

Ynet-News, May 09, 2025 – Friday
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Israel vows more strikes on Houthis, considers hitting Iran

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Inside the Yemen Houthis reign of terror and regional ambitions

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Houthi missile triggers sirens across central Israel, intercepted by IDF Arrow 3

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Israelis and Syrians at one table, hosted by UAE, discuss nine strategic hilltop posts

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US aid plan to bypass Hamas, with Gaza Humanitarian Foundation GHF

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Satellite reveal secret Iran facility producing tritium to enhance power of warheads

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Israeli commandos eliminate Lion's Den terrorist, senior fugitive captured in Nablus

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Trump - Saudi civil nuclear talks are delinked from Israel concerns

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Even the smallest slip is a game-changer: pilots reveal secrets of Yemen airstrikes

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Judge blasts police as Qatargate political tactic emerges—rule-of-law intimidation

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Former hostage Emily Damari calls on Pulitzer board to rescind prize to PA essays

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Unusual waves of attacks in southern Lebanon: Hezbollah positions targeted

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Pakistan intercepted Israeli-made drones fired by India, responding to April 22 attacks

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Tanks withdrawn, troops sent back to Gaza: Jenin refugee camp is quiet and terror free

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Trump says Houthis gave their word to halt attacks; Israel will act alone if needed

05.07.25 – We - Omer 19

Drive-by shooting near Jenin, car ramming near Hebron; 2 soldiers on ventilators

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Arrest raids in Britain: Iranian terror cell planned attack on Israeli embassy in London

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EU Parliament votes to freeze Palestinian funding over incitement in textbooks

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Trump: Three more hostages died in Gaza, only 21 remain alive

05.07.25 – We- - - News Placed in May 07 spot – Wednesday - Omer 19

Trump halts strike on Houthis; bypass Israel on Iran, Yemen & Lebanon negotiations

05.06.25 – Tu - Omer 18

IDF chief Zamir orders expansion of draft notices to Haredim, who remain passive

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US halts bombing of Houthis; Omani-ceasefire; no mention of attacks on Israel

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Qatar says US offered new plan unseen by Israel; for ceasefire ahead of Trump's visit

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India military strikes against Pakistan, tensions spiral after Kashmir killings

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Netanyahu & Putin first phone call since 2023, on 80th anniversary of WWII victory

05.06.25 – Tu- - - News Placed in May 06 spot – Tuesday - Omer 18

Second Israeli airstrike in Yemeni capital; all aircraft & airport terminal were destroyed

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Minister Smotrich: In 6 months, there will be no Hamas in Gaza, period

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At least 32 wounded Druze evacuated from Syria: provided professional medical care

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After evacuation order, IDF strikes dozens of targets, shut down Yemen's main airport

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Two senior Hamas surrender to IDF in Rafah; questions yield structure of the area

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Turkey intercepted 1,300 pagers en route to Lebanon one day before triggered operation

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Israel attack destroys everything: strikes on Yemen cause nation wide fuel shortage

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Israel shifts approach to Gaza: timing, hostages, offensive — and the Trump model

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Death sentence for Hamas terrorists no less than Nazi atrocities of the Holocaust

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Era of restraint is over: Israel strikes Houthi seaport & cement factory in Yemen

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From raids to territory control: IDF plans push population south to distribute aid

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Deadline for Hamas: Deal by end of Trump visit May 16 or Israel takes Gaza

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Ministers reject Court Commission into Oct. 7; vote for political panel investigation

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Knesset Committee approved tens of thousands of reserves to expand Gaza war

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An illusion of calm: Israel's expands buffer zone in Syria; tactics similar to West Bank

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Gaza flotilla still stuck at sea, Malta investigating if explosion was internal, not drone

05.05.25 – Mo - Omer 17

Cabinet unanimously approves expansion of military operations in Gaza

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Thousands stranded at Ben Gurion as emboldened Houthis threaten aerial siege

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Hamas executes several Gaza looters accused of collaborating with Israel

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Teen men arrested on suspicion of wildfire arson near Modi'in

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Mezuzah crafted from Joshua altar site, Mount Ebal stone affixed to Huckabee's office

05.04.25 – Su - - News Placed in May 04 spot – Sunday - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Houthi tested hypersonic missile on Ben-Gurion Airport that avoided interception

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Houthi attacks drain US & allies billions; Over 800 strikes yet barrage has not ceased

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Gaza aid ship crew stranded at sea; 40 activists in Malta were blocked from boarding

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Houthi missile fail to intercept, hits Tel Aviv Ben Gurion airport, 8 hurt in blast

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

PM urges Qatar stop playing both sides in Gaza talks; align to civilization or barbarism

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

IDF issues tens of thousands of reserve call-ups ahead of expanded Gaza operation

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Thousands rally in Tel Aviv demanding hostage deal amid expanded Gaza operation

05.03.25 – Sa - Omer 15

Netanyahu postpones Azerbaijan visit amid security pressures in Gaza and Syria

05.03.25 – Sa - Omer 15

US baffled by Houthi calculus as airstrikes fail to deter Yemeni rebels

05.03.25 – Sa - Omer 15

Trump removed Mike Waltz from NSA & placed him as a hawkish UN ambassador

05.03.25 – Sa - - News Placed in May 03 spot – Saturday - Omer 15

IDF 20 Syria strikes overnight — its most intense wave of attacks in Syria this year

05.03.25 – Sa - Omer 15

US and Israel finalizing agreement to resume Gaza aid deliveries

05.03.25 – Sa - Omer 15

Official urges patience against Houthi threat after 4th missile launch in 24 hours

05.09.25 – Fr - Omer 21

Israel vows more strikes on Houthis, considers hitting Iran

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'We'll keep hitting them': Israel vows more strikes on Houthis, considers hitting Iran
Iran-backed Yemeni rebels keep launching missiles at Israel; in response, Israel plans
wider, more forceful strikes; 'Deal with US doesn't bind us—they'll pay,' says security
official; 'Iran won't get off easy'
Itamar Eichner, Lior Ben Ari|23:27

Despite an unofficial ceasefire between the Houthis and the United States, the Iran-backed Yemeni rebels launched another missile at Israel on Friday, triggering air raid sirens across central Israel and forcing millions into shelters. The IDF said the missile was successfully intercepted by the Arrow 3 air defense system.

Shortly after the attack, an Israeli security official told Ynet that Israel is not party to the Houthi-American agreement and will continue striking Houthi targets. "We will keep hitting the Houthis. That deal doesn't bind us—they'll pay the price," the official said.

Following the halt in U.S. strikes against Houthi positions, Israeli officials said they plan to escalate their own operations in Yemen, with broader and more powerful attacks expected in the coming days. Targets will include missile launch sites, infrastructure and any remaining operational ports, with an aim of total destruction. Officials also said IDF planners are reviewing possible strikes on Iranian targets, warning that "Iran won't get off easy."

Friday's missile attack, which occurred at 4:24 p.m. as Israelis filled beaches and public spaces, triggered alarms in multiple cities, including Tel Aviv, Herzliya, Bat Yam, Bnei Brak, Holon, Rishon Lezion, Modi'in-Maccabim-Reut and others. The Houthis claimed the missile targeted Ben Gurion International Airport.

Meanwhile, large-scale pro-Houthi demonstrations were held in Yemen's capital Sanaa under the slogan "We defeated America, we will defeat Israel." Similar rallies were reported in Hodeidah, Hajjah, Amran and Dhamar. Footage from the protests showed banners reading, "Jaffa will chase you to your grave," referring to Tel Aviv's historically Arab quarter.

Houthi military spokesman Yahya Saree declared that the missile was launched at the airport, while senior figure Hezam al-Asad, who frequently posts threats in Hebrew, wrote on X, "The temporary entity is under fire." Protesters in Sanaa claimed the U.S. ceased its strikes without achieving any objectives. "America failed and abandoned its defense of Zionist ships," they said. "We reaffirm our commitment to defend Gaza and support the resistance. We will not leave them alone."

Senior Houthi official Mohammed al-Bukhaiti told Qatar's Al-Araby channel that support for Gaza would continue "whether through attacks on Israel or in the Red Sea."

He emphasized that the U.S.-Houthi agreement does not include Israel and warned that Israeli escalations in Gaza, Syria or Lebanon would provoke broader retaliation. "Any Israeli escalation will justify an air and naval blockade. Our operations will continue until the war of extermination in Gaza ends," he said.

Following the interception, Defense Minister Israel Katz said, "The Houthis continue to fire Iranian-made missiles at Israel. As promised, we will respond forcefully in Yemen and wherever necessary."

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Inside the Yemen Houthis reign of terror and regional ambitions

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'Turning Yemen into North Korea': Inside the Houthis' reign of terror and regional ambitions

Despite relentless US strikes and heavy infrastructure damage, Houthis keep firing at Israel; Trump lauds their 'great capacity to withstand punishment'; meanwhile, Yemenis face poverty, disease and repression under an Iran-backed regime that jails, extorts and indoctrinates

Lior Ben Ari|19:53

The ports of Hodeidah and Ras Issa have been repeatedly bombed, damage to Sanaa's airport is estimated at \$500 million and smuggling routes from Iran have been blocked.

After U.S. President Donald Trump announced the suspension of the military campaign in Yemen, the Houthis pledged to repair the damage and continue attacking Israel "no matter the cost." On the same day, they launched a missile toward Israel, sending millions of civilians into shelters.

So what is their plan? How do they continue to operate despite the severe humanitarian crisis in areas under their control? And why haven't they collapsed?

The Houthis make their demands of Israel clear and constant. Regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, they insist on an end to the war in Gaza, the opening of border crossings and the delivery of aid—what they describe as "lifting the siege." Until then, they say, there is nothing to discuss. Neither American strikes—nor Israeli strikes this week—have deterred them from continuing to launch drones and missiles at Israel. Until Trump's announcement, they were also targeting U.S. aircraft carriers and naval vessels in the Red Sea.

Trump said Thursday the Houthis had a "great capacity to withstand punishment." The U.S. military had targeted the Houthis even before Trump, but the past two months have

seen the most intensive American air campaign against them since 2017. Still, the Houthis emerged from the operation with a commitment not to strike American ships—while stressing that the agreement “in no way whatsoever” applies to Israel, and that attacks against it will continue.

“We hit them very hard,” Trump said. “They took tremendous punishment. You could say there’s a lot of bravery there—it was amazing what they took. But we honor their commitment. They gave us their word that they wouldn’t be shooting ships anymore, and we honor that. Hopefully, that’s over with. Just leave those ships alone.”

Despite the significant strikes on their missile and weapons depots, the Iran-backed Yemeni rebels claim they continue to advance in weapons development. After Israeli strikes this week in Hodeidah and Sanaa, they again threatened retaliation and warned they would expand their list of targets in Israel. They also accused Israel of trying to stir public unrest through these attacks.

But Yemenis in Houthi-controlled areas don’t need Israeli airstrikes to feel discontent. In reality, they have no shortage of reasons to rise up against the terror group that has seized large parts of their country, exploits them, worsens their daily lives and pours money and resources into military capabilities—rather than stabilizing the country and helping its people.

Persecution, poverty and indoctrination

In recent weeks, reports have increased of arrests carried out by the Houthis in areas under their control in Yemen. The daily U.S. airstrikes prior to Trump’s surprise announcement, along with growing speculation about a possible ground operation against the group, have led the terror organization to tighten security, intensify surveillance and go deeper into hiding.

Houthi policies have had sweeping effects—militarily, economically, socially, tribally and even in health and media sectors. Last month, Qatar-based outlet The New Arab reported eyewitness accounts of Houthis pursuing and arresting street vendors, imprisoning them and barring them from working. The group has cracked down on any potential leaks of information about its activities, closely monitoring citizen movement, gatherings and behavior.

Sources told the newspaper that these measures began in the second half of 2024, but intensified as operations against the Houthis expanded, especially following the surge in U.S. airstrikes. According to the report, the Houthis’ greatest fear is being targeted with advanced technical or technological means—similar to those used against Hezbollah in Israel’s pager operation last year.

They have ramped up internal communications monitoring and begun spying on local tribal and political leaders. Shop owners have been ordered to remove street-facing security cameras, and recordings have been confiscated to prevent footage of senior figures, vehicles or military equipment from leaking.

The Houthis have also further isolated Yemenis in the territories they control and have harmed the education system. In recent days, Saudi-owned newspaper Asharq Al-Awsat reported that the group has banned the teaching of English in early elementary grades—a first in the country’s history. The decision was met with pushback from various segments

of the population, including some pro-Houthi activists. The group issued directives suspending English instruction in grades 1–3 in all public and private schools in areas under its control.

In terms of movement restrictions, The New Arab reported that people who frequently travel between Houthi-held regions and those under the internationally recognized Yemeni government are subject to tight monitoring.

Press freedom in Yemen remains under the grip of the Iranian proxy. Anyone who publishes information, images or footage of attacks risks arrest. Discussions of the Houthis' economic losses or disclosure of the number and locations of wounded fighters are forbidden. Control has tightened over hospitals, medical centers and doctors. Economically, sources told the Qatari newspaper that banking operations and money transfers are now under stricter control. The Houthis fear funds being transferred out of their territory to Aden, where the legitimate Yemeni government is based. Since the outbreak of the war in Gaza, the Houthis have run fundraising campaigns to support their military activities—often by extorting civilians in areas under their rule.

In addition, the Houthis operate summer camps for children that include indoctrination and military-religious training, after which the youths are deployed to battlefronts. Civilians in Houthi-controlled areas are also required to attend mandatory courses called “al-Aqsa Flood,” named for the Palestinian term for the Gaza war, under the pretext of showing support for the Palestinian cause.

Vaccine denial, hunger and disease

As the country collapses and the Houthis pour resources into armament and warfare, senior members of the terror group continue to live comfortably while the population starves.

Medical sources in Yemen, along with international organizations, have long warned of local outbreaks of disease in Houthi-controlled areas. Last week, Asharq Al-Awsat reported that the military escalation and the group's refusal to allow vaccinations have contributed significantly to the health crisis.

UN reports have confirmed thousands of cases of cholera, malnutrition and other illnesses in the first three months of this year. The Houthis have conducted an ongoing campaign against the vaccination of Yemeni children, describing vaccines as a “conspiracy.” Combined with the country's dire conditions and lack of clean water, the health situation has become deadly.

Destroying Yemen, eyeing expansion

Testimonies in recent years make clear that the Houthis are devastating the areas under their control. Yet, senior members of the group continue to appear regularly on Arab news channels, painting a very different picture—one of total control and national unity under the banner of “support for Gaza.”

Houthi-affiliated media, led by Al Masirah, broadcast images of massive demonstrations across Yemen in solidarity with Gaza and against Israel. The question arises: What more do they seek beyond their clearly stated goals regarding Israel?

A Yemeni political analyst who spoke to Ynet on condition of anonymity due to recent events said the Houthis aim for full control of the state. “They are driven by an

entrenched ideological belief that they hold the absolute truth—a mindset common to many religious movements,” the analyst said. “This belief makes them less willing to share power with other local factions, whom they view not merely as political rivals, but as enemies of their faith. This is evident in their public discourse, where they frequently label religious opponents as 'hypocrites.'”

The analyst added that the Houthis launched their movement in Yemen’s Saada province and captured the capital, Sanaa, in September 2014. They later expanded into other regions, including Hodeidah, Marib and al-Bayda. Although their territorial control has since diminished, they still maintain a grip on about a third of Yemen’s landmass, particularly in mountainous and highland regions.

According to the analyst, the Houthis’ ambitions stretch far beyond Yemen. “They seek to leverage their internal dominance to influence regional and international dynamics, as reflected in their maritime attacks and repeated assaults on Israel. They position themselves as a key player in the ‘Axis of Resistance’ led by Iran.”

In light of the weakening—if not collapse—of Iran’s other regional proxies, such as the regime of Bashar Assad, the Houthis’ ambitions have only grown. “They are now the strongest remaining arm of the axis,” the analyst said. “They show no signs of ceasing efforts to shape regional and global events whenever opportunity arises, especially amid the ongoing geopolitical rivalry between East and West.”

“The Houthis’ recent actions have taught them how to exploit international interests—especially those of Russia and China—to exert strategic pressure,” he said. “This approach is likely to intensify following Trump’s announcement of an American withdrawal and Oman’s declaration of a mediation initiative that includes the Houthis. As a risk-taking movement, they show little regard for the harm their decisions cause Yemen. They wouldn’t hesitate to turn the country into the North Korea of the Middle East if it advances their ideological and political goals.”

If Israel learned anything from October 7, it is to take the beliefs of extremist Islamist groups seriously. The Houthi slogan, emblazoned on every sign and flag, reads: “God is great, death to America, death to Israel, curse the Jews, victory to Islam.” Therefore, even if the war in Gaza ends and the Houthis stop launching attacks, the capabilities they have already developed—and the time they may gain to rebuild—leave Israel facing a threat that is neither predictable nor controllable.

The Houthis, for instance, could suddenly decide to launch attacks over any event at the Temple Mount, or any minor incident in Nablus. The more power they accumulate, the more severe and lethal their actions could become. Officials in Israel understand that this situation cannot be allowed to continue.

05.09.25 – Fr - Omer 21

Inside Israel’s quiet push to stabilize the Syrian Golan

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Inside Israel’s quiet push to stabilize the Syrian Golan

IDF troops face sporadic gunfire from terrorists, while patrols near Quneitra proceed without helmets; amid reports of Druze massacres nearby, Israel sets up 9 new posts and allows regime forces to operate near the border

Yoav Zitun|17:39

A 202nd Paratroopers Battalion soldier opens the yellow Israeli gate at the Quneitra Crossing — the only official passage between Israel and Syria — located in the northern Golan Heights. He's not wearing a helmet, in line with the relatively low threat level in the area. A few feet ahead, his fellow soldier presses a switch to open the second, inner gray gate, facing east.

Just 50 miles from this point, Israeli Air Force helicopters recently delivered aid to Druze communities in Suweida. More than 20 wounded Syrian Druze have already crossed through this border fence for treatment in Israel. There's no trace here of the massacres being carried out against Druze by jihadist forces only dozens of miles away — and for now, no sound of gunfire has reached this stretch.

The fall of the Assad regime, a Syrian flag still flew from a tall pole atop the border outpost. The faded colors of Syria's flag still mark the checkpoint pillars. Inside the abandoned living quarters of Syrian border troops, torn remnants of a large portrait of former president Hafez Assad remain — a stark reminder of the man who initiated the ceasefire with Israel in 1974. That reality has since unraveled under the rule of his son, Bashar.

Six months after the Syrian Golan was retaken without a fight, the IDF now operates with triple the number of routine security battalions on both sides of the Golan border. After several months of stabilization and relative quiet, two new developments have emerged in the Syrian sector.

In the northern part of the Syrian Golan, about 15 miles from the border, Israel is permitting the new leadership under Ahmad al-Sharaa to deploy local policing forces to maintain law and order in villages such as Khan Arnabah, Jubata al-Khashab and New Quneitra. The security situation in these areas is stable, allowing Israeli troops to move safely through village streets en route to nine new IDF posts established on Syrian territory.

By contrast, the southern Golan tells a different story. Villages along the road to Daraa province are populated by more religious Sunni residents who, during the civil war, welcomed Jabhat al-Nusra terrorists. From these villages, the group launched roadside bombings — including against Israeli soldiers. Unlike in the center and north, no one here is volunteering to hand over weapons to Israeli troops, as has quietly happened elsewhere.

Last month, during a routine patrol in the Syrian town of Neveh, 80th Battalion paratroopers came under heavy fire from gunmen using heavy machine guns, shooting from residential balconies. The soldiers quickly returned fire, took cover and escaped unharmed.

“We immediately deployed drone fire from Hermes 450 drones and eliminated seven terrorists who threatened our troops,” a senior commander in the area said. “But we could have killed a hundred under the rules of engagement. We chose not to go there.”

A growing security concern for the IDF is the second, more eastern ridge of volcanic hills leading toward Damascus — an area the Northern Command has so far opted not to seize. Unidentified figures occasionally approach the abandoned Syrian military posts on these ridges, located 15 miles from the Israeli border, and are driven off by long-range IDF fire. Despite feelers from Damascus, the IDF has not allowed al-Sharaa’s forces to reach the area.

“Al-Sharaa’s regime is still trying to consolidate its control and does not effectively govern large parts of Syria,” a senior IDF officer explained. “He lacks control over the Alawite coastal region loyal to Assad, the northern zones where the Turks and Kurds dominate, and the southeast, which is under Bedouin tribal influence. We’re doubtful that the southwestern corner bordering Israel is a current priority for him.”

Senior General Staff officials have recently spoken with Western diplomats who visited Damascus to assess the actual control wielded by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), al-Sharaa’s organization. “You enter the Defense Ministry or Foreign Ministry, and you see 50 offices completely empty, with only three or four rooms staffed by our hosts,”

European counterparts reportedly told the IDF, describing the regime’s limited grip on the country.

The IDF estimates al-Sharaa’s armed force numbers around 60,000 fighters, though lightly armed and operating primarily via pickup trucks.

Following Iran’s withdrawal from most of Syria — including from the Golan Heights, to Israel’s relief — Russia continues to maintain a military presence, particularly along the Assad-aligned coastal zone and in the northeastern city of Qamishli.

Israeli defense officials have recently met with their Turkish counterparts to establish a coordination mechanism for both militaries operating in Syria. The IDF believes Turkey is eager to help build a formal army for al-Sharaa, especially after the IDF destroyed much of the Assad regime’s vast weapons stockpiles. However, Ankara reportedly remains hesitant due to the financial burden.

Last month, IDF officers held a rare meeting with around 60 Druze sheikhs from both Israel and Syria in an effort to strengthen ties with the community across the border — not only with residents of the Syrian-Druze village of Hader, across from Majdal Shams. A proposal to allow Syrian, primarily Druze, laborers to work in the Israeli Golan was recently halted by the political echelon, reportedly due to bureaucratic and insurance concerns.

The process of achieving a localized normalization with Syria — at least in the Golan Heights — is advancing slowly. The quieter the Syrian side becomes, the more secure IDF soldiers feel. Most troop movement is still in vehicles, but no longer in tightly coordinated pairs or trios, and in many areas soldiers don’t feel the need to wear helmets.

The main concern in the sector is the sudden arrival of dozens of pickup trucks from deeper inside Syria via the Quneitra–Damascus highway, which runs directly to the

Israeli Golan. “The distance from Quneitra to Kibbutz Ein Zivan, at high speed, is about five airborne minutes,” explained Lt. Col. G., the operations officer of the Golan Division. Standing atop the old Quneitra police station — a Soviet-style building with barred detention cells that evoke the dark legacy of torture and incarceration until just a year ago — one sees how much the IDF has invested.

Paratroopers once slept in this building, but now they and other units are housed in new, relatively comfortable bases the IDF has built, with permanent infrastructure, bathrooms, showers and fortified barracks. Meals are delivered from bases on the Israeli side of the border.

The massive engineering barrier project that the IDF is constructing here is also progressing, albeit slowly. Giant trenches and towering embankments are being built to delay any future ground invasion into the Golan. So far, about 20% of the ambitious 55-mile border project with Syria has been completed.

On the road to an IDF post near the village of Kahtania, three Syrian children smile peacefully at passing soldiers. One already wears a shirt bearing the symbols of “New Syria” and a portrait of al-Sharaa. Another boy seen earlier wore a shirt featuring Abdel al-Sharout, a Syrian soccer star who supported the anti-Assad revolution and was killed in clashes with the regime.

Soldiers here, including from the storied 77th Armored Battalion, stay alert — though they are keenly aware that their counterparts in Gaza may be in far greater need right now. At another IDF post flying the red flags of the Paratroopers Brigade, three shiny, high-powered motorcycles are parked near the gate. The guard at the checkpoint says his fellow soldiers had confiscated them from Syrian youths who came too close to IDF positions — possibly to gather intelligence on troop movements.

Military intelligence in the sector is still described as limited, with only one or two arrests per month. “It’s true that some of the combat routines here resemble those in the West Bank — surprise checkpoints, patrols and reconnaissance,” said Lt. Col. G. “But if we receive a targeted warning or specific intel about a hostile element, we strike or detain immediately. No hesitation.”

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Houthi missile triggers sirens across central Israel, intercepted by IDF Arrow 3

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Houthi missile fire triggers air raid sirens across central Israel

IDF says threat intercepted by Arrow 3 after alerts issued for large swaths of the country; flights at Ben Gurion Airport briefly halted; woman injured while running for cover
Elisha Ben Kimon|08:32

Air raid sirens sounded across central Israel on Friday afternoon following a missile launch from Yemen. The IDF confirmed that the missile was successfully intercepted by the Arrow 3 defense system.

Flights to Ben Gurion Airport, including some operated by El Al, were delayed or diverted after air raid alerts were triggered at the airport. In response to the security situation, a number of international airlines extended their cancellations of flights to Israel.

The alerts were heard in multiple cities and towns, including Tel Aviv, Herzliya, Bnei Brak, Givatayim, Holon, Bat Yam, Rishon Lezion, Ness Ziona, Kfar Saba, Netanya, Tel Mond, Or Yehuda, Azor, Beit Dagan and Modiin-Maccabim-Reut, as well as parts of the Shomron and Judean lowlands.

The Magen David Adom ambulance service reported that a woman sustained injuries while rushing to a shelter during the alert. No other casualties were reported.

Tel Aviv District Police said officers are conducting searches in the area to identify and isolate any potential missile debris impact sites. Meanwhile, mass demonstrations are taking place in Sanaa, the capital of Yemen, under the slogan “We defeated the U.S. and will defeat Israel.” Similar rallies were reported in the provinces of Hodeidah, Hajjah, Amran and Dhamar. Footage from the protests showed signs reading, “Jaffa — will chase you to your death,” referring to the historically Arab quarter of Tel Aviv.

On Wednesday, the IDF identified a suspected missile launch from Yemen that failed mid-flight and did not reach Israeli territory. That same morning, Houthi forces launched another UAV toward Israel, which was successfully intercepted by the Israeli Air Force without triggering any alerts.

Prior to the incident, senior Houthi official Hezam al-Asad—known for issuing threats against Israel in Hebrew—reiterated that attacks on Israel would continue. “Does the Zionist entity have enough shelters?” he wrote.

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Israelis and Syrians at one table, hosted by UAE, discuss nine strategic hilltop posts

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Inside the UAE-mediated secret talks between Israel and Syria

Delegations have met three times at the Abu Dhabi home of a senior Emirati official to discuss security issues, including Israeli airstrikes in Syria; talks expected to continue and expand to economic and other areas of cooperation

Smadar Perry|05:14

A spokesperson for the UAE Foreign Ministry was quick to deny reports that the Emirates were mediating in “unofficial” talks between Israel and Syria. However, just hours later, Syria’s new president, Ahmad al-Sharaa—speaking during a visit to Paris—

confirmed that indirect talks were underway with “the mediation of a third country,” though he did not name it. It was later revealed that the mediator was the UAE.

Through the Emirati mediators, the Syrian side reportedly asked Israel for time to allow the new president to “organize” and demanded an end to Israeli airstrikes on Syrian territory.

The discussions, described as focused on security matters, were held between two Israeli academics with past experience in the security establishment and three close aides to President al-Sharaa. According to the Syrian leader, three meetings have thus far taken place at a private residence in Abu Dhabi belonging to a senior UAE official. During the meetings, Israelis and Syrians sat at the same table, surrounded by an abundant spread of refreshments—an effort by the hosts to create a relaxed atmosphere.

“The Emirati mediators have patience and proven experience,” said an Israeli official, who declined to confirm whether he had personally attended the talks. “These were preliminary, non-committal discussions,” he added, noting that both sides would brief their leadership afterward.

The Syrian delegation expressed grievances over IDF operations inside Syria and the occupation of nine strategic hilltops, from which Israel has refused to withdraw. They requested time to allow the new government in Damascus to stabilize its internal affairs and highlighted the country’s worsening economic crisis.

In the most recent meeting, the Syrian side quoted President al-Sharaa as saying Syria has no interest in conflict with any of its neighbors, including Israel. Israeli officials noted a shift in tone from the previous regime, pointing out that the new Syrian leader refers to “the State of Israel” rather than “the Zionist entity.”

The latest round of talks followed al-Sharaa’s visit to Abu Dhabi on April 13. Syrian representatives emphasized that Iran had been “kicked out” of the country. One member of the delegation told Ynet that Iran “will not be allowed to return,” calling it a clear signal of the new regime’s intentions toward Israel.

Looking ahead, both sides aim to continue the dialogue and expand it to include economic matters—such as possible Israeli medical aid, academic exchange programs for Syrian students and other areas of mutual concern.

