a growing disconnect between the military's operational capacity and the government's broader political aspirations, as the IDF continues limited ground operations under a scaled-down plan called "Mini Oranim." The strategy focuses on expanding a buffer zone near the Gaza border while pressing Hamas to release more hostages or agree to improved terms in a potential deal.

"Zamir is not sugarcoating the facts," a senior defense official said. "He's telling the leadership to abandon some of their fantasies."

The general's remarks underscore the IDF's reluctance to repeat what officials describe as past failures. Military gains made earlier in the war were eroded after the government declined to pursue political measures aimed at removing Hamas from power. Eighteen months into the conflict, the terror group continues to control most of the Gaza Strip. Zamir is also maintaining the army's policy of operational ambiguity. Journalists are not embedded with combat units, and public briefings are limited. As a result, global and domestic coverage has been dominated by controversial incidents, such as the killing of Palestinian medics and unverified reports of civilian casualties in Israeli airstrikes.

Military sources say the IDF aims to "act first and speak later" and to keep Hamas from gaining insight into Israeli intentions. Despite the restrained approach, Zamir reportedly supports a more decisive ground offensive aimed at defeating Hamas militarily—using different tactics from those employed before the last ceasefire, including surrounding key areas and inspecting civilians in stages.

However, a full reoccupation of Gaza could take many months, possibly years, and would require the reactivation of tens of thousands of reservists. Current reservist participation rates in combat units stand at 60% to 70%, according to the military—figures fully communicated to Netanyahu and senior ministers.

"There is concern those numbers won't improve in the event of a broader offensive," said the defense official.

Zamir also has updated the government on the IDF's readiness for potential conflict on other fronts, including Iran and Lebanon, as well as concerns about equipment availability and tank and armored vehicle readiness.

The current strategy may suit some in the government. A prolonged, lower-intensity presence in parts of Gaza could provide short-term security for Israeli communities, reduce the demand for extended reservist deployments, and create opportunities to resettle areas seized during the fighting.

Meanwhile, Hamas is rebuilding. According to Israeli intelligence, the group still has approximately 20,000 fighters, including senior commanders. Hamas has reportedly smuggled in military equipment using drones, possibly launched from within Israeli territory.

The army is investigating whether any military-use items were among the humanitarian supplies airdropped into Gaza during the last ceasefire, which lasted two months. The IDF is also weighing internal calls for an inquiry into how commanders managed the broader ground campaign.

In a recent speech, Zamir acknowledged that Hamas has not been defeated—raising questions about the effectiveness of a military effort that initially enjoyed near-universal domestic backing and widespread international support.

In a statement, the IDF said: “We do not comment on discussions held behind closed doors. The IDF is preparing for a range of developments in the war, including the potential mobilization of reservists to expand operations in Gaza. We will not disclose further details for security reasons.”

04.13.25 – Su - - News Placed in April 13 spot – Sunday Pesach 02
Hamas may be serious to hostage release & second phase; but will not disarm

04.13.25 – Su Pesach 02

Hamas says prepared for 'serious' hostage release following US assurances on ceasefire
Israel is waiting for a response to the proposal to offer for release of nine or 10 live hostages, including Edan Alexander, seen over the weekend in a Hamas psychological terror video; Defense minister says after the encirclement of Rafah and the capture of Morag corridor: 'A significant portion of Gaza's territory is now part of Israel's security zones'

Itamar Eichner, Yoav Zitun, Einav Halabi | 23:58

A day after Hamas released a video of Israeli-American hostage Edan Alexander pleading for his release, Israeli officials believe there has been meaningful progress in the hostage negotiations and a possible shift in Hamas' position.

A Hamas delegation led by senior official Khalil al-Hayya arrived in Cairo Sunday, where Egyptian mediators are awaiting the group's formal response to Israel's latest proposal. That proposal reportedly includes the release of nine to 10 living hostages—nearly identical to the original plan proposed by Trump envoy Steve Witkoff, which called for the release of 11 hostages, including Alexander. Israel is also demanding the return of the remains of approximately 10 dead Israeli hostages.

According to Israeli sources, the United States has offered Hamas a commitment: if the group agrees to release more than eight hostages, Washington will guarantee that Israel will enter negotiations for a second phase, centered on a ceasefire. Israeli officials also

believe that increasing military pressure—particularly following the IDF's seizure of the Morag corridor and encirclement of Rafah—is yielding results.

Video of hostage Edan Alexander released by Hamas

Defense Minister Israel Katz said Sunday night that capturing the 12-kilometer Morag corridor, which cuts across the Gaza Strip between Khan Younis and Rafah, effectively splits the territory from east to west and places the area between the Philadelphi and Morag corridors within Israel's growing security zone. He also noted that Israel is deepening its control of the northern perimeter of Gaza as part of broader efforts to protect Israeli communities.

"Several hundred thousand residents have already evacuated combat zones, and a significant portion of Gaza's territory is now part of Israel's security zones," Katz said. "The primary objective is to exert intense pressure on Hamas to return to the hostage release framework. The longer Hamas refuses, the more forcefully the IDF will operate—continuing to target operatives and destroy infrastructure. Gaza will become smaller, more isolated, and increasing numbers of its residents will be forced to evacuate."

Meanwhile, Hamas spokesperson Taher al-Nunu told Asharq that the group is prepared for a "serious" prisoner exchange, ceasefire and Israeli withdrawal. However, he insisted Hamas would not disarm and accused Israel of attempting to secure hostage releases without proceeding to the second phase of negotiations. "Hamas' weapons, and those of other factions, are not up for negotiation," he said.

