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05.11.22

Al Jazeera reporter dead another wounded in IDF fight with PA in Jenin

05.11.22

Al Jazeera reported dead in IDF exchanges of fire in Jenin refugee camp

Abu Akleh, a native of Jerusalem killed while covering IDF incursion into camp resulting in fire fight with Palestinian gunmen; shot in the head is taken to local hospital and pronounced dead

Elior Levy, Reuters | Published: 05.11.22, 08:34

Shireen Abu Akleh 51, a seasoned reporter with the Al Jazeera network, was killed on Wednesday, in an exchange of fire when IDF troops entered the Jenin refugee camp.

The network says she was shot by Israeli troops. The IDF said they were investigating the incident.

Abu Akleh was reportedly shot in the head and taken to a local hospital where she was pronounced dead.

Al Jazeera interrupted its regular programming to report her death.

"We know all our reporters on the scene in Jenin were wearing flack jackets marked as Press," the network said.

"We condemn the terrible crime meant to prevent media outlets from their reporting," Al Jazeera said in a statement. "We hold the Israeli government and the occupation forces responsible for the murder of our colleague and demand that the international community condemn the killing of Shireen Abu Akleh."

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas also blamed Israel for the reporters' death.

One Palestinian official said Shireen Abu Akleh had been "assassinated" by Israeli forces while reporting on a raid in the city of Jenin, which has seen intensified army raids in recent weeks as violence has surged.

The Palestinian health ministry confirmed Abu Akleh's death and said a second reporter, Ali Samodi, had been wounded.

In a statement, the military said its troops had shot back after coming under "massive fire" in Jenin and that "there is a possibility, now being looked into, that reporters were hit - possibly by shoots fired by Palestinian gunmen".

This was the first reported military incursion into the camp in three weeks after they had entered the camp in search of suspected terror operatives.

Abu Akleh, a native of Jerusalem, had been covering Israel and the West Bank for Qatar based news organization for the past two decades and was a well known figure in the Arab speaking world.

The IDF said she **may have been shot by** the same **gunmen who were targeting troops** in the camp.

The military expressed its sadness over the incident.

"We **call on Palestinians to join** us in an **investigation** including by a coroner," the IDF said but added that thus far their **offer has been refused**.

05.10.22

EU coordinator seeks to salvage Vienna impasse over Tehran nuclear issues

05.10.22

EU's nuclear coordinator heads to Tehran to salvage nuclear deal

Enrique Mora says he was **traveling to Tehran**, as the bloc makes a **last-ditch effort to salvage** the deal after a weekslong standstill; Iranian official in Hebrew tweet says progress being made, 'were a sign of extreme government and official ability to deal with the most important matters'

Itamar Eichner,Reuters| Published: **05.10.22**, 22:10

The European Union's **Iran nuclear coordinator** Enrique Mora said on Tuesday he was **heading to Tehran to meet Iran's** negotiator Bagheri Kani to try to give new impetus **to save the 2015 accord**.

"Travelling again to Tehran for meetings with Bagheri Kani and other officials on the Vienna talks and other issues. Work on closing the remaining gaps of this negotiation continues," Enrique Mora said on Twitter, referring to the formal negotiation process in the Austrian capital.

Officials in **Tehran confirmed Mora's visit**, seeking to portray it as proof of Iran's diplomatic engagement and attention to economic problems.

Ali Shamkhani, the chair of **Iran's** powerful Supreme National **Security Council**, **tweeted in Hebrew** that nuclear talks were progressing and "were a sign of extreme government and official ability to deal with the most important matters."

The landmark accord in 2015 granted Iran sanctions relief in exchange for strict curbs on its nuclear program. Former President Donald Trump pulled the U.S. out of the deal four years ago, piling sanctions on Iran under a policy of "maximum pressure." In response, Iran has gradually accelerated its enrichment of uranium, including a small amount to 60% enrichment- a short, technical step from weapons-grade levels.

President Joe Biden vowed to rejoin the deal. Talks to **get both sides to return to compliance** began in Vienna over a year ago. But the **negotiations**, which also involve the United Kingdom, Germany, France, China and Russia, have **stalled since breaking off in March**. The sides had seemed just on the verge of a breakthrough.

Mora has played a crucial role in facilitating the negotiations, given that **Iran refuses to speak directly to America**. He last traveled to Tehran in late March, before heading to Washington.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said Mora would be "conveying messages" from the other signatories to Tehran during his trip.