The six Syrian delegates, who received official clearance to attend the talks, described a dire humanitarian situation in Syria.

Israeli participants raised concerns about the vulnerability of Syria’s Druze community, stating that Israel would not tolerate attacks on “our brothers in blood.” While President al-Sharaa’s message of non-confrontation was welcomed, Israeli officials said it was “positive but not enough.”

The UAE’s Foreign and Intelligence Ministries—both headed by brothers of the Emirati leader—are said to have initiated the talks between the Israeli and Syrian teams.

Additionally, Israeli and Syrian experts in defense and economics have met recently at international conferences in Europe, where representatives of the new Damascus regime reportedly expressed openness and warmth toward their Israeli counterparts.

05.09.25 – Fr - Omer 21

US aid plan to bypass Hamas, with Gaza Humanitarian Foundation GHF

05.09.25 – Fr - Omer 21

US unveils Gaza aid plan to bypass Hamas

Exclusive: Witkoff reveals new initiative at UN, aiming to bypass Hamas and the UN via the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation; despite criticism from aid groups, the plan promises secure, transparent delivery to restore donor confidence

Itamar Eichner|00:14

In a rare and high-profile presentation to the UN Security Council, U.S. envoy Steve Witkoff on Thursday introduced a sweeping American initiative to restore humanitarian aid to Gaza through a new independent mechanism known as the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF).

The plan, detailed in a 14-page document obtained by Ynet, aims to bypass long-standing challenges that have undermined donor trust and hindered aid distribution. Witkoff emphasized the initiative's founding principles of "transparency, independence and security," seeking to ensure aid does not reach Hamas.

The foundation proposes the creation of four Secure Distribution Sites across the Gaza Strip, each serving up to 300,000 people, with the goal of reaching 1.2 million residents in the first phase and up to 2 million later. The sites will operate without military presence, under direct supervision of independent safety and security teams. Aid — including food packages, hygiene kits, medicine and water — will be distributed based solely on need, and without discrimination.

Despite the initiative's stated neutrality, the UN and several humanitarian organizations have expressed firm opposition and have declined to cooperate, amid growing accusations that Israel is intentionally starving the population in Gaza.

Witkoff, however, stood firm in the closed-door Security Council meeting, asserting that the goal is to prevent aid from being diverted to Hamas. Critics pushed back sharply during the session, arguing that any alternative mechanism lacking UN coordination could further complicate the humanitarian crisis.

GHF calculates that a single 1,750-calorie aid meal will cost just \$1.31, covering logistics, security and delivery. Each family food box — containing 50 full meals — will cost \$65 and be delivered directly to vulnerable households.

The foundation is led by prominent figures in the humanitarian and financial sectors, including Nate Mook (former CEO of World Central Kitchen), Jake Wood (founder of

Team Rubicon) and David Beasley (former head of the UN World Food Program). Oversight will be handled by a leading global auditing firm and a legal team specializing in international humanitarian law. The document also cites concerns within the international community over diversion of aid by armed groups, black-market resale and lack of transparency from local authorities. GHF, the statement says, is guided by principles of humanitarianism, neutrality, independence and universality, and is committed to measurable field outcomes.

Although a U.S.-backed initiative, GHF aims to operate outside any political or military apparatus. While the IDF will not be present at the distribution sites, coordination will be maintained to ensure humanitarian access. The foundation also invites local and international NGOs to use its secure infrastructure for delivering aid.

“GHF sets a new standard for humanitarian aid in conflict zones,” the document concludes. “If it can fulfill its promise, it may become a global model for restoring trust in humanitarian assistance in crisis areas worldwide.”

Trump teases 'important announcement' ahead of Middle East visit

U.S. President Donald Trump said earlier this week that he plans to deliver a “very important” and “very positive” announcement in the coming days, ahead of his scheduled visit to the Middle East next week. While Trump did not elaborate on the content of the announcement, State Department spokesperson Tammy Bruce later hinted it may relate to humanitarian aid delivery to Gaza.

Last month, Trump discussed his latest conversation with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, revealing that he had urged the Israeli leader to allow greater access for food and medical supplies into the Gaza Strip.

“Gaza came up in the conversation, and I said, ‘We need to do right by Gaza. The people there are suffering,’” Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One before departing for Pope Francis’s funeral in Rome.

When asked whether he raised the issue of opening aid crossings, Trump responded affirmatively. “We’re going to take care of it. There is a very serious need for medicine and food, and we’ll make sure it gets there,” he said.

Pressed on Netanyahu’s reaction, Trump replied ambiguously: “Felt good about it”—though it remained unclear whether he was referring to himself or to the prime minister.

05.08.25 – Th - Omer 20

Satellite reveal secret Iran facility producing tritium to enhance power of warheads

05.08.25 – Th - Omer 20

Report: Satellite images reveal suspected secret Iranian nuclear weapons facility
Fox News reveals suspected nuclear site near known Iranian facilities, which Tehran claims is a chemical plant; US-Iran nuclear talks face delays amid disputes over uranium enrichment

Ynet|21:48

As Tehran and Washington continue negotiations over a potential new nuclear agreement, satellite images of a previously unknown facility in northern Iran—allegedly linked to the country's nuclear weapons program—were published Thursday.

According to the report on Fox News, the site is located in Semnan Province, not far from known nuclear facilities. The Iranian opposition group National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI) claims the facility has been operating for over a decade and is referred to by Iranian officials under the codename "Rainbow Site."

Iran insists the facility is a chemical plant. However, the NCRI alleges it is used for developing nuclear weapons and specifically for producing tritium—a radioactive isotope that can be used to enhance the explosive power of nuclear warheads. Unlike enriched uranium, the report notes, tritium has no commercial or civilian use, "casting further doubt on Iran's longstanding claims that its nuclear ambitions are solely for energy or civilian use," Fox News reported.

Meanwhile, diplomatic sources told opposition-aligned network Iran International that despite Tehran's agreement to allow extensive inspections of its nuclear facilities by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), significant disagreements with the U.S. remain—chief among them, Iran's demand to continue uranium enrichment. These issues are hindering progress in the talks.

Two Iranian diplomats, speaking anonymously, said it is unclear whether the next round of negotiations, scheduled for this week, will take place as planned, following a delay in last week's talks in Oman. One diplomat familiar with the discussions said, "Iran has agreed to rigorous and ongoing inspections of its nuclear sites by IAEA inspectors, and both sides have reached understandings on oversight and verification measures."

However, he added that key disputes persist. "The main disagreement concerns Iran's right to enrich uranium—a point the U.S. strongly opposes." He noted that the lack of a clear agenda and coordination has complicated the negotiations. "Each round is held under a different framework, with no structured process," he said.

Another diplomat said Washington has introduced additional issues into the talks, including Iran's ballistic missile program and its network of proxy forces in the region. On this issue, a separate source told Iran International that Tehran had agreed to temporarily restrain its proxies, including the Houthis in Yemen, to avoid giving Israel a pretext to derail a potential deal.

05.08.25 – Th - Omer 20

Israeli commandos eliminate Lion's Den terrorist, senior fugitive captured in Nablus

05.08.25 – Th - Omer 20

Israeli commandos eliminate Lion's Den terrorist, senior fugitive captured in Nablus

Border Police, Shin Bet and IDF troops carry out coordinated operation in West bank city, killing a terrorist affiliated with the Lion's Den terrorist cell and arresting a senior operative; Palestinian reports claim 41 people hurt during raid
Elisha Ben Kimon, Einav Halabi|20:49

An undercover Border Police unit operating in the West Bank, in coordination with Shin Bet and IDF operatives, eliminated a Palestinian terrorist and arrested a wanted individual during an operation in Nablus on Thursday.

The terrorist, Rami al-Qahen, was affiliated with the Nablus-based Lion's Den terrorist group and was involved in planning and carrying out attacks, as well as assisting in arming other terrorists.

In a joint statement, Israel Police, IDF and Shin Bet reported that undercover Border Police officers, along with IDF troops from the Samaria Brigade, carried out the operation in Nablus based on precise intelligence provided by Shin Bet and Military Intelligence. The mission targeted a wanted individual connected to the previously disrupted Lion's Den terrorist cell.

"The forces covertly located the terrorist, identified him as armed and posing a threat to the unit, and subsequently opened fire, resulting in his elimination," the statement read. A search of the terrorist's possessions revealed a handgun, two magazines and cash suspected of being intended for terrorist activity. A tactical vest was also found in his vehicle.

Another high-ranking wanted individual who was with the terrorist at the time was arrested and taken for further questioning by security authorities.

"During the operation, disturbances broke out, including gunfire and the throwing of explosive devices at the forces, posing a threat to them. The forces responded with gunfire, resulting in confirmed hits. There were no injuries to our forces," the statement added.

Palestinian reports stated that 41 people were injured during the security forces' operation in Nablus.

05.08.25 – Th - Omer 20

Trump - Saudi civil nuclear talks are delinked from Israel concerns

05.08.25 – Th - Omer 20

Report: Under Trump, Saudi civil nuclear talks delinked from Israel recognition
Riyadh resists US 123 nonproliferation criteria, seeks uranium enrichment; Gaza war has made normalization of ties with Israel politically toxic for the kingdom; Trump to discuss economic deals in incoming visit, including potential \$100 billion arms package
Reuters|19:03

The United States is no longer demanding Saudi Arabia normalize ties with Israel as a condition for progress on civil nuclear cooperation talks, two sources with knowledge of the matter told Reuters ahead of U.S. President Donald Trump's visit next week.

Dropping the demand that Saudi Arabia establish diplomatic relations with Israel would be a major concession by Washington. Under former president Joe Biden, nuclear talks were an element of a wider U.S.-Saudi deal tied to normalization and to Riyadh's goal of a defense treaty with Washington.

The kingdom has repeatedly said it would not recognize Israel without a Palestinian state, frustrating Biden administration attempts to expand the Abraham Accords signed during Trump's first term. Under those accords, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Morocco normalized relations with Israel.

Progress toward Saudi recognition of Israel has been halted by fury in Arab countries over the war raging in Gaza. The nuclear talks had also stumbled over Washington's non-proliferation concerns. In a possible sign of a new approach, U.S. Energy Secretary Chris Wright said that Saudi Arabia and the United States were on a "pathway" to a civil nuclear agreement when he visited the kingdom in April.

"When we have something to announce, you will hear it from the President. Any reports on this are speculative," U.S. National Security Council spokesman James Hewitt told Reuters in response to a request for comment.

Saudi Arabia's government media office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Even without the normalization requirement for civil nuclear talks to progress, and despite unpacking the issue from a wider defense treaty, a deal is not yet in close reach, one of the sources said.

One sticking point is Section 123 of the U.S. Atomic Energy Act that allows cooperation with other countries developing civil nuclear capabilities but specifies nonproliferation criteria, including limiting uranium enrichment. Saudi Arabia's energy minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman has said that the kingdom would seek to enrich uranium and sell the product.

One of the sources said the kingdom was still not willing to sign a so-called 123 agreement, which would prevent enrichment or reprocessing of plutonium made in reactors - two routes that have the potential to culminate in nuclear weapons. Secretary Wright previously told Reuters that a 123 agreement would be a prerequisite to any deal.

However, there are several ways to structure a deal to achieve both countries' objectives, Wright has said.

One solution being discussed is a "black box" arrangement where only U.S. personnel would have access to a uranium enrichment facility on Saudi soil, the same source said. Sell more oil

Riyadh wants to build nuclear generation capacity as it seeks to diversify its economy away from oil. Nuclear power could also help free up more crude barrels for export. Arms control advocates have previously expressed concern about a Saudi nuclear program because de facto ruler Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has said the kingdom would seek to quickly develop nuclear weapons should its regional rival Iran do so.

The U.S. and Iran are currently holding talks over Tehran's nuclear program, which Washington and Western allies say is geared toward producing weapons. Iran insists it is purely for civil purposes.

U.S. Vice President JD Vance on Wednesday described the talks with Iran as "so far, so good" and said there was a deal to be made that would reintegrate Iran into the global economy while preventing it from getting a nuclear weapon.

Saudi Arabia and the United States are set to discuss a number of blockbuster economic deals during Trump's visit next week, with the U.S. poised to offer Saudi Arabia an arms package worth well over \$100 billion, sources have told Reuters. Trump has said Riyadh should "round up" a planned investment package in the U.S. to \$1 trillion from an initial \$600 billion.

The trip is Trump's second visit abroad, after a short trip to Rome for the pope's funeral, since he returned to office in January. In his first term, a lavish trip to Saudi Arabia marked his first overseas stop.

Trump fostered close ties with Gulf states including Saudi Arabia during his first term. The country invested \$2 billion in a firm formed by Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law and former aide, after Trump left office, and there are plans to build two Trump towers in Jeddah and Riyadh.

05.08.25 – Th - Omer 20

Even the smallest slip is a game-changer: pilots reveal secrets of Yemen airstrikes

05.08.25 – Th - Omer 20

'Even the smallest malfunction is a game-changer': Israeli pilots reveal secrets of Yemen airstrikes

After a Houthi missile hit Ben Gurion Airport, the Israeli Air Force launched a rapid response using three fighter jet types, refueling and control planes and dozens of munitions; pilots and crews reveal how they prepared, operated and managed the pressure Gal Ganot|17:59

A day and a half after a missile fired by the Houthis from Yemen exploded on the grounds of Ben Gurion International Airport, Israel announced the end of what it called an "era of restraint" and launched Operation Port City. On Monday, Israeli Air Force jets struck targets in the port of Hodeidah and an additional industrial facility in the area.

Israeli officials described the strike as a broad operation coordinated with the United States, which simultaneously announced it was halting its own campaign against the

Houthi due to a ceasefire agreement—an agreement that does not apply to Israel. The following day, dozens of Israeli warplanes carried out additional strikes, this time in the capital Sanaa, causing extensive damage to Yemen's central airport.

The strikes involved coordination between various IAF squadrons, using F-15, F-16 and F-35 "Adir" fighter jets, alongside refueling, intelligence and command-and-control aircraft. "They provided the support that enabled us to reach such a distant range," said Maj. N., 25, the deputy commander of the 69th Squadron, who previously oversaw strike planning in Yemen and participated in this week's operations.

More than half the personnel involved in Operation Port City—both air crews and the technical teams responsible for aircraft maintenance and armament—were reservists. According to Maj. N., the recent controversy over an open letter from pilots calling for the release of Israeli hostages, even at the cost of halting fighting, did not impact unit morale. "Reservists showed up in full force," he said. "Those things don't affect the squadron—we're ready for anything."

The strike, carried out roughly 1,200 miles from Israel—about a two-and-a-half-hour flight each way—involved some 50 different munitions. The targets hit included those from a designated target bank, as well as others added during the hours-long preparation for the mission.

"Normally, preparation for such an operation takes several days, but this time it happened in a very short window," said Maj. N. "From the moment the missile landed at Ben Gurion Airport, only a short time passed before we got the call to prepare for the strike. That adds complexity, but because we've rehearsed this scenario before, we were able to get ready quickly. Intelligence preparation is a major component of both planning and execution. The fact that this wasn't our first operation in Yemen helped—but still, every time we go there, we discover new things."

Operating in a relatively unfamiliar theater required taking into account potential threats from foreign militaries in the area. "We prepared for the possibility of being targeted and made every effort—both in planning and execution—to avoid that, and it worked," he said. "On missions like these, sometimes the most dangerous part is simply the distance from home. Even the smallest malfunction can become a game-changer in terms of making it back safely to land in Israel. For those scenarios, we have detailed contingency plans and responses."

"During the long flight, your focus is on the aircraft systems—monitoring all the data. You're constantly checking timelines, fuel planning, exactly as trained, to make sure you can complete the mission and return," he said. "The pride sets in once the mission is complete, but the real relief only comes when the plane touches down and you shut off the engines in the hangar. That's when the tension finally releases. It's something you learn to manage on long flights—you can't let your guard down too early. You have to stay alert the whole time, because even after completing the mission, you still have a two-and-a-half-hour flight home."

"There's excitement before takeoff. What helps me is serious preparation—knowing exactly what needs to be done at every stage and what scenarios might arise. It's a

positive kind of pressure, the kind every combat pilot feels when entering hostile or enemy territory. The amazing thing is that the moment you enter the cockpit and launch the mission, you switch into a mode where there's no room for emotion."

'The war is not over'

For Capt. N., 25, a fighter pilot in the 69th Squadron, it was his first time operating over Yemen. "There's extremely precise synchronization among everyone, down to the second," he said. "An encounter—say, with a tanker or a jet from another squadron 800 km from home—has to happen at exactly the right time and place.

"Any malfunction that would be minor near home takes on much greater significance at that distance. A glitch could force us to change the plan on the spot or affect fuel—and when you're far from home, that's critical. So our preparation is more comprehensive, with detailed contingency plans and responses."

How does a pilot stay sharp en route to such a mission?

"The communication is strictly professional. There's almost no casual talk—that's how we maintain operational focus. When you're flying close to other aircraft, especially during refueling, you need to stay completely aware and oriented. You're always thinking about the next moment," said Y.

Operational planning, he explained, relied on high-level intelligence and included action plans for potential counterattacks. While the squadron maintains its combat readiness through years of training, the mission's preparation took only a few hours. "We knew exactly what to do if we were threatened at any stage from any direction. We ran simulations in advance, down to minute details—including each crew member's role in the formation," he said.

What did he feel after the mission?

"On one hand, tremendous pride. I was honored to be given this responsibility. On the other hand, the war is not over. Hostages are still in captivity, forces are still fighting in Gaza. I'm now on standby to assist in Gaza. This was a localized success, but we keep pushing forward until we win."

Maj. S., a technical officer in the 69th Squadron, said the squadron had been preparing for two major operations simultaneously, forcing the maintenance units to split their efforts. "This kind of mission has huge implications—it's not just another operation in our usual region," he said. "When it's a third-ring mission, aircraft maintenance is completely different. It requires outside experts to conduct deep checks on the planes."

Under normal conditions, preparing the aircraft takes a day and a half to two days, but that timeline was significantly compressed. After thorough inspections, the jets performed a short test flight—a sort of dress rehearsal—before being armed and declared mission-ready. "Our strength lies in our people. Without them, this mission wouldn't have succeeded," he said. "It's all thanks to the human fabric here—people who've been working day in, day out, for over a year and a half. It's a privilege to witness.

Tremendous pride."

Lt. A., an intelligence officer who led the planning for the Yemen strikes, described the strategic aim behind the attack. "We wanted to return fire for fire. If they hit Ben Gurion, then they won't have an airport in Sanaa," she said. "Once the decision was made, we

prioritized targets to try to shut down the airfield long-term and stop weapons transport operations there.”

The first strike, carried out Monday night, hit the port of Hodeidah and a concrete plant. The following day’s operation struck Sanaa Airport, another concrete facility and power stations.

Y. monitored the mission in real time from the control center alongside the Air Force chief and senior command. “We saw the planes cross into enemy airspace live,” she recalled. “It was an incredible sense of accomplishment—and mostly relief when they landed safely. Once they crossed into Yemen, the threat level automatically rose. We’ve struck targets in Yemen before, but not with IAF jets directly over Yemeni soil. This time they were far more exposed.”

Are further strikes being planned?

“We’re always thinking ahead to the next campaign—whether in Yemen or elsewhere,” she said. “After each strike, we assess the results—how our targets affected their system and what kind of psychological impact we achieved.”

05.08.25 – Th - Omer 20

Judge blasts police as Qatargate political tactic emerges—rule-of-law intimidation

05.08.25 – Th - Omer 20

Judge blasts police over Netanyahu adviser’s re-arrest as Qatargate probe intensifies
Court orders Jonathan Urich released after surprise detention; investigation shifts to alleged Qatari money trail and possible political ties, while Netanyahu allies claim persecution; 'Investigation's racing forward without anyone asking what the offense is,' judge says

Ynet correspondents|17:19

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s adviser, Jonathan Urich, was unexpectedly re-arrested Wednesday just before the end of his house arrest, as a new suspect emerged in the expanding Qatargate investigation into alleged ties between Netanyahu staffers and the Qatari government.

Urich, who had been under house arrest, was summoned for questioning and then informed he would remain in custody. On Thursday, police brought him before the Rishon Lezion Magistrates’ Court and requested to extend his detention by five days. Judge Menachem Mizrahi denied the request, ordering his release and lifting the house arrest. However, at police request, the release was delayed by 24 hours to allow an appeal.

During the hearing, Judge Mizrahi harshly criticized the police, questioning the grounds for the re-arrest. “The investigation is racing forward without anyone asking what the offense is,” he said. Mizrahi also rejected a request to extend the house arrest of Eli Feldstein, Netanyahu’s former spokesman, who is also a suspect in the case.

A new figure questioned in the case is a former Mossad operative reportedly close to a retired IDF general linked to business dealings with Qatar. He is suspected of bribery, contact with a foreign agent and money laundering. He was released to house arrest after appearing before Judge Mizrahi in court.

In a heated exchange during Urich's hearing, the judge asked, "Why is Urich even under arrest?" The police investigator cited new information suggesting intensified suspicion of bribery. Mizrahi, unsatisfied, demanded clarity: "Explain to me what justified this renewed arrest. Take the report—highlight for me where the suspicion was strengthened."

Urich's attorney, Amit Hadad, also denounced the conduct of police, recounting how Urich's wife had been summoned to collect him from detention — only to be kept waiting for hours before being told he would remain in custody. According to Hadad, investigators only informed them of the arrest decision well past midnight.

The court reviewed the new material submitted by police, but Judge Mizrahi was unconvinced. "This? This is old news — it's not new," he said. Mizrahi later stated that Urich had been under house arrest, was questioned from 3:21 p.m. to 11:49 p.m., and was arrested minutes later. He found no legal basis for the arrest, asserting that the officer acted unlawfully. "There was no offense, and there is no fear that he will obstruct the investigation — he had just completed questioning," Mizrahi said. The judge also cast doubt on the bribery allegations against Urich and Feldstein, noting the need to prove their status as public officials for such charges to apply. Regarding allegations of money laundering, he questioned whether the suspicions justified such a severe infringement on personal liberty. Addressing the accusation of contact with a foreign agent, Mizrahi emphasized that the offense requires a clear intent to harm national security. "It feels like the investigation is racing forward without anyone asking what offense are we actually investigating here?" Mizrahi said.

He ordered Urich's release from all forms of detention under previously set conditions: a travel ban, passport deposit and mandatory attendance at future interrogations. He urged investigators to file their appeal swiftly so the district court could review the matter. Feldstein, who missed the hearing due to a dental procedure, was also released from house arrest.

"A court that values human liberty must not permit this," Mizrahi concluded.

Focusing on the Qatari money trail

Last week, Urich was summoned for questioning by the Israel Police's anti-corruption unit Lahav 433, but the session was canceled at the last minute.

The investigation has intensified over the past two weeks, with law enforcement focusing on the alleged Qatari money trail—who paid, how much was paid, to whom and for what purpose.

Urich has denied any wrongdoing, telling investigators that payments found in his bank account stemmed from private consulting work for the PR firm Perception, run by Israeli

media strategist Israel Einhorn. He insisted the payments were unrelated to Qatar, but investigators suspect otherwise.

Urich was due to complete a two-week house arrest on Thursday, which had been extended last month by the district court following a police appeal. That extension came after a lower court had ordered both Urich and Feldstein released from house arrest, citing no violations of their release terms and no investigative actions justifying continued detention. Judge Mizrahi said at the time that the two could be trusted and that there was no legal basis to keep them confined.

At that earlier hearing, police submitted classified documents to District Court Judge Amit Michles, allegedly outlining the financial path at the heart of the case. Urich's attorney, Amit Hadad, said the house arrest extension was linked to a parallel investigation in the United States involving Jay Footlik, a lobbyist for the Qatari government.

Police also previously informed the court that Urich was being investigated in connection with two separate matters: the Qatar-related case and a separate inquiry into the leak of classified information. However, the charge of leaking sensitive information was dropped after Prime Minister Netanyahu told investigators he had authorized the release.

According to Netanyahu's testimony, Urich acted "with authority and permission." The Prime Minister's Office later said the leak was aimed at advancing the release of Israeli hostages held in Gaza.

Last month, police claimed a new suspicion had emerged against Urich—obstruction of justice—and argued this justified keeping him under house arrest. Investigators said they had submitted a document outlining the potential disruption to their work.

Communications Minister Shlomo Karhi, a close Netanyahu ally, denounced Urich's arrest on Thursday, calling it politically motivated. "The legal mafia, led by the attorney general, continues to persecute Urich—this time with a full arrest, right after he finished house arrest. No justification. No shame. Just schemes and excuses to try and break the prime minister's associates and tarnish Netanyahu and the entire right-wing government," Karhi said. "As fabricated cases unravel and illegally recruited state witnesses collapse, a new tactic emerges—rule-of-law intimidation. But we will not be broken. We will not flinch. We will not surrender."

05.08.25 – Th - Omer 20

Former hostage Emily Damari calls on Pulitzer board to rescind prize to PA essays

05.08.25 – Th - Omer 20

Former hostage Emily Damari calls on Pulitzer board to rescind prize to Palestinian poet Mosab Abu Toha

Toha has justified the kidnapping of Israelis on October 7 and spread antisemitic content and fake news on his social media accounts; 'You have chosen to elevate a voice that denies truth, erases victims, and desecrates the memory of the murdered'

Ynet|13:29

Revelations emerged this week after Palestinian poet Mosab Abu Toha was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for commentary, about his past comments justifying the October 7 massacre and expressing antisemitic views. Now, Emily Damari—a former hostage recently released from Hamas captivity—has issued a direct and emotional appeal to the Pulitzer Prize Board.

"Dear Members of the Pulitzer Prizes board, My name is Emily Damari. I was held hostage in Gaza for over 500 days," Damari wrote in the open letter. "On the morning of October 7, I was at home in my small studio apartment in Kibbutz Kfar Aza when Hamas terrorists burst in, shot me and dragged me across the border into Gaza. I was one of 251 men, women, children, and elderly people kidnapped that day from their beds, their homes, and a music festival."

"For almost 500 days I lived in terror. I was starved, abused, and treated like I was less than human. I watched friends suffer. I watched hope dim. And even now, after returning home, I carry that darkness with me - because my best friends, Gali and Ziv Berman are still being held in the Hamas terror tunnels," she wrote.

"This is a man who, in January, questioned the very fact of my captivity. He posted about me on Facebook and asked, 'How on earth is this girl called a hostage?' He has denied the murder of the Bibas family. He has questioned whether Agam Berger was truly a hostage. These are not word games - they are outright denials of documented atrocities."

On the morning of October 7, I was at home in my small studio apartment in Kibbutz Kfar Aza when Hamas terrorists burst in, shot me and dragged me across the border...

— Emily Damari (@EmilyDamaril) May 8, 2025

She continued: "You claim to honor journalism that upholds truth, democracy, and human dignity. And yet you have chosen to elevate a voice that denies truth, erases victims, and desecrates the memory of the murdered. Do you not see what this means? Mosab Abu Toha is not a courageous writer. He is the modern-day equivalent of a Holocaust denier. And by honoring him, you have joined him in the shadows of denial. This is not a question of politics. This is a question of humanity. And today, you have failed it."

Abu Toha was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for commentary, journalism's most prestigious honor, for a series of essays in The New Yorker about life in Gaza during the war. According to the Pulitzer board, he was recognized "for deeply reported and personal essays that describe the physical and emotional devastation in Gaza, blending meticulous observation with the intimacy of memoir to convey the Palestinian experience during more than a year and a half of war with Israel."

He responded to the award on social media, writing on X: "I dedicate this success to my family, friends, teachers, and students in Gaza. Blessings to the 31 members of my family who were killed in one air strike in 2023." He concluded the post with: "I'm praying for an immediate and permanent ceasefire and JUSTICE and PEACE!"

Among the poet's winning essays are "The Gaza We Leave Behind," published on the site on October 7, 2024, a year after the massacre, and describing his longing for his homeland, and "Requiem for a Refugee Camp," which deals with the destruction of the Jabaliya refugee camp, where his grandparents were born and raised. In it, he recalled his days in Jabaliya in early November 2023: "I saw two men carrying a headless body. ... Then I came to a view of hell—an area of at least twenty-seven thousand square feet, flattened and ablaze. I had never witnessed such devastation in my life. When I returned to my family, I told them, 'There cannot be more destruction like this.' I could not imagine anything worse."

I'm honored to receive the Pulitzer Prize today. Great thanks to the prize's jury and board members for honoring me.

I dedicate this success to my family, friends, teachers, and students in Gaza.