04.13.25 – Su - - News Placed in April 13 spot – Sunday Pesach 02
Netanyahu backs son after tweet against Macron support of an evil PA state

04.13.25 – Su Pesach 02

'A true Zionist': Netanyahu backs son after 'screw you' tweet against Macron
PM calls tone unacceptable but defended him, accusing French leader of bias by backing Palestinian state, but not independent Corsica and New Caledonia

Itamar Eichner|13:05

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sunday defended his son Yair's tweet cursing French President Emmanuel Macron, saying he disapproved of the language but supported the substance of the remarks.

In the post, Yair Netanyahu wrote "screw you" in response to Macron's call for a Palestinian state. The prime minister described his son as "a true Zionist who cares about the future of the country."

"I love my son Yair," Netanyahu said in a statement. "Like any citizen, he is entitled to his personal opinion, even though I do not accept his style in responding to President Macron's call for a Palestinian state."

Netanyahu accused Macron of being “gravely mistaken” in continuing to promote a Palestinian state “in the heart of our land, whose aspiration is the destruction of the State of Israel.” He added that “to this moment, neither a representative of Hamas nor of the Palestinian Authority has condemned the atrocities of the worst massacre of Jews since the Holocaust, which indicates their true attitude toward the Jewish state.”

He said Israel “will not jeopardize its existence over illusions disconnected from reality,” and rejected “moralizing lectures on establishing a Palestinian state that would endanger Israel’s existence” from someone “who opposes granting independence to Corsica, New Caledonia, French Guiana and other territories whose independence would in no way threaten France.”

04.13.25 – Su - - News Placed in April 13 spot – Sunday Pesach 02
Israeli alarmed over soft US stance on Iran nuclear talks, absence of red lines

04.13.25 – Su Pesach 02

Israeli officials alarmed over soft US stance in nuclear talks with Iran

With no official updates yet, Jerusalem is relying on Iranian reports and fears a deal that won’t stop Tehran post-Trump; officials quietly believe a bad deal is worse than no deal at all—and prefer credible military option

Itamar Eichner|11:47

Israeli officials expressed growing concern Sunday over reports emerging from newly launched nuclear negotiations between the United States and Iran in Oman.

The talks, led by President Donald Trump's envoy Steve Witkoff, resumed Saturday, and Israeli sources fear that the preliminary proposals do not include dismantling Iran’s nuclear program based on the so-called “Libya model”—which Israel views as the only effective framework.

Though not officially stated, officials in Jerusalem have privately acknowledged that a potential agreement under the current U.S. administration would be viewed as deeply problematic, especially given expectations that Trump will not remain in office beyond his current term.

With Iran reportedly close to possessing the material for six nuclear bombs, Israeli officials worry that a deal now would leave the Islamic Republic dangerously close to breakout capability after Trump’s departure.

Some in Israel quietly hope the talks collapse, potentially paving the way for a credible military option. One of the central concerns is that Trump might prefer a moderate compromise to avoid a direct confrontation with Iran.

Officials are also wary of Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, who is known for his expertise and negotiation skills. There is concern in Jerusalem that he may be able to

manipulate the American delegation or stall the talks until Trump loses patience and rushes into a deal.

Meanwhile, in a development reflecting the broader regional concerns, U.S. Air Force chief Gen. David Allvin recently met with his Israeli counterpart, Maj. Gen. Tomer Bar, at the Pentagon. The IDF had not previously disclosed Bar's trip to Washington, suggesting the sensitive nature of the discussions—presumed to focus on military contingencies should diplomacy with Iran fail.

In an interview with The Wall Street Journal prior to the talks, Witkoff said that while the U.S. will not tolerate a nuclear-armed Iran, there is "room for compromise." He noted that the U.S. position starts with dismantling the nuclear program, but added, "That doesn't mean we aren't open to negotiations."

Witkoff emphasized that if Iran refuses to dismantle its program, the next steps would be left to Trump's discretion. He described the current talks as a confidence-building effort, aimed at conveying the importance of a deal rather than producing a fully fleshed-out agreement. Any eventual deal, he stressed, would require stringent oversight to ensure Iran is not covertly pursuing nuclear weapons capabilities.

The American draft proposal: no dismantling of Iran's nuclear program. Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who has long rejected direct talks with Washington as "foolish," was reportedly urged by senior Iranian officials to reverse his position and allow Tehran to engage with the U.S., even directly if necessary, according to a report by The New York Times. The officials warned Khamenei that without dialogue, the regime could be in danger, citing the growing threat of war with the U.S. and Israel, compounded by Iran's deepening economic crisis.

The first round of indirect nuclear negotiations between the United States and Iran took place Saturday in Muscat, Oman. Although both delegations were housed in the same building, they remained in separate rooms as Oman's foreign minister shuttled written messages between them. According to Iran's lead negotiator, four rounds of exchanges took place over two and a half hours, culminating in a symbolic handshake between

Araghchi later posted on Telegram that the talks were conducted in a "positive and constructive" atmosphere. He confirmed that a follow-up meeting is scheduled for Saturday, April 19. While Iran announced Oman would continue to host the discussions, a regional diplomatic source told Amwaj.media that the next round may move to Europe due to logistical considerations.

An Iranian official disclosed that the draft proposal brought by Witkoff to the first round did not include a demand for dismantling Iran's nuclear infrastructure or any explicit military threat—conditions that had led to the collapse of previous talks. The softer tone helped foster a more constructive environment but raised concerns in Israel about the seriousness of U.S. intentions and the absence of clear red lines.

