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IDF changed Gaza & fulfilled the mission; border tensions high for Old City march

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Jihad not agreed to Egypt cease-fire; Hamas enjoys seeing his opposition pummeled

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866 Gaza rockets, 260 intercepted, 215 IDF targets attacked as PA seeks a victory

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Iran pressures Gaza respond against Israel; Hamas leaders aware of becoming targets

5.14.23
IDF changed Gaza & fulfilled the mission; border tensions high for Old City march

5.14.23

Netanyahu: We've changed the equation in Gaza

Prime Minister says military achieves goals set at start of 5-day operation; Ben-Gvir demands targeted killings be extended to West Bank and claims he impacts decision to launch attack

Gilad Cohen|04:38

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Sunday that Israel changed the equation in the face of Gaza.

"IDF and the Shin Bet took out the entire leadership of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad and by doing so, fulfilled the goals of the mission in perfect form," he said at the start of the weekly cabinet meeting.

Members of Netanyahu's government praised the operation with Communications Minister Shlomo Karhi, himself a resident of the South, saying he hoped he would not have to sleep in a shelter any longer. National Security advisor Tzahi Hanegbi quiet would be met with quiet, "but Israel would do everything necessary to protect its citizens."

The ceasefire that was reached with the mediation of Egypt, came into effect at 10 pm on Saturday but tensions along the border remain high, as terror factions eye a right-wing march in the Old City of Jerusalem later in the week.

The annual event marking the anniversary of the unification of Jerusalem after the 1967 Six-Day War, has prompted cross-border fighting in past years.

An end to the fighting brings back political challenges to Netanyahu's government, first of them, the need to pass a national budget bill before the end of May. The prime minister hopes to present the bill as early as next week.

Netanyahu will also have to face his coalition crisis brought on by the far-right National Defense Minister who had been absent from parliament and cabinet meetings over his accusations that the government was too lax in its policies against the Gaza terror groups, a point now made irrelevant after the military operation.

Ben-Gvir claimed he had been a factor in the decision to launch the attack on Gaza although he had been barred from attending any of the security meetings leading up to or during the 5-days of fighting.

He demanded that targeted killing be carried out against terror leaders in the West Bank as well. "If Likud members thought I would be defeated and come crawling back, they were mistaken," he said. "I believe I had an impact on the operation. We will not dissolve a right-wing coalition but at the same time will not sit back when the government adopts policies that are not in line with the right. The last operation was good and important but it must be continued," Ben-Gvir said.

5.14.23

Calm after five-day 1.469 Jihad rockets and mortar fight & 422 IDF strikes

5.14.23

Operation Shield and Arrow wrap, in numbers

Initial IDF count reveals 1.469 rockets and mortar shells were fired toward Israel, 291 failed to breach the border and 39 fell in the sea; two died in Israel and 33 in Gaza including 6 PIJ commanders killed in 422 Israeli strikes on the Strip

Yoav Zitun, Einav Halabi 03:53

Israel ended its third round of fighting in four years, against the Palestinian Islamic Jihad terror group in Gaza and the IDF has begun its assessment of Operation Shield and Arrow after six commanders of the Islamist faction were killed and 422 strikes were conducted in Gaza over a five-day period.

According to the military's initial tally, 1,469 rockets and mortars were launched from the Strip at Israeli communities in Israel, 1,139 of them breached the border while 291 failed and 39, landed in the sea.

The Iron Dome missile defense system intercepted 437 of the launches and two were intercepted by the David's Sling system, in its first operational capacity. According to the IDF, the Iron Dome exhibited a 90% success rate.

Two people were killed by rocket fire in Israel, one in Rehovot, when a rocket hit an apartment block there on Thursday, and another, a resident of Gaza who was working in Israel, after being critically hurt by shrapnel in an open field in the south, on Saturday. Israel's emergency service MDA said 77 people received treatment during the operation, 32 of them for physical injuries and 45 for emotional distress caused by the rocket fire. According to Palestinian health officials, 33 people were killed in Gaza among them 13 civilians including six children and three women. Israel claims at least four of them were victims of failed rocket launches. At least 147 people were injured by Israeli strikes. Israel conducted targeted assassinations of six PIJ commanders.

According to Palestinian estimates, Gaza suffered five million dollars in damage as a result of the fighting.