— Mosab Abu Toha (@MosabAbuToha) May 6, 2025

At the outbreak of the war, Abu Toha fled from his home in northern Gaza to the Jabaliya camp, then attempted to escape to the United States via Egypt with his wife and three children. He currently resides in New York.

Following Damari's release, Abu Toha posted about her in January on X: "How can this girl be called a hostage? (Yes, that's the case for some of the captives). This is Emily Damari, a 28-year-old British-Israeli soldier whom Hamas captured on 10/7. This is an interview with her on Israeli TV. According to the Arabic subtitles, Emily says she served near the Gaza border. The interviewer asks, 'How does your mother sleep at night?' Her answer (wow): 'Fortunately, she's English. She does not know the details of these things.'"

He continued, "So this girl is a 'hostage'? This soldier, who was near a city that she and her country occupy, is called a 'hostage'? And our brothers and sisters—teachers, doctors, journalists, farmers, taxi drivers—are called 'prisoners'? People who live under occupation, refugees for decades, struggling daily to survive, and when they are taken from hospitals and school shelters—they are called prisoners? F*** your language."

In a separate post on February 3, Abu Toha referred to Israeli IDF observer Agam Berger as a "murderer" after she attended her sister's Air Force graduation ceremony.

On February 21, he cast doubt on Israel's account that Hamas terrorists had killed Shiri Bibas and her two sons, Kfir and Ariel, with their bare hands. "Shame on you, BBC. You are a propaganda machine," he wrote. "If you haven't seen any evidence, why publish this? Well, that's what you are—filthy people."

05.08.25 – Th - Omer 20

Unusual waves of attacks in southern Lebanon: Hezbollah positions targeted

05.08.25 – Th - Omer 20

Unusual waves of attacks in southern Lebanon: Hezbollah positions targeted

Strikes included around 20 attacks focused on the Nabatieh area; air raids described as forming a 'belt of fire.'

Lior Ben Ari, Yair Kraus, Elisha Ben Kimon|12:24

The Israeli Air Force reportedly carried out a series of intense airstrikes in southern Lebanon Thursday morning, in what Lebanese and Saudi outlet Al-Hadath described as an unusual escalation in the eastern sector of the region.

According to reports, the strikes included around 20 attacks focused on the Nabatieh area, including the village of Roumine, and were carried out in two separate waves. Sources told Al-Hadath that the strikes targeted Hezbollah positions, calling it an attack on a "significant target." The Hezbollah-affiliated Al-Mayadeen network described the air raids as forming a "belt of fire."

The strikes follow a separate targeted killing reported Wednesday in the Sidon area of southern Lebanon. Lebanese media said Khaled Ahmad al-Ahmad, a senior Hamas operative, was killed in an airstrike on his vehicle. The Israel Defense Forces later confirmed the operation, stating that al-Ahmad served as head of operations for Hamas's Western Lebanon Brigade and was actively planning terror attacks against Israel.

"During the war, the terrorist promoted multiple plots targeting IDF soldiers, the State of Israel, and its citizens," the IDF said. "In recent weeks, he facilitated the transfer of weapons and coordinated attacks against Israel. His activities posed a direct threat to Israel and its people. The IDF will continue to pursue Hamas operatives wherever they operate."

Last week, the IDF eliminated two Hezbollah operatives in southern Lebanon. One was said to have been gathering intelligence near the border, and the other was identified as a fighter in Hezbollah's Radwan Force. According to the IDF spokesperson, the strikes occurred about 20 minutes apart in the area of the village of Meiss al-Jabal and were conducted using unmanned aerial vehicles.

05.08.25 – Th - Omer 20

Pakistan intercepted Israeli-made drones fired by India, responding to April 22 attacks

05.08.25 – Th - Omer 20

Pakistan says intercepted Israeli-made 'suicide drones' fired by India

Israeli Ambassador to India Reuven Azar expressed support for New Delhi and its 'right to self-defense' - but did not mention Pakistan, which is supported by Turkey's Erdogan. He noted that 'the attack in Pahalgam is reminiscent of October 7th' due to its brutality
Itamar Eichner|10:59

Israel supports India's right to self-defense and New Delhi knows it can rely on Jerusalem, Israeli Ambassador to India Reuven Azar said in recent interviews—while Pakistan has accused India of using Israeli-made "suicide drones." According to a spokesperson for Pakistan's military, the country intercepted 12 Harop drones,

manufactured by Israel Aerospace Industries, which it claims were launched by India. Debris was reportedly found near major cities including Karachi and Lahore. "We are neutralizing them one by one," the spokesperson said.

The Harop drone, technically classified as a loitering munition, is launched from outside the battlefield and has a maximum flight range of 200 kilometers. It can hover over hostile territory, identify targets and crash into them. In addition to Israel, the drone has been sold to India, Germany and Azerbaijan, the latter having used it in fighting against Armenia.

Speaking to Indian media outlets, including CNN News18, and in official social media posts, Azar articulated Israel's unequivocal support for India's sovereignty and the protection of its citizens. He expressed solidarity with India in its conflict with Pakistan, saying that "Israel supports India's right to self-defense. Terrorists should know there is nowhere to hide from the crimes they've committed against innocent people." Indian interviewers, noting that Israel was among the first countries to express support for India following Operation Sindoor, drew parallels between the October 7 Hamas massacre and the recent attack in Pahalgam, and asked Azar what lessons India could draw from Israel's counterterrorism experience.

Operation Sindoor targeted terrorist infrastructure in the Pakistan-controlled region of Kashmir and was seen as a strategic response to attacks by groups based there. "The Pahalgam attack is a watershed moment due to its brutality, resembling the characteristics of October 7," said Azar. "Democracies have no choice but to act against such severe threats to their security. India exercised its right to self-defense, and we are confident it is doing so responsibly to protect its citizens."

Azar also highlighted shared values between Israel and India, including innovation, advanced agriculture, health and military technology. "The partnership between Israel and India is grounded in deep values of democracy, security and innovation," he said, adding that the two countries are working to strengthen cooperation in agricultural tech, water solutions, and disaster management.

His comments also contained an implicit reference to common threats posed by hostile states. Without naming any countries, Azar said that "fighting terrorism transcends borders and requires close coordination between nations with shared values."

In a world seeing rising violence and organized terrorism, Azar emphasized the importance of standing together against aggression. He stressed the need for deeper international cooperation to prevent the spread of radical ideologies and to punish both terrorists and those who support them.

"Terrorism breaks all rules and presents democracies with difficult dilemmas," Azar said. "We are fighting this war with one hand tied behind our backs, and I do not envy the Indian government or its decision-makers as they weigh how to act based on intelligence in order to achieve effective results and prevent another such attack."

Azar was careful to stress that Israel is not involved in India's conflict, and he refrained from giving advice or passing judgment. He said the international community must not only condemn terrorism but also act against it—by arresting perpetrators, curbing the spread of dangerous weapons, and fighting radical content online, among other measures.

While expressing clear support for India in his interviews, Azar avoided directly naming Pakistan—a significant diplomatic choice, especially given that Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, a vocal critic of Israel since October 7, has publicly supported Pakistan. Tensions between India and Pakistan, two nuclear powers with a decades-long rivalry, have sharply escalated. India has accused Pakistan of backing the terrorists behind the deadly April 22 attack in the disputed Kashmir region, and the two countries have since exchanged fire and launched strikes against each other in the area.

05.08.25 – Th - Omer 20

Tanks withdrawn, troops sent back to Gaza: Jenin refugee camp is quiet and terror free

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Tanks withdrawn, troops sent back to Gaza: Jenin refugee camp is quiet and terror free
Four months into the West Bank operation, the IDF still holds Jenin's refugee camp — now a 'ghost neighborhood' cleared of enemies; With no clashes or unrest, active duty troops - soon headed for Gaza - continue pursuing dozens of terrorists hiding in nearby villages; Troubling data shows 50% of those released in 2023 hostage deal return to terror
Yoav Zitun|01:25

The four tanks from the IDF's 188th Armored Brigade that entered Jenin with fanfare earlier this year—at the urging of political leaders—have recently been quietly withdrawn from the West Bank and redeployed to their more natural place: the ruined neighborhoods of Rafah in southern Gaza.

Soon, the active duty soldiers of the Nachshon Battalion will also leave the densely packed ghost neighborhood in the heart of what is often called the "terror capital" to take part in the expanded ground operation in Gaza recently approved by the Cabinet. Their last encounter with hostile forces in Jenin occurred four months ago, and since then not even riots have broken out. The quiet will now be handed over to reservists, many of whom are being called up for their fifth or sixth round of duty within a year and a half.

A low dirt mound separates the bustling streets of Jenin from the refugee camp neighborhood, technically part of the city itself. The camp is located in the northernmost tip of the West Bank, near Afula. Modern high-rises and shopping centers surround the camp, which sits at a lower elevation. Its narrow alleyways closely abut Jenin's city streets on all sides.

Inside the city of Jenin, there's prosperity and normalcy: the malls and schools are open and, as Ynet reported about a month ago, the IDF has resumed allowing Israeli Arabs to spend millions of shekels there every weekend on shopping sprees. In the small,

infamous bubble of the refugee camp, a few dozen IDF soldiers remain permanently stationed, supported by male and female Border Police officers from Unit 23.

These troops have effectively been living inside the camp for five months, although their actual operations now take place outside the city—focused on arrest raids in nearby villages, where, according to Central Command estimates, several dozen terrorists are still hiding, about 10 of whom are considered to have "blood on their hands."

Meanwhile, the soldiers feel at ease, surrounded by graffiti of Stars of David on building walls and newly bulldozed roads created through the demolition of around 200 structures. In shops around the neighborhood, dusty shelves still display electronics and food items. Many of the approximately 3,000 Palestinian residents who were displaced from the camp remain disappointed with the Palestinian Authority's proposed solutions, such as temporary housing on farmland.

Four months after the IDF seized control of two refugee camps in the West Bank, commanders estimate that only a few dozen fugitives from the Jenin camp remain on the run—eight of them considered high-value targets. Nachshon Battalion fighters from the Kfir Brigade are now in their final days in Jenin before being redeployed as regular infantry in Gaza. Contrary to earlier plans, they'll be replaced by reservists. In recent months, the regular troops have alternated between routine security duties and "mini-maneuvers"—two-and-a-half-week stays inside seized Palestinian homes in the camp (dubbed "identifications"), followed by four-day breaks at home.

"The conditions here for the troops are good, the food is decent, and we're already deep in preparations for the major operation planned in Gaza," said the battalion's commander, Lt. Col. G. The last armed encounter his forces faced in Jenin was four months ago, and since then, not even disturbances have occurred—despite dozens of soldiers effectively living in the hostile 1.5-square-kilometer camp surrounded by the urban sprawl of Jenin. "The camp is clear of hostile forces"

As the IDF gears up for a wider offensive in Gaza and commanders count every reservist willing to answer a fifth or sixth emergency call-up in under two years, the army made an unusual move today: it invited journalists to the Jenin refugee camp without any specific reason.

According to commanders, the first two phases of Operation Iron Wall—achieving operational control of the camp and clearing its structures—were completed successfully two months ago. Since then, troops have focused on arrest raids and pursuing dozens of remaining militants who fled the camp to nearby villages. These fugitives are now without their home turf and far from the narrow alleyways where they once operated more than 100 surveillance cameras to track IDF patrols and time their roadside bombings with deadly precision.

"The camp is clear of hostile forces," said one commander. "We demolished around 200 buildings not to destroy, but to eliminate enemy infrastructure—now and in the future—that could endanger our forces. It also allowed us to create roads for troop movement and

casualty evacuation. After Operation Defensive Shield 23 years ago, the militants learned lessons and built barriers on those roads to prevent military vehicles from maneuvering.” According to IDF figures, 102 terrorists have been killed so far in the current operation in northern Samaria; 320 have been arrested; and 14 airstrikes have been carried out, including by fighter jets. The operation has also led to a sharp drop in both threat alerts and actual attacks. A total of 338 weapons have been seized. The most recent Ramadan, just a month ago, was reportedly one of the quietest in the West Bank in a decade. During Passover, 41,000 Israelis visited the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron, and about half of all IDF counterterror operations (arrests and weapons seizures) in the West Bank now take place in the Hebron and Bethlehem areas.

Since the start of the operation, around 450 weapons have been seized, along with the destruction of hundreds of improvised explosive devices. Dozens of homes that served as weapons labs have been demolished. As part of the effort to open new roads for military access, approximately 100 buildings in Jenin and another 100 in Tulkarm and Nur Shams have been razed. Since the war began, about 930 militants have been killed in the West Bank, and some 2,050 weapons have been seized.

The IDF said: “To prevent terror from reestablishing itself in northern Samaria, the army is making changes to the camps, including opening roads to ensure freedom of movement and operational flexibility for our troops. As part of this plan, Central Command has announced its intention to demolish additional buildings. These demolitions are the result of thorough evaluations and are limited to the minimum necessary to guarantee security.”

Business as usual in Jenin city

Inside the damaged and deserted refugee camp, the sense of security among the soldiers is palpable. They enter and exit the area in armored vehicles—sometimes even without protective netting—using the city’s main roads in broad daylight, without being pelted by stones. The army cites Israel’s “carrot and stick” strategy, led by political authorities and first reported by Ynet two months ago. Just last weekend, Israeli Arabs contributed NIS 17 million to Jenin’s economy thanks to the reopening of the Jalama crossing, allowing them to shop in the city formerly dubbed the “terror capital.”

“The malls in Jenin are packed, the stores are bustling, the schools are all open—and that’s not something to be taken for granted, considering there’s a permanent IDF force operating inside the city’s refugee camp,” said an IDF official. “We have solid coordination with the Palestinian security forces in the area. In their last major operation here a year ago, they couldn’t even advance past the second row of buildings due to heavy militant resistance. Six of their officers were killed. What they did in six weeks, we’ve done in 24 hours.”

Alongside the IDF troops, a full Border Police company—Unit 23—is permanently stationed in the city. These male and female officers, trained to a similar level as IDF border infantry, protect reporters visiting the camp. Their presence has long become routine. “We have the advantage of continuity, while IDF battalions rotate in and out frequently,” said one Border Police officer. “We carry out every type of mission, which helps bolster the IDF’s manpower.”

Maj. G., the operations officer for the Menashe Brigade, looked at graffiti sprayed by soldiers on the walls of deserted Palestinian homes. “We handle any unusual incidents, fix things if needed, and repaint. Everything we destroyed had a reason. I don’t know when—or if—the 3,000 Palestinians who lived here will return,” he said.

Meanwhile, Central Command is also dealing with the 408 prisoners recently released to the West Bank as part of the latest hostage deal with Hamas. Early indications suggest that some are already trying to return to terrorism. Statistics are stark: 82% of those freed in the 2011 Gilad Shalit deal resumed terrorist activity, as have about 50% of those released in the first round of the 2023 hostage deal. From a security standpoint, the military prefers to have released prisoners in the West Bank rather than Gaza, as the IDF has full operational freedom to act in the West Bank at any time and in any location. “They’re under tight surveillance, and we interrogated and warned them before their release,” said a senior IDF source. “Zakaria Zubeidi, for example—the militant most associated with Jenin—is now busy with political meetings in Ramallah. He doesn’t come here anymore. And he knows that if he returns to terrorism, it’ll be at his peril.” The commander of Central Command, Maj. Gen. Yaki Dolf stated: “Any terrorist who returns to terrorism has only himself to blame.” He explained that Operation Iron Wall is aimed at dismantling the terrorist system from its roots, starting with achieving operational control over key strongholds like Jenin. “We’re systematically pursuing the fugitives with intelligence and keeping track of every movement route. As a result, we now can operate anywhere, anytime—even in the heart of the refugee camps.” The IDF estimates that the two battalions added to the northern West Bank for holding the camps may be withdrawn by year’s end, once operations are complete and all wanted fugitives have been arrested. Ultimately, this will be a political decision. Regardless, the four tanks deployed to the area at the beginning of the operation, under political pressure, have long since been removed and sent to Gaza, where they are relevant to combat, not just photo ops.

Mossad agents R, D and N, who led 'Paggers Operation,' drew widespread Arab media coverage; most outlets called it a 'rare public appearance,' noted their faces were hidden;

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05.08.25 – Th - Omer 20

Trump says Houthis gave their word to halt attacks; Israel will act alone if needed

05.08.25 – Th - Omer 20

Trump says Houthis 'gave their word' to halt attacks; Netanyahu says Israel will act alone if needed

US president says Houthis have committed to halting attacks on commercial vessels in the Red Sea and the US honors their word; he also marveled at their 'great capacity to withstand punishment'

Daniel Edelson, New York|01:14

U.S. President Donald Trump said Wednesday the Houthis have committed to halting attacks on commercial vessels in the Red Sea and emphasized that Washington intends to honor that commitment.

In his first public comments on the cease-fire with the Yemen-based terror group, Trump said, "We had a very good outcome with the Houthis. We honor their word. They made a commitment, and we dealt with other countries that are close to them and their surrogates—we honor all of their words."

Trump described the Houthis as having shown "a great capacity to withstand punishment," adding: "They took tremendous punishment. You could say there's a lot of bravery there—it was amazing what they took. But we honor their commitment. They gave us their word that they wouldn't be shooting ships anymore, and we honor that. Hopefully, that's over with. Just leave those ships alone."

The cease-fire has raised questions in the region, particularly in Israel, where Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu responded with a statement asserting that Israel would continue to act independently to counter threats.

In a video released Monday night, styled as a mock interview with his advisers, Netanyahu said Israel is fully capable of defending itself without assistance if necessary. "We are acting in Yemen and in other distant places," he said, adding that Israel "has a long arm, and we will use it. If others join us—our American friends, for example—that's good. But if not, we will defend ourselves on our own."

Meanwhile, U.S. officials signaled cautious optimism regarding parallel diplomatic talks with Iran. According to senior sources, discussions with Tehran are progressing constructively, though Washington is not rushing to judge the outcome of the negotiations. Officials stressed that while Iran may pursue civilian nuclear energy, it cannot be allowed to maintain a program that could lead to nuclear weapons capability. They warned that if Iran were to acquire such weapons, it could trigger a wider nuclear arms race in the Middle East.

05.07.25 – We - Omer 19

Drive-by shooting near Jenin, car ramming near Hebron; 2 soldiers on ventilators

05.07.25 – We - Omer 19

Terrorist attacks in West Bank injure 3 reserve soldiers: Shooting attack near Jenin, car ramming near Hebron

2 injured in shooting at Reihan crossing in northern West Bank; 1 was injured in car ramming attack near Hebron, driver neutralized
Elisha Ben Kimon|Updated:23:19

Two reserve soldiers were injured Wednesday by gunfire at a vehicle in the Reihan crossing area near Jenin, near the West Bank security fence. Forces were dispatched to the scene upon receiving the report, and are conducting searches for suspects in the area. The IDF is examining the possibility that it was a drive-by shooting.

The injured were evacuated to Rambam Hospital in Haifa, where their condition was listed as serious. "Both are sedated and on a ventilator, suffering from gunshot wounds to the upper body and are expected to undergo surgery in the coming hours," the hospital reported.

At the same time, a reserve officer was slightly injured in an attempted car ramming in Mount Hebron in the southern West Bank; the driver, who got out of the car and pulled out a knife, was neutralized.

About two weeks ago, the IDF announced the elimination of a terrorist who had attempted a shooting attack at the Homesh checkpoint in the northern West Bank. The terrorist arrived on foot at the checkpoint, then opened fire on the force, which eliminated him.

The Palestinians reported that the terrorist was Suleiman Manasra, 25, from Qabatia in the Jenin area. He sent a message to his friends before setting out to carry out the attack: "If I have upset anyone in my life, forgive me, no one knows what will happen to them," he wrote. The Palestinian media network "Quds", affiliated with Hamas, reported that he arrived at the scene in his vehicle - not on foot - and shouted "Allahu Akbar" before opening fire.

Operation Iron Wall by the IDF Central Command has led to a dramatic drop in attacks. According to newly released defense establishment data, April 2025 saw the lowest number of attacks in the West Bank in five years—46 incidents, three of which were classified as major (involving gunfire, stabbings or explosives).

05.07.25 – We - Omer 19

Arrest raids in Britain: Iranian terror cell planned attack on Israeli embassy in London

05.07.25 – We - Omer 19

Arrest raids in Britain: 'Iranian terror cell planned attack on Israeli embassy in London'
Four days after the raids in which eight suspects, including seven Iranians, were arrested, the Telegraph reports that the target was the Israeli embassy in London; terrorists were captured hours before they carried out the attack

Itamar Eichner|22:26

British media reported Wednesday that the Iranian nationals arrested in the UK over the weekend were allegedly planning an attack on the Israeli embassy in London. According to The Telegraph, the raids that led to their arrests took place just hours before the suspected plot was due to be carried out.

The dramatic raids occurred over the weekend, resulting in the arrest of eight terror suspects, seven of whom are Iranian nationals. In recent days, UK outlets have reported growing speculation that five of the suspects—accused of plotting a terrorist attack—had also been targeting a site connected to the Jewish community, possibly a synagogue.

The Daily Telegraph reported that the raid in which five of the suspects were apprehended on Saturday happened just hours before the planned attack was set to take place. The Daily Mail also cited sources describing the plot as a “major attack” that could have put lives at immediate risk. These sources added that the plot was not related to events marking the 80th anniversary of the victory over Nazi Germany, which culminate Thursday but began earlier this week with a military parade attended by King Charles. Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi responded Wednesday evening to the arrests, writing on the social media platform X: “We are disturbed to hear that Iranian citizens have been detained by British security services. If credible allegations of wrongdoing are proven, Iran is ready to assist in the investigations. We call on the UK to ensure our citizens’ rights are respected and to guarantee them a fair legal process.”

British authorities announced two separate raids on Saturday. In one, five suspects were arrested—four of them Iranians—who were allegedly planning an attack on what was described as a “specific location,” though no further details were given. Hours earlier, three more Iranians were arrested in a separate operation. Authorities emphasized that this second group was not connected to the alleged embassy plot, and that a separate investigation is underway. According to The Daily Mail, the second group may have been part of another Iranian cell involved in espionage. They were reportedly arrested over concerns that news of the primary raid might cause them to flee.

The five men suspected of planning the attack, aged 24 to 46, were arrested in separate locations: Swindon, west London, Stockport, Rochdale, and Manchester. Four remain in custody and one has been released on bail.

In Rochdale, dramatic video captured images of about 30 heavily armed officers—reportedly including SAS commandos—storming a house around 7 p.m. Local residents told the media that masked officers escorted a shirtless man in his 40s from the home at gunpoint and ordered him to lie on the ground. In Swindon, another suspect was detained in broad daylight on a city street by masked security officers.

British Home Secretary Yvette Cooper said the two operations, which resulted in eight arrests, were among the largest counterterrorism efforts the UK has seen in recent years. Asked about potential ties between the suspects and the Iranian regime, she did not respond directly, but hinted at possible connections.

"These significant operations and the ongoing investigation are of immense importance, and of course, Iranian nationals are involved in both cases. We support the police and security services in their inquiries and security assessments," Cooper said.

Iran has for years sought to carry out terrorist attacks against Jewish and Israeli targets, as well as Iranian dissidents abroad. Warnings about its activities in the UK have increased in recent years. Last year, the UK's domestic intelligence agency, MI5, revealed that since early 2022 it had disrupted at least 20 Iran-linked plots.

One such operation attributed to Iran involved the stabbing of exiled Iranian journalist Pouria Zeraati in March of last year. Zeraati, a presenter on the London-based Persian-language network Iran International, which is affiliated with Iranian regime opponents, was attacked outside his home in the British capital. Two Romanian nationals were arrested in their home country in December in connection with the incident and are now undergoing extradition proceedings to the UK.

The exposure of the new plot has renewed calls in Britain to formally designate Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a terrorist organization. The ruling Labour Party pledged to do so while in opposition but has yet to follow through. The Telegraph reported that some within the UK's Foreign Office fear such a move could close a vital backchannel with Tehran, which is also used by the United States.

Nigel Farage, leader of the far-right Reform Party, said the IRGC should have been blacklisted "years ago." "I've got friends in the Middle East who are stunned we haven't done it," he said. Labour lawmaker Luke Akehurst also urged the designation, saying the recent raids highlight the "urgency" of such a step.

05.07.25 – We - Omer 19

EU Parliament votes to freeze Palestinian funding over incitement in textbooks

05.07.25 – We - Omer 19

EU Parliament votes to freeze Palestinian funding over incitement in textbooks

European Parliament votes to freeze Palestinian funding until inciting content is removed from textbooks: 'Children deserve peace-based education, not jihad'; PA had pledged reforms—but introduced new Gaza curriculum urging violence

Itamar Eichner|20:10

The European Parliament on Wednesday voted to freeze funding to the Palestinian Authority due to continued incitement in school textbooks and condemned the involvement of UNRWA employees in the October 7 Hamas-led terror attack.

In a series of resolutions passed as part of the parliament's annual budget review, lawmakers strongly condemned Palestinian textbooks used by both the Palestinian Authority and UNRWA, for the sixth consecutive year, stating that the materials include "antisemitism, incitement to violence, hate speech, and glorification of terrorism."

The resolutions declared that EU funding to the Palestinian Authority should be withheld “as long as the content of the textbooks fails to meet UNESCO standards, antisemitic references are not removed, and examples inciting hatred and violence remain.” For the first time, the parliament also included a specific demand that inciting content be removed by the start of the next academic year in September. It conditioned future EU assistance on concrete textbook reforms.

The decision, adopted as part of the European Parliament’s annual budgetary process that evaluates the use of taxpayers’ money, passed with broad cross-party support—including from center-left parties—and was especially backed by the influential chair of the parliament’s Budgetary Control Committee. The resolution passed with a commanding majority: 443 votes in favor, 202 against, and 21 abstentions.

Back in July 2024, the European Commission had already announced that EU aid to the Palestinian Authority would be officially conditioned on reforming its educational content. Despite promises made by the PA to the EU at the time, a March 2025 investigation by the research and policy institute IMPACT-se found no evidence of meaningful reform. On the contrary, the report revealed that the PA had produced an entirely new curriculum for Gaza that was filled with violent incitement, calls to kill civilians, promotion of jihad, and explicit antisemitism.

The report’s findings, presented to senior EU officials and European Parliament budget committee members, were widely covered in the media and helped lay the groundwork for this week’s parliamentary decision.

The resolutions mark a direct challenge to the Palestinian Authority’s agreements with the EU and sharpen the demand for immediate reforms to its educational system. Additionally, the parliament passed a resolution stating that “no EU funds should be allocated to individuals or organizations linked to terrorist groups.” In this context, the resolution cited evidence that UNRWA employees had taken part in the atrocities committed on October 7. The parliament emphasized the existence of alternatives to UNRWA and urged the European Commission to work instead with “reliable partners such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Food Programme (WFP), and UNICEF.”

‘We will not turn a blind eye to children being exposed to hate’

Members of the European Parliament from a wide range of political factions, including from the center-left, voiced strong opposition to Palestinian educational incitement. Niklas Herbst, chair of the Budgetary Control Committee from the center-right EPP—the largest and most influential group in the parliament—stated: “Today the Parliament made it clear that Palestinian textbooks must not promote violence, incite hatred or spread antisemitism. It is our responsibility to ensure that European taxpayers’ money supports coexistence, respect for human rights and mutual understanding.”

He added that the EU must “demand full accountability and transparency from our partners to ensure that no EU funding supports educational content that contradicts these core values.”

Sabrina Pignedoli, a member of the Socialist & Democrats (S&D) group who serves on the education committee, said: “Education is the foundation of every new generation. It must be based on peace, respect, and human dignity. The European Parliament has sent a

clear message today: We will not turn a blind eye when children are exposed to hate and division. Every student has the right to an education that fosters understanding and reconciliation, not fear and polarization.”

Joachim Schuster, from the liberal Renew Europe group, said: “The European Parliament has made clear that hatred and incitement cannot be part of Palestinian textbooks. In my view, they shouldn’t be part of any textbook. Children deserve an education rooted in peace and mutual respect, not one that glorifies violence or promotes antisemitism. EU funds should build hope, not hate.”

Dutch MEP Bert-Jan Ruissen from the right-leaning ECR party added: “Education funded by European taxpayers must reflect the fundamental values of our continent—peace and mutual respect, not hatred and violence. It is our duty to ensure that Palestinian textbooks stop promoting antisemitism or glorifying terrorism. Only when incitement ends can we hope for peace in the region.”