Trump, whose envoy is leading the talks, commented Saturday night that negotiations were proceeding well. "I think they're going fine," Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One. "Nothing matters until you finish it, so I don't like to talk about it. But it's going okay. I think the Iran situation is going pretty well."

The White House had earlier described the talks as “positive and constructive.” According to additional reports, Trump has given Tehran a two-month timeline to reach a framework agreement.

Meanwhile, European countries must decide by October whether to invoke the “snapback” mechanism, which would reinstate all UN sanctions on Iran, as originally outlined in the 2015 nuclear deal. Triggering the mechanism could prompt Iran to withdraw from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty—a move that risks igniting a broader military confrontation.

04.13.25 – Su- - - News Placed in April 13 spot – Sunday Pesach 02
Houthi missile fire triggers air raid sirens across central Israel, Jerusalem

04.13.25 – Su Pesach 02

Houthi missile fire triggers air raid sirens across central Israel, Jerusalem

IDF says ballistic missile launched from Houthi-controlled Yemen and likely intercepted, activating alerts for the first time in 2 weeks; incident causes flight delays; debris found near Hebron

Ynetnews|10:20

Air raid sirens sounded across central Israel on Sunday evening, including in the Tel Aviv metropolitan area, Jerusalem, the Sharon region and other parts of the country, following missile fire from Yemen in what marked the first alarm of its kind in two weeks.

The IDF said that at least two ballistic missiles were likely launched from Houthi-controlled territory in Yemen. While attempts to intercept the rockets were carried out, the IDF noted that the results were still under review and had not confirmed whether the missiles were successfully shot down.

The IDF initially reported that at least two ballistic missiles were likely launched from Houthi-controlled territory. However, the military later issued a correction, stating that only a single missile had been fired. “After review, it has been determined that one missile was launched from Yemen,” the IDF said. “Interception attempts were carried out, and the missile was likely successfully intercepted. Sirens were sounded in accordance with protocol.”

Footage posted online showed interceptor missiles being launched toward the incoming threats. Debris from an interception attempt was found south of Hebron in the West Bank, according to local reports.

Incoming flights to Ben Gurion Airport, including an Arkia flight from Eilat, were delayed and forced to circle in holding patterns following the alerts. A Jordanian aircraft en route to Amman was also delayed in the air.

Though no sirens had been activated over the past two weeks, the Iran-backed Houthi rebels have continued launching missiles, which reportedly landed outside Israeli territory. In the same period, U.S. forces have maintained strikes on Houthi targets in Yemen, and American officials have recently opened direct talks with Iran, the Houthis' primary backer.

Meanwhile, the IDF reported Saturday night that it successfully intercepted an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) approaching Israeli airspace from the east. No sirens were triggered. Jordan's military confirmed the incident, saying that an unidentified UAV entered its airspace and crashed near Ma'an, causing fires but no casualties.

04.13.25 – Su- - - News Placed in April 13 spot – Sunday Pesach 02
Gaza health official threatened after calling out terrorists using hospital

04.13.25 – Su Pesach 02

Gaza health official threatened after calling out terrorists using hospital

Hospital official in Khan Younis criticizes Palestinian Islamic Jihad, urges operatives to leave facility—terror group issues threat: 'You've crossed the line'

Einav Halabi|09:53

The head of nursing at Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis, Mohammad Sakr, has come under threat after publicly condemning Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) terrorists for using the medical facility to carry out terror activity.

In a Facebook post, Sakr identified himself by name and title and said he had appealed to the operatives to leave the hospital, explaining that his actions were aimed at protecting the facility from being shut down.

Following his plea, Sakr received a note at his office reading, “Dear one: You’ve crossed the line—be careful. This is your first warning.” In his post, he added, “They are threatening me brutally. I call on you in the name of God—not to forgive them.” Terrorist groups in Gaza, including Hamas and PIJ, have long been accused of using civilian infrastructure such as hospitals for military purposes, effectively turning patients and medical staff into human shields.

A Gaza-based source reported that last month, senior commanders from Hamas' al-Qassam Brigades and internal security forces barricaded themselves inside al-Aqsa Hospital in Deir al-Balah, even expelling new mothers from recovery rooms to take shelter there.

Meanwhile, the IDF said it struck a Hamas command-and-control center inside Gaza City's Al-Ahli Baptist Hospital overnight in response to a rocket fired toward southern Israel during Passover on Saturday night. Israeli officials said no one was hurt after medical staff were warned in advance and evacuated the facility.

Hamas condemned the strike as “a vile and filthy crime,” accusing Israel of deliberately targeting 34 hospitals across Gaza in what it called a systematic campaign to destroy the enclave’s health infrastructure. The Gaza government’s media office dismissed Israel’s claim that terrorists operated from within the hospital as “absurd” and “a desperate attempt to justify its crimes against a protected civilian facility.”

Separately, a rocket alert sounded Sunday afternoon in Kibbutz Re'im near the Gaza border. The IDF later confirmed that a rocket launched from Gaza was intercepted. Palestinian media reported Israeli strikes in Gaza City’s Zeitoun neighborhood in response. Similar rocket fire occurred a day earlier, and last week a heavy barrage targeted Ashdod and Ashkelon.

In the wake of the attack, IDF Arabic spokesperson Lt. Col. Avichay Adraee issued an evacuation warning to residents of multiple neighborhoods in Khan Younis, including Kizan al-Najjar, Kizan Abu Rishwan, al-Salam, al-Manara, al-Qurain, Ma'an, Batn al-Samin, Jurat al-Lot, al-Fukhari and southern areas of Bani Suheila. “We will strike with maximum force any area from which rockets are launched,” Adraee wrote on social media.