But talks in **Vienna** have remained at an **impasse** over several unresolved issues. U.S. officials have said a **key hurdle involves Iranian demands** that Washington lift its **terrorism designation of Iran's powerful, paramilitary Revolutionary Guard**.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine also has complicated the talks, as Moscow threatened to derail negotiations with new demands and European capitals have grown distracted by the continent's greatest humanitarian crisis since World War II.

Separately, the **International Atomic Energy Agency**, charged with monitoring Iran's nuclear program, has grown increasingly **critical of Iran's failure to cooperate** with the organization and its refusal to explain the traces of radioactive material at several undeclared nuclear sites in the country.

The agency's head, Rafael Mariano Grossi, expressed his frustration with Iran in comments to the European Parliament committees on Tuesday.

"We, in the last few months, were able to identify **traces of enriched uranium in places that have never been declared by Iran**, so we are extremely concerned about this," Grossi said, adding he was skeptical that officials could close a nuclear deal if the **IAEA still had unanswered questions**.

05.10.22

Attorney argues mentally disabled not responsible for smuggling & unfit for trial

05.10.22

Police nab 11 kilograms of pure cocaine in case at airport

Drug worth millions discovered in case of mentally disabled passenger held in custody despite family claims he could not even travel to France on his own and had no money to fund smuggling

Israel Moshkovitz | Published: **05.10.22**, 21:59

The police were investigating a major drug smuggling, after a **suitcase containing 11 kilograms of pure cocaine**, which arrived on a flight from France was detected.

The case belonged to a 32-year-old resident of the north, who was suffering from a mental disability, and was being held in police custody.

The drugs were valued at millions of shekels and were confiscated and transferred to a police lab for further testing.

The Nazareth Magistrate court remanded the owner of the case to five days in custody, while his attorney argued he could not be held responsible for smuggling drugs because of his mental condition.

"My client who is a person with disabilities, made several suicide attempts after his military service, had lost sight in one of his eyes and is being treated by psychiatrists," Lawyer Tomer Naveh said.

He said he was told by his client that the suitcase was handed to him in France and that he was asked to bring it to Israel. "He has no idea who gave him the suitcase. We will present medical records, which will prove our claim that he is unfit to stand trial."

The police said their investigation was just beginning. "This is a huge case, the investigation is in its initial steps and the goal is to reach more suspects that were involved in this smuggling," a police official said.

The suspect's mother told Ynet that her son is recognized as disabled by social services. "He doesn't understand what he's doing. I didn't even know he was in France, he told us that he was going on a trip to the south. From what I understand he's not even able to buy his own plane tickets and book a hotel room and he has no money to pay for such a strip," she said.

05.10.22

Terror wave sparks death penalty debate, only imposed twice for World War II crimes

05.10.22

Israel's latest terror wave sparks debate on death penalty

Recent security tensions, which have so far claimed the lives of 18 Israelis, have once again reignited the fiery discussion on the need for capital punishment, which in Israel has only been imposed twice, but thus far not against terrorists

i24NEWS, Ynet | Published: 05.10.22, 09:53

The terror wave that has engulfed Israel in recent weeks has sparked another round of nationwide debate on whether the de-facto ban on the death penalty should be lifted as a way to deter potential terrorists.

While capital punishment is legal in Israel, it has so far only been handed out for crimes committed during World War II, being imposed twice, against a convicted Nazi official and a convicted Nazi soldier.

"Of course I think that [the] death penalty is the solution, because in the last few weeks, 18 Israelis were murdered," said Hananya Naftali shortly after the capture of the two terrorists who went on a deadly axe rampage in the city of Elad.

"Let's face it, we live next to radical neighbors that want to see our blood, not our smiles. They want to see our funerals, not our weddings."

Joel Schalit, editor-in-chief of news startup The Battleground, disagreed with sentencing terrorists to death on the grounds that captured operatives are useful intelligence resources to prevent future attacks. "I think that captured terrorists are a lifelong intelligence opportunity for security services to exploit, and that provides more protection for Israelis."

Iranian writer Ramin Parham, meanwhile, explained that though Israel's security establishment is effective when it comes to capturing terrorists, it has repeatedly failed to address the source of the issue, which he says stems from the regional absence of functioning states.

"Have you been able to root out the problem [of terrorism]? No. We have to look at where the root cause is," Parham said.