IMPACT-se: Parliament taking a stand against empty promises

Marcus Sheff, CEO of IMPACT-se, welcomed the move: “It is very encouraging to see the European Parliament taking leadership and demanding accountability from both the Palestinian Authority and the European Commission, making clear that empty promises will no longer be tolerated.”

“It is unacceptable that European taxpayers’ money is being misused to fund an educational system that fuels the kind of extreme hatred and violence we saw on October 7. We will continue monitoring the Palestinian education system and pushing for the promised reforms to be implemented,” he said.

Eric Agassi, IMPACT-se’s deputy director based in London, added: “The European Parliament is sending a clear message today—it’s time for the European Commission to stop relying on Palestinian assurances and instead present credible public evidence that real changes have been made.”

“For six years in a row, the Parliament has consistently found no meaningful improvements in Palestinian educational content. The promises of reform have proven to be hollow. Credibility is on the line. Without verifiable evidence of change, it would be irresponsible to continue releasing funds as in the past.”

05.07.25 – We - Omer 19

Trump: Three more hostages died in Gaza, only 21 remain alive

05.07.25 – We - Omer 19

Trump: Three more hostages died in Gaza, only 21 remain alive

US president also confirms that he will not stop in Israel during his upcoming Middle East visit

Daniel Edelson, New York|00:43

U.S. President Donald Trump announced late Tuesday that 21 hostages held by Hamas in Gaza are still alive, down from 24 a week ago. He stated, "These are young people, and

young people don't die. Old people die, but young people don't die under these conditions." An official Israeli statement on the matter has yet to be released as of Tuesday night.

Trump made the remarks during the official swearing-in ceremony of Steve Witkoff as U.S. Special Envoy to the Middle East. He also confirmed that he would not be stopping in Israel during his upcoming Middle East visit.

Regarding the conflict in Yemen, Trump announced that the United States would cease its airstrikes against Houthi rebels. He explained, "They don't want to fight anymore," attributing this shift to the Houthis' expressed willingness to halt attacks on regional shipping. The ceasefire was reportedly mediated by Oman and U.S. envoy Steve Witkoff.

Trump emphasized that the focus is on maintaining freedom of navigation, particularly in the Red Sea and Bab al-Mandab Strait. However, analysts noted that the Houthis had not publicly confirmed the ceasefire, and tensions persist, especially concerning their stance on Israel.

On Iran, Trump reiterated the U.S. position that Tehran must not possess nuclear weapons. He stated: "We want Iran to be a successful country. We don't want to do anything that blocks that path. But they can't have nuclear weapons. And if they choose another path, it will be a very sad thing, and it's something we don't want to do, but we won't have a choice. They are not going to have nuclear weapons. They are not going to have nuclear weapons. Do you understand me?"

The announcement of the hostages' status comes as Israel plans a new military operation in Gaza, intensifying the urgency of diplomatic efforts in the region.

05.07.25 – We - Omer 19

Trump halts strike on Houthis; bypass Israel on Iran, Yemen & Lebanon negotiations

05.07.25 – We - Omer 19

Trump's surprise halt to strikes on Houthis raises eyebrows in Israel and tensions with US

Explainer: Washington officials say attacks by Iranian proxy may stop, but Israeli leaders were blindsided by move, which underscores deeper friction between two nations over Iran, hostage deal and Trump's decision to bypass Israel on high-stakes Mideast tour
Itamar Eichner|00:22

U.S. President Donald Trump's unexpected announcement that American strikes on the Houthis would stop has little to do with Israel, according to Israeli officials. From Trump's standpoint, if they stop targeting American ships, the United States is satisfied.

Still, although no one in Israel is likely to acknowledge it officially, this move is part of the growing strain in U.S.-Israel relations. Ahead of Trump's upcoming Middle East visit,

Strategic Affairs Minister Ron Dermer is scheduled to visit the White House on Wednesday, aiming to resolve disagreements and coordinate with American officials.

At the same time, families of hostages who have spoken with American officials said they were told Washington is pushing hard for a hostage deal with Hamas. The U.S. is exerting heavy pressure on Qatar, which Israel accuses of torpedoing the Egyptian proposal.

It is unclear whether these efforts will succeed. Trump's administration is eager for a deal to be reached during his trip to the region, though that appears unlikely as Hamas insists on a full ceasefire, while Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu remains committed to "total victory" over the terrorist organization.

Trump announced Tuesday night that the U.S. would immediately halt airstrikes against the Houthis, claiming they "don't want to fight" and that his administration will "trust their word" not to blow up ships. Trump explained that the decision was made following the Houthis' agreement to stop disrupting vital Middle East shipping routes.

"It's not a deal," he said. "They said, 'Please don't bomb us anymore, we won't attack your ships.' They don't want to be bombed anymore." He made no mention of Israel. "I kind of expected it to happen, but there's no agreement."

Senior Republican Senator Lindsey Graham welcomed Trump's statement and posted on X a message directed at Israel: "To my friends in Israel, do what you must to defend your airspace and your people." Graham warned that the Houthis would jeopardize Iran if they continued attacking Israel, urging a firm response: "Without Iran, the Houthis couldn't target America, global trade routes, or Israel. It wouldn't take much to put Iran out of the oil business."

The Houthis, however, denied agreeing to stop targeting American ships. "Operations in the Red Sea and against Israel will not stop until the aggression in Gaza ends," a member of their political council told Bloomberg. Israel, which was not informed in advance of Trump's declaration, was surprised by his comments and unclear on what they meant regarding the Houthis' readiness to stop firing. Sources familiar with the matter said that if the Houthis cease fire, Israel will not respond. However, the assessment in Israel is that the Houthis retain missile capabilities.

According to CNN, Trump's statement came after a "flurry of diplomatic activity" between the U.S., Oman, and the Houthis. Sources said the understanding reached was aimed at "building momentum" for renewed talks on a nuclear agreement with Iran. So far, the date of a potential fourth round of negotiations between Washington and Tehran remains unknown.

Trump also said Tuesday that he would make an "important announcement" in the coming days, before his Middle East tour next week — a trip that will not include a stop in Israel. He did not elaborate on the subject of the upcoming announcement, only describing it as "very positive." Shortly afterward, the U.S. State Department issued a statement that may hint at what's to come: "An important announcement regarding aid to Gaza will be made in the coming days — it will be very good news."

Trump is scheduled to visit Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates between May 13 and 16. According to Israeli officials, there is no indication he will visit Israel during the trip, though a surprise stop has not been ruled out. Behind the scenes, frustration is mounting in Israel over the omission — reminiscent of former President Barack Obama's first Middle East tour, which included visits to Cairo and Istanbul but skipped Jerusalem.

Strains between Israel and the U.S. have also grown following a dramatic Washington Post report claiming that National Security Advisor Mike Waltz was fired in part for engaging in “intensive contacts” with Netanyahu about a possible strike on Iran — contradicting Trump's efforts to negotiate a new nuclear deal and conflicting with the more restrained views of others in the administration. Netanyahu's office denied the report, saying that while the prime minister did meet with Waltz, Iran was not discussed. Still, Netanyahu's office did not deny that someone close to him was in contact with Waltz. In addition to Netanyahu's visits to Washington in February and April, Minister Ron Dermer — a trusted adviser — also traveled to the U.S. and met with senior officials. These moves have reinforced the perception that Israel is pushing Trump toward military action against Iran. Dermer is expected to meet this week with senior Trump aides, including Steve Witkoff, ahead of the president's regional tour.

Two competing camps in the Trump administration

There are currently two main camps within the Trump administration. One includes “classic Republicans,” such as Waltz and Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who believe the U.S. should project global power, including military engagement in Ukraine, China, and Iran. Opposing them is the “America First” camp — an isolationist faction advocating that Washington focus inward and reject the role of global policeman.

This second group is led by Vice President J.D. Vance and Trump's son, Donald Trump Jr. While the hawkish faction maintains close ties with Israel, the “America First” bloc lacks a strategic connection to the country, though some members may hold religious sympathy toward it. Within this internal American struggle, Israel is perceived as encouraging a military path against Iran, which could drag the U.S. into a conflict it seeks to avoid. This concern was underscored by a recent New York Times report that Trump had halted a joint Israeli-American plan to attack Iranian nuclear facilities.

Despite ongoing coordination between Washington and Jerusalem, tensions persist, fueled by nuclear talks with Iran, the U.S. withdrawal from Syria, and warming ties between the U.S. and Turkey. The dismissal of pro-Israel advisor Waltz and the rise of Vice President Vance's influence have dealt a political blow to Israel. Vance, notably, said before the election that a war with Iran would be against American interests.

05.06.25 – Tu - Omer 18

IDF chief Zamir orders expansion of draft notices to Haredim, who remain passive

05.06.25 – Tu - Omer 18

IDF chief of staff orders expansion of draft notices to Haredim

In shadow of shortage of servicemen - and the approval of plans to expand the operation in Gaza - Eyal Zamir ordered expansion of issuance of draft orders to yeshiva students; In response, the Haredim are expected to increase pressure to pass conscription exemption law - and are even hinting at the dissolution of the coalition.

Yoav Zitun, Shilo Freid|22:21

IDF Chief of Staff Eyal Zamir has instructed the military's Manpower Directorate to expand the issuance of draft notices to Haredi men, citing growing strain on military personnel and as plans move forward for an expanded ground operation in Gaza. The directive includes organizational measures and increased capacity for integrating Haredi recruits into the military.

In recent days, senior military officials have hinted at a broader rollout of draft notices. During a briefing near Zikim in southern Israel, IDF Spokesperson Brig. Gen. Effie Defrin stated: "The IDF sends draft notices to every 16-year-old in Israel. We will continue working toward drafting all citizens—including Haredim." According to the directive, all Israeli males, regardless of religious affiliation, will receive a preliminary draft notice at age 16-and-a-half, followed by a second notice. Those who fail to report will be classified as draft evaders. Under new procedures, once a person is declared a deserter, criminal sanctions apply—including travel restrictions and arrest upon entry or exit from Israel for prosecution.

The move is expected to intensify pressure on Haredi political leaders to advance legislation addressing military service exemptions. Without such a law, thousands of Haredi young men would quickly be classified as criminals. In response, Haredi parties have warned of potential coalition fallout. A senior United Torah Judaism official told Ynet: "These draft orders are merely symbolic, intended to divide the nation."

The official continued, "Everyone knows these orders have no real practical effect. Not a single Haredi will enlist against the will of his rabbis," and criticized Defense Minister Israel Katz: "It's unfortunate he cannot manage this issue responsibly. He's only fanning the flames and worsening the situation."

Meanwhile, Deputy Agriculture Minister Moshe Abutbul of the Shas party warned on Kol Berama radio that his party is prepared to follow through on its threats: "We keep our promises, and the government should be worried. There was enough time to prepare. This summer will be a hot one. This foot-dragging on the draft law is unacceptable. If they don't get it—fine, the coalition collapses. I don't recommend testing us."

In contrast, the reservist advocacy group Brothers in Arms welcomed the chief of staff's announcement but said: "We've heard enough promises and statements. We'll wait to see real action. Israelis have learned that the gap between declarations and execution is vast. We demand meaningful penalties for draft dodgers, just as any other citizen would face. A young man from Modi'in Illit cannot be more privileged than one from Modi'in."

The reservists' group Shoulder to Shoulder also expressed support: "We back the chief of staff and his directive to significantly broaden the recruitment base."

Uri Keidar, CEO of the secular advocacy group Israel Hofsheet (Be Free Israel), added: "It's good that Chief of Staff Zamir understands that there's no moral justification for sending tens of thousands of reservists into yet another combat round while tens of thousands of Haredim continue to shirk service without consequences. If Defense Minister Katz tries to block this move, he'll lose what little public legitimacy he has left." In a recent Knesset session, the head of logistical support in the IDF said the military currently needs 12,000 soldiers—7,000 of them combat troops. There is a shortfall of 25 active reserve battalions. The army aims to cap reserve duty at 42 days annually, down from the current average of 70.

According to the latest figures from three weeks ago, of the first 10,000 draft notices sent to Haredi youth, only 205 enlisted. About 900 have begun the recruitment and screening process. Thousands more were classified as draft evaders or had arrest warrants issued. The IDF has been adjusting its approach, focusing on communities with lower resistance to enlistment. Still, Haredi sources predict even lower compliance now that notices are being sent to more devout communities where military service is entirely off the table. At the same time, the three main newspapers affiliated with the Haredi factions of United Torah Judaism—Yated Ne'eman, HaModia and HaMevaser—published identical front-page messages condemning the judiciary amid fears of forced conscription: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved. The judicial authorities are tightening their decrees and threatening to draft yeshiva students, God forbid. We cannot remain passive—every option is on the table on this matter, which is the apple of our eye and the essence of our soul."

The papers quoted the emotional appeal of Rabbi Dov Landau, the leading Lithuanian Haredi rabbi, who told a gathering of yeshiva heads at his home that he plans to travel abroad to raise funds for Torah institutions.

"Once again, we face the collapse of the budget for yeshivot and kollels due to these decrees. We must go to the U.S. and partner with the righteous donors of the World Torah Fund," he said. "It is my personal duty to embark on this mission for the Torah world despite the enormous difficulty. May God help us, and may this decree be swiftly nullified."

05.06.25 – Tu - Omer 18

US halts bombing of Houthis; Omani-ceasefire; no mention of attacks on Israel

05.06.25 – Tu - Omer 18

Trump halts bombing of Houthis after Omani-mediated ceasefire

Officials say Israel caught off guard by statements, with no briefing on the matter made prior; 'If the Houthis stop firing, Israel will not respond,' a source adds

Itamar Eichner, Lior Ben Ari, News Agencies|Updated:21:26

U.S. President Donald Trump declared Tuesday that Yemen's Houthi rebels have "capitulated" and pledged to halt attacks on international shipping, prompting what he called an immediate end to American airstrikes against the group.

“They don’t want to fight,” Trump said to the press. “We will stop bombing the Houthis effective immediately. We will take their word that they won’t be blowing up ships.”

Shortly after his announcement, Oman said it mediated a ceasefire deal between the Houthis and the U.S., a major shift in the Iran-aligned group's policy since the start of Israel's war in Gaza in October 2023.

Neither side will target the other, including U.S. vessels in the Red Sea and Bab al-Mandab Strait, Oman said in its statement. The statement made no mention of the Houthi attacks on Israel.

Trump’s comments come just days before a planned Middle East trip, during which he promised a “very big announcement.” His remarks suggest a dramatic shift in U.S. posture toward the Houthis, whom Washington has targeted with repeated strikes in response to their attacks in the Red Sea.

Israeli officials were taken by surprise by the remarks. According to officials in Jerusalem, Israel was not briefed in advance about Trump’s statement, which appeared to imply a broader de-escalation by the Houthis. They added that Israel is seeking clarity on whether the group intends to suspend rocket fire directed at Israel, in addition to American ships operating in the Red Sea.

“If the Houthis stop firing, Israel will not respond,” said a source with direct knowledge of the situation.

Despite the possibility of a pause, Israeli intelligence assesses that the Houthis still possess the operational capacity to launch additional missiles.

Ahead of Trump's comments, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Israel Katz reacted to continued Houthi missile fire with harsh warnings aimed at both the rebel group and its Iranian backers. Following Israeli airstrikes on Sana’a airport Tuesday, Netanyahu said, “You bear direct responsibility for every attack carried out by the Houthi militia against Israel, and you will bear the full consequences.”

Katz added, “Anyone who harms us will feel our retaliation tenfold,” as Israel’s military campaign in Yemen entered its second consecutive day.

The Israeli strikes reportedly disabled Sanaa’s airport and hit multiple power stations and a key cement factory. The IDF said the targets were used by the Houthis for weapons transfers and terror operations, and the attacks were carried out with measures to minimize civilian harm.

Houthi officials warned of further escalation, while Israel made clear its operations would continue regardless of regional developments.

05.06.25 – Tu - Omer 18

Qatar says US offered new plan unseen by Israel; for ceasefire ahead of Trump's visit

05.06.25 – Tu - Omer 18

US said to offer new ceasefire plan as Israel readies to expand Gaza operations

Qatari media says proposal seeks long-term truce ahead of Trump's upcoming visit to the Middle East, scheduled for May 13–16; Israeli officials say they were not aware of such an initiative

Lior Ben Ari, Itamar Eichner, Einav Halabi|19:36

The United States has presented a new ceasefire proposal aimed at halting the war in Gaza, according to an Egyptian official, as Israel prepares to expand its military operation following a breakdown in hostage negotiations with Hamas.

The Qatari newspaper Al-Araby Al-Jadeed reported Tuesday that Cairo received the American proposal in recent hours. The plan seeks a long-term ceasefire ahead of U.S. President Donald Trump's upcoming visit to the Middle East, scheduled for May 13–16. Israeli officials said they were not aware of such an initiative.

The Egyptian official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the proposal comes amid ongoing meetings of Hamas leaders in Doha. It includes opening humanitarian corridors into Gaza, the release of a limited number of hostages—including Edan Alexander—and the delivery of verifiable information on the condition of remaining captives. The proposal also reportedly demands proof that hostages not included in the initial release are receiving adequate food and medical care.

The official added that Egyptian, American and Israeli representatives are holding talks to address Gaza's deepening humanitarian crisis. One proposal under discussion involves appointing a private company, owned by a Palestinian-American businessman and a candidate to lead a Gaza aid oversight committee, to manage the distribution of urgent relief under increased Israeli supervision.

The reported proposal includes what the Egyptian source described as "less complex" terms than those debated over the past two weeks and is intended to de-escalate tensions and lay the groundwork for broader negotiations to end the war.

Meanwhile, Hamas issued a statement Tuesday evening rejecting Trump's recent remarks that the group mistreats Gaza residents and obstructs humanitarian aid. "President Trump's statements echo the lies of Netanyahu's terrorist government, which is systematically starving innocent civilians," the group said.

In Israel, military and government officials are weighing the timing of a full-scale ground operation in Gaza. A senior Israeli security official said Monday that the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) will use the coming days for preparations but will delay the launch of its broader maneuver until after Trump's regional visit. The former president is expected to travel to Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates next week.

The official said the pre-maneuver phase offers a narrow window for a potential hostage deal, possibly based on the so-called "Witkoff model." Under such an arrangement, Israel would seek to maintain control over areas cleared during the fighting and incorporate them into a permanent security buffer zone beyond the March ceasefire lines. The official

emphasized that Israel would not dismantle the buffer zone under any temporary or permanent agreement, citing the need to protect nearby communities and prevent arms smuggling to Hamas.

The security official said the military, under a plan developed by IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir and approved by Defense Minister Israel Katz and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, will reinforce its forces to “defeat and dismantle Hamas’ military and governing capabilities,” while exerting heavy pressure to secure the release of all hostages. He said Israeli forces will receive strong aerial, naval and ground support, including heavy engineering equipment to neutralize explosives and demolish Hamas positions.

The IDF began issuing tens of thousands of emergency call-up orders to reservists over the weekend. Many units will be mobilized for the sixth or seventh time since the conflict began 17 months ago. Reservist brigades will be deployed to the northern border and the West Bank to free up regular forces for operations in Gaza.

Earlier this week, reports emerged that Zamir issued a rare warning to political leaders about the potential impact of a major ground assault on the hostages’ fate. In a recent closed-door security meeting, Zamir told Netanyahu and senior ministers: “In a broad maneuver, we could lose the hostages.” He has previously stated that the IDF’s top priority is the safe return of the hostages, contrasting with Netanyahu’s assertion that Israel’s primary goal is defeating Hamas.

05.06.25 – Tu - Omer 18

India military strikes against Pakistan, tensions spiral after Kashmir killings

05.06.25 – Tu - Omer 18

India says it carried out military strikes against Pakistan as tensions spiral after Kashmir killings

TUE, MAY 6 2025, 7:20 PM Vinay Dwivedi

The operation follows a militant attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, in which 26 people were killed last month.

India’s Defence Ministry said it will hold a detailed briefing on the strikes, labeled “Operation Sindoor,” later in the day.

Pakistan reportedly said it was responding to “to this act of war.”

India early on Wednesday said its armed forces had conducted strikes against Pakistan and what it calls Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir, targeting “terrorist infrastructure.”

“Our actions have been focused, measured and non-escalatory in nature. No Pakistani military facilities have been targeted,” the country’s Ministry of Defence said.

The operation, which targeted nine sites, follows a militant attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, in which 26 people were killed last month, the ministry said.

“We are living up to the commitment that those responsible for this attack will be held accountable,” the statement said, while adding that India had shown “considerable restraint in selection of targets and method of execution.”

The Defence Ministry said it will hold a detailed briefing on the strikes, labeled “Operation Sindoor,” later in the day. Sindoor refers to a red- or orange-colored powder mostly worn by Indian Hindu married women.

“Pakistan has every right to give a robust response to this act of war imposed by India, and a strong response is indeed being given,” Pakistan’s Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said, according to AP.

Pakistan’s foreign ministry said the strikes were carried out by the Indian Air Force from within Indian airspace.

British media outlet The Guardian reported that Pakistani Defense Minister Khawaja Asif said Indian missiles had struck at least two locations in Pakistan-administered Kashmir and five in the country’s eastern Punjab province.

Asif also added that the country was “in the process of retaliating,” adding “You will see Pakistan’s response before the morning.”

Three Indian Air Force fighter jets were reportedly shot down, according to Pakistani state media.

Reuters, citing the Indian Army, reported that three civilians were killed by Pakistani shelling across the Line of Control — the de facto border that separates Indian and Pakistani-administered parts of Jammu and Kashmir.

India’s embassy in the U.S. posted a statement that its actions were “focused and precise,” adding that “no Pakistani civilian, economic or military targets have been hit. Only known terror camps were targeted.”

Most airlines are diverting out of Pakistani airspace, flight tracker FlightRadar24 said on X, while Indian airlines such as IndiGo and SpiceJet said that airports in northern India and flights were impacted.

Middle Eastern airline Qatar Airways said that it has temporarily suspended flights to Pakistan due to the closure of Pakistani airspace.

U.S. President Donald Trump reportedly told journalists in the White House that “I guess people knew something was going to happen based on a little bit of the past. They’ve been fighting for a long time.”

Trump said that “it’s a shame,” and that he hopes this will end “very quickly.”

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio said he was monitoring the situation closely, and would continue engaging both sides’ leadership toward a peaceful situation. India’s National Security Adviser Ajit Doval had briefed Rubio after the strikes, India’s embassy to the U.S. said.

Separately, United Arab Emirates foreign minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed called on India and Pakistan to “exercise restraint, de-escalate tensions, and avoid further escalation that threaten regional and international peace,” according to Emirati state media.

On Monday, United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres said in a post on X that India and Pakistan should avoid a military confrontation as it could spin out of control. “A military solution is no solution.”

05.06.25 – Tu - Omer 18

Netanyahu & Putin first phone call since 2023, on 80th anniversary of WWII victory

05.06.25 – Tu - Omer 18

Netanyahu and Putin hold first phone call since 2023 amid regional tensions
Netanyahu thanks Putin for Russia’s help in securing the release of hostage Sasha Trufanov, while Putin raises concerns over Gaza’s humanitarian crisis
Itamar Eichner|18:26

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu spoke by phone Tuesday with Russian President Vladimir Putin, marking their first conversation since December 2023.

The call came shortly after Israel conducted a second airstrike in Yemen within 24 hours, although the airstrikes were not mentioned in either side's summary. The leaders discussed developments in the Middle East and bilateral relations.

Putin raised concerns over the "catastrophic humanitarian situation" in Gaza, reiterating Russia’s condemnation of terrorism in all its forms. He warned that counterterror operations should not lead to severe harm to civilians. Russia expressed willingness to assist in reducing civilian suffering and deescalating the conflict. Both sides reaffirmed their interest in continued dialogue on evacuating Russian nationals and securing the release of Israeli hostages held in Gaza.

Netanyahu’s office made no mention of Gaza, instead thanking Putin for Russia’s role in securing the release of Sasha Trufanov, an Israeli-Russian dual national held by Hamas. Netanyahu also emphasized Israel’s ongoing efforts to free all remaining hostages. The two leaders exchanged warm greetings on the 80th anniversary of the Allied victory over

Nazi Germany in World War II, with Netanyahu highlighting the Red Army's decisive role and the contributions of Jewish soldiers and commanders.

Tuesday's call was the first between the leaders since December 2023, when Netanyahu left a cabinet meeting for nearly an hour to speak with Putin. That conversation came 10 days after the October 17 Hamas-led assault on southern Israel.

05.06.25 – Tu - Omer 18

Second Israeli airstrike in Yemeni capital; all aircraft & airport terminal were destroyed

05.06.25 – Tu - Omer 18

'The sky is full of smoke,' Sanaa resident tells Ynet | Panic caught on camera during Israeli strike

Residents in Sanaa reporting heavy smoke rising over the Yemeni capital; 'There's an atmosphere of panic and fear,' one resident told Ynet

Lior Ben Ari|18:17

Following the second Israeli airstrike in Yemen within 24 hours—carried out in response to the ballistic missile launched by the Houthis that exploded near Ben Gurion Airport on Sunday—a resident of Sanaa described to Ynet the panic in the streets during the attack and the heavy smoke rising over the Yemeni capital.

“All the skies over Sanaa are filled with smoke. There's an atmosphere of panic and fear,” he said. According to him, “Smoke is rising from the south of the city due to the strike on the Khaziz power station, and the skies over northern and central Sanaa are covered with smoke from the strike on the airport.”

Israeli officials confirmed that the Israeli Air Force struck targets in and around Sanaa on Monday afternoon. Earlier, IDF Arabic-language spokesperson Lt. Col. Avichay Adraee issued an unprecedented message calling for the evacuation of the international airport in the Yemeni capital. “The IDF is determined to continue operating forcefully against anyone who poses a threat to the residents of Israel, at any distance required,” the IDF Spokesperson's Unit stated.

The IDF said it targeted the Sanaa airport, major power stations, and a cement factory. In a statement following the strike, the IDF spokesperson added, “For the second time in less than 24 hours, the Israeli Air Force struck terror targets belonging to the Houthi terror regime in Yemen.

The Israeli Air Force targeted and destroyed Houthi terror infrastructure at the central airport in the Sanaa area, rendering it completely inoperative. The airport, like the Hodeidah port that was struck last night, is used by the Houthi terror group to transfer weapons and operatives and is routinely operated by the Houthi regime for terrorist purposes.”

The spokesperson further noted: "Several central power stations in the Sanaa area were also targeted. These are used by the Houthi terror regime as key infrastructure for electricity supply to its regime. In addition, the 'Al-Amran' cement factory north of Sanaa was struck—an important asset for the Houthi regime used for constructing tunnels and military infrastructure. Damaging the factory impacts the Houthi regime's economy and military build-up."

The IDF said the strikes were carried out in a focused manner, with precautions taken where possible to minimize harm to civilians and civilian property. The operation was approved by the Air Force commander and the IDF chief of staff.

"The Houthi terror regime has operated over the past year and a half under Iranian direction and funding, seeking to harm Israel and its allies, destabilize the regional order, and disrupt global maritime freedom," the statement added.

Arab media reported widespread panic in Sanaa. According to Sky News Arabia, all civilian aircraft and the terminal at Sanaa International Airport were destroyed. Saudi outlet Al Arabiya, citing sources, reported that airport staff were evacuated. Al Hadath, also Saudi-owned, reported that roads leading to the airport were closed, with "panic among residents and shopkeepers in the airport area," and significant displacement from the area.

Reports from Yemen said the Israeli strikes targeted Sanaa and Amran provinces. Senior Houthi official Mohammed al-Bukhaiti told Qatar's Al-Araby TV, "We will impose a new equation: a blockade will be met with a blockade. Our struggle against the United States, Britain, and Israel will continue until the aggression against Gaza ends. We still have many Israeli targets that we haven't attacked yet."

Another senior Houthi figure, Nasser al-Din Amer, claimed: "The enemy focused its attacks on fuel tanks, power stations, and cement factories to ignite fires and create clouds of smoke—an image very different from the one caused by the Yemeni strike. Most of these targets have already been hit dozens of times in recent years. A response is coming, and the naval and aerial blockade on Israel will not be lifted until the attacks on Gaza stop and the siege is removed."

05.06.25 – Tu - Omer 18

Minister Smotrich: In 6 months, there will be no Hamas in Gaza, period

05.06.25 – Tu - Omer 18

Smotrich: 'In another 6 months, there will be no Hamas in Gaza, period'

Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich claims Hamas will cease to exist in Gaza within six months; He envisions a destroyed and depopulated Gaza, with residents seeking relocation to third countries, and no remaining threat to Israel from the strip

Elisha Ben Kimon, Lior Ben Arij 17:44

Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich claimed on Tuesday, a year and a half into the Gaza War, that "in another six months, there will be no Hamas in Gaza, period." Speaking at

the Settlement Conference held in the West Bank settlement of Ofra, Smotrich was asked how the victory picture would look and replied: "When Gaza is completely destroyed, its citizens are concentrated south of the Morag Corridor and begin to leave in large numbers to third countries."