Meanwhile, the IDF reported that Israeli forces struck more than 90 terrorist targets across the Gaza Strip over the past 48 hours. The strikes included a weapons warehouse in Gaza City's Daraj and Tuffah neighborhoods containing explosives and devices used in attacks, as well as the rocket launch site from which Saturday’s attacks were launched. Troops from the 36th Division continued operations in Rafah and the Morag Corridor. In Rafah's Tel al-Sultan and Shaboura neighborhoods, Gaza Division forces destroyed weapons caches, tunnels and terror infrastructure, killing several terrorists. In northern Gaza, the 252nd Division also destroyed tunnels, military compounds and eliminated terrorists attempting to plant explosives.

04.13.25 – Su - - News Placed in April 13 spot – Sunday Pesach 02
After rockets launched, IDF disables 34th hospital in Gaza used by Hamas military

04.13.25 – Su Pesach 02
IDF strikes Hamas targets in Gaza after rocket launches during Passover Eve
Forces launch retaliatory strikes on Hamas positions in Gaza, including a hospital used for military operations, after terror group launched rockets at Israel during holiday
Roni Green Shaulov, Yoav Zitun, Einav Halabi|05:58

The IDF on Sunday struck Hamas positions in Gaza after a rocket was launched from the Strip toward Israeli communities near the border on Saturday night, during Passover’s Seder night and intercepted by the Israeli Air Force.

The military said rocket sirens were sounded in open areas, no injuries were reported and the intercepted rocket was the fourth launched into Israel from Gaza that day.

Following the launch, IDF Arabic-language spokesperson Lt. Col. Avichay Adraee issued an evacuation warning to residents in central Gaza. “To all residents of the Nuseirat refugee camp nearby neighborhoods — this is your final warning before we strike,” he wrote.

“We will strike with maximum force any area from which rockets are fired. The terrorist organizations, particularly Hamas, bear full responsibility for the displacement and suffering of civilians. For your safety, move immediately south to the designated shelters in Al-Mawasi.”

Several hours later, the Hamas-affiliated Shehab news agency reported that the Israeli Air Force had struck Gaza’s Al-Ahli Baptist Hospital in the Zeitoun neighborhood. According to the report, two missiles were fired after the hospital had been evacuated of patients, medical staff and the wounded.

On Sunday morning, just before 10:00 a.m., the IDF and Shin Bet confirmed the strike, saying it targeted a Hamas command and control center in northern Gaza located within the Al-Ahli Hospital.

“The compound was used by Hamas terrorists to plan and execute terror attacks against Israeli civilians and IDF troops,” the military said. “Prior to the strike, steps were taken to mitigate harm to civilians or to the hospital compound, including issuing advanced warnings in the area of the terror infrastructure, the use of precise munitions, and aerial surveillance.”

The IDF added Hamas “systematically violates international law while using civilian infrastructure, brutally exploiting the civilian population as a human shield for its terrorist activities,” and reiterated its previous warnings that all military use of medical facilities in Gaza must stop.

Later that day, the IDF and Shin Bet announced another strike on a Hamas command compound in Deir al-Balah, in central Gaza. “At the time of the strike, numerous Hamas terrorists were operating from within the compound. The targeted terrorists had planned to carry out additional terrorist attacks,” the statement read.

It also said that precautionary measures were taken to reduce civilian harm, including the use of precision-guided munitions and aerial surveillance.

Gaza’s Health Ministry, controlled by Hamas, said the airstrikes destroyed the hospital’s emergency and reception departments, as well as several laboratories. Medical teams had evacuated patients and staff after receiving a call from Israeli security officials.

No casualties were reported. The hospital’s director, Dr. Fadel Naim, said a nearby pharmacy and adjacent buildings were also heavily damaged, affecting over 100 patients and dozens of staff.

Following the strike, Hamas condemned the attack as a “heinous and vile crime,” accusing Israel of deliberately destroying and disabling 34 hospitals in Gaza as part of a “systematic plan to dismantle what remains of the health sector.”

Hezbollah's silent collapse in Lebanon; urge Israel to withdraw to justify disarming

04.13.25 – Su Pesach 02

'Source of deep division': Hezbollah's silent collapse in Lebanon

Lebanon's deputy prime minister highlights Hezbollah's waning clout as disarmament progresses, international pressure mounts on Iran-backed terror group

Lior Ben Ari|04:25

Lebanon's Deputy Prime Minister Tarek Mitri said Saturday in an interview with Qatari outlet Al-Araby Al-Jadeed that Hezbollah's weapons are a "source of deep division among the Lebanese," and that the Shiite terror group "no longer enjoys the same influence it once had."

Speaking on the 50th anniversary of Lebanon's civil war, Mitri said the country had been split into two camps in recent years: "One that boasts about Hezbollah's weapons and draws political, social and economic power from them — and another that opposes the use of arms to impose such influence."

He said the latter camp rejects "the existence of an armed organization outside the state's legitimate authority." While the divide still exists, he noted it has diminished. Hezbollah's declining influence, according to Mitri, is due in part to its ongoing war with Israel, which has "weakened and exhausted it," and to a growing political consensus around principles such as the state's exclusive right to bear arms, the state's authority over decisions of war and peace and its responsibility to reclaim all Lebanese territory.