5.12.23

Jihad not agreed to Egypt cease-fire; Hamas enjoys seeing his opposition pummeled

5.12.23

Egypt presents Israel with new Gaza cease-fire outline as fighting drags on

Rocket fire toward border communities, Ashkelon, and Netivot continues following targeted killing of Islamic Jihad operations chief; IDF responds with strikes on terrorist group's command centers, as well as 15 concealed rocket launchers; Jerusalem waits for response from Gaza on Egyptian truce proposal

Adam Kutub, Itamar Eichner, Daniel Salami, Einav Halabi, Matan Tzuri, |15:41

Egyptian mediators on Friday presented Israel with a new cease-fire proposal for fighting in Gaza.

In first since onset of hostilities, Gaza rockets fired toward Jerusalem area. However, Israeli officials remain apprehensive about accepting the outline before Islamic Jihad signals it agrees to its details, and sent a message that "calm will be answered with calm."

Meanwhile, the IDF continued to pound Islamic Jihad targets in the Gaza Strip Friday evening. The army stated that Israeli fighter jets have struck two more of the terrorist group's operational command centers, which have been used by several of its operatives for planning and facilitating rocket fire toward Israeli population centers. Earlier, fighter jets and other aircraft struck 15 rocket launchers and hidden launch sites from which recent launches toward Israeli territory were carried out.

IDF airstrike in Beit Hanoun, Gaza

According to the Palestinians, the attacks focused on Khan Younis and Deir al-Balah, as well as farmland in the northern part of the coastal enclave.

Warning sirens continued to ring out across communities in the Eshkol Regional Council near the Gaza border, as well as in the southern cities of Ashkelon and Netivot. The Iron Dome missile defense system was activated against incoming threats.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu held a situation assessment Friday evening and instructed the heads of the defense establishment to carry on with targeted assassinations of Islamic Jihad commanders and precision strikes on the terrorist group's assets.

A senior Israeli official familiar with the discussion at the meetings told Ynet that the ongoing Operation Shield and Arrow has led to a "change in the equation" whereby Israel is no longer willing to make a distinction between rocket fire aimed at Gaza border towns and cities and the Tel Aviv metropolitan area or other cities.

According to the source, the cease-fire is being stalled to demonstrate to Gaza terrorist factions that Israel is committed to protecting all parts of its territory with the same force and convey a message to Hezbollah, Hamas, and other terrorist organizations about the intelligence capabilities of the Shin Bet and the IDF.

"The targeted assassinations demonstrate tremendous intelligence capabilities. To eliminate [Islamic Jihad commanders] while they know they are being sought out demonstrates extremely high capabilities," the source said, adding that as far as the Israeli defense establishment is concerned "their homes, rocket production sites, and they themselves" are legitimate targets.

Earlier Thursday, Israel carried out the assassination of Iyad al-Hassani, Islamic Jihad's operations chief and served as the head of the organization's military council, who was hiding in a safehouse west of Gaza City. His personal assistant Mohammed Abed al-A'al was also reportedly killed in the attack.

The source also said that the likelihood of Hamas joining the fighting is low, contradicting an earlier assessment that the Gaza-ruling faction might throw its hat in the ring as well.

"Hamas doesn't want to get involved in this; it has too much to lose. Hamas's disdain for Islamic Jihad is perhaps even greater than their hatred for us. They quite enjoy seeing them being pummeled," the source said.

Meanwhile, the organizers of the protest movement against the government's judicial reform drive announced the cancellation of the central rally planned for Saturday evening in Tel Aviv following the escalation.

"The protest organizers have been in close contact with the Israeli police and security officials in recent days, with the consideration before us being the preservation of the security of the protesters," the organizers said.

"We continue to monitor the situation closely, and if we see that the government is advancing changes related to judicial reform, we will take to the streets of Israel with full force. The Israeli government should not mistake our intentions - we are guardians of democracy and we will ensure that Israel remains democratic."

5.12.23

866 Gaza rockets, 260 intercepted, 215 IDF targets attacked as PA seeks a victory

5.12.23

In first since onset of hostilities, Gaza rockets fired toward Jerusalem area

With 13-hour lull in rocket fire, sirens blare across southern Israeli cities and in areas near Jerusalem, as rocket barrages resume IDF resumes attacks on Islamic Jihad posts in Gaza while Israel stalls truce talks

Itamar Eichner, Daniel Salami, Elisha Ben Kimon, Matan Tzuri|Updated:04:57

After 13 hours of tense calm along the Gaza Strip border, Islamic Jihad resumed rocket attacks toward southern Israel Friday noon and for the first time since the onset of fighting, also launched rockets toward the Jerusalem area, with warning sirens sounding in Beit Shemesh, Nes Harim, and Alon Shvut on the West bank.