The minister elaborated, stating that in six months—two years after October 7—"there will be no Hamas in Gaza, period. Not as a functioning entity, not militarily, not civilian, not governing. There will be no body capable of paying salaries or managing anything. Additionally, the entire population will be concentrated in a completely sterile area without Hamas, where humanitarian aid will be provided."

According to Smotrich: "The rest of the strip will be empty. It will take more time to demilitarize it, and there may still be isolated terrorists appearing here and there like tired, hungry and thirsty zombies who will eventually surrender, and the IDF will remove them. Our hostages, God willing, will have returned, I hope very soon, with Hamas' surrender. This is essentially the plan we approved in the cabinet two days ago." "I think within a few months, we can definitively declare victory," he added. "We will be able to say Hamas no longer functions as an entity, and there is no longer a threat from Gaza to the citizens of the State of Israel."

Regarding the departure of Gaza's residents, Smotrich mentioned that this is "an event that will change reality and the history of the State of Israel for decades to come. We must invest much more in this, primarily diplomatically, with the United States, to secure agreements with those third countries. There is good progress in these talks, but it needs to become much more significant."

In his vision, Smotrich added, "the IDF continues to cleanse, to turn over every stone, and to destroy infrastructure. Gaza's civilians are concentrated in the south, completely desperate, understanding that there is no future, no purpose, and nothing left for them in Gaza. They will seek relocation and to start new lives elsewhere. This puts Israel in a different position and impacts the entire region, including this place we are sitting in, for the next 50 years."

Meanwhile, as a deal for the release of hostages appears more distant amid approval of the Gideon's Chariots plan, Qatar's Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Majed Al-Ansari, stated that "mediation efforts regarding Gaza continue despite the difficult situation." He added: "Humanitarian aid cannot be used as a bargaining chip in negotiations. The world recognizes Qatar's role as a fair mediator. Our mediation, along with Egypt and the United States, focuses on ending the war."

He further stated: "Mediation efforts have led to the release of more hostages than what has been achieved through military action. We call for international pressure to find solutions that will allow aid to enter Gaza. Israel's policy of using aid as a weapon must stop."

05.06.25 – Tu - Omer 18

At least 32 wounded Druze evacuated from Syria: provided professional medical care

05.06.25 – Tu - Omer 18

At least 32 wounded Druze evacuated from Syria: 'I waited for days with my injuries, without medicine or help'

Ziv Medical Center in Safed admitted 32 wounded from clashes in Syria in less than a week, and is preparing to admit more. 'You are saving lives,' a wounded Druze man who arrived with shrapnel wounds to his limbs told the medical team. Some 19 wounded are still hospitalized, including a pregnant woman in critical condition and a woman giving birth

Ron Crissy|16:58

At least 32 wounded Druze were evacuated from conflict areas in Syria to Ziv Medical Center in Safed in less than a week.

"I was sure I wouldn't survive. I waited for days with my injuries, without medicine or help," shared one of the patients on Tuesday. He arrived with shrapnel wounds to his limbs. "When I finally got to Ziv, they gave me water, treated me, and spoke to me like a human being." He expressed gratitude to the medical staff, adding, "You take care of me all the time—and you're saving lives."

Of the 32 evacuees brought to Ziv since April 30—including women, children and men—19 remain hospitalized under medical supervision. They are being treated in the orthopedic, neurosurgery, pediatric and high-risk maternity departments, where staff are working around the clock to provide professional, compassionate care.

Professor Aviram Nissan, head of the surgical division at Ziv, spoke about the patients' conditions and the complexity of their treatment, noting that the hospital received 30 wounded individuals and two women—one in a high-risk pregnancy and one in serious condition after giving birth.

"Some of the patients underwent surgery, others were treated with invasive procedures, and some will undergo surgery today, tomorrow and in the coming days," he said. Currently, 19 patients remain hospitalized, one has been transferred to another facility, and Ziv remains on standby to receive additional casualties. "We have extensive experience from previous years treating wounded individuals from across the Syrian border during the civil war, and we are continuing that effort," Nissan said. "We will provide care to anyone who arrives at Ziv Medical Center."

Among the recent arrivals was a 37-year-old Druze man from a Syrian village at the heart of the fighting. He was moderately injured after jumping from a height of two stories—about 12 meters—while trying to escape danger. "I felt my life was in danger. I had to jump and fell into an elevator shaft," said the injured businessman from Syria.

He described receiving care in Israel as "coming full circle," noting: "My grandfather grew up here, and I have family in the village of Rama. The excellent medical team and my family from Rama are surrounding me with love—I don't have enough words to thank you." He was admitted to the spinal surgery unit in Orthopedics B and has since undergone back surgery.

Over the weekend, the Israeli Air Force operated in the As-Suwayda region of Syria, securing the ground evacuation of wounded Druze and delivering supplies via aircraft to communities on Jabal al-Druze. Earlier in the week, there was also an aerial evacuation of Druze casualties from Syrian territory.

On Saturday, the IDF spokesperson reported strikes across Syria, targeting a military site, anti-aircraft artillery and surface-to-air missile infrastructure. The commanders of the Israeli Air Force and Northern Command were present in the air force operations center during the attacks.

"The IDF struck dozens of infrastructure elements and weapons systems across Syria using 12 fighter jets, including anti-aircraft guns and surface-to-air missile launchers," the IDF statement said. "The IDF will continue to ensure aerial freedom of operation to carry out its missions and remove any threats in the region."

A day earlier, Israel carried out a strike near the Syrian presidential palace as a warning to President Ahmad al-Sharaa following clashes with members of the Druze community. Damascus called the strike a "dangerous escalation."

05.06.25 – Tu - Omer 18

After evacuation order, IDF strikes dozens of targets, shut down Yemen's main airport

05.06.25 – Tu - Omer 18

After evacuation order, IDF strikes, shuts down Yemen's main airport

Arabic-language military spokesman issues rare alert urging civilians to flee Sanaa airport, days after Houthi missile strike near Ben Gurion; 'Panic has spread among residents'

Yoav Zitun|14:45

The Israeli Air Force struck multiple Houthi targets in Yemen for the second time in less than 24 hours, the IDF announced Tuesday, including a major airstrike that reportedly shut down Sanaa's main airport. A source in Sanaa told Ynet: "The whole sky is smoke, there is an atmosphere of panic and fear."

According to the IDF, the strike destroyed infrastructure used by the Iran-backed Houthi militia at Sanaa International Airport, effectively rendering it inoperable. The IDF said the airport was used to transfer weapons and operatives and was routinely operated by the Houthis for terror-related activity.

The IDF further stated that the Sanaa airport strike followed a similar attack on the Hodeidah port the previous night, which it also accused the Houthis of using to support

terror operations. "This is another example of how the Houthi terror organization exploits civilian infrastructure for terrorism," the statement read.

In addition to the airport, Israeli jets struck several major power stations in the Sanaa area. The military said the Houthis used these sites to support their terror network, calling it further evidence of the regime's exploitation of civilian resources and the Yemeni population.

The Air Force also struck the Al-Amran cement factory, located north of Sanaa, which Israel says is a key economic and military asset used by the Houthis to build tunnels and military infrastructure. "Damaging this facility hits the terror regime's economy and its military buildup," the IDF added.

The military emphasized that the operation was approved by the Air Force commander and the IDF chief of staff, and the strikes were "precisely targeted" and conducted with measures taken to minimize civilian harm.

The IDF accused the Houthis of operating under Iranian direction and funding over the past year and a half, aiming to attack Israel and its allies, destabilize the region and disrupt global maritime traffic.

"The IDF remains determined to act forcefully against anyone who poses a threat to the citizens of Israel, at any range necessary," the statement concluded.

Earlier, the military issued an unprecedented direct warning in Arabic, calling on all individuals near Sanaa International Airport in Yemen to evacuate immediately, citing a potential threat to their safety.

The statement, delivered by IDF Arabic-language spokesperson Col. Avichay Adraee, included a map and a blunt message: "Urgent warning to everyone in the vicinity of Sanaa International Airport: We urge you to evacuate the airport area immediately and to warn others nearby to do the same. Failure to do so endangers your lives."

Saudi outlet Al Hadath reported that "Israeli warplanes have entered Yemeni airspace."

Earlier, Saudi network Al Arabiya cited regional sources estimating that "an airstrike on the airport is expected within the hour," and reported that airport staff had begun evacuating.

Al Hadath also cited sources saying that roads leading to the airport had been closed and that "panic has spread among residents and shop workers in the vicinity of the airfield," along with significant movement of people fleeing the area.

The warning comes two days after a missile launched from Yemen by Iran-backed Houthi forces landed near Ben Gurion Airport, prompting widespread flight cancellations and heightened security concerns. In response, the Israeli Air Force launched a powerful retaliatory strike against Houthi targets, including the port of Hodeidah and a cement plant in the city of Bajil.

The military released on Tuesday afternoon new footage of Monday's airstrikes in Yemen, including target maps and in-flight refueling of fighter jets. "The IDF is determined to continue striking forcefully against anyone who poses a threat to the citizens and residents of the State of Israel, at any range required," said the military spokesperson.

Following the strike, the IDF confirmed that around 20 fighter jets attacked dozens of targets linked to the Houthi regime in and around the port city of Hodeidah—over 1,200 miles from Israeli territory. According to the military, the strike came in response to repeated Houthi attacks on Israel, including the launch of surface-to-surface missiles and drones.

The terror infrastructure hit at the Hodeidah port, he said, serves as a major source of income for the Houthi regime. “The Hodeidah port is used to transfer Iranian weapons, military equipment, and other materials for terror purposes,” the IDF said. It added that another target was a concrete factory in Bajil, east of Hodeidah, which the Houthis use as a key economic asset and for building tunnels and military infrastructure. “Striking this facility directly impacts the regime’s economy and military buildup,” the spokesperson added.

The IDF’s decision to issue a public evacuation alert in Arabic—directly addressing civilians in Yemen—is highly unusual and underscores the escalating tensions between Israel and the Houthis. It also suggests further military action may be imminent. Israeli officials, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, have repeatedly warned that continued Houthi attacks will not go unanswered.

05.06.25 – Tu - Omer 18

Two senior Hamas surrender to IDF in Rafah; questions yield structure of the area

05.06.25 – Tu - Omer 18

Hamas commander who held hostages surrenders to IDF in Rafah

Yousef Qadi, who took part in the October 7 massacre, turns himself in in Rafah along with Mohammad Zaarab, a commander in Hamas’ sniper unit; army says their Shin Bet interrogation yielded intelligence on 'significant terror infrastructure' in the area
Yoav Zitun|13:27

The IDF on Tuesday released footage showing two senior Hamas operatives surrendering in Rafah, including a commander directly involved in the October 7 attacks and the holding of Israeli hostages.

According to the military, Yousef Qadi, a Hamas platoon commander who participated in the massacre and oversaw the captivity of several hostages later released, was captured along with Mohammad Zaarab, a senior member of Hamas’ sniper unit. The two were apprehended by 188th Brigade troops, operating under the command of the 36th Division. Several knives were reportedly found on their person at the time of their arrest.

The IDF said that interrogation of the detainees by the Shin Bet internal security agency produced valuable intelligence, including the location of what the military described as a “significant terror infrastructure” in the area.

The arrests come as Israel continues its military campaign in Rafah, having completed the encirclement of the city in recent weeks. A senior Israeli defense official said the IDF intends to expand its ground activity in Gaza under the newly approved Operation Gideon's Chariots, aimed at defeating Hamas and securing the release of hostages still held in the enclave.

The plan, unanimously approved by the Security Cabinet earlier this week, includes establishing a "sterile zone" in Rafah. According to the official, this area will serve as a screening site for Palestinian civilians, who will be processed by Israeli forces. Humanitarian aid will be distributed there via civilian contractors, as part of efforts to ensure aid bypasses Hamas control.

The official added that under the plan, the IDF would maintain control of cleared areas and act to prevent the return of terrorist activity, following what he called "the Rafah model," where all known threats were neutralized. "In every area we clear, we will remain and deal with it accordingly," he said.

Hamas responded Tuesday by warning that any expansion of the ground operation in Gaza would amount to "a clear decision to sacrifice Israeli hostages." The group accused Israel of repeating a "cycle of failure" that had so far failed to achieve its stated objectives.

The IDF has not commented on the timeline for implementing the next stages of the operation, but signals from senior officials suggest broader incursions may soon follow.

05.06.25 – Tu - Omer 18

Turkey intercepted 1,300 pagers en route to Lebanon one day before triggered operation

05.06.25 – Tu - Omer 18

Turkey intercepts 1,300 pagers en route to Lebanon days after pager operation, report says

Turkish intelligence seized a shipment of 1,300 pagers bound for Lebanon, allegedly rigged with hidden explosives inside batteries, days after widescale operation against Hezbollah

Ynet|11:35

Turkish intelligence services intercepted a shipment of over 1,300 pagers in Istanbul that were allegedly en route to Lebanon — just days after a Mossad operation targeting similar devices held by Hezbollah terrorists, Turkish outlet Sabah reported Tuesday.

According to the report, Turkey's National Intelligence Organization (MIT) received information about the shipment and began inspecting ports and airports, eventually discovering that the delivery was scheduled for September 27. None of the details in the Sabah report have been confirmed by Israeli authorities or other media outlets.

The shipment reportedly arrived on September 16, one day before a series of explosions occurred in Lebanon. It consisted of four pallets sent from Taiwan via a cargo flight from Hong Kong. The 61 boxes, weighing approximately 850 kilograms (1,874 pounds), were declared as “food processors” on the shipping manifest.

Turkish security forces, accompanied by a bomb disposal unit, opened the boxes and discovered 1,300 pagers, including devices manufactured by Taiwanese company Gold Apollo, alongside about 710 detonators, batteries and cables. The shipment also contained 144 mini handheld blenders, cameras and additional electronic components.

The pagers were immediately sent to a lab, where Turkish officials claimed they found “a highly flammable white explosive substance — approximately 3 grams (0.1 oz) — hidden inside the batteries.” Similar material was reportedly found in the associated detonators.

The owner of the Istanbul-based company listed as the shipment’s recipient was questioned and claimed his firm provides customs consulting services rather than freight or shipping. Turkish media added that President Recep Tayyip Erdogan raised the issue in a December conversation with former Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati, informing him of the seizure and destruction of the pagers.

The Mossad’s so-called “pager operation” was launched on September 17 over concerns it might soon be exposed. On the operation’s first day, Hezbollah terrorists’ pagers detonated in Lebanon and Syria. A day later, on September 18, their walkie-talkies exploded as well.

According to a Reuters investigation published in October last year, the pagers sent to Lebanon in February 2023 contained miniature plastic explosives embedded in batteries, along with a novel detonation system that was undetectable via standard X-ray screening. The rigged batteries were engineered to appear normal but held only about one-third the energy capacity expected for their size. Experts cited in the report noted that while a standard 35-gram (1.2 oz) battery would typically provide 8.75 watt-hours, the modified battery held just 2.22 watt-hours — suggesting much of the internal volume was taken up by explosives.

05.06.25 – Tu - Omer 18

Israel attack destroys everything: strikes on Yemen cause nation wide fuel shortage

05.06.25 – Tu - Omer 18

When Israel attacks, it destroys everything': Yemenis fear further Israeli strikes amid oil shortages

Yemen Petroleum Company shifts to emergency footing to manage dwindling fuel supplies after repeated Israeli and US airstrikes damage Hodeidah port; Houthi leaders vow 'aggressive' retaliation

Lior Ben Ari|09:09

The Yemen Petroleum Company announced Tuesday it's operating under an emergency plan at all its stations and affiliated sites due to "continued strikes in the country." This comes amid an expanded U.S. military campaign against the Houthis in Yemen and following Israeli airstrikes in the port city of Hodeidah Monday night.

The company said the plan is intended to manage current fuel supplies until tankers can resume docking and unloading. It blamed ongoing U.S. strikes on its facilities for the disruption. Reports also confirmed the U.S. carried out further attacks in the Hodeidah port area on Monday.

"U.S. enemy aircraft struck the Ras Issa oil port in Hodeidah province on April 17. Despite major damage, our technical teams restored operations within five days," the company said. "Employees kept working under threat of airstrikes, but the U.S. renewed attacks on April 25, once again halting operations."

The company added that repair efforts began the next day, only to be interrupted again by another round of airstrikes that evening. Since then, it claimed, "U.S. aircraft have targeted the port nearly every day in a persistent attempt to block reopening efforts." The company also said that it had taken alternative measures to allow direct fuel offloading from ships despite Israeli strikes last year that destroyed its oil tanks.

In recent days, public concern has mounted in Yemen over the destruction of oil infrastructure in Hodeidah and Ras Issa. Even before Monday night's strikes, a source in Sana'a told Ynet there were growing fears of a fuel crisis. Long lines were seen at gas stations, many of which were later closed — apparently to prevent unrest and regroup.

Following Monday's Israeli strikes, the same source said Yemen had been bracing for retaliation after a Houthi missile exploded at Ben Gurion Airport. "Hodeidah is a lifeline for all Yemenis, not just the Houthis," he said.

"This isn't just about the Houthis—it affects everyone. You're [Israel] bombing everything, like it's revenge. People are afraid. When Israel strikes, it destroys everything. And today, the worst happened — there's no fuel. It's gone. Even though the company issued a statement, we're tired of war. We're exhausted."

Meanwhile, Egypt's Al-Qahera News reported that Israeli strikes "completely destroyed one dock at Hodeidah port and damaged 70% of four others," effectively shutting the port down. The report has not been confirmed by Yemeni officials.

Hodeidah was not the only target Monday night. The Israeli Air Force also struck a cement plant in Bajil, which the IDF described as "a significant economic resource for the Houthis. Moreover, it is used for the construction of underground tunnels and terrorist infrastructure for the terrorist regime."

Footage released by the Houthis showed a fire at the plant, though the facility appeared to remain largely intact.

The Israeli operation was coordinated with U.S. forces. According to the IDF, around 20 fighter jets dropped approximately 50 munitions during the raid. "The IDF struck dozens

of terrorist targets of the Houthi regime in and around the Red Sea port of Hodeidah, about 2,000 kilometers (1,240 miles) from Israeli territory,” the military said.

An Israeli security source confirmed the attack was synchronized with a U.S. strike and added: “We destroyed the Hodeidah port and cement plants used for weapons production. This was a powerful strike and not the last one. No more games.”

Following the attack, Houthi Supreme Political Council member Mohammed al-Bukhaiti warned, “Escalation will be met with escalation until the strikes on Gaza stop. Our missile capabilities are secure. We’re serious about enforcing an aerial blockade on Israel. The strike on Ben Gurion Airport was a warning.”

Senior Houthi official Nasruddin Amer added, “The aggressive Zionist-American strikes on civilian infrastructure won’t affect our military operations or the morale of our people, who take to the streets every week. Yemen’s position will escalate. The air and sea blockade on Israel won’t be lifted until the aggression and siege on Gaza end.”

Another Houthi figure, Ali al-Qahoum, said: “The consequences of Israel’s strike will be severe for the Zionists. We will not back down. Yemen’s response is coming — and will be aggressive.”

05.05.25 – Mo - Omer 17

Israel shifts approach to Gaza: timing, hostages, offensive — and the Trump model

05.05.25 – Mo - Omer 17

Israel’s ‘shift in approach’ to Gaza: timing, hostages, offensive — and the Trump model
Explainer: IDF faces critical decision on tactics, including fate of hostages and mounting strain on reservists, all while Hamas refuses to buckle in negotiations on ceasefire without a permanent end to war

Itamar Eichner, Alon Strimling|23:52

Israel’s latest proposal for a partial hostage exchange, which does not include a ceasefire, is expected to be rejected by Hamas unless there are last-minute changes, officials say. As a result, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) will launch an extensive operation in the Gaza Strip. This time, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other senior officials have promised, the operation will be different. The IDF will not revert to its previous strategy of targeted raids, where forces would clear neighborhoods and then leave. Instead, the IDF plans to remain in every area it captures with the goal of holding onto that territory.

According to Minister of Finance Bezalel Smotrich, the IDF will not retreat from these areas, even in exchange for the release of hostages. Meanwhile, Hamas continues to demand an end to the war and a complete Israeli withdrawal in exchange for the release of the 59 hostages still held in Gaza.

Criticism of the IDF’s previous approach focused on the high number of soldiers who died in areas that had been cleared of Hamas fighters, only for the militant group to

regroup once Israeli forces withdrew. This led to a costly cycle, with the IDF returning to these areas later. This happened, for example, in Jabalia and Beit Lahiya, which were cleared repeatedly by the IDF. Ultimately, hundreds of thousands of Gazans returned to these areas as part of the last hostage exchange deal.

Within Israel's security establishment, there was criticism of the political leadership, which was accused of acting without a strategy to create alternatives to Hamas in these regions. Officials hope that the new plan will address this gap, with the government promising that it will be more effective as the war enters its second year.

The Security Cabinet approved an expanded operation in Gaza last night, known as "Gideon's Chariots." The plan involves a graduated maneuver in which the IDF will capture and hold territories, focusing on "capture and stay" rather than short-term raids. The plan was unanimously approved by the Cabinet, and according to Netanyahu, it was proposed by IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir. The aim, Netanyahu said, is to defeat Hamas in Gaza and bring back the hostages. This aligns with statements he made in recent months.

The Cabinet also approved a reorganization of humanitarian aid distribution in Gaza "if necessary" to prevent Hamas from seizing the supplies and to degrade the group's governance capabilities. Senior security officials had called for this step for some time, believing that it would reduce the civilian population's dependency on Hamas. It was noted during the Cabinet meeting that there is currently sufficient food in Gaza. The new plan will include the occupation and retention of Gaza's territory, the relocation of Gaza's population southward for their protection, and efforts to deny Hamas the ability to distribute humanitarian aid. Military operations aimed at weakening Hamas are also part of the plan.

For Netanyahu and Smotrich, the "top goal" of the operation is clear: the defeat of Hamas. In a speech at the conclusion of the World Bible Quiz, Netanyahu, while addressing the hostages, said, "We have many objectives. We've already brought back 147 hostages alive, and a total of 196. There are up to 24 more alive, and we want to bring back the remaining 59. But the ultimate objective of the war is victory over our enemies."

Smotrich added that the IDF would not withdraw from the areas it captures in Gaza, even in exchange for hostages. "Once an operation begins, there is no retreat from the areas we've captured, not even for hostages," he said at a conference in Sderot.

However, IDF Spokesperson Brig. Gen. Effie Defrin contradicted Netanyahu and Smotrich, clarifying that the aim of the operation is to "increase pressure on Hamas to bring it to the negotiating table for hostage releases." Zamir also told the Cabinet that the IDF is on the path to defeating Hamas, which will assist in the return of the hostages. Netanyahu added that the plan is a good one because it can achieve both goals – defeating Hamas and bringing back the hostages.

Families of the hostages, however, expressed frustration, emphasizing their belief that military pressure would only result in more deaths. They pointed to past experiences where hostages were lost during military operations.

Following comments attributed to Zamir about the potential loss of hostages during an extensive military maneuver, 25 families of the hostages demanded an urgent meeting

with him. “It’s unacceptable that we hear about the risk of losing our loved ones through the media,” said a statement from the Hostages Families headquarters. Defrin responded, without directly addressing the quote, saying that the hostages are always at the forefront of the IDF’s mind. He added that the goal of returning the hostages and defeating Hamas are interlinked.

The expanded operation is not expected to start immediately. Several factors contribute to the delay. One major reason is that the IDF still needs to complete its reservist call-up and prepare the necessary forces. Another reason is the upcoming visit of U.S. President Donald Trump to Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates later this month. Israeli officials prefer to conduct a large-scale military operation after Trump’s visit concludes, so as not to overshadow his diplomatic efforts regarding the Gaza war. A senior security official said that preparations for the operation will allow a window of opportunity for a hostage deal under the “Witkoff model,” in which some hostages may be released in exchange for a ceasefire and humanitarian aid. In such a case, Israel would aim to retain control of the areas it clears, expanding its security buffer beyond the March lines.

Once the new plan is implemented, the operation in Gaza will largely resemble previous tactics, with the key difference being in how the territory is treated. Once the IDF clears an area, it will remain there, with the key term being “occupation.” The maneuver will be gradual, as in the past, and not a full-scale occupation of Gaza all at once.

Netanyahu clarified that the new plan differs from past ones in that “we are moving from short-term raids to occupying areas and remaining there.” He also mentioned that efforts are ongoing to promote a plan proposed by President Trump that would allow Gazans to leave voluntarily, with negotiations already underway with several countries.

According to a senior security official, the IDF’s continued presence in the area will follow the Rafah model to prevent terrorism from returning to cleared areas.

Humanitarian aid, as previously outlined, will be delivered after the start of the operation, and the IDF will oversee the process, creating designated safe zones where Hamas members will be screened out.

The expanded operation, along with the call-up of tens of thousands of reservists, is expected to place a significant financial burden on Israel. Senior officials in the Ministry of Finance have expressed concern that new austerity measures will be needed to fund the operation, including substantial cuts to government budgets, which would severely affect services to Israeli citizens. There is also a possibility of new tax hikes, particularly those not already approved in this year’s budget, despite opposition from the Finance Ministry and the Tax Authority.

Security officials estimate that the resumption of large-scale military operations in Gaza will require additional funding for the IDF, possibly amounting to as much as 15 billion shekels, or more. One senior Ministry of Finance official noted that “the government must take into account the enormous cost of expanding the war in Gaza, especially with the call-up of tens of thousands of reservists for extended periods.”

U.S. President Trump stated that the U.S. would help provide food to Gaza’s civilians, although he did not directly reference Israel’s operational plans in the region. “The people of Gaza are being treated poorly by Hamas,” Trump said.

Israel and the U.S. are working on a secure aid distribution mechanism to ensure that humanitarian supplies reach Gaza without benefiting Hamas. The model being discussed is based on the "Witkoff model," named after U.S. Special Representative for the Middle East, Steve Witkoff. This system was previously used during a ceasefire in the Nitzarim corridor.

The U.S.-led international humanitarian aid fund would be independent, managed by leading humanitarian and political organizations. The fund will work with civilian companies and NGOs to oversee aid distribution in Gaza. Israel will not hire companies directly but will rely on the fund to manage the process.

The fund is part of a broader vision by President Trump for Gaza's future, aligning with his administration's policy of not funding either side of the conflict.

Recently, many reservists were notified to prepare for an unexpected call-up. The mobilized forces will likely be split into two categories: one group will serve in offensive roles in Gaza, while the other will replace regular IDF units in the field.

At the same time, the Israeli government is pushing for a law that would exempt thousands of Haredim from military service. This move has sparked controversy, with opposition members in the Knesset criticizing the government's decision not to include them in the draft.

During an emergency meeting of the Knesset's State Comptroller Committee, which was not attended by coalition representatives, the IDF presented concerning data about the readiness and physical condition of its soldiers. "There is significant wear and tear, both physically and mentally, as many regular units have been continuously fighting since October 7. The need for more reservists and regular forces is growing dramatically," said Brig. Gen. Rami Abudraham, Head of the IDF's Ground Forces Directorate.

Brig. Gen. Shai Taib, Head of IDF Manpower Planning, said the army needs 12,000 additional regular soldiers, including 7,000 combat soldiers, to meet current operational demands. Meanwhile, the Chair of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, Yuli Edelstein, called for an explanation from Netanyahu and Defense Minister Israel Katz regarding the lack of reinforcements. "The army's regular forces are nearing exhaustion," Edelstein said.

05.05.25 – Mo - Omer 17

Death sentence for Hamas terrorists no less than Nazi atrocities of the Holocaust

05.05.25 – Mo - Omer 17

'Death sentence for Hamas terrorists absolutely a possibility'

Alan Baker, former legal adviser to Israel's Foreign Ministry and former ambassador to Canada, says terrorists behind October 7 atrocities could face death penalty, citing Israeli law, Geneva Conventions and parallels to Nazi crimes

Sharon Kidon|23:09

Alan Baker, former legal adviser to Israel's Foreign Ministry and former ambassador to Canada, says the death penalty could be applied to some Hamas terrorists involved in the October 7 massacre at Kibbutz Nir Oz.

In a recent interview, Baker said Israeli law—and international law—allows for such a punishment in cases involving especially heinous crimes.