He added that these principles have become more entrenched in Lebanese politics, altering the nature of the debate around Hezbollah's weapons compared to the past. Following a Hezbollah official's statement last week that the group is open to talks on disarmament, a source close to the organization said most of its southern Lebanon bases have already been handed over to the Lebanese army.

Speaking anonymously to AFP, the source said that out of 265 Hezbollah outposts south of the Litani River, "around 190 have been transferred to the Lebanese army." Under the ceasefire agreement signed in late November, Hezbollah is required to withdraw from all positions south of the river and dismantle its infrastructure there. Only the Lebanese army and UN monitors are permitted to operate in the area.

On Thursday, Lebanese Foreign Minister Youssef Rajji addressed the disarmament issue, confirming that Beirut had been told it won't receive international aid until all weapons in the country — north and south of the Litani — are brought under control.

Rajji said the message was reiterated by U.S. envoy Morgan Ortagus, deputy to special Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff, during her visit to Lebanon early last week. According to him, the international community wants Lebanon to extend its sovereignty across its entire territory.

In an interview with Lebanese outlet LBCI, Ortagus compared Hezbollah to cancer and urged Lebanese authorities to speed up disarmament. "We continue to push the

government to take all necessary steps to end hostilities, including the disarmament of Hezbollah and all militias,” she said.

Rajji denied that a timeline for disarmament was discussed but said Ortogus made clear that it should happen “as soon as possible.” He also called on the international community to pressure Israel to withdraw from five strategic points it still holds in southern Lebanon.

“We call on all countries to press Israel to withdraw from Lebanese territory it occupies. Doing so would eliminate Hezbollah’s main justification for retaining its weapons and bolster Lebanon’s position, which favors diplomacy to reclaim its land. So far, however, Israel refuses, citing security concerns.”

Meanwhile, Lebanon’s Al-Jadeed TV reported that the Lebanese army has continued to disarm Hezbollah in recent days, even entering additional bases north of the Litani that the terror group had not previously handed over.

The channel also reported that the army is close to completing the dismantling of Hezbollah’s infrastructure across all areas south of the river. Sources told the outlet that weapons will be gradually confiscated, followed by a formal handover agreement with Hezbollah.

04.13.25 – Su - - News Placed in April 13 spot – Sunday Pesach 02

Lebanese army took control of 190 out of 265 Hezbollah bases south of Litani River

04.13.25 – Su Pesach 02

Lebanese army took control of most Hezbollah bases south of Litani River, source says
Source says 190 out of 265 Hezbollah positions now under army control as Iran-backed terrorist group increasingly expressing willingness to discuss disarmament amid international pressure

AFP|12:16

Hezbollah has transferred control of most of its military positions in southern Lebanon to the Lebanese army, a source close to the Iran-backed terrorist group told Agence France-Presse on Saturday, in a potential step toward disarmament under the ceasefire agreement with Israel.

The anonymous source said that out of 265 Hezbollah posts located south of the Litani River, approximately 190 have been handed over to the Lebanese military.

The development comes in line with the terms of a ceasefire agreement signed in late November, which stipulates that Hezbollah must withdraw from all positions south of the Litani and dismantle its infrastructure in that region. Under the agreement, only Lebanese armed forces and UN peacekeepers are authorized to operate in southern Lebanon. The report follows remarks by a senior Hezbollah official earlier this week, expressing a willingness to discuss disarmament. On Thursday, Lebanese Foreign Minister Youssef Rajji acknowledged that Beirut had been informed it would not receive international aid

unless the country's weapons — both north and south of the Litani — were brought under state control.

According to Rajji, U.S. envoy Morgan Ortagus, deputy to special envoy Steve Witkoff, reaffirmed this condition during her visit to Lebanon earlier this week. Ortagus, who has compared Hezbollah to a cancer, urged Lebanese authorities to expedite the disarmament process. In an interview with Lebanese broadcaster LBCI, she said, "We continue to urge the government to take all necessary steps to end hostilities, including the disarmament of Hezbollah and all militias."

Foreign Minister Rajji denied any discussions of a specific timeline but confirmed Ortagus stated the process "must happen soon." He also called on the international community to press Israel to withdraw from five strategic areas it still controls in southern Lebanon. "This would remove any justification Hezbollah uses to maintain its weapons and would strengthen Lebanon's diplomatic stance," he said.

Meanwhile, Lebanon's Al Jadeed TV reported that the Lebanese army has begun entering additional Hezbollah bases north of the Litani, which had not previously been vacated by the group. The channel also said the army is nearing completion of dismantling Hezbollah's infrastructure south of the river.

Weapons confiscation is being carried out gradually, and sources indicated that a formal agreement on a handover mechanism is in the works.

04.12.25 – Sa - - News Placed in April 12 spot – Saturday Full Moon 7:23pm
 Hamas releases new video of hostage Edan Alexander on Passover night

04.12.25 – Sa Full Moon 7:23pm

Hamas releases new video of hostage Edan Alexander on Passover night

Terror group releases second propaganda video featuring sign of life from 20-year-old Israeli-American soldier who has been held captive in Gaza for 554 days
Lihi Gordon, Hagar Kochavi, Gaya Zohar|11:29

Hamas on Saturday night, the eve of Passover, released a video showing a sign of life from 20-year-old Israeli-American soldier Edan Alexander, who has been held captive in Gaza for 554 days.

The family of the captive soldier has authorized the release of an image from the terror group's psychological warfare video.

"As we gather for the holiday evening in the U.S., our family in Israel is preparing to sit around the Passover table," the family said in a statement. "Edan, a lone soldier who made Aliyah and enlisted in the Golani Brigade to defend the country and its citizens, remains in Hamas captivity. As you mark the festival of freedom, remember that there is no true freedom while Edan and 58 other hostages are still not home."