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05.09.22

Hamas prestige riding a flurry of lone-wolf terror, fueled by religious sentiment

05.09.22

Hamas riding terror wave, not leading it, IDF says

Military says terror group's leader Yahya Sinwar should not be seen as the one orchestrating the violence as it would only serve to bolster his prestige in the eyes of Palestinians

Yoav Zitun|Published: 05.09.22, 23:31

The Israeli military told the country's political echelon Monday that " Hamas and its leader in Gaza Yahya Sinwar are riding the latest wave of terror, but are not leading it."

The military's assessment comes on the heels of the arrest of the two Palestinian terrorists behind an axe rampage in Elad, who told their investigators they were not members of Hamas, nor did they receive directions from the terrorist group.

The deadly attack — which claimed the lives of three Israeli — came less than a week after Sinwar called on all Palestinians to carry out attacks against Israelis using knives or axes.

The military also told politicians that Sinwar should not be seen as the one orchestrating the violence as it would only serve to bolster his prestige in the eyes of the Palestinians. The IDF added that it views the terror wave as a flurry of lone-wolf attacks fueled by religious sentiment and recent events on Jerusalem's Temple Mount, and that there was no intelligence to suggest a link to Hamas.

This comes just days after IDF Chief of Staff Aviv Kochavi said he considers each victim of the recent attacks an operational failure on the military's end, especially considering the vast resources and personnel deployed to stymie fresh attacks.

To that end, the military has deployed six battalions of reservist forces at the West Bank security barrier — which Israel deems a vital tool in its fight against Palestinian terrorism — bringing the total number of battalions in the volatile area to 26, twice as many as usual.

The IDF also intends to continue carrying out counterterrorism sweeps across the Jenin area in the West Bank — which proved to be a hotbed for Palestinian terrorist activity in recent months — which include extensive arrests and seizures of illegal arms.

Israel also launched on Monday a month-long military drill featuring thousands of troops which a multi-front confrontation with an emphasis on Gaza, Lebanon and the West Bank.

05.10.22

Russia pounds Black Sea port Odessa as bodies uncovered in collapsed buildings

05.10.22

Russia pounds Odessa as civilian bodies uncovered elsewhere

Ukrainian military says Russian forces recently fired at the Black Sea port city of Odessa seven missiles, which injured and killed several civilians; Authorities add bodies of 44 civilians uncovered in a bombed building 75 miles from the besieged city of Kharkiv
Associated Press| Published: 05.10.22, 12:46

Russia pounded away at Ukraine's vital southern port of Odessa, Ukrainian officials said Tuesday, as they announced they found the bodies of 44 civilians in the rubble of a building in the northeast that was destroyed weeks ago.

The bodies were found in a five-story building that collapsed in March in Izyum, about 120 kilometers (75 miles) from the city of Kharkiv, which has been under sustained Russian attack since the beginning of the war in late February.

"This is another horrible war crime of the Russian occupiers against the civilian population" said Oleh Synehubov, the head of the regional administration, in a social media message announcing the deaths.

Izyum lies on a key route to the eastern industrial region of the Donbas, now the focus of Russia's war in Ukraine. Synehubov did not say specifically where the building was.

Earlier, the Ukrainian military said Russian forces fired seven missiles a day earlier from the air at the crucial Black Sea port of Odessa, hitting a shopping center and a warehouse. One person was killed and five were wounded, the military said.

Ukraine alleged at least some of the munitions used dated back to the Soviet era, making them unreliable in targeting. Ukrainian, British and American officials warn Russia is rapidly expending its stock of precision weapons and may not be able to quickly build

more, raising the risk of more **imprecise rockets being used as** the conflict grinds on. That could result in wider damage and more civilian deaths.

But the Center for Defense Strategies, a Ukrainian think tank tracking the war, said Moscow did use **some precision weapons** against Odessa: Kinzhal, or "Dagger" hypersonic **air-to-surface missiles** -- which allows Russia to fire at a distance without being exposed to potential anti-aircraft fire.

The strikes came the same day Russian President Vladimir Putin marked his country's biggest patriotic holiday without being able to boast of major new battlefield successes. On Monday, he watched troops march in formation and military hardware roll by in a **Victory Day parade on Moscow's Red Square** to celebrate the Soviet Union's role in the 1945 defeat of Nazi Germany.