The Iron Dome missile defense system intercepted several rockets, but some caused damage to homes and a greenhouse in communities in the Eshkol Regional Council and a home in Sderot. No injuries were reported.

In response, the IDF attacked Islamic Jihad military posts in Rafah and hit two militants in the southern part of the Strip who had prepared to fire rockets.

Shortly before the barrage of about 10 rockets fired at Ashkelon, residents in Sderot were warned to remain vigilant as there is still concern about rocket fire.

Meanwhile, cease-fire negotiations between the sides continue, and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu held a security assessment with Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, IDF Chief of Staff Herzi Halevi, and Shin Bet Director Ronen Bar.

According to an Israeli source in Jerusalem, until the latest barrage of rockets, the sides made strides in truce talks after Islamic Jihad secured what it viewed as a victory, following the killing of an Israeli senior citizen in an attack on the central city of Rehovot on Thursday.

Immediately following the attack, Israeli sources said they were suspending talks while rocket fire continued.

The PIJ had retreated from its demand for the return of the body of Khabar Adnan, a senior Islamic Jihad operative who died in an Israeli prison after a three-month hunger strike. A Palestinian source told BBC Arabic that the efforts to reach a truce "encountered obstacles".

Meanwhile, Israeli attacks in the Strip continued with relatively low intensity overnight and in the morning, while there were no rocket launches towards Israel since 10 pm Thursday.

An Israeli source stated that the "obstacle" preventing progress is Israel's refusal to commit to a cessation of targeted killings, and both sides are seeking a formula that they can agree on.

"Ultimately, they want to reach a situation where there are no targeted killings between rounds," the official said. "In practice, there have been no targeted killings without Jihad firing in more than a decade. It may end in oral understandings as it has in the past."

According to the official, "the Israeli message to Islamic Jihad is that every moment that passes they may lose more assets, so it's better for them to agree to a cease-fire as soon as possible."

The debate between the warring sides is primarily semantic: Islamic Jihad demands a commitment to something that happens anyway when they do not fire. That is, there are no targeted killings without rockets.

According to the BBC report, "the cease-fire agreement will be discussed between Egyptian President al-Sisi, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, King Abdullah of Jordan, and U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken."

Apart from the BBC, Arab television channel ar-Rad reported that "the cease-fire talks in Gaza being conducted by Egypt and the UN are very difficult, but negotiators are optimistic about the possibility of reaching a cease-fire agreement within a few hours." The report also noted that the main obstacle currently is Israel's demand to stop targeted killings in the Strip, but it is also claimed that Israel is trying to be the one to "have the final say" before the cease-fire goes into effect. The report also stated that "a final text for the cease-fire agreement is currently being worked on."

Mohammed al-Hindi, the head of the Islamic Jihad's politburo and the organization's representative in cease-fire talks in Egypt, met Wednesday with the head of Egyptian intelligence Abbas Kamel in Cairo. Speaking to Qatar-based Al Araby TV, al-Hindi said that "the talks continue, and we hope to reach an honorable agreement that reflects the interests of the Palestinian people."

Meanwhile, shortly before midnight, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office released an official statement following a security assessment, stating that "the operation

will continue as necessary." Senior Israeli officials defined the chances of a cease-fire as "50-50", adding that "as long as there is no progress, we will not stop. If there are targets - we hit them. We give them an opportunity, but we don't give them endless credit."

According to reports, Egypt has been attempting to broker a cease-fire agreement between the two sides since Tuesday, but so far, its efforts have been unsuccessful. Islamic Jihad insists on an Israeli commitment to cease targeted killings, and releasing the body of hunger-striking prisoner Khader Adnan, as part of the truce. Israel was not planning on holding Adnan's body, but it is also not willing to release it as part of a cease-fire, nor is it willing to commit to stopping targeted killings. Initially, Islamic Jihad also called for the cancellation of the Jerusalem Flag March next week, but this has now been taken off the table.

Meanwhile, Operation Shield and Arrow continues at a relatively low intensity. The IDF conducted attacks Thursday night and early Friday on military positions and rocket launchers of the Islamic Jihad throughout Gaza.

Since the beginning of the operation, 215 targets in the Palestinian enclave have been attacked, 260 rockets were intercepted by Israeli air defenses, 163 unsuccessful launches were detected (one out of every five), and a total of 866 rockets were fired into Israel. The IDF says that one reason why Islamic Jihad has not been firing at night is that the military is targeting the firing positions.

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5.11.23

Iran invested millions in Gaza fight; 18000 barred work permits stops terror

5.11.23

Security official: Iran attempting to block Gaza cease fire

Tehran, seeing its investment of tens of millions of dollars in the