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu spoke to Alexander's parents, Yael and Adi, following the release of the clip and expressed solidarity, his office said in a statement.

The prime minister told the family that “a tremendous effort is underway at this very moment to bring Idan and all our hostages home,” according to the statement.

Alexander, who holds dual citizenship, grew up in Tenafly, New Jersey, and made Aliyah at 18 to volunteer for the Golani Brigade. He was staying with his grandparents in Tel Aviv and with his military cohort at Kibbutz Hatzor.

On October 7, he chose to remain on base despite being eligible for leave, as his mother was visiting from the U.S.—a decision that would later lead to his abduction. That morning, during the attack, he managed to call her and say that a piece of shrapnel hit his helmet, but he was otherwise unharmed.

This is not the first video Hamas has released of Alexander. On day 421 of his captivity, the terror group published footage of him saying, presumably under duress: “It’s time to put an end to this nightmare. Every day feels like an eternity here, and the pain inside grows day by day.” In the video, he appears to lower his head, strike his knees and says: “Our fear is at its peak. We die a thousand times every day and no one feels us.”

There are currently 59 hostages still held in Gaza, 24 of whom are confirmed to be alive. Since fighting resumed, Hamas has released weekly videos showing signs of life from hostages, in what is widely seen as an effort to pressure the Israeli government to agree to a deal.

Last week, the group released video messages from Bar Kupershtein and Maxim Herkin. The week prior, they showed Elkana Bochbot, and five days before that, footage of Bohbot together with Yosef-Chaim Ohana.

Meanwhile, the Israeli negotiating team is working with mediators, mainly Egypt and in coordination with the U.S., to try to break the deadlock in talks. An Israeli official said Friday that “the ball is in Hamas’ court.” While Hamas has already rejected Israel’s proposal to release 11 living hostages, it has yet to respond to a newer Egyptian proposal involving the release of eight.

Israeli negotiators are currently trying to maximize the number of live hostages included at the start of any potential agreement, even as the government continues to oppose a comprehensive deal that would end the war in exchange for the release of all hostages. At the same time, the head of the Israeli negotiating team, Strategic Affairs Minister Ron Dermer, has come under public criticism for a lack of results. However, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu expressed support for him in a statement from his office, which dismissed reports of a significant slowdown in talks since Dermer’s appointment. The statement said: “Minister Dermer is working around the clock and leading the issue in all its aspects. The orchestrated campaign against him is unworthy, does not reflect reality, serves Hamas propaganda, and hurts the families of the hostages.”

IDF encircled Rafah & cut off from the coast, will expand other areas in Gaza

04.12.25 – Sa Full Moon 7:23pm

Katz tells Gazans IDF to expand operations, offers emigration option

Defense minister says IDF fully controls southern Gaza, adding it to security buffer zone; warns civilians fighting will force evacuations as troops advance to other areas

Ynet|06:43

Defense Minister Israel Katz warned on Saturday that IDF operations would soon expand to all areas of the Gaza Strip and urged residents to evacuate.

In a public message, Katz said Israel is working to facilitate the departure of Gazans to other countries in coordination with a plan proposed by U.S. President Donald Trump.

Katz confirmed that Israeli forces have completed their deployment along the Morag Corridor and now fully control southern Gaza, effectively cutting off Rafah from the rest of the coastal enclave. "The entire area from the Philadelphi Corridor to the Morag Corridor will be added to the security buffer zone," he said. "Now we will operate in other areas of Gaza."

The IDF said in a statement that 36th Division troops completed the establishment of the Morag Corridor over the past 24 hours, severing the Rafah and Khan Younis Brigades. The IDF also reported destroying underground tunnels and other terror infrastructure in the area and encircling the city of Rafah.

Shortly after the military's statement, three rockets were launched from the Khan Younis area at Israeli communities near the border. All were intercepted, and no injuries were reported.

In anticipation of further strikes, IDF Arabic-language spokesperson Lt. Col. Avichay Adraee issued a warning to residents of Khan Younis neighborhoods, urging them to evacuate. "Terror groups are responsible for you having to evacuate and for the suffering of civilians," Adraee said. "We will attack with force the areas from where the rockets were launched."

04.12.25 – Sa - - News Placed in April 12 spot – Saturday Full Moon 7:23pm

IDF seals off Rafah, intercepts rocket fire from southern Gaza

04.12.25 – Sa Full Moon 7:23pm

IDF seals off Rafah, intercepts rocket fire from southern Gaza

Forces encircle Rafah after securing the Morag Corridor; IDF says dozens of terrorists killed, tunnels and terror infrastructure destroyed in past 10 days; Hamas delegation heads to Cairo for ceasefire talks

Yoav Zitun|04:38

The IDF said Saturday that air defenses intercepted three rockets launched from southern Gaza toward Israeli border communities. No injuries were reported.

Earlier in the day, the military said it had completed its deployment along the Morag Corridor and effectively cut off southern Gaza from the rest of the coastal enclave. The military said its forces had surrounded the city of Rafah, destroyed underground tunnels and dismantled terror infrastructure. According to the IDF, dozens of terrorists were killed in the area over the past 10 days of fighting.

“The IDF will continue to solidify its control on the main passageway and take action to thwart terror activity,” the military said in a statement.