Alan Baker, former legal adviser to Israel's Foreign Ministry and former ambassador to Canada

In an earlier interview with The Sun UK, Baker had suggested that some of the captured Hamas attackers could face capital punishment after trial. Asked what led him to that conclusion, he replied, "Because this is the law. People who carry out the most heinous crimes—rape, murder and other things—can be put on trial and given the death penalty or other penalties. The law enables this, as does the Geneva Convention with respect to those who are residents of the territory."

Although Israel has not used capital punishment since the 1962 execution of Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann, Baker said that, legally, the option still exists.

"As far as I know, yes," he said when asked whether Israel's legal system allows for the death penalty. "If not, then I understand that there is proposed legislation to ensure that this is the case. But in any event, it is possible according to the Geneva Convention. In view of the seriousness of the crimes committed by some—not all, but the most heinous—this could be a possibility."

Some critics argue that capital punishment could serve as a motivation for terrorists rather than a deterrent. Baker dismissed that idea.

"Terrorists are already very encouraged and highly incited," he said. "They do what they do and keep saying they'll repeat what they're doing. So I don't think giving the death penalty or not would make one iota of difference."

He also cautioned against letting international opinion influence such decisions.

"These considerations shouldn't take into account what the world thinks," he said. "The world will condemn Israel whatever it does—whether it imposes the death penalty or anything less. We've seen this for 80 years. Israel has tried to explain itself and to appear reasonable, and the world has consistently condemned it."

Asked whether the current circumstances were comparable to the Eichmann case, Baker noted recent public comparisons between the October 7 atrocities and Nazi crimes during the Holocaust. "I can absolutely sympathize and understand that comparison," he said.

"So if a Nazi was given the death penalty, then I think there's absolutely no reason why these [Hamas] people who carried out the most heinous crimes shouldn't be given the same penalty."

Baker has been involved in numerous trials of Palestinian terrorists during his legal career. He emphasized that any potential death sentences would need to be based on law and evidence presented in court.

05.05.25 – Mo - Omer 17

Era of restraint is over: Israel strikes Houthi seaport & cement factory in Yemen

05.05.25 – Mo - Omer 17

'The era of restraint is over': Israel strikes Houthi terror infrastructure in Yemen

IDF says joint operation with U.S., dubbed 'Port City' and taking place nearly 2,000 km from Israeli territory, destroyed port of Hudaydah and a cement factory used for weapons production

Ynet|Updated:21:05

Israel launched airstrikes in Yemen late Sunday, targeting Houthi infrastructure in coordination with the United States, a day after a missile fired from Yemen exploded near Ben Gurion Airport, injuring five people.

The Israeli operation, dubbed "Port City," struck the port of Hudaydah and a cement factory used for weapons production, according to Israeli security officials. The strike marked a significant escalation following weeks of Houthi missile and drone attacks, which had previously failed to land inside Israeli territory.

"A total of 50 munitions were dropped. We destroyed Hudaydah Port and facilities used to manufacture arms," a senior Israeli official said. "This was a very powerful strike—and it will not be the last. The era of restraint is over."

According to the Israel Defense Forces, fighter jets targeted terror infrastructure belonging to the Houthi regime along the Yemeni coast, roughly 2,000 kilometers from Israeli territory. The IDF said the strikes were in response to repeated Houthi rocket and drone attacks on Israel and its civilians.

The military said the Hudaydah port serves as a central source of revenue for the Houthis and a conduit for Iranian weapons, military supplies and equipment used for terrorism. The Bajil cement factory east of Hudaydah was also targeted; according to the IDF, the plant supports the Houthis' military infrastructure, including tunnel-building efforts, and its destruction dealt a blow to the group's economic and military capabilities. The IDF also blamed Iran for directing and financing Houthi aggression over the past year and a half, saying the group's actions have endangered Israel, destabilized the region and disrupted global maritime routes. "The IDF is determined to continue forcefully striking any threat to Israeli civilians—at any distance," the statement read.

The airstrikes coincided with U.S. attacks on Houthi targets in Yemen's capital, Sana'a, and elsewhere. Saudi-owned Al-Hadath television reported that more than 30 Israeli aircraft participated in the strikes, which hit at least nine Houthi sites, including the Bajil cement plant, where casualties were reported.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, in a video posted on social media, said he was en route to the military headquarters in Tel Aviv but did not elaborate on the situation. "We

have acted before and will act again,” he said. “This is not a one-time strike. There will be more.”

The Houthis responded defiantly, with senior official Mohammed al-Bukhaiti warning of further escalation and threatening to impose an aerial blockade on Israel. “The latest attack on Ben Gurion was a warning,” he said, claiming that their missile capabilities remained intact and hidden.

The political bureau of the Houthis told Qatar-based Al-Araby television that Israel targeted economic rather than military sites “because it could not reach the military ones.” They accused Israel and the United States of trying to provoke internal unrest in Yemen.

The explosion at Ben Gurion Airport marked a turning point in Israel’s response strategy. Although more than two dozen Houthi projectiles had been launched toward Israel in recent weeks, Sunday’s incident was the first to cause injuries and land directly on Israeli soil, prompting the cancellation of multiple flights by foreign airlines.

Until now, Israel had largely refrained from retaliating directly, deferring to U.S. military operations and responding to a reported request from Washington to allow the U.S. to handle the Houthi threat independently.

Israel’s last major strike in Yemen occurred in December, during a televised speech by Houthi leader Abdul-Malik al-Houthi. That operation targeted Sana’a airport, knocking its control tower out of service, as well as Hudaydah port and a power station. The IDF used about 25 aircraft in the mission and coordinated in advance with the United States. Since March 15, the Trump administration has intensified airstrikes against Houthi targets, launching more attacks in six weeks than the Biden administration did over 13 months. According to U.S. Central Command, over 800 Houthi sites have been targeted, and missile and drone attacks have decreased significantly. Still, the primary goal of halting Houthi attacks on Israel and shipping in the Red Sea remains unmet.

05.05.25 – Mo - Omer 17

From raids to territory control: IDF plans push population south to distribute aid

05.05.25 – Mo - Omer 17

From raids to territorial control: This is the IDF’s plan for next phase of Gaza War
Analysis: Security Cabinet endorses a phased military escalation in Gaza focused on territorial control and Hamas infrastructure, avoiding areas with hostages, while approving conditional humanitarian aid distribution; This is what ministers were told regarding risks to the hostages

Yossi Yehoshua|16:44

Israel’s Security Cabinet convened Sunday overnight to approve the next phase of the war in Gaza, alongside a new round of reserve call-ups that have triggered public unease — particularly among the hostages’ families. In light of the developments, it’s important

to clarify what was actually approved, what wasn't and what ministers were told regarding risks to the hostages.

A warning by IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir aired Sunday detailing that a military operation could lead to the loss of the hostages, was not tied to the plan approved last night. The warning was made two weeks ago and referred to a scenario involving a full-scale ground operation across the entire Gaza Strip.

By contrast, the plan approved last night is broad but limited in scope and explicitly avoids operations in areas where hostages are believed to be held. A senior IDF official clarified: "We don't intend to enter areas where there is concern that hostages may be located." The army will coordinate closely with the Hostage and Missing Persons Headquarters, headed by Maj. Gen. (res.) Nitzan Alon.

What's included in the next phase of the war?

The upcoming phase shifts from targeted raids to the seizure and holding of territory — not across the entire Strip, but in specific zones. It will include above- and below-ground clearing operations and intensified activity in the Hamas tunnel network, only a quarter of which has been fully neutralized.

The goal is to replicate the operation in Rafah where, despite heavy destruction, Hamas' underground infrastructure wasn't entirely cut off. The IDF is now working to achieve complete control of the area, including defeating the Rafah Brigade, this time for real.

This new phase - which has been dubbed Operation Gideon's Chariots - won't begin immediately. First, the military must complete troop mobilization, a process reportedly hindered by low turnout and broader public sentiment. The operation also hinges on the completion of tactical planning and U.S. President Donald Trump's upcoming visit to Gulf states in the region.

"We're increasing the pressure to bring our people home and defeat Hamas," Zamir said during a visit to the Navy's elite Shayetet 13 unit on Sunday. "We'll operate in additional areas and destroy all infrastructures — both above and below ground."

Humanitarian aid and political disagreements

Another element of the cabinet's decision involves preparations for the resumption of humanitarian aid to Gaza. The aid will eventually be distributed by an international fund that will supervise deliveries to prevent Hamas from intercepting them.

Although the exact start date hasn't been decided, the plan was approved by a wide majority. Far-right ministers Itamar Ben-Gvir and Orit Strock opposed it, claiming Gazans already have "enough" supplies, but their stance was not adopted.

The IDF has warned that supplies in Gaza will run out within a month and Zamir said starving the population would violate international law. According to him, there's no intention of returning to the previous volume of 650 aid trucks per day. Instead, aid will be limited to essentials, under strict supervision to ensure it reaches civilians rather than Hamas terrorists.

Crucially, Zamir strongly opposes IDF soldiers distributing the aid themselves — a position he agreed upon with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Israel Katz two weeks ago.

His message appeared directed not only at the dissenting ministers but also at Netanyahu-aligned media figures who have portrayed Zamir as too similar to his predecessor Herzi Halevi — a comparison some are pushing for political convenience.

Full cabinet backing and Netanyahu's endorsement

A senior Israeli official said Monday morning that the cabinet unanimously approved the new military plan, which the official described as proposed by Zamir and fully aligned with Netanyahu's declared goals of "defeating Hamas and returning the hostages."

The cabinet also approved, by a wide majority, the conditional resumption of humanitarian aid — if needed — in a way that would prevent Hamas from seizing control and erode its governance capabilities.

According to the official, the plan includes taking and holding territory in Gaza, pushing the local population southward for protection, stripping Hamas of its ability to distribute humanitarian aid and launching heavy strikes on Hamas targets—actions intended to help bring about the terror group's defeat.

In the cabinet discussion, Zamir said: "We are on the path to defeating Hamas, in a way that will also contribute to bringing back the hostages." Netanyahu called the plan "a good one" because it could achieve both key objectives: Hamas' defeat and the hostages' return.

Netanyahu stressed that the plan marks a strategic shift: "We are moving from raids to territorial control and staying in the areas we take." He also reiterated his support for Trump's initiative to facilitate voluntary emigration of Gazans, noting that talks with several countries on the matter are ongoing.

05.05.25 – Mo - Omer 17

Deadline for Hamas: Deal by end of Trump visit May 16 or Israel takes Gaza

05.05.25 – Mo - Omer 17

Israel sets deadline for Hamas: Deal by end of Trump visit or we take Gaza

US president will end his Mideast visit in just 10 days and by then, according to senior security official, IDF forces will be ready for Operation Gideon's Chariots; Israel will bring aid into Gaza to 'a sterile zone in the Rafah area where entrants will be screened by the IDF to prevent Hamas operatives from gaining access'

Itamar Eichner, Yoav Zitun|15:10

A senior defense official said Monday afternoon that the name of the new operation approved overnight by the security cabinet for expanded action in the Gaza Strip is "Gideon's Chariots." The official clarified that forces will use the coming period to prepare, but will not begin maneuvering in Gaza until after U.S. President Donald Trump concludes his visit to the Middle East, which includes stops in Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates between May 13 and 16.

“Unlike in the past, the IDF will remain in any territory it captures, to prevent the return of terrorism, and will operate in each cleared area according to the Rafah model, where all threats were neutralized and the area became part of the security buffer zone,” the official said.

He added that Israel will bring humanitarian aid into Gaza “after the start of operational activity and a large-scale evacuation of civilians to the south,” and noted: “A humanitarian plan will be implemented, as presented yesterday by the IDF and approved by the cabinet, that distinguishes between the aid and Hamas by using civilian companies and designating areas that will be secured by the IDF. This includes a sterile zone in the Rafah area beyond the Morag route, where entrants will be screened by the IDF to prevent Hamas operatives from gaining access.”

Regarding the timing of the expanded operation and the possibility of a hostage deal, the defense official said: “The military’s preparations ahead of the ground maneuver will create a window of opportunity—until the end of the U.S. president’s visit—for a hostage deal under the ‘Witkoff model.’ In such a case, Israel will seek to retain territory that has been cleared and incorporated into the buffer zone beyond the March lines. Under any temporary or permanent arrangement, Israel will not withdraw from the security buffer zone around Gaza, which is intended to protect Israeli communities and prevent weapons smuggling to Hamas.”

The official stated that, under the plan formulated by the IDF chief of staff and the General Staff, and approved by the defense minister and prime minister, the IDF will reinforce its troops and operate with force to defeat and subdue Hamas and destroy its military and governmental capabilities, “while applying strong pressure to secure the release of all hostages.” He added that a “robust protective envelope” would be provided for maneuvering forces by land, air and sea, using heavy equipment to neutralize explosives and destroy threatening structures.

A central component of the plan, he said, is the mass evacuation of all Gazan civilians from combat zones, including northern Gaza, to areas in the south, in order to separate them from Hamas terrorists and allow the IDF operational freedom. At least at the beginning of the operation—if and when it starts—the humanitarian blockade on the Strip will continue until the civilian evacuation is complete.

The official stressed that “if no hostage deal is reached, Operation ‘Gideon’s Chariots’ will begin with great force and will not end until all its objectives are achieved.” He added that “the plan for voluntary relocation of Gaza residents, especially those gathered in the south outside Hamas’ control, will be part of the operation’s goals.”

At the cabinet meeting overnight, ministers discussed the chosen name for the operation. One minister commented on the choice, asking why “Gideon” was selected, noting the resemblance to Minister Gideon Sa’ar. National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir made a quip, and another minister replied, “You can call it ‘Ma’ale Itamar.’” The room laughed, and another minister said, “Let’s call it ‘Let me die with the Philistines.’” Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu responded, “We don’t want to die with them. We want them to die alone.”

05.05.25 – Mo - Omer 17

Ministers reject Court Commission into Oct. 7; vote for political panel investigation

05.05.25 – Mo - Omer 17

Government rejects National Commission of Inquiry into Oct. 7, votes to appoint political panel to investigate

Ministers want to appoint investigators into the failings leading up to the massacre, despite warnings from the AG, public opinion polling indicating a vast majority of the public supports it and the victims' demands

Itamar Eichner, Tova Zimuky, Roy Rubinstein|14:06

The government decided on Monday against establishing a national commission of inquiry into the failings leading up to and on October 7 and instead voted to appoint a political panel after the Supreme Court ruled that the government must explain why it would not establish an independent commission.

According to public opinion polling, a vast majority of Israelis including the families of victims of the massacre, families of fallen soldiers and of hostages held in Gaza, demand a National Commission of Inquiry and oppose the efforts by the government to investigate its own failures and assign blame only on the security agencies, the IDF and others.

"The commission will represent the different views of different sectors and will have public trust," the government decision claimed. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's coalition has long accused the Supreme Court of bias and even directed blame at the court for the policies that led to the Hamas massacre and its devastating outcome.

Ministers said Supreme Court Chief Justice Yitzhak Amit, whose appointment came over the government's opposition, does not have the trust of a large part of the Israeli population and that the same is true of Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara, who Education Minister Yoav Kisch said would have stopped Netanyahu's criminal trial for corruption had she not been politically opposed to him.

According to Israeli law, the government has the authority to announce a national commission of inquiry and its members are selected by the chief justice.

"The government's decision not to establish a national commission of inquiry is harmful and damaging to the search for truth," the AG said in a letter. She has warned Netanyahu that only such a commission could be regarded as an independent inquiry in the eyes of the International Court of Justice, where Israel has been accused of genocide and other crimes against humanity.

Netanyahu told ministers that Israel is still facing considerable challenges and that the war is still being fought. His opponents said he refuses to allow an independent commission to investigate his role in the catastrophe.

05.05.25 – Mo - Omer 17

Knesset Committee approved tens of thousands of reserves to expand Gaza war

05.05.25 – Mo - Omer 17

Netanyahu called to explain call-up of tens of thousands of reserves in expanded war
Prime minister tells government that Israel plans to occupy areas of Gaza; Knesset panel chair summons Netanyahu, Defense Minister Katz after tens of thousands of summons issued to reserve troops while the government promotes draft exemption for Haredi men
Moran Azulay|13:02

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Israel Katz were called to appear before the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee after tens of thousands of IDF reserve troops were called up for duty once again at the same time as the government is promoting a draft bill that would exempt ultra-Orthodox men from service.

Committee chair Yuli Edelstein, a senior member of Netanyahu's ruling Likud Party, summoned the two after the security cabinet voted unanimously to expand the offensive in Gaza to continue fighting against Hamas. A senior political official said the plan includes a military occupation of areas in the Strip, removal of the civilian population to the south to keep them safe, and preventing Hamas from controlling humanitarian aid distribution.

IDF Chief of Staff Eyal Zamir told ministers during the seven-hour-long meeting on Sunday that the military's aim was to defeat Hamas while working to return the remaining 59 hostages still held in Gaza since the October 7 massacre.

According to the official, Netanyahu said the plan accepted by the cabinet is good because it could achieve two objectives: defeating Hamas and returning the hostages. "We are transitioning from a method of raids into Gaza to an occupation of territory there that would remain under the IDF control," Netanyahu said adding that he is still trying to advance the plan proposed by U.S. President Donald Trump to remove Palestinians from Gaza. "There are discussions underway with several countries," he told the ministers.

05.05.25 – Mo - Omer 17

An illusion of calm: Israel's expands buffer zone in Syria; tactics similar to West Bank

05.05.25 – Mo - Omer 17

An illusion of calm: Israel's expanding buffer zone in Syria
Six months after moving into the Syrian Golan, the IDF has tripled its presence, focusing on deterrence, infrastructure and cautious cooperation with local forces even as tensions linger in the south | Ynet reporter with IDF troops on the Syrian Golan
Yoav Zitun|12:22

At the Quneitra border crossing — the only passage between Israel and Syria — an IDF paratrooper from the 202nd Battalion opens the yellow gate on the Israeli side. Helmetless due to the low threat level, he's followed by another soldier who unlocks the inner gray gate leading east.

Roughly 80 km (50 miles) from the crossing, Israeli Air Force helicopters recently air-dropped aid to Druze communities near As Suwayda. More than 20 wounded Syrian Druze have also been evacuated through this gate for medical treatment in Israel. Despite the ongoing massacres of Druze by jihadist groups just miles away, the Israeli-held border zone remains quiet.

Six months after the IDF took control of the Syrian Golan without a fight, Israeli military presence has tripled. The IDF now operates along both sides of the border with three times the number of routine security battalions. The abandoned Syrian military outposts — once adorned with Syrian flags and portraits of Hafez Assad and his son Bashar — are fading symbols of the old regime.

In the northern Syrian Golan, 20–30 km (12–18 miles) from the border, the IDF has permitted forces loyal to new Syrian President Ahmad al-Sharaa — leader of Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) — to act as a local police force in local towns. Israeli troops move freely through these towns en route to nine new outposts built in Syrian territory. The area is considered secure.

In contrast, the southern Golan remains volatile. The Sunni-majority villages on the road to Daraa, once supportive of Jabhat al-Nusra during Syria's civil war, have not disarmed. Unlike the quieter north, there's no cooperation with Israeli forces.

Two weeks ago, paratroopers from the IDF's 890th Battalion came under heavy fire while patrolling the Syrian town of Nawa. Gunmen fired from balconies with heavy machine guns. The soldiers took cover and were unharmed.

According to a senior officer, Israeli drones responded by eliminating seven terrorists. "We could have taken out 100 under the rules of engagement," he said, "but chose not to."

Further east, the IDF monitors the second ridge of volcanic hills — around 18–20 km (11–12 miles) from the border — but has not moved in. Unidentified figures occasionally approach abandoned Syrian posts there and are repelled with warning fire. Despite interest from Damascus, Israel has not allowed HTS forces to access the area.

"The al-Sharaa regime is still struggling to consolidate power," said a senior IDF officer. "It doesn't control vast regions, including the Alawite-dominated coast, Turkish- and Kurdish-held northern zones and Bedouin areas in the southeast. It's doubtful this border region with Israel is a top priority for them right now."

HTS's limited control, foreign interests linger

Western diplomats recently visited Damascus to assess HTS control. According to IDF officials who debriefed them, key ministries such as defense and foreign affairs appeared largely deserted — only a few rooms were staffed in buildings meant to host dozens of offices.

Israeli intelligence estimates HTS has around 60,000 lightly armed soldiers who mostly operate in pickup trucks. Following Iran's withdrawal from Syria — including the Golan — Russia still maintains forces along the coast and in Qamishli in the northeast.

Israel held talks with Turkish representatives to coordinate military activity in Syria. The IDF believes Turkey is interested in building a standing army for al-Sharaa, especially after much of Assad's vast weapons stockpiles were destroyed by Israeli forces. However, Ankara remains hesitant over the financial cost.

About a month ago, IDF officers held a rare meeting with roughly 60 Druze sheikhs from both Israel and Syria to strengthen ties. An initiative to allow Syrian Druze laborers to work in the Israeli Golan was blocked by Israeli lawmakers, reportedly over insurance and bureaucratic issues.

Local normalization with Syria — at least in the Golan — is progressing slowly. As quiet prevails, Israeli troops increasingly patrol without helmets and travel solo or in small teams, unlike the cautious procedures early on.

Still, the main concern remains a sudden convoy of armed pickups traveling from deeper inside Syria via the Damascus–Quneitra highway. “The distance between Quneitra and Kibbutz Ein Zivan is about five minutes at high speed,” warned Lt. Col. G., the Golan Brigade's operations officer.

Infrastructure, deterrence and readiness

Standing atop the former Quneitra police station — a grim, Soviet-style building with barred cells — soldiers now sleep in new fortified bases built by Israel at a cost of tens of millions of shekels. The troops receive meals from kitchens nearby on the Israeli side. The IDF is also slowly advancing a massive engineering project to fortify the border. So far, about 20% of the 90-km (56-mile) buffer zone with Syria has been completed, including deep trenches and defensive embankments.

During a visit near the village of Qahtaniyah, soldiers stop near three smiling Syrian children — one already wearing a shirt bearing al-Sharaa's image. Units like the 77th Battalion remain alert, though many admit the IDF's real focus now lies in Gaza.

At another outpost, paratroopers have confiscated flashy motorcycles from Syrian youths who ventured too close — possibly for intelligence gathering. Intelligence collection in the area remains limited, with only one or two arrests per month.

“Our tactics here are similar to the West Bank — surprise checkpoints, patrols,” said Lt. Col. G. “But if we get a specific warning or intel on a hostile actor, we strike immediately and without hesitation.”

05.05.25 – Mo - Omer 17

Gaza flotilla still stuck at sea, Malta investigating if explosion was internal, not drone

05.05.25 – Mo - Omer 17

Gaza flotilla is still stuck at sea, and Malta is investigating whether explosion was self-inflicted

Senior Maltese security official says he is investigating whether the flotilla was planned as a diversion for an Iranian cargo ship bringing weapons to Hezbollah in Lebanon
Zeev Avrahami, Malta|09:19

Mysterious explosions on Thursday night derailed a carefully orchestrated plan: a so-called humanitarian flotilla bound for Gaza was intended to spark widespread international attention similar to the Turkish-led Gaza flotilla some 15 years ago. But the vessel was halted roughly 17 kilometers off the coast of Malta, reportedly after being targeted by two UAVs.

As of now, the incident appears to have delayed the flotilla indefinitely. “Prime Minister Robert Abela offered those on board the vessel to send a team to assess the damage and even proposed covering all repair costs so the ship could resume its journey to Gaza,” said Maltese government spokesperson Edward Montebello. “However, the people on the vessel rejected the offer outright.”

Despite the Maltese government's support, pro-Palestinian activists aboard the vessel Conscience have refused assistance. They claim the offer to carry out repairs at sea is insufficient, particularly due to the condition that Malta would only support repairs if the mission is indeed humanitarian.

“There’s no chance we’ll accept the Maltese government’s offer, which clearly favors collaboration with the criminal Israeli government over providing humanitarian aid to the people of Gaza or to civilians stranded at sea,” said Tiago, an activist from Barcelona who joined the flotilla. “There are injured people onboard, suffering both physically and psychologically. We demand the Maltese government allow the ship to dock at one of its ports.”

Tiago explained that he managed to join the flotilla despite not being part of the original mission. “We managed to evade the coast guard and got within 500 meters of the ship, shouting ‘Free Palestine’ in support.”

Ynet and Yedioth Ahronoth reached out to a senior Maltese security official regarding speculation that emerged on several platforms, including Intelli Times, suggesting that the attacked flotilla was merely a diversion for another vessel on the same route—an Iranian cargo ship allegedly transporting weapons and ammunition to Lebanon.

“We’re dealing with a situation where much remains unclear,” the official acknowledged. “The Maltese government is holding intense discussions on the matter, and we’re examining every possible lead, including that theory.” He added that investigators are also exploring the possibility that the explosion was not caused by an external factor.

“This is classic Israeli tactics,” Tiago responded. “Instead of addressing their criminal attack on innocent people undertaking a humanitarian mission, they spin a story in which everyone but Israel is to blame.”

A planned demonstration by dozens of pro-Palestinian activists in a central square in Valletta was abruptly canceled in the evening. Activists claimed Malta had agreed to discuss allowing the vessel to dock and undergo repairs—an option the government continues to firmly deny.

“If that happens, it will be a first victory,” Tiago said. “But we’ll believe it only when it happens. I haven’t decided yet whether I’ll stay for the duration of the repairs or go back. But we won’t stop until there’s recognition of the war crimes and genocide Israel is committing.”

05.05.25 – Mo - Omer 17

Cabinet unanimously approves expansion of military operations in Gaza

05.05.25 – Mo - Omer 17

Cabinet unanimously approves expansion of military operations in Gaza

After a discussion lasting about seven hours, plans approved for extensive ground operations in the heart of Gaza and an increased mobilization of reservists.

Israel National News Published: May 5, 2025, 2:46 AM (GMT+3)

After a seven-hour discussion, the Security Cabinet early Monday morning unanimously approved the plans to expand combat operations in Gaza.

The discussion focused on new operational plans aimed at increasing pressure on Hamas, including a large-scale ground maneuver and entry into areas of the Gaza Strip, where IDF forces are expected to remain for an extended period.

Additionally, a principled framework for the distribution of future humanitarian aid to Gaza was approved, despite opposition from National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir. According to the approved framework, aid will be transferred in the future through an international fund that will oversee preventing its transfer to Hamas.

As part of preparations for the operation, a large-scale mobilization of reservists is expected. The reservist forces will be divided into battalions that will join the fighting in the field and brigades that will replace regular units entering Gaza.

A senior Israeli official quoted by Walla news website estimated that the operation approved by the Cabinet will only be implemented after the conclusion of US President Trump's visit to the Middle East in about 10 days. "Until then, reservists will be mobilized and trained for the expansion of the operation," the official said.

The official noted that during the Cabinet meeting, it was decided to make an effort to reach a deal for the release of the hostages before President Trump's arrival in the region. "The effort will be to bring Hamas back to the framework proposed by Egypt and to the plan of White House envoy Witkoff, under which several hostages would be released in exchange for renewing the ceasefire," said the official.

The Cabinet meeting was intended to approve agreements that were reached during a discussion held this past Friday at the Kirya military headquarters, attended by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Defense Minister Israel Katz, Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir, and senior IDF officials.

An Israeli official said after the discussion, "As long as Hamas does not release our hostages, we will significantly deepen our military operations."

He added, "This is what will happen unless Hamas agrees at the last moment to a deal and releases the hostages."

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Thousands stranded at Ben Gurion as emboldened Houthis threaten aerial siege

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Thousands stranded after missile near Ben Gurion as Houthis threaten 'aerial siege'
Around 20 foreign airlines have paused flights to Israel, Transport Ministry says;
Minister Regev warns Israeli carriers not to raise prices and urges stranded Israelis to
contact Foreign Ministry's emergency center for assistance
Roy Rubinstein|23:42

Transportation Minister Miri Regev said Sunday evening that the government is working "around the clock" with foreign airlines and aviation authorities to restore international flight service, after a Houthi missile launched from Yemen landed near Ben Gurion Airport and triggered a wave of flight cancellations.

According to the ministry, around 30 foreign carriers are still operating normally at Ben Gurion alongside Israel's three domestic airlines. However, about 20 airlines have suspended service temporarily for up to 72 hours, following dramatic footage of the missile explosion and heightened security concerns.