Many Western analysts had expected Putin to use Victory Day holiday to trumpet some kind of victory in Ukraine or announce an escalation, but he did neither. Instead, he sought to justify the war again as a necessary response to what he portrayed as a hostile Ukraine.

Putin has long bristled at NATO's creep eastward into former Soviet republics. Ukraine and its Western allies have denied the country posed any threat.

"The danger was rising by the day," **Putin said**. "Russia has given a preemptive response to aggression. **It was forced, timely, and the only correct decision.**"

Intense fighting also raged in **Ukraine's east**, including at a **steel plant in Mariupol**, where Russian forces sought to end the resistance of Ukrainian **defenders making their last stand**. One of the Ukrainian fighters holding out at the steel plant said they were still defending the city. Valeri Paditel, who heads the border guards in the Donetsk region, said the fighters were "doing everything to make those who defend the city in the future proud." The **Ukrainian** military further **warned** Tuesday that **Russia could target** the country's **chemical industries**. The claim wasn't immediately explained in the report. But Russian **shelling** has previously **targeted oil depots and other industrial sites** during the war.

05.09.22

First Muslim sworn in, to reorganize the 15-justice Supreme Court

05.09.22

Khaled Kabuv sworn in as first Muslim Supreme Court justice

64-years-old Kabuv is known to hold constitutional views, and takes office alongside some **80 other judges** who were sworn in to various positions **at the country's highest judicial authority**

i24NEWS| Published: **05.09.22**, 20:48

Justice Khaled Kabuv on Monday became the **first Muslim appointed to Israel's Supreme Court**, the country's highest judicial authority.

Jaffa-born Kabuv — who will succeed former Justice Neal Hendel — takes office alongside some 80 other judges who were sworn in to various positions at the Court on Monday.

64-years-old Kabuv — known to hold constitutional views — had been approached in 2017 for the position, though he was not initially named.

His and the other justices' appointment comes amid efforts to reorganize the 15-justice body presiding over Israel's top court, which is often called on to rule on questions affecting society, the economy or the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

It acts both as the ultimate court for criminal and civil matters, and as the guarantor of the constitutionality of laws and the conformity of government decisions.

Kabuv's appointment comes hours after United Torah Judaism MK Yitzhak Pindrus faced backlash from across the political spectrum for both panning the Supreme Court for what he considered a gross overstep into the work of the Knesset, and after stating publicly that he would like “to blow up” Israel's top court.
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05.09.22

Arab Joint List & Bennett-Lapid Coalition remains; votes defeat Zionist Party 52-61

05.09.22

Coalition rejoices after defeating first no-confidence motions of summer session
One of measures beaten thanks to votes from Joint List; PM says 'silent majority' in Israel wishes government sees out its days; 'After all the spins and malarkey, we started with a victory,' says Lapid

Attila Somfalvi, Moran Azulay | Published: 05.09.22, 19:58

The coalition rejoiced Monday evening after defeating two motions of no-confidence tabled by the opposition at the opening of the Knesset's summer session.

The first measure led by Likud failed 52-61, garnering support from the opposition's predominately Arab Joint List. The second motion led by Shas, from which the Joint List was absent, was voted down 52-56.

Yamina MK Idit Silamn, who left the coalition hanging by a thread when she resigned from It last month, was absent from both votes.

After the vote, Prime Minister Naftali Bennett said that the "silent majority" in Israel wanted the coalition to see out its days.

"All the no-confidence motions were defeated and we are kicking off this session on the right foot. The silent majority in Israel wants the success of the government, the success of the state and continued economic prosperity and stability," he said.

"The silent majority should speak a little more. We will continue to take the country forward, in growth and security, and we will do it together — that is paramount."

Foreign Minister Yair Lapid wrote on Twitter, "after all the spins and malarkey, we started with a victory."

The opposition's Religious Zionist Party slammed the coalition for counting on the Joint List's votes, a move that would have been considered political suicide in previous years.

05.09.22

Israel nabs woman sending death threats to PM's family & left wing coalition

05.09.22

Israel nabs woman suspected of sending Bennett death threats

Police put gag order on investigation after 65-year-old woman resident of the south is arrested on suspicions of sending members of PM's family threatening letters containing live bullets

Liran Levi | Published: 05.09.22, 13:04

The Israeli police on Monday arrested a woman on suspicion of sending death threats to the wife and son of Prime Minister Naftali Bennett last month.