Meanwhile, a senior Hamas official told AFP that a delegation from the terror group would travel to Cairo on Saturday for talks with Egyptian mediators about a possible ceasefire. “We hope the meeting will achieve real progress toward reaching an agreement to end the war, halt the aggression and ensure the full withdrawal of occupation forces from Gaza,” the official said.

Israeli officials reiterated that the next move lies with Hamas. According to them, the Egyptian proposal—reportedly including the release of eight living hostages—remains on the table, alongside a separate plan advanced by U.S. envoy Steve Witkoff. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu held consultations Friday to review the Egyptian plan, which includes steps to end the war—steps that Israel opposes—as well as continued military pressure on Gaza, including the targeted killing of senior Hamas operatives.

04.11.25 – Fr - - - Pesach day of Preparation

Iran cannot have a nuclear weapon, Trump says on eve of Witkoff talks

04.11.25 – Fr - - - Pesach day of Preparation

Iran cannot have a nuclear weapon, Trump says on eve of talks

Witkoff, who will lead the US delegation, says administration's red line is preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapon, with dismantling its nuclear program as the opening demand

News Agencies | 23:40

Iran "can't have a nuclear weapon," U.S. President Donald Trump said Friday ahead of high-stakes weekend talks over the state's nuclear program. "I want Iran to be a wonderful, great, happy country. But they can't have a nuclear weapon," Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One, hours before his envoy Steve Witkoff is to meet Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi in Oman.

Earlier Iran said it was giving high-level nuclear talks with the United States on Saturday "a genuine chance" after President Donald Trump threatened bombing if discussions failed.

Trump made a surprise announcement on Monday that Washington and Tehran would begin talks in Oman, a Gulf state that has mediated between the West and the Islamic Republic before.

In a sign of the difficult road ahead for negotiators, the White House reiterated Trump's threat on Friday, saying he wants Iran to know there will be "all hell to pay" if it does not agree to abandon its nuclear program.

Special envoy Steve Witkoff, who will lead the U.S. delegation, was quoted by the Wall Street Journal as saying the administration's "red line" is to stop Iran from being able to produce a nuclear weapon and that dismantling its nuclear program is the opening demand. But he suggested Washington would be open to "other ways to find compromise."

The January return to the White House of Trump, who in his first term withdrew the U.S. from a 2015 big-power accord with Tehran, has again brought a tougher approach to a Middle Eastern power whose nuclear program Washington's ally Israel regards as an existential threat.

At the same time, Iran and allied groups have been weakened by the military offensives Israel has launched across the region, including air strikes in Iran, after being attacked from Gaza by Palestinian militant group Hamas in October 2023.

Iranian state media said the talks would be led by Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi and Witkoff, with Omani Foreign Minister Badr al-Busaidi as intermediary.

The Iranian foreign ministry said on Friday the U.S. should value the Islamic Republic's decision to engage in talks despite what it called Washington's "prevailing confrontational hoopla".

"We intend to assess the other side's intent and resolve this Saturday," spokesperson Esmaeil Baghaei posted on X. "In earnest and with candid vigilance, we are giving diplomacy a genuine chance."

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Majid Takht-e Ravanchi was quoted by the semi-official news agency ISNA as saying: "Without threats and intimidation from the American side, there is a good possibility of reaching an accord." He added: "We reject any bullying and coercion."

"Important and practical" Iranian proposals

Iran had rejected direct negotiations with Washington before Trump announced on March 30: "If they don't make a deal, there will be bombing, and it will be bombing the likes of which they have never seen before."

"Important and practical" Iranian proposals have been prepared in pursuit of "a real and fair" agreement, Ali Shamkhani, an adviser to Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, said in a post on X.

"If Washington comes to the talks with sincere intentions and genuine will to reach an agreement, the path to a deal will be clear and smooth," Shamkhani added.

Since Trump pulled the U.S. out of the 2015 deal that curbed Iran's uranium enrichment activity, deeming the accord deeply flawed, Tehran has accumulated a stockpile of uranium refined to levels close to what would be suitable for nuclear bomb fuel.

Iran had agreed in the deal, reached during U.S. President Barack Obama's administration, to strictly limit its enrichment activity in return for a lifting of global economic sanctions. Tehran says its program is purely for peaceful energy purposes, but the West says it goes far beyond any civilian requirements, and suspects Tehran of covertly seeking to develop nuclear weapons capability.

Direct-indirect talks

Confusion arose after Trump announced that the talks between the longtime geopolitical adversaries would be direct, while Iran has insisted they would be indirect, with Omanis acting as mediators.

Shamkhani said Araqchi was heading to neighboring Oman with "full authority" for indirect talks.

The U.S. and Iran held indirect talks during President Joe Biden's term that ended in January but made little, if any, progress. The last known direct negotiations between the two governments were under Obama.

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Ynet-News, April 11, 2025 – Friday

Nissan 1st Month Pesach April 11-18, FF March 19

Ramadan Ended = Expect Arab Jihad frenzy over Pesach

03.29.25 – Saturday New moon 6:00am, Nissan 1st Month

04.11.25 – Fr- - - Pesach day of Preparation

IDF intercepts drone from Yemen; fire breaks out in Jordan from falling pieces

04.11.25 – Fr- - - Pesach day of Preparation

Erdogan calls Israel a terror state, despite de-escalation talks

04.11.25 – Fr- - - Pesach day of Preparation

Dermer's appointment slows hostage talks, no progress in sight

04.11.25 – Fr- - - Pesach day of Preparation

IDF soldier injured, tunnels under former schools, Morag Route expanded

04.11.25 – Fr- - - News Placed in April 11 spot Pesach day of Preparation

PM slams dissenting University letters, urging military insubordination to end war