The list of suspended carriers includes Ryanair and Delta, which canceled flights through Monday; Wizz Air, Air India, Iberia and the Lufthansa Group (including Swiss and Brussels Airlines), which paused flights until Tuesday; and British Airways and Italy's ITA, which suspended all flights through Wednesday. United Airlines halted flights until Friday and is reviewing the situation. Air Europa, Air France and Austrian Airlines also canceled select flights on Sunday.

Regev confirmed the missile fell in a field near the airport's parking access road, injuring several people and causing panic. Ben Gurion resumed full operations within 30 minutes, she said, adding that Israeli aviation authorities are in ongoing contact with global counterparts to bring airlines back.

More Stories

However, Regev also directed officials to prepare for the possibility that some foreign carriers may not resume flights after the 72-hour window. In that case, she said Israel would reactivate aviation hubs in Larnaca and Athens to serve as transit points for stranded Israelis, with increased flights to and from those cities.

Addressing concerns over rising airfare prices amid reduced flight availability, Regev warned Israeli airlines against price gouging. "I will not tolerate inflated pricing. If necessary, I will use my authority—together with the economy minister—to set a price ceiling," she said.

Thousands of Israelis are currently stranded abroad due to the flight disruptions. Among them are dozens of passengers aboard an Air India flight from Delhi that was forced to turn back just 10 minutes before landing in Israel. The plane, which included a pregnant woman and a passenger with a broken leg, was diverted to Abu Dhabi, where it sat for hours before returning to India.

Regev urged any citizens facing delays or cancellations to contact the Foreign Ministry's emergency command center, which is coordinating with the Transport Ministry to provide assistance.

The missile strike and its ripple effects were also felt on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange, where El Al shares jumped 5%, amid expectations of increased demand and reduced competition. Meanwhile, the airline's website temporarily crashed under a surge of incoming traffic.

Houthi leaders, emboldened by what they view as a successful strike, have vowed to push for a full aerial siege of Israel.

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Hamas executes several Gaza looters accused of collaborating with Israel

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Hamas executes Gaza looters accused of collaborating with Israel

As Israel blocks aid to enclave and public anger mounts, terror group says cracking down on armed gangs looting food: 'We will strike with an iron fist all these renegades'; Gazans report gangs also rob civilians of money and phones

Reuters|20:09

Hamas has executed a number of alleged looters after several incidents in which heavily armed gangs attacked food stores and community kitchens in the Gaza Strip this week, sources close to the Palestinian terrorist group said.

Hamas officials have accused some of the looters of working in collaboration with Israel, which has sealed off aid from entering Gaza for the past two months. Israel has not commented on the allegation.

In one incident, the Hamas-run interior ministry said a police officer was killed and others were wounded when an Israeli drone fired a missile at a police unit chasing criminals in Gaza City.

"We will strike with an iron fist all these renegades, and we will take the necessary measures to deter them, no matter the cost, and we will not allow them to continue terrorizing citizens, threatening their lives and stealing their property," the ministry said in a statement on Saturday, referring to the alleged looters.

Ismail Al-Thawabta, director of Gaza's Hamas-run government media office, said some of the looters acted under a clan umbrella and others acted as organized groups, some of which he said received direct support from Israel.

He said a number of "revolutionary execution rulings" had been carried out against "several top criminals" proven to have been involved in looting.

Some Gaza residents and Palestinian media said Hamas' armed wing imposed curfews starting at 9 p.m. to restrict the movement of civilians and to chase criminals.

United Nations officials have warned of the increasingly dire humanitarian situation facing Gaza, which has been devastated by the Israeli campaign launched following the Hamas-led attack on Israel on October 7, 2023.

Israel has defended its blockade against aid entering Gaza, alleging that Hamas steals supplies intended for the civilian population and distributes them to its own forces, an allegation that Hamas denies.

However, the problem has worsened as the blockade has persisted, posing a challenge to Hamas, which has faced irregular protests by people in Gaza angered by shortage of food reaching the enclave.

The incidents underlined the strain facing the Gaza population, which has been increasingly squeezed into areas in central Gaza and along the coast as Israeli forces have created wide buffer zones around the enclave.

Gangs take money, phones

"Those gangs, some of them armed, have terrorized people, not only stealing food, but stopping some people on the roads and taking away their money and phones," said Ahmed, from Gaza City, who asked that his full name not be used.

"They aid the occupation in starving us; they must be dealt with as collaborators," he told Reuters via a chat app.

SAFA news agency, close to Hamas, said the interior ministry has formed a new 5,000-member force tasked with confronting looters and armed gangs. However, local police forces have been hampered by attacks from Israeli drones against any armed Palestinians they identify.

Hamas deployed thousands of police and security forces across Gaza after a ceasefire took effect in January, but its armed presence shrank sharply since Israel resumed large-scale attacks in March.

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Teen men arrested on suspicion of wildfire arson near Modi'in

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Teen man arrested on suspicion of arson near Modi'in

Days after massive wildfires near Jerusalem brought under control, Omar Dar Daoud arrested on suspicion of nationalistic arson, along with another teen Meir Turgeman|19:34

The Rishon LeZion Magistrate's Court on Sunday extended by four days the detention of Omar Dar Daoud, a 19-year-old resident of Jerusalem, who was arrested Saturday night near Ben Shemen Forest, close to Modi'in. He is suspected of committing arson with a nationalistic motive and of possessing drugs not intended for personal use.

During the court hearing, a police representative said: "Last night, a citizen reported seeing two individuals on a scooter at the side of the road, appearing to set fire to something and throwing it into the area near the road. He immediately contacted the police hotline, slowed his vehicle and maintained visual contact with the suspects while staying on the line with dispatch."

The citizen directed officers to the scooter, and shortly afterward, Daoud and another teenage suspect with him were arrested.

"During a search of their belongings and the scooter, various types of drugs were found. They were detained at the scene and taken in for questioning," the officer said. According to the police, Daoud claimed he had come to the area to purchase drugs through an app for personal use and denied stopping at the roadside or attempting to ignite anything. The arrest occurred around 11:30 p.m. Saturday night.

Daoud's attorney, Itzik Sadeh of the Public Defense, asked the police representative during the hearing whether any incendiary materials were found in his client's possession. The officer replied that no such materials were discovered, nor were there signs of a fire in the area.

"There is no evidence that he started a fire," Sadeh argued. "No flammable material was found at the scene, and there's no proof that anything was thrown with the intent to ignite."

Despite this, Judge Ronit Cohen ruled to extend the suspect's detention, stating there is reasonable suspicion linking him to the alleged offenses. She emphasized that the charges carry grounds for detention due to public danger, particularly "in light of the massive wildfires that broke out in Israel over the past week."

Sadeh noted that Daoud has no prior criminal record. An appeal against the court's decision has been filed, with a hearing expected to take place Monday.

According to the Fire and Rescue Authority, a special investigation team has begun probing the causes of the recent fires, and in-depth inquiries are underway. During a speech at the International Bible Contest on Independence Day, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu claimed that 18 individuals had been arrested on suspicion of arson. However, police later clarified that this statement was incorrect.

So far, the Fire Authority has not issued an official determination on the cause of the wildfires. One suspect was arrested in a separate incident in southern Jerusalem, where he allegedly attempted to start a fire following the outbreak of multiple blazes. At this time, there is no indication that the fires were deliberately set.

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Mezuzah crafted from Joshua altar site, Mount Ebal stone affixed to Huckabee's office

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Mezuzah crafted from Biblical Mount Ebal stone affixed at US ambassador's office
Mike Huckabee tells Samaria Council Chairman Yossi Dagan that it is 'a reminder, every time I enter my office, that there are people praying for the peace of Jerusalem - and Judea and Samaria'

Elisha Ben Kimon|19:22

U.S. Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee met in Jerusalem with Yossi Dagan, head of the Samaria Regional Council, marking his first official meeting with an Israeli municipal leader since taking office.

According to a statement from the Samaria Council, the two discussed "the challenges facing Israel and the security and historical significance of Judea and Samaria," using the biblical names commonly associated with the West Bank in Israeli discourse.

At the end of the meeting, which took place last week, Dagan presented Huckabee with a mezuzah crafted from stones from Mount Ebal—considered by some to be the biblical site where Joshua built an altar—handmade by artist Assaf Kidron from the settlement of Itamar.

The two affixed the mezuzah to the entrance of the ambassador's office, where Dagan recited the traditional blessings, including the Shehecheyanu prayer, often recited upon special occasions.

Huckabee thanked Dagan for the gift, saying it would serve as "a reminder, every time I enter my office, that there are people praying for the peace of Jerusalem. And we all pray for the peace of Judea and Samaria, and for the peace of all of Israel."

A longtime supporter of Israel, Huckabee has visited the West Bank on multiple occasions, including stops in Elon Moreh, Itamar, Barkan, the biblical site of Shiloh and Joseph's Tomb.

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Houthis tested hypersonic missile on Ben-Gurion Airport that avoided interception

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Report: Houthis tested new missile in Ben-Gurion Airport attack

According to Hezbollah-affiliated Al Mayadeen, the Yemeni terrorist organization is continuing to develop new types of missiles and UAVs despite US operations.

by Shachar Kleiman Published on 05-04-2025 17:45 Last modified: 05-04-2025 17:46
EPA/Yahya Arhab

The pro-Iranian Al Mayadeen network claims that the Houthis in Yemen had fired a new type of missile toward Ben-Gurion International Airport earlier this morning. The report cited assessments suggesting the launch was part of ongoing efforts by the Yemeni terrorist organization to develop advanced missiles and drones, in defiance of American military operations in the region.

At the same time, Saudi-owned Al Hadath reported that the US-led coalition had struck a Houthi training camp overnight. According to the report, dozens of Houthi operatives were killed or wounded in training camp strikes over the past 24 hours.

Throughout the night, the US coalition reportedly carried out dozens of airstrikes on Houthi hideouts, military posts, and rocket launchers across Yemen, focusing primarily on the northern provinces of Saada and Al-Jawf. According to reports, the Houthis had deployed advanced weapons in these areas, including ballistic missile systems and drones.

Houthi military spokesperson Yahya Saree announced that the terrorist organization had launched a ballistic missile toward Ben-Gurion Airport, "in the Jaffa area," claiming it was a hypersonic missile. He said that interception attempts by US and Israeli defense systems had failed and boasted that airport activity was suspended for over an hour. Saree warned all international airlines against flying to Ben-Gurion, claiming the airport was "not safe for flights."

Earlier, senior Houthi figure Mohammed al-Bukhaiti told Arab media that "the attack on Ben-Gurion proves our ability to strike fortified sites inside Israel. We have demonstrated our capability to strike at the military prestige of the US, UK and Israel. There are no red lines in this confrontation with the Zionist entity, the United States and Britain."

Against this backdrop, the head of the Houthis' Supreme Political Council, Mahdi al-Mashat, convened a meeting of the organization's security apparatuses on Sunday "to discuss recent developments, respond to American aggression against Yemen, and support operations in Gaza."

According to a report by the Washington-based Institute for the Study of War (ISW), Iran continues to supply the Houthis with weapons and intelligence on naval movements to

improve the accuracy of their attacks in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. At the same time, US forces reportedly thwarted an Iranian weapons shipment to the Houthis by sea in recent days.

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Houthi attacks drain US & allies billions; Over 800 strikes yet barrage has not ceased

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

As Israeli defenses fail, analysts explain how Houthi attacks drain billions. In-depth interviews reveal how low-cost Houthi weapons are forcing the US and its allies into a high-cost military response, draining resources and destabilizing global trade. Gabriel Colodro/The Media Line|14:23

When a \$20,000 missile fired by Yemen's Houthi rebels can bring down a US Reaper drone worth over \$30 million, the cost of war takes on a new, troubling shape. That imbalance is now defining the crisis in the Red Sea, where sustained attacks from Iranian-backed terrorists are draining Western defense budgets and disrupting the arteries of global commerce.

Over 800 strikes have been carried out by the United States against Houthi positions since March 15, yet the barrage of drones and missiles has not ceased. As Houthi forces target American, British, and Israeli-linked ships across one of the world's most vital maritime corridors, military and economic pressure is intensifying on the US and its allies, with no end in sight.

According to British Colonel (ret.) Richard Kemp, who commanded forces in Afghanistan and has advised on Middle East security, said Iran's fingerprints are all over the conflict. "This is Iran flexing its muscles," Kemp said in an exclusive interview. "It's not only about attacking Israel—it's about showing that Tehran can hurt the West, especially economically, without ever firing a shot directly." Kemp described the Houthis as one arm of what he called the "Iranian octopus," used to deter Western attacks on Iran by threatening both military and commercial targets. "It's a way of saying: if you hit us, we'll unleash chaos through our proxies," he said. "And the Red Sea is one of the best places to do that."

The cost of containment

The economic disparity between offensive and defensive action in this conflict is staggering. While the Houthis fire relatively cheap projectiles—often made with imported components from Iran—intercepting them requires millions of dollars in sophisticated Western systems.

Janatan Sayeh, a research analyst at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, explained that this isn't accidental—it's strategic. "This is asymmetric warfare by design," Sayeh said. "You don't need to inflict mass casualties. You just need to make your adversary bleed money." Sayeh detailed how the Houthis now assemble most of

their weaponry inside Yemen. “Iran no longer sends complete missiles,” he said. “They send parts—drones, guidance systems, warheads—and the Houthis put them together locally, based on instructions. This modular system makes interception harder and enables a continuous supply chain.”

That supply chain is hard to disrupt. Even if parts are intercepted at sea, once the knowledge and tooling exist inside Yemen, the system can regenerate. “Every Patriot missile or naval interceptor costs millions,” added Kemp. “Every drone they launch might cost a few thousand. This is not sustainable.”

Beyond the cost of interception, maintaining a constant military presence in the region adds to the strain. Aircraft carrier groups, drone patrols, and airstrike campaigns in Yemen are expensive undertakings, and the frequency of Houthi attacks suggests that this drain could last for years. “This is turning into a war of attrition,” said Sayeh. “But only one side is spending big.”

Maritime chaos and energy risks: A wider economic fallout

While the military costs of intercepting Houthi attacks have dominated headlines, the economic disruption caused by the crisis is equally severe—and still growing. According to Noam Raydan, a senior fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, commercial transit through Bab el-Mandeb and even the Suez Canal has declined by over 50% since the Houthis began their maritime campaign in late 2023. “This is huge,” Raydan said. “A lot of commercial ships are simply unable to sail through the Red Sea, and they’ve had to reroute around southern Africa. That adds weeks of travel and increases transportation costs significantly.”

Raydan noted that although the shipping industry has adapted in some ways—shifting routes and adjusting services—many vessels linked to American or Israeli interests still avoid the region altogether. “There are no ships sailing under the Israeli flag in those waters,” she said. “And even vessels with indirect links to Israel are steering clear.” This disruption has not only raised global freight rates but also created opportunities for certain companies to profit from the instability. “Some firms have taken advantage of the crisis,” Raydan explained. “One Singapore-based shipping company even launched a new Red Sea service during the conflict. And large players like Maersk and CMA CGM have benefited from increased freight charges, though others, like MSC, which saw vessels attacked, have had to pull back.”

Raydan emphasized that the impact of these disruptions is far-reaching. “Consumers are affected even if they don’t realize it,” she said. “Transportation costs are factored into everything—whether it’s gasoline or imported goods.” She added that the effect is visible particularly in oil shipments. “Crude oil from Iraq that once passed through the Red Sea now has to take the longer route around Africa. That directly raises the price per barrel by the time it reaches European refineries.”

Despite some early warnings in late 2023, the expected dramatic inflation in consumer goods didn’t fully materialize, thanks in part to industry adaptation. However, Raydan cautioned that the risks remain volatile and unresolved. “The Houthis are still tracking ships,” she said. “Even if they aren’t attacking every target, they’ve already divided their

maritime campaign into multiple phases. There's no telling what they might do next—or for what reasons.”

She also highlighted the broader strategic stakes, especially for regional energy producers like Saudi Arabia and the UAE. “These countries are investing in massive energy infrastructure,” Raydan said. “But all of that depends on regional stability. If the Houthis are allowed to keep expanding their capabilities, they could target high-profile energy projects. They’ve done it before.”

Finally, Raydan pointed to the silent economic victim in all of this: Egypt. “The decline in Suez Canal traffic has cost them billions—at least \$5 billion in lost revenue so far,” she said. “And with transit still down by around 70%, it’s a major national blow.”

Limited options, mounting pressure

Despite the scale of the response, both Kemp and Sayeh criticized the West’s handling of the crisis. “The US response, especially under the Biden administration, was extremely weak,” Kemp argued. “They delisted the Houthis as a terrorist group early on to appease Iran. That set the tone for everything that followed.” Sayeh agreed that airstrikes alone would not stop the attacks. “This is a game of whack-a-mole,” he said. “You hit one missile site, they build another. You kill a commander, they replace him. As long as Iran is providing the material and training, this cycle continues.”

Both analysts dismissed the likelihood of deploying ground forces. “There’s no appetite in Washington or London for boots on the ground,” Kemp said. “We might see special forces operations targeting key Houthi leadership. But large-scale deployment?

Unlikely.” Sayeh added that even decapitation strategies have a limited effect. “You can take out one figure, but if the infrastructure is intact, the threat persists. This is about dismantling networks, not individuals.”

What about Iran?

While some wonder if the Houthis are being addressed in the US–Iran nuclear negotiations, Sayeh said they are not. “You can cap enrichment percentages, but how do you tell Iran to stop helping a group it doesn’t officially control?” Including them in the talks, he warned, would actually limit US and Israeli options for retaliation. “Keeping them off the table gives more operational flexibility,” he said.

Still, Sayeh suggested that escalation is possible. “If Iranian ships or personnel are proven to be supporting the Houthis, they could become legitimate targets. The precedent exists.”

A costly pattern with no end in sight

As long as the Houthis receive weapons, training, and political backing from Tehran, none of the experts interviewed believe the threat will disappear. “So long as the weapons are coming from Tehran,” said Sayeh, “this issue is going to persist.” Kemp echoed the same warning: “Unless we start thinking of this as a global strategy by Iran, we’ll keep losing this battle—one overpriced missile at a time.”

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Gaza aid ship crew stranded at sea; 40 activists in Malta were blocked from boarding

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Gaza aid ship crew fears 'Israel's far reach' while stranded at sea
Greta Thunberg among dozens hoping to board Gaza-bound ship carrying humanitarian aid, disabled by drones in international waters near Malta; activists say there is no doubt Israel is behind the strike
Ze'ev Avrahami, Malta|11:52

“It’s honestly a little frightening,” said Laura, a Belgian student and one of 40 pro-Palestinian activists who were set to board the aid ship Al Awda (“The Conscience”) headed for Gaza, just outside Maltese waters. Before they could join, two drones disabled the vessel in international waters, around 17 kilometers (10.5 miles) off Malta’s coast.

The ship, targeted over the weekend some 2,000 kilometers (1,240 miles) from Israeli shores, had departed Tunisia last week and was headed for Malta as part of the “Freedom Flotilla,” a campaign by activists aiming to “break the siege on Gaza.”

Spokeswoman Yasmine Asar said the drone strike targeted the ship’s generators. Videos released by organizers showed the vessel engulfed in flames and smoke, with loud explosions audible. No injuries were reported but the ship is now stranded at sea. For the passengers on board and the 40 activists on the ground in Malta — among them Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg — there’s no doubt who was behind the strike. “It’s scary because we ran full risk assessments before this humanitarian sail and we trusted what Defense Minister [Israel Katz] said — that he’d allow us in just to evacuate some Gazans to Europe,” Laura said.

“But what happened Thursday, when Palau suddenly asked us to remove its flag and exposed us as unprotected, showed not only how ruthless Israel is and how far its hand can reach but also how complicit other countries are — willing to violate international law just to starve more babies in Gaza,” she added.

“It’s scary to know that governments, including mine, are cooperating. It’s frightening that arms-laden ships sail freely, but 30 people with humanitarian aid are bombed in the middle of the sea.”

On Sunday, the activists who were blocked from boarding gathered in Valletta’s main square with dozens of locals to protest Malta’s refusal to let the ship dock or even allow it to pump out water from its lower deck.

“The ship’s at risk of sinking due to water intrusion and the international community is preventing any access or assistance,” said Andrei, a pro-Palestinian activist who was scheduled to join the flotilla.

In an interview with the Times of Malta, Thunberg explained the reason for organizing the mission: “Right now two million people are being delivered to starved by Israel in Gaza and it is our responsibility as human beings to do everything in our power to try to demand an end to that.”

For now, unless a humanitarian or sanitary crisis unfolds aboard, the ship appears stuck indefinitely in international waters. No country has agreed to intervene. Malta's government issued a statement saying it would assess the situation and form a committee to investigate who was behind the drone strike.

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Houthi missile fail to intercept, hits Tel Aviv Ben Gurion airport, 8 hurt in blast

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Houthi missile hits Ben Gurion international airport | Watch

At least 8 hurt in blast; After Arrow 3 missile defense system and the American THAAD missile defenses fail to intercept a missile launched in Yemen; Katz warns of retaliation Ynet|09:30

A ballistic missile fired by the Houthi rebels in Yemen landed in the Ben-Gurion International Airport outside Tel Aviv on Sunday after air raid sirens sounded across central Israel. According to the IDF the military attempted to intercept the missile after "sirens were sounded in accordance with protocol."

The missile caused damage and a number of injuries for the first time since the Iran-backed group renewed its attacks on Israel, after it landed near aircraft parked on the runway outside Terminal one.

Flights were suspended during the attack and two people, a man and a woman, both in their 50s suffered slight and moderate injuries from the blast. A third woman in her 30s was hurt during her rush to shelter. All of the wounded were taken to the nearby Shiba Medical Center for treatment.

"We all went into the shelters as soon as the sirens were activated," Pinchas Idan, union boss at the Airport Authorities, told Ynet. "We heard a loud explosion. It fell near the planes. We were lucky because an aircraft was in the air."

Operations resumed at the airport soon after the strike but flight delays were expected. Defense Minister Israel Katz warned of retaliation against the Houthi rebels. "Anyone who harms us will be doubly harmed," Katz said. Israel's last military action against the Houthis was three months ago. Since then, the United States and its partners in an international coalition conducted strikes against the rebel army and asked that Israel refrain from attacks.

Last week, Israeli officials said they're refraining from responding directly to the Houthis because the U.S. is leading the fight. "The fact that they're firing doesn't mean much," a senior Israeli defense official said earlier this week.

The launch marks the fifth one in two days as the Iran-backed terror group ramps up its efforts to harm the country. The U.S. operations in Yemen continue against the Houthis, though focused mainly on airstrikes at this point.

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

PM urges Qatar stop playing both sides in Gaza talks; align to civilization or barbarism

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Netanyahu urges Qatar to 'stop playing both sides' in Gaza mediation

PM renews criticism of Doha, declaring Gulf state must 'decide if it's on the side of civilization or if it's on the side of Hamas barbarism'

Itamar Eichner, Lior Ben Ari|00:21

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office on Saturday called on Qatar to "stop playing both sides" in its mediation efforts between Israel and Hamas, urging the Gulf state to align with "civilization" over "barbarism."

The statement, posted on Netanyahu's official X account, follows Qatar's condemnation of an alleged Israeli attack on a humanitarian aid ship near Malta.

"The time has come for Qatar to stop playing both sides with its double talk and decide if it's on the side of civilization or if it's on the side of Hamas barbarism," the statement read.

Earlier, Qatar's Foreign Ministry denounced the reported Israeli assault on a vessel from the Freedom Flotilla coalition in international waters off Malta, as well as attacks on fishing boats off Gaza's coast. Doha labeled the incidents violations of international law and called for accountability.

The diplomatic exchange occurs amid heightened scrutiny of Qatar's role in facilitating ceasefire negotiations and hostage releases between Israel and Hamas. While Qatar has been instrumental in mediating temporary truces, Israeli officials have expressed frustration over what they perceive as Doha's simultaneous support for Hamas.

Adding to the tension is the ongoing "Qatargate" scandal in Israel, where two of Netanyahu's close aides, Jonatan Urich and Eli Feldstein, were arrested over allegations of receiving payments from Qatar to promote its image during the Gaza war. The funds were reportedly funneled through an American lobbyist, aiming to enhance Qatar's influence in Israel while discrediting Egypt's mediation efforts.

Netanyahu has denied any wrongdoing, labeling the investigation a politically motivated attack. He has also criticized Qatar for allegedly fostering anti-Israel sentiment in Western institutions, particularly universities, through funding and media influence.

Qatar, for its part, maintains that its mediation efforts are in pursuit of regional stability and humanitarian relief, rejecting accusations of duplicity.

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

IDF issues tens of thousands of reserve call-ups ahead of expanded Gaza operation

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

IDF issues tens of thousands of reserve call-ups ahead of expanded Gaza operation
Tens of thousands of Israeli reservists called up as IDF prepares renewed Gaza offensive;
move seen as effort to pressure Hamas on hostages
Yoav Zitun|00:06

The IDF plans to resume ground operations across more areas of Gaza, with reservists replacing regular troops in other zones.

The military began issuing tens of thousands of emergency reserve call-up orders on Saturday evening as it prepares to expand its ground operation in Gaza in the coming days, according to military officials. The call-up marks the sixth or seventh round of mobilization for many reservist brigades since the war began 17 months ago.

While some reserve units will be deployed directly into Gaza for renewed combat operations, most will be reassigned to other fronts—such as the northern border or the West Bank—to replace regular army units moving south to spearhead the next phase of fighting. Entire reserve battalions are expected to take part in the expanded ground campaign in Gaza.

The move effectively nullifies the IDF's earlier commitment to limit reservist duty in 2025 to just two and a half months. That schedule has now been scrapped before the calendar year's midpoint, and military officials have declined to specify how long reservists will be required to serve under the current mobilization.

Military leaders say the renewed offensive is aimed at increasing pressure on Hamas to secure a hostage deal. IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir has declared the return of hostages held by Hamas as the military's top priority, followed by the defeat and dismantling of the terrorist group.

The Security Cabinet is expected to formally approve the expanded Gaza campaign on Sunday, following a high-level meeting chaired by Netanyahu on Friday. Defense Minister Israel Katz and Chief of Staff Zamir have already signed off on the operational plans. "As long as Hamas does not release our hostages, we will deepen our military action significantly," said a senior Israeli official following the meeting. "That is what will happen unless Hamas agrees to a last-minute deal."

Under the new operational structure, reserve forces will be split into two groups: those that will directly participate in combat in Gaza, and those that will backfill regular units reassigned to the front. In recent days, numerous reserve commanders have told their soldiers to prepare for an imminent, unplanned call-up.

In a statement over the weekend, the military emphasized that reservist deployment would be conducted with "consideration and responsibility, based on operational needs." Amid troop fatigue and a shortage of combat personnel, Halevi warned that the military

cannot achieve its goals alone and called for political backing and civilian enforcement of sanctions on draft evaders.

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Thousands rally in Tel Aviv demanding hostage deal amid expanded Gaza operation

05.04.25 – Su - Omer 16 Q1 18:53am

Thousands rally in Tel Aviv demanding hostage deal amid plans for expanded Gaza operation

Families warn Gaza escalation endangers captives as Israelis gather in Tel Aviv to press for immediate agreement securing their release

Ynet correspondents|00:02

Thousands of Israelis gathered in Tel Aviv's Habima Square on Saturday evening to demand the release of the 59 hostages still held by Hamas, following the release of a new captivity video of hostage Maxim Herkin and the IDF's decision to expand its ground offensive in Gaza.

The rally, organized by the Hostages and Missing Families Forum, warned that intensifying military action in Gaza could jeopardize the lives of both living captives and the remains of those killed. "We are raising a red flag—Israel is on a path to sinking deeper into the Gaza quagmire," the forum said in a statement. "Expanding the war is a grave mistake. Stop this before it's too late."

At the rally's central event at Hostage Square, former captives and community leaders addressed the crowd. "As a people and a nation, we are obligated to bring them home," said former hostage Omer Shem Tov. "We owe them their freedom and independence." Another former hostage, Gadi Mozes, spoke at a parallel gathering in Karmit Gat, organized by the Nir Oz community, criticizing the government's approach. "This war is futile and wasting the nation's resources," Mozes said. "Two million Gazans won't just disappear."

In a statement Saturday night, the Hostages Forum said families spent the Sabbath gripped by "agonizing anxiety" over their loved ones' fate and warned that the new military push, which was approved in principle by Israeli leaders this weekend, could further endanger the hostages. "The decision to escalate now, without securing the return of our brothers and sisters, will be a disaster for generations," the statement read. The group also highlighted the human toll on reservists and their families, as tens of thousands are being called up for renewed operations. "This decision will cost lives—of hostages and soldiers alike—and extract a steep price from thousands of reservists and their families," the statement said. "We call on the Israeli government and military commanders: Stop this mistake. An agreement must be reached to bring everyone home."

05.03.25 – Sa - Omer 15

Netanyahu postpones Azerbaijan visit amid security pressures in Gaza and Syria

05.03.25 – Sa - Omer 15

Netanyahu postpones Azerbaijan visit amid security pressures in Gaza and Syria
PM's planned five-day trip to Shiite Muslim ally pushed back due to packed political-security agenda; Netanyahu's office says visit would be rescheduled
Itamar Eichner|20:48

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has postponed a planned visit to Azerbaijan due to security developments in Gaza and Syria and a packed political-security agenda, his office announced Saturday.

Netanyahu was scheduled to travel to Baku on Wednesday for a five-day official visit and meetings with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev. The visit, which would have included a weekend stay, was set to take place roughly 10 days after Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian visited the same country amid ongoing nuclear talks between Washington and Tehran.

In a statement, Netanyahu's office said the trip would be rescheduled and thanked Aliyev for the invitation, adding that the prime minister "appreciates the warm relations between the two countries."

Azerbaijan, a Shiite Muslim country bordering Iran, has emerged as a key strategic partner for both Israel and Turkey. Despite regional tensions, Azerbaijan maintained firm support for Israel throughout the ongoing war and even increased its energy exports to Israel during the war—now supplying nearly half of Israel's fuel needs, up from a third prior.

Lebanon warns Hamas it will face 'harshest measures' over attacks from its territories
Aliyev has recently positioned himself as a regional mediator following a visit by Trump envoy Steve Witkoff, who has led diplomatic efforts in the area. Aliyev has held meetings with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and newly appointed Syrian President Ahmad al-Sharaa, boosting his status as a potential diplomatic bridge in the region. Both Israel and the United States reportedly see him as a rare figure capable of engaging all sides.

An Israeli delegation led by National Security Adviser Tzachi Hanegbi also met with a senior Turkish delegation in Baku, in talks reportedly brokered by Aliyev.

Economically, ties between Israel and Azerbaijan have deepened in recent months. Azerbaijan's national oil company recently acquired a 10% stake in Israel's Tamar gas field, in a deal estimated at around \$900 million. In March, Azerbaijani energy giant SOCAR and British company BP were granted licenses to explore natural gas in Israeli waters—marking SOCAR's first exploration venture outside Azerbaijan.

Additionally, Israel's Technion opened a cybersecurity center in Baku, and Azerbaijani construction giant Accord won an Israeli government tender to supply 1,600 construction workers to projects in Israel.

The Trump administration is reportedly working to include Azerbaijan in the Abraham Accords, the series of normalization agreements between Israel and Arab and Muslim-majority nations. Witkoff raised the issue during his recent talks with Aliyev in Baku.

05.03.25 – Sa - Omer 15

US baffled by Houthi calculus as airstrikes fail to deter Yemeni rebels

05.03.25 – Sa - Omer 15

US 'baffled by Houthi calculus' as airstrikes fail to deter Yemeni rebels

Attacks from Yemen surge despite 6-week US air campaign; anti-Houthi factions told US ground op needs Gulf backing, but Saudi Arabia and UAE deny involvement; Yemeni PM resigns, as experts warn airstrikes alone won't stop the Houthis

News agencies|19:00

Despite a month and a half of heavy air and naval bombardment by the United States and, more recently, Britain, Yemen's Houthi rebels launched four separate attacks against Israel within a single day, underscoring the group's continued operational capacity and defiance.

The Iran-backed terrorist group, which controls northwestern Yemen, has maintained pressure on Israel and its allies, triggering repeated missile alerts across the country in recent weeks. Some projectiles have been intercepted without sirens being activated, highlighting the ongoing challenge to Israel's air defenses.

The Red Sea blockade imposed by the Houthis also remains in place, inflicting significant economic harm on both Israel and Egypt. As the conflict drags on, international observers have begun to question whether the current U.S.-led air campaign is sufficient—or whether only a broader ground operation will ultimately bring the Houthis to heel.

Since the start of the latest campaign overnight on March 15–16, the Trump administration has launched twice as many airstrikes as the Biden administration did over a 13-month period. According to U.S. Central Command, the operation has targeted over 800 Houthi sites, killing hundreds of fighters, including senior figures.

The Pentagon claims the strikes have had tangible effects: ballistic missile launches by the Houthis have dropped by 69 percent, while drone attacks have declined by 55 percent. The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) reported at least 351 U.S. strikes over six weeks—America's highest monthly total since 2017.

Yet the campaign's main objective—halting Houthi aggression toward Israel and securing Red Sea shipping lanes—has not been achieved.

According to The Financial Times, the U.S. is still grappling with a dilemma that eluded President Joe Biden and even Saudi Arabia before him: how to significantly degrade Houthi military capabilities and end the attacks without being drawn into a costly, protracted war with no clear endgame.

Though U.S. strikes have forced the rebel group's senior leadership into hiding and reportedly destroyed critical infrastructure and weapons depots, Houthi forces continue to stage weekly rallies in Sanaa, showcasing anti-Israel and anti-American sentiment. The group has also managed to inflict damage on U.S. forces, albeit limited. In one recent incident, an American F-18 fighter jet plunged into the sea from the USS Harry S. Truman as its crew attempted to evade a Houthi attack.

"I haven't seen an ability to make the Houthis desperate for a pause," Jon Alterman of the Center for Strategic and International Studies told the Financial Times. "When I've spoken with people in the U.S. government, many seem consistently baffled by the Houthi calculus."

According to Alterman, one of the core challenges is that the Houthis derive their legitimacy, in part, from opposition to the United States. They also have a "lot of patience," he added.

Under the Biden administration, the U.S. also attempted to deter the Houthis through airstrikes, albeit at a slower pace. But the group, hardened by years of Saudi bombardment and fortified by an extensive network of tunnels and bunkers in Yemen's northern mountains, remained largely undeterred.

Former U.S. ambassador Dan Shapiro, who served in the Biden administration, said officials eventually concluded that "probably we're going to need to kill some Houthi leaders to change their policy." However, he noted that such a move raised political concerns about implicitly supporting rival Yemeni factions—something the administration was reluctant to do.

In recent weeks, Houthi missile and drone attacks have reached nearly every region of Israel. According to Ynet military analyst Ron Ben-Yishai, the uptick in attacks stems from two key developments.

First, U.S. intelligence capabilities have significantly improved during the six-week air campaign, allowing for more precise targeting of Houthi arms depots and launch sites. Israel believes the U.S. is now effectively striking not just weapon storage facilities but also operational sites used to launch missiles and drones across western and central Yemen.

Second, U.S. forces have successfully disrupted Iran's supply lines, making it harder for the Houthis to receive new weapons. As a result, analysts say, the Houthis are accelerating their launches—firing off drones and missiles before their caches can be destroyed.

Mirroring Hamas tactics in Gaza, the Houthis are also adjusting the timing of their attacks, launching during daylight hours when the visibility of missile flashes makes it harder for American aircraft to detect and target them with precision.

Only a ground offensive

The escalation in Houthi attacks on Israel and Red Sea shipping came shortly after the end of the most recent ceasefire in Gaza, which until then had coincided with a lull in Houthi operations.

Former Pentagon official Dana Stroul described the current U.S. operation as “the most significant sustained air campaign the U.S. military has carried out since the height of the ‘defeat ISIS’ war more than a decade ago.”

While the barrage of airstrikes may be taking a toll on the Houthis, speculation has mounted about whether anti-Houthi factions—or even Yemen’s internationally recognized government—will attempt to seize the opportunity to launch a renewed ground offensive. Such an operation could reignite the civil war that was effectively frozen in 2022 following a truce between the Houthis and Saudi Arabia.

However, two senior Yemeni officials from anti-Houthi camps told the Financial Times that while discussions have taken place with the U.S., there are no immediate plans for a ground operation. They cited not only strategic hesitation but also the devastating humanitarian consequences such an escalation could bring in war-ravaged Yemen, where life expectancy hovers around 63.

“We’re telling them to achieve their objectives; there needs to be something on the ground and the region [Saudi Arabia and the UAE] has to be involved,” one official said. “But there’s still skepticism.” With Riyadh and Abu Dhabi publicly denying involvement in any renewed offensive—after years of costly entanglement—Yemeni leadership appears paralyzed. “Everyone is waiting for the other one to move,” the official added. Meanwhile, Yemen’s Prime Minister Ahmed Awad bin Mubarak announced his resignation. In a statement posted on X (formerly Twitter), he cited “many difficulties,” including the inability to effectively organize the government. “I just concluded a meeting with the chairman of the Presidential Leadership Council, Rashad al-Alimi, and submitted my resignation as prime minister,” he wrote. “I pray my successor will succeed and call on everyone to unite and support him in these difficult times.”

Farea al-Muslimi, a researcher at Chatham House in London, said the Houthis could be seriously weakened by a combined air-and-ground campaign involving southern Yemeni factions. But such an effort would require close coordination among the U.S., Saudi Arabia, the UAE and groups that have failed to oust the Houthis for nearly a decade. “You have a lot of people dealing with the war as if they’ve learned nothing from 2015 [when Saudi Arabia intervened], as if this is going to be easy, and I’m not full of that wishful thinking,” al-Muslimi told the Financial Times. “The Houthis have a PhD in being incognito and no matter how heavy the airstrikes, it’s not going to make much difference on its own.”

With the campaign’s endgame unclear, questions remain about the long-term effectiveness of the U.S. effort. Shapiro noted that while the Biden administration’s earlier strikes destroyed hundreds of weapons depots, “at the end of the day, they have many more than hundreds, and they can keep building.” “They’ve got an indigenous capability and they are still smuggling” from Iran, said Shapiro.

The U.S. recently issued direct warnings to Iran, vowing to respond “at the time and place of our choosing” over its continued support for the Houthis.

Stroul also cautioned about the toll the Red Sea campaign is taking on American military readiness. "They've pulled so much out of the Asia-Pacific theatre for this campaign in the Red Sea," she said. "So, how long are they willing to go on, and where's the pain point for them?"

Jerusalem and Cairo losing patience

Israel has opted not to respond militarily to recent Houthi attacks, relying instead on the ongoing U.S.-led campaign in Yemen, officials said this week. According to Israeli defense sources, Washington's intensive air campaign has significantly degraded the Iran-backed group's capabilities, making Israeli intervention unnecessary for now.

"The fact that they're still firing doesn't mean much," a senior Israeli security official told Ynet earlier this week. "The American operation is very effective. The Houthis still have launch capabilities, but they're struggling to launch in significant numbers. Most of the missiles are intercepted or fall short—right now, the Houthi threat to Israel is more of a nuisance than a strategic danger."

The official added that it's difficult to predict when the threat from Yemen will disappear entirely, but emphasized the need for patience. "The Americans are doing a good job there. There's nothing we could add in terms of offensive capabilities," he said. Another Israeli source noted, "Every day during the past six weeks, the U.S. has carried out roughly ten times more strikes than we could execute in Yemen in an entire year."

An Israeli interceptor launched at an incoming Houthi missile

As the military campaign continues, Egypt faces steep economic fallout from the Houthi disruption of Red Sea shipping routes. The sharp decline in traffic through the Suez Canal has cost Cairo an estimated \$800 million in monthly revenue. Tensions between Egypt and Washington flared recently when President Donald Trump publicly called on Cairo to grant the U.S. free passage through the canal, arguing that "America is protecting it."

From Jerusalem's perspective, the broader concern is not only the immediate threat of Houthi missile fire, but the group's growing reach. Israeli officials have been monitoring Houthi attempts to expand their presence into the Horn of Africa, geographically drawing closer to Israel.

Danny Citrinowicz, a research fellow at the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) and former head of the Iran branch in IDF Military Intelligence, warned earlier this month that the ideological fervor driving the Houthis to target Israel would not easily be diminished.

"Eventually, there may be no choice but to bring down the Houthi regime," Citrinowicz said. "The U.S. strikes are doing good tactical work, but they're not building long-term deterrence. The Houthis may be hurt, but their motivation to act is stronger than ever."

05.03.25 – Sa - Omer 15

Trump removed Mike Waltz from NSA & placed him as a hawkish UN ambassador

05.03.25 – Sa - Omer 15

Trump ousted national security adviser over Iran talks with Netanyahu, report says
Mike Waltz's dismissal followed secret talks with Netanyahu on striking Iran and
classified chat group leak, as Trump grew wary of the adviser's hawkish stance and
internal clashes

Ynet|17:05

One of the key reasons behind the abrupt dismissal of National Security Adviser Mike Waltz earlier this week was his involvement in "intense coordination" with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu regarding a potential military strike on Iran, just hours before a scheduled Trump-Netanyahu summit, The Washington Post reported on Saturday, citing two senior administration officials and Trump advisers.

The report said President Donald Trump had grown increasingly frustrated with Waltz, who was perceived as hawkish and overly eager to resort to military force. He reportedly clashed with senior administration figures over military policy, particularly on the issue of whether to launch strikes against Iran.

According to The Post, the final straw in Waltz's tenure was the so-called "Signalgate" affair in which he inadvertently added the editor of The Atlantic magazine to a Signal group chat discussing sensitive military plans for airstrikes in Yemen. The fallout from the leak further undermined Waltz's position.

On Thursday, Trump announced Waltz's reassignment, nominating him to serve as U.S. ambassador to the United Nations. Secretary of State Marco Rubio will take over as national security adviser.

In a Truth Social post, Trump praised Waltz's record in the military, Congress and the White House, saying: "I know he'll bring the same dedication to his new role. We will continue fighting tirelessly to make America—and the world—safe again."

According to The Post, Trump was particularly angered by Waltz's conduct in early February, when Netanyahu visited the White House. That day, Waltz was reportedly deeply engaged in coordinating with the Israeli leader on military options against Iran. Two sources said Waltz supported Netanyahu's position and pushed the view that "time was ripe" for action against Tehran.

"Waltz wanted to take U.S. policy in a direction Trump wasn't comfortable with because the U.S. hadn't attempted a diplomatic solution," one source told the paper. "It got back to Trump and the president wasn't happy with it."

The episode has reportedly led some senior officials to question the continued need for a traditional National Security Council structure. They expressed satisfaction with Rubio's appointment and suggested that Waltz's exit could mark a shift in the NSC's influence, which has historically played a central role in shaping U.S. foreign policy.

A White House official, a Trump adviser and another individual familiar with the matter told the paper they "increasingly felt [Waltz] was not a good fit for the president."

A Trump adviser added, “If Jim Baker was doing a side deal with the Saudis to subvert George H.W. Bush, you’d be fired. You can’t do that. You work for the president of your country, not a president of another country.”

Despite the mounting tensions, efforts were reportedly made to support Waltz within the administration. According to two senior officials, Vice President JD Vance attempted to offer Waltz a lifeline in March by taking him on a trip to Greenland—a territory Trump had once expressed interest in acquiring. “The decision to take him along was in part to boost the embattled adviser days after the Atlantic reported that Waltz had inadvertently included the magazine’s editor on a planning chat coordinating military action in Yemen,” one of the officials said.

05.03.25 – Sa - Omer 15

IDF 20 Syria strikes overnight — its most intense wave of attacks in Syria this year

05.03.25 – Sa - Omer 15

IDF confirms Syria strikes, reports Druze evacuated for treatment

Military reports Air Force targeted Syrian military sites while also evacuating five wounded Druze from al-Suwayda to an Israeli hospital amid escalating violence

Yoav Zitun, Lior Ben Ari | 13:21

The IDF Spokesperson’s Unit confirmed on Saturday that Israeli fighter jets struck targets across Syria overnight between Friday and Saturday. The military said the strikes targeted a “military site, anti-aircraft cannons, and surface-to-air missile infrastructure.”

Syrian reports said the attacks hit areas near Hama, Damascus, Daraa, and the coastal city of Latakia. Air Force helicopters also took part in the operation.

During the night, conflicting reports emerged that one helicopter had landed in the al-Suwayda region in southwestern Syria — where dozens of Druze were massacred earlier this week — and took off minutes later carrying wounded Druze.

Hours later, without addressing the helicopter report directly, the IDF announced that five wounded Syrian Druze had been evacuated to Ziv Medical Center in Safed. The military added, “The IDF is deployed in southern Syria and is prepared to prevent the entry of hostile forces into the area of Druze villages.”

According to the UK-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, Israel carried out around 20 strikes overnight — its most intense wave of attacks in Syria this year. Saudi-owned Al-Hadath channel claimed one of the targets was an air defense base once used by Bashar Assad’s regime.

Later reports said Israeli jets struck al-Shaara in the Latakia countryside and the city of Harasta near Damascus. Hezbollah-affiliated Lebanese outlet Al-Mayadeen reported that the strike near Shtaha targeted a warehouse inside an old Syrian army base.

Local sources said Israeli aircraft were operating along Syria's coast, center and south, targeting military sites and an area near an old military hospital north of Damascus. Syrian media later reported casualties. The official SANA news agency said one person was killed in Harasta, a suburb of Damascus. The Sham FM radio station reported four injuries in Harasta and two more near Latakia. SANA also said four people were wounded in the Hama area.

The previous night, Israel reportedly struck near the Syrian presidential palace in a warning to Syrian President Ahmad al-Sharaa following violent clashes with members of the Druze community. Damascus described that strike as a "dangerous escalation."

05.03.25 – Sa - Omer 15

US and Israel finalizing agreement to resume Gaza aid deliveries

05.03.25 – Sa - Omer 15

US and Israel near agreement to resume Gaza aid deliveries, report

Two countries reportedly finalizing a deal to resume aid to Gaza via a new distribution system, as Israel's Security Cabinet prepares to approve expanded military operations in the Strip

Ynet|09:45

The U.S. and Israel are close to finalizing a new agreement that would resume humanitarian aid deliveries to Gaza, American outlet Axios reported early Saturday, citing two Israeli officials and a U.S. source familiar with the matter.

The deal would outline a new distribution mechanism designed to prevent Hamas from seizing the aid, with the IDF having no direct involvement. Officials said the goal is to get this mechanism in place before the IDF expands its ground operations in the Strip.

According to the report, the aid will be delivered through an internationally backed trust fund supported by donor countries and philanthropic organizations. Aid would be delivered to designated hubs inside Gaza, where Palestinian families could collect one aid package per week, enough to last seven days.

An informed source said Israel has committed to funding and executing the engineering work needed to build the infrastructure for these distribution sites.

The developing agreement also includes a provision for a private American company to handle logistics and provide security at and around the aid centers. Israeli officials stressed that the IDF will not be involved in the distribution process or present at the sites but will offer indirect security in other areas of Gaza.

Israel halted humanitarian aid deliveries to Gaza roughly two months ago, following the end of the first phase of the hostage deal and the collapse of talks for a second phase. Defense Minister Israel Katz said two weeks ago that Israel is preparing to resume aid deliveries but only through a new civilian-operated infrastructure.

On Sunday, the Security Cabinet is expected to approve expanded combat plans for Gaza, including a broader reserve call-up. Reservists will be divided into two groups: combat battalions for offensive operations deep in the Strip and full brigades to replace compulsory service units entering Gaza as the spearhead of the new operation. The planned escalation does not appear to include a full-scale invasion or complete reoccupation of the Strip but rather another significant step up in operations. Israeli officials said Friday that hostage deal negotiations are nearing exhaustion and Israel will intensify its military efforts if Hamas continues to reject a deal.

05.03.25 – Sa - Omer 15

Official urges patience against Houthi threat after 4th missile launch in 24 hours

05.03.25 – Sa - Omer 15

Official urges 'patience' against Houthi threat after 4th missile launch in 24 hours
Sirens blare across central Israel after Yemeni terror group launches fourth missile in one day, marking another escalation in attacks despite weeks of US military operations targeting their capabilities
ynet|Updated:08:39

Air raid sirens sounded Saturday morning across central Israel following a missile launch by Yemen's Houthis, according to the IDF. The military said the projectile was intercepted and that alerts were activated "in accordance with protocol." Residents reported hearing explosions.

The sirens went off at 6:25 a.m. local time. Israel's emergency service Magen David Adom reported no injuries, except for a 26-year-old man who was hurt while running to a shelter.

Roughly 1.5 million people live in the areas where the alerts were triggered. This follows two missile alerts in northern Israel on Friday, also linked to ballistic missile fire from Yemen. The first strike, targeting the Ramat David Airbase, triggered sirens around 5:30 a.m. in several northern regions. Shrapnel was later found in a kindergarten in Mishmar HaEmek. A second barrage at 1:30 p.m. activated sirens in Haifa, the Carmel area and the Jezreel Valley. No casualties were reported in either incident.

The IDF also said it intercepted a drone launched toward Israel from the east on Friday, likely also fired by Yemen's Houthis. In recent weeks, dozens of cities and towns in southern and central Israel have also experienced alerts due to similar launches from Yemen.

The attacks continue despite ongoing U.S. airstrikes in Yemen. A month and a half into the American operation, the Houthis appear not only to maintain their launch capabilities but to be increasing the pace of their attacks.

Earlier this week, U.S. Central Command reported that over 800 Houthi targets had been struck, with hundreds of terrorists killed. Still, some in Washington have criticized the campaign's limited objectives, saying it has failed to eliminate the group's leadership or cripple its missile capabilities.

U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth recently warned Iran over its support for the Houthis. "You will bear the consequences at a time and place of our choosing," Hegseth said in a message to Tehran. "We see your lethal support and know exactly what you're doing. You know what the U.S. military is capable of — you've been warned."

Israeli officials have said they're refraining from responding directly to the Houthis because the U.S. is leading the fight. "The fact that they're firing doesn't mean much," a senior Israeli defense official said earlier this week.

"The American operation is very effective. The Houthis can still launch missiles but not in large quantities. Most are intercepted or fall short. The Houthi threat is mostly an annoying nuisance for Israel."

The official added that while it's hard to say when the threat from Yemen will end, "patience is needed." He also noted that Israel has little to contribute to the U.S.-led campaign. "Every day during this operation, the Americans have carried out about 10 times as many strikes as we could do in Yemen over the course of a year," the source said.

First published: 06:30, 05.03.25

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Ynet-News, May 02, 2025 – Friday Iyar 2nd Month
Iyar 2nd Month 2:33 pm 04.27.25 – Su- Omer 09 New Moon

05.02.25 – Fr - Omer 14

Israeli strike on Syria countryside, will not allow forces south of Damascus

05.02.25 – Fr - Omer 14

Foreign hostages forgotten in Gaza: 6 beaten for not understanding Hamas, others killed

05.02.25 – Fr - Omer 14

Israel approves plans to expand Gaza operation

05.02.25 – Fr - Omer 14

Saudi citing Egyptian; cease-fire talks on the Gaza Strip have definitively failed

05.02.25 – Fr - Omer 14

2,000 km from Israel: two drones attacked Gaza aid ship near Malta

05.02.25 – Fr - Omer 14

Shin Bet introduces new security measures for Netanyahu amid growing tensions

05.02.25 – Fr - Omer 14

IDF set for 24,000 reserve call-up prepares to expand Gaza military operations

05.02.25 – Fr - - News Placed in May 02 spot – Friday - Omer 14
Israel strikes near Syrian presidential palace amid violence against Druze

05.02.25 – Fr - Omer 14
Missile debris falls on kindergarten in north Israel from Houthi launch intercept

05.01.25 – Th - Omer 13
Druze IDF soldiers urge action amid Syria sectarian violence; We will go ourselves

05.01.25 – Th - Omer 13
Jerusalem hills wildfire brought under control after 30 hours of firefighting

05.01.25 – Th - Omer 13
Netanyahu: Will bring back hostages, but ultimate goal is defeating our enemies

05.01.25 – Th - Omer 13
IDF chief Zamir; military prepared to expand war to bring hostages home very soon

05.01.25 – Th - Omer 13
Ben-Gvir using Greece & Italy help rather than Israel resources to battle wildfires

05.01.25 – Th - - News Placed in May 01 spot – Thursday - Omer 13
220 yards of cars abandoned in Jerusalem hills wildfire, 18 suffered smoke injuries

04.30.25 – We - Omer 12
Arson suspected in Memorial Day fires sweeping Israel

04.30.25 – We - Omer 12
IDF strikes extremists near Damascus to thwart attack on Druze community

04.30.25 – We - Omer 12
US backs Israel's ban on UNRWA Gaza aid operations at World Court

04.30.25 – We - Omer 12
Due to high winds, torch lighting ceremony canceled, will broadcast recorded rehearsal

04.30.25 – We - Omer 12
Druze leader calls on Israel to intervene in sectarian fighting in Syria

04.30.25 – We - Omer 12
Netanyahu Memorial Day speech praised Israel's fallen heroes in defense of their home

04.30.25 – We - - News Placed in April 30 spot – Wednesday - Omer 12
50 firefighting teams deployed on forest fires in Jerusalem hills; evacuations for caution

04.30.25 – We - Omer 12

Trump purged Kamala Harris's husband & others from Holocaust Memorial Council

04.29.25 – Tu - Omer 11

Netanyahu to visit Azerbaijan 10 days after Iranian president

04.29.25 – Tu - Omer 11

President Isaac Herzog Memorial Day speech beside the Wall of Tears

04.29.25 – Tu - - News Placed in April 29 spot – Tuesday - Omer 11

On Israel's 77th Independence Day population 10,094,000: One-third are under 20

04.29.25 – Tu - Omer 11

Government scraps plan to dismiss Shin Bet chief after resignation announcement

04.29.25 – Tu - Omer 11

Hamas emerging from undiscovered tunnels, in fatal Gaza battle, killing two IDF

04.29.25 – Tu - Omer 11

IDF targets Hezbollah missiles stored in Beirut; Lebanon asks Embassy to stop attacks

04.28.25 – Mo - Omer 10

Israeli defense expanding Gaza operation to full force, with major reserve call-up

04.28.25 – Mo - Omer 10

Shin Bet chief Ronen Bar to step down June 15; begins appointing a replacement

04.28.25 – Mo - Omer 10

IDF conducts first use of quick response, Bar rocket, in Gaza Strip

04.28.25 – Mo - Omer 10

Israel refuses 5-year Gaza truce that enables Hamas to rebuild and continue war

04.28.25 – Mo - Omer 10

Demonstrators block roads as 70 active & 110 reserve Haredi enlist in IDF

04.28.25 – Mo- - - News Placed in April 28 spot – Monday - Omer 10

ICJ begins debate on Gaza aid; 40 nations discuss Israel in five days of hearings

04.28.25 – Mo - Omer 10

Iran fended off extensive cyber-attack against its infrastructure Sunday

04.28.25 – Mo - Omer 10

Normalize with Israel put Egypt in criticism defense from its own people & Arabs

04.28.25 – Mo - Omer 10

Israel hasn't attacked Yemen for 3 months, but the US has hit over 800 Houthi targets

04.28.25 – Mo - Omer 10

Trump announces US very close to reaching nuclear agreement with Iran

04.28.25 – Mo - Omer 10

PM meets Ambassadors of EU, Asia, Africa & Latin America in Jerusalem

04.27.25 – Su - Omer 09 New Moon

Air Force jet accidentally drops bomb over north Israel kibbutz for second time

04.27.25 – Su - Omer 09 New Moon

PM submits affidavit, Shin Bet chief did not warn of imminent October massacre

04.27.25 – Su - - News Placed in April 27 spot – Sunday - Omer 09 New Moon

IDF targets Hezbollah weapons warehouse in Beirut; warned residents of strike

04.27.25 – Su - Omer 09 New Moon

Iran accuses Israel of Saturday 12:00 pm port explosion, as death toll rises to 36

04.27.25 – Su - Omer 09 New Moon

Fires break out in Wadi Qelt and near Ramat Gan Safari; rescue efforts underway

04.27.25 – Su - Omer 09 New Moon

Egypt demands Hamas provide full report on hostages' condition by early May

04.27.25 – Su - Omer 09 New Moon

IDF bill to extend compulsory military service for men amid growing troop shortage

04.26.25 – Sa - Omer 08

IDF aerial defenses intercept Houthi missile strike on southern city of Beer sheva

04.26.25 – Sa - Omer 08

Israel skips Pope Francis funeral, angering president of Humanitarian Coalition

04.26.25 – Sa - Omer 08

Freelance journalist for BBC Arabs praises attacks on Jews: burn Jews like Hitler did

04.26.25 – Sa - Omer 08

Border Police officer, IDF captain killed in clashes with terrorists in Gaza

04.26.25 – Sa - - News Placed in April 26 spot – Saturday - Omer 08

Hamas negotiating for 5-year truce and all hostage release for IDF withdraw