Police said the 65-year-old woman was arrested in southern Israel where she lives, but put a gag order on the investigation and the release of any additional details.

The first of the death threats, addressed to Gilat Bennett, was sent on April 26, and prompted the police serious crimes unit along with the Shin Bet to launch a probe. The second letter, addressed to Bennett's 16-year old son Yoni, was received two days later, on April 28.

Both letters contained live bullets inside the envelopes.

Bennett said at the time that political disagreements, no matter how deep, should never turn violent. "We must do everything to make sure that does not happen," he said.

"We are all human beings and can have arguments and disagreements but not bullying and threats. I am a prime minister and a politician, but I am also a father and husband and my duty is to protect my wife and children. We must tone the discourse down," he said.

"I call on everyone from all sides of the political spectrum - now is the time for calm and appeasement."

Yoni, in a story posted on Instagram, said the death threats were the result of incitement by right-wing influences who deserve to go to prison.

Bennett has been criticized by members of the Right after he opted to join a coalition made up of parties from the left side of the political spectrum, including the Islamist Ra'am faction.

Members of his Yamina party have also received threats, including his long-time political ally and Interior Minister Ayelet Shaked - who has since been assigned a special security detail.

05.08.22

Two arrested for operating drug lab within defunct synagogue in northern Israel

05.08.22

Two arrested for operating drug lab within defunct synagogue in northern Israel
Can't wait for the High Holy Days? Officers seized over 700 lbs of cannabis after receiving intel about an active drug operation, but were shocked to find signs pointing to the venue's previous purpose

Israel Moskovitz | Published: 05.08.22, 18:14

Two men were arrested for operating a bustling drug lab in a space that had housed a synagogue in the northern city of Tiberias until recently, Israel Police said on Sunday.

Over the weekend, officers raided the drug lab and seized about 1,700 cannabis plants, weighing a total of about 320 kilograms (705 lbs). But to their shock, they found signs pointing to the venue's previous purpose.

"A few days ago, we received intelligence about a drug lab operating in a residential apartment in Tiberias. We opened an undercover investigation and gathered evidence about the lab's operations," said Superintendent Aviv Benzino, head of the Investigations and Intelligence Department at the Tiberias Police.

"It's shocking that they took such a sacred place and turned it into a drug lab for the purpose of growing, selling and distributing drugs, and all this out of greed. I estimate the place operated for at least a few weeks, the laboratory operated inside an apartment complex, part of which used to serve as a synagogue."

The attorney of the two suspects said in response that he has yet to receive the investigation material as it's still in its early stages but described his clients as two religious Jewish men from Bnei Brak and Jerusalem "who came to live in Tiberias... without criminal intent."

A court extended their remand by six days.

05.09.22

Lebanon's election May 15; Hezbollah now has two-thirds of parliament

05.09.22

A rival sits out Lebanon's election. Now Hezbollah could fill the void
Expanded grip on parliament could give Hezbollah more sway over presidential elections
but could also isolate Lebanon at a time when it desperately needs international support
Reuters| Updated: 05.09.22, 11:47

The stakes are high in Lebanon's election. The heavily armed Hezbollah movement has seen one of its main rivals descend into disarray, handing it an opportunity to cement power over a divided country that's sinking into poverty.

Abdallah al-Rahman will not be casting a ballot, though.

"I won't vote for anyone," said the wiry-haired sculptor and activist, dismissing the candidates whose pictures are plastered on buildings and giant billboards in Lebanon's second city of Tripoli ahead of the national parliamentary election on May 15.

Rahman is from the Sunni Muslim community, one of the country's main groupings and a traditional counterweight to Hezbollah, a powerful Iranian-backed Shi'ite group. Yet like many of his fellow Sunnis, he is skipping the election following the shock withdrawal of his community's longtime leader and figurehead, Saad al-Hariri, scion of a political dynasty.

Rami Harrouq, who lives in the Hariri stronghold of Bab al-Tebbaneh in northern Tripoli, will not be participating either. Alternative candidates have not impressed the 39-year-old factory worker, and he has been worn down by the country's economic collapse.

"We carry a lot of resentment against politicians, especially in Tripoli. These last two years have been full of misfortune for us," he said. "Of course I won't vote."
High abstentions among Sunnis - as well as a fragmentation of the Sunni vote as a result of Hariri turning his back on politics - could play into the hands of Hezbollah and its allies, who collectively won 71 of 128 seats when Lebanon last voted in 2018, according to some political experts.

"Because of what Saad Hariri did, Hezbollah now has two-thirds of the parliament within its sights," said Ibrahim al-Jawhari, a political analyst who served as an adviser to former prime minister Hariri, referring to the threshold that would shield the group and its allies from vetoes.

Hezbollah gains would reverberate far beyond this small country of about 7 million people. Israel, Lebanon's neighbor to the south, sees the group as a national security threat and has waged war against it in the past. Washington, London and much of Europe have classified it as a terrorist organization.

Such a political shift in the movement's favor would affirm Lebanon's position within the regional sphere of influence of Iran, which is waging a proxy battle with Sunni arch-rival Saudi Arabia across the Middle East and is at loggerheads with the United States.

Hezbollah is an organization that occupies a unique place in Lebanese society. It commands a paramilitary wing that some experts estimate has a more potent arsenal than the national army, while also running hospitals and schools - earning it the frequent description of a "state within a state".

The group itself has said it expects the make-up of the new parliament to differ little from the outgoing one and that it neither wants nor expects a two-thirds majority. Its main Christian ally, for one, is widely expected to lose seats.

Yet any expanded grip on parliament could give Hezbollah more sway over presidential elections later this year and over economic reform bills required by the International Monetary Fund, and even allow for amendments to the constitution.

It could also isolate Lebanon at a time when it desperately needs international support.

Three-quarters of the population are below the poverty line amid an economic meltdown that many people blame on political paralysis and corruption.

Political loyalties in the country mostly follow sectarian lines and power is shared between Muslim and Christian groups in a complex system aimed at preserving a balance between factions that have taken up arms against each other in the past.

'Feeling lost'

When Hariri announced in January he was stepping back from politics and that neither he nor the broader Future Movement would take part in upcoming elections, it was widely seen as a de facto boycott by the political heavyweight.

The move - which shocked supporters and rivals alike - capped years of political difficulties for Hariri. His waning fortunes have reflected a deterioration in relations with Riyadh, which cut ties with Hariri as Hezbollah's grip tightened.

"We shouldn't forget that since 1992 in Beirut, people had one name on their lips - Hariri. Whether Rafik or Saad, it was Hariri," said Fouad Makhzoumi, a Sunni businessman and member of parliament who is running again.

"When it's no longer around, what do you do?" he said. "There's a sense of feeling lost." Rafik, also a former premier, was assassinated in 2005.

While the Future Movement has not officially called for a boycott, its strongholds in Beirut are dotted with posters encouraging people to skip the vote and supporters have tweeted similar messages.

Turnout is expected to be particularly low in Lebanon's Sunni majority districts, according to independent pollster Kamal Feghali.

He told Reuters that about 30% of people who voted in those districts in 2018 have said they will not this year - with the highest level of disillusionment in Tripoli. That compares with a nationwide average of 20%.

Future Movement founding member Mustafa Allouch told Reuters he understood the disdain on the streets, but said sitting on the sidelines was not the answer.

The 64-year-old resigned from the party, delayed his retirement plans and chose to run as an independent because he feared the "vacuum" left by Hariri's withdrawal would allow Hezbollah-backed lists to sweep in.

"This is very dangerous, because it drops the electoral threshold and opens the door for those we talked about earlier, Hezbollah ... to get seats and take control of the city," he said.

Grand Mufti call

Sunnis and Shi'ites are estimated to account for just under a third of the population each, with Christians making up an estimated 40%. Under electoral law, candidates cannot run as individuals but must run in lists.

In Tripoli's Sunni-majority northern district of Akkar, Future won five of seven seats in 2018. Four of the winning lawmakers are running again on two separate lists.

As the vote nears, leading Sunni figures have focused on trying to boost voter turnout nationwide.

Bahaa Hariri, Saad's older brother and political rival, founded a movement known as "Together for Lebanon" that has been broadcasting advertisements across radio stations encouraging people to vote, without naming preferred candidates.

In April, the religious head of Lebanon's Sunni community, Grand Mufti Abdullatif Derian, declared in a sermon that all Lebanese should vote.

Jawhari, the analyst, estimated the fragmented and disillusioned Sunni community could hand Hezbollah and its allies at least six, but up to eight, additional seats in parliament "without having to do anything".

They would need to get to 86 seats in order to secure two-thirds of parliament, which would shield them from any vetoes emanating from a "blocking third".

A Hezbollah source said the group had not yet decided who it would back as Lebanon's next president and said it supported talks with the IMF but was against any "conditional" aid.

The source added that Hariri's withdrawal could be a boon to Hezbollah's partners.

"It's natural and logical," the source said.

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05.09.22

Putin at WWII Victory Day: Ukraine action was preemptive move against West

05.09.22

Putin at WWII Victory Day: Ukraine action was preemptive move against West

Speaking at annual parade in Red Square commemorating the defeat of Nazi Germany, Russia's leader claims West is readying for invasion 'of our land' and 'special operation' in Ukraine was needed to save Donbass

News agencies | Published: 05.09.22, 10:36

Russian President Vladimir Putin used his speech at the annual Victory Day parade to say it's Russia's duty to protect the memory of those who defeated Nazism, and Moscow's military action in Ukraine was a preemptive move to ward off aggression.

The annual show in Red Square commemorating the defeat of Nazi Germany has become so ritualized that one year's parade is barely distinguishable from others. A previously unseen piece of equipment might appear; the medal-festooned World War II veterans in the viewing stands become frailer and fewer in number each year. Its predictability can dilute its emotional power.

Putin then took the stand for a speech, claiming the West was preparing for the invasion "of our land," while NATO was creating "threats at our borders". He, however, did not declare the "special military operation" in Ukraine as official war - as some expected - instead, saying the "operation" was necessary to "save" the Donbass region. He directly addressed soldiers fighting in the Donbas region of eastern Ukraine, which Russia has pledged to "liberate" from Kyiv's control.

"You are fighting for the Motherland, for its future, so that no one forgets the lessons of World War Two. So that there is no place in the world for executioners, punishers and Nazis," he said.

This year, as Russian troops fight grueling battles in Ukraine and unleash torrents of missiles and bombs, few Russians are likely to be dulled by the parade's rituals. Instead, they will watch it for signs of what could come next in the conflict.

When asked whether mobilization rumors could dampen the Victory Day mood, Putin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said "nothing will cast a shadow" over "the sacred day, the most important day" for Russians.

Human rights groups report a spike in calls from people asking about laws concerning mobilization and their rights in case of being ordered to join the military.

Russian state TV has ramped up the patriotic rhetoric. In announcing the Feb. 24 military operation, Putin declared it was aimed at the "demilitarization" of Ukraine to remove a perceived military threat to Russia by "neo-Nazis."

In his 11-minute speech, Putin did not mention Ukraine by name, gave no assessment of progress in the war and offered no indication of how long it might continue. There was no mention of the bloody battle for Mariupol, where Ukrainian defenders holed up in the ruins of the Azovstal steel works are still defying Russia's assault.

Putin has repeatedly likened the war - which he casts as a battle against dangerous "Nazi"-inspired nationalists in Ukraine - to the challenge the Soviet Union faced when Adolf Hitler invaded in 1941.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskiy has said it is Russia that is staging a "bloody re-enactment of Nazism" in Ukraine.

05.08.22

Hundreds of security captured terrorists after forcing them to hide in one spot

05.08.22

Israel captures Elad terrorists after four-day manhunt

IDF, Shin Bet and Israel Police say in a joint statement As'ad Alrafa'ani and Sabhi Abu Shakir were caught hiding behind a bush in a quarry near Elad, exhausted and dehydrated; 'We promised we will lay our hands on them, and so we did,' Bennett says
Ynet| Published: 05.08.22, 11:27

Israel on Sunday said it has captured the two terrorists who carried out the deadly attack in the predominantly Haredi city of Elad last week.

As'ad Alrafa'ani (19) and Sabhi Abu Shakir (20), both from Rumana near the city of Jenin, stabbed three people to death with an axe and a knife on Thursday evening before fleeing the scene and prompting a massive manhunt.

The two were apprehended on Sunday morning hiding behind a bush in a quarry near Elad, having not eaten or drunk any water for nearly 60 hours with the axe used in the attack lying meters away.

The two were caught by special forces and commando units using helicopters and other means.

"The two terrorists who murdered three Israeli civilians in the deadly attack in the city of Elad have been caught," said in a joint statement the IDF, Shin Bet and the Israel Police. The two had been detained and taken for further questioning by the security forces.

Police Commissioner Kobi Shabtai praised security forces for nabbing the two terrorists responsible for the deaths of Yonatan Havakuk, 44, Boaz Gol, 49, and Oren Ben Yiftah, 35, all fathers who leave behind 16 orphans.

"The manhunt for the terrorists is over. Our intense activity immediately after the terror attack, using hundreds of security personnel, forced them to hide in one spot, and that is what led us to them," Shabtai said.

"We said we won't rest until they are captured. Every terrorist must know that Israel's reach is long and we will find anyone who will harm the citizens of the Jewish State. We are determined to continue fighting terror, and I thank all the security personnel who went through sleepless nights in order to capture the terrorists."

Prime Minister Naftali Bennett also praised the security forces in the wake of the successful operation. "We promised we will lay our hands on them, and so we did," he said at the start of the cabinet meeting.

"These terrorists were incited to brutally murder with unimaginable cruelty and they were captured wretched near a forest in the area. But their capture isn't enough, we are on the verge of a new stage in the war against terror. We won't allow inciting others from afar without consequences," Bennett added, referring to Hamas officials in Gaza.

At least 18 Israelis have been killed in five attacks since March, including another stabbing rampage in southern Israel, two shootings in the Tel Aviv area, and a shooting last weekend in a West Bank city of Ariel.

Nearly 30 Palestinians have died in violence - most of whom had carried out attacks or were involved in confrontations with Israeli forces in the West Bank. Associated Press contributed to this report

05.07.22

Drone strike targets Iran militia in east Syria, by US coalition forces

05.07.22

Drone strike targets eastern Syria, state media reports

Attack, not attributed to Israel, carried out in Deir ez-Zor area where American led coalition forces operate; Syrian opposition rights group says Iran backed militias were hit in the strike

Liad Osmo | Published: 05.07.22, 13:30

The Syrian news agency Sana reported on Saturday, that an airstrike was carried out against targets in the Deir ez-Zor area in the east of the country, but did not attribute the attack to Israel.

The UK based Syrian Observatory for Human's Right said Iran backed militias were targeted.

Several explosions have been heard on Saturday morning in the city of Deir ez-Zor and its surroundings which are under the control of the regime forces and Iranian-backed militias, the rights group said.

These explosions have been caused by airstrikes by an unidentified military aircraft that hit Iranian-backed militia positions in Hawija Katia area and "Al-Jisr Al-Jadid Al-Tourabi," they added.

Saudi Arabia's Al Arabiya channel reports claimed the strike was carried out by American drones.

There were no reports of injuries in the attack.

American led coalition forces have been known to operate in the area of Deir ez-Zor as have Iranian proxies.

Israel has been known to carry out strikes against targets there in the past, Although no blame has been directed at the IDF after Saturday's attack.

Syria attributed a strike on the Damascus area last month, to Israel. At least nine people were reported to have been killed in that attack which Saudi media reported, was targeting Iranian weapons shipments for the Lebanese based Hezbollah group.

According to the Observatory for Human Rights, missiles hit the Damascus international airport and where warehouses belonging to both the Syrian and the Iranian military, were hit.

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Ynet-News, May 06, 2022 – Friday

05.05.22 – Th- - - News

74th Independence of Israel; holiday wishes by Russia, US, China, France

05.05.22 – Th- - - News Placed in May 05 spot – Thursday

Supreme Court paves way for razing eight PA nomad villages of West Bank

05.06.22 – Fr- - - News Placed in May 06 spot – Friday

Zionist, Orthodox & Hasidim instructed to carry weapons on Shabbat

05.05.22 – Th- - - News Placed in May 04 spot – Wednesday

UN chief calls to disarm Hezbollah ahead of Lebanon elections May 15

05.03.22 – Tu- - - News Placed in May 07 spot – Saturday

Putin may fully mobilize forces May 9; Pope told Russia will end war May 9

05.03.22 – Tu- - - News

Russians use difficult criticism as Israel evaluates condition of Kyiv embassy

05.01.22 – Su- - - News

Russia missile strike on Odesa weapons & ammunition as Pelosi visits Kyiv

05.02.22 – Mo- - - News

Hamas claims Saturday West Bank guard shooting, says more to come

05.02.22 – Mo- - - News Placed in May 03 spot – Tuesday

UN budget gaps & increased costs, de-prioritize UNRWA the Palestinian cause

05.02.22 – Mo- - - News Placed in May 02 spot – Monday

Ramadan ends; poster raised; Sinwar warns any Israeli on site is a fight with Gaza