04.11.25 – Fr- - - Pesach day of Preparation

Witkoff tells hostage families: A serious deal is taking shape, just a few weeks

04.10.25 – Th- - - News – Thursday Nisan 13

Mediator in the middle: Azerbaijan's role in fragile Israel-Turkey dialogue

04.10.25 – Th- - - News – Thursday Nisan 13

Six Arab Israelis charged with funding West Bank Hamas cells with Turkish cash

04.10.25 – Th- - - News – Thursday Nisan 13

Behind the scenes of the March 2-5 secret negotiations between the US and Hamas

04.10.25 – Th- - - News – Thursday Nisan 13

Pat Hana & Latet center, nonprofits, serve thousands in line for Passover food packages

04.10.25 – Th- - - News Placed in April 10 spot – Thursday Nisan 13

Growing friction of IDF troops and Syrian locals fuels anti-Israel sentiment

04.10.25 – Th- - - News – Thursday Nisan 13

Applying for a US visa? Your social media will be scrutinized for antisemitism

04.10.25 – Th- - - News – Thursday Nisan 13

Macron: France plans to push 147 UN votes for a Palestinian state, likely by June

04.09.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday Nisan 12

Hezbollah tipped off before inspection, cleared weapons site, then returned

04.09.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday Nisan 12

Katz: All of Rafah will be evacuated and turned into a security buffer

04.09.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday Nisan 12

US Senate confirms Mike Huckabee as ambassador to Israel in all Republican vote

04.09.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday Nisan 12

How Witkoff became Trump all-purpose point man on Iran, Russia & hostages

04.09.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday Nisan 12

Israel eliminates senior Hamas commander in massive north Gaza attack

04.09.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday Nisan 12

Israeli lawmakers receive threatening letters with a suspicious substance

04.09.25 – We- - - News – Wednesday Nisan 12

Nuclear deal with Iran only if follows Libyan example, PM says

04.09.25 – We- - - News Placed in April 09 spot – Wednesday Nisan 12

Israel eases restrictions on West Bank vehicles to pass through PA checkpoint

04.08.25 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday Nisan 11
IDF chief calls on soldiers to defeat Gaza Rafah Brigade

04.08.25 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday Nisan 11
Hamass cell arrested for planning to plant roadside bombs and fire upon Israeli busses

04.08.25 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday Nisan 11
Biden boycotted, Trump approves: Ben-Gvir to make Homeland visit to US

04.08.25 – Tu- - - News Placed in April 08 spot – Tuesday Nisan 11
Turkey moving in to Syria; holding talks with Israel to avoid military clash

04.08.25 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday Nisan 11
Sudan's military reach for Israel weapon support, after appeal to Iran failed

04.08.25 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday Nisan 11
IDF redeploys Golani Brigade to Gaza after months on northern front

04.08.25 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday Nisan 11
Mayors and NGOs urge MKs to cut red tape, fund post-war recovery efforts

04.08.25 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday Nisan 11
Shin Bet chief stay is a security risk; compared to forcing a couple to stay together

04.07.25 – Mo- - - News – Monday Nisan 10
Ministers slam IDF over planned resumption of aid deliveries to Gaza

04.07.25 – Mo- - - News – Monday Nisan 10
In meeting with Netanyahu, Trump confirms direct nuclear talks with Iran

04.07.25 – Mo- - - News – Monday Nisan 10
Israel's IAI, India completed Barak missile defense tests intercepting up to 45 miles

04.07.25 – Mo- - - News – Monday Nisan 10
Egypt - Gaza proposal, release of 8 hostages, 40 to 70 days of calm & aid

04.07.25 – Mo- - - News – Monday Nisan 10
Families of October 7 victims sue PA-American for funding Hamas tunnels

04.07.25 – Mo- - - News Placed in April 07 spot – Monday Nisan 10
IDF prepares to resume aid deliveries to Gaza within buffer zones

04.07.25 – Mo- - - News – Monday Nisan 10
Shin Bet scandal deepens as new audio points to unlawful arrest tactics

04.06.25 – Su- - - News Placed in April 06 spot – Sunday Nisan 09
Expanding footprint, Houthis are building a terror empire in Africa with Iran's help

04.06.25 – Su- - - News – Sunday Nisan 09
Ashkelon & Ashdod from Gaza 10 rocket attack where forces not yet cleared

04.06.25 – Su- - - News – Sunday Nisan 09
Witkoff, Trump, Netanyahu summit Monday on Gaza, Iran, Turkey, Syria & 17% tariff

04.06.25 – Su- - - News – Sunday Nisan 09
This is what UK lawmakers said to get denied entry to Israel

04.06.25 – Su- - - News – Sunday Nisan 09
Shin Bet audio clip reveals arrest & hold of West Bank settlers without evidence

04.06.25 – Su- - - News – Sunday Nisan 09
US deploys THAAD & two Patriot missile batteries to enhance deterrence in Israel

04.05.25 – Sa- - - News Placed in April 05 spot – Saturday Nisan 08
2 British Parliament arrive uninvited, planned to film security forces, denied entry

04.05.25 – Sa- - - News – Saturday Nisan 08
Czech Republic to be first EU state to place embassy in Jerusalem, then Hungary

04.05.25 – Sa- - - News – Saturday Nisan 08
Netanyahu's flash US visit Sunday will discuss 17% tariff on Israeli goods

04.05.25 – Sa- - - News – Saturday Nisan 08
UN three year extension for West Bank envoy who denied Hamas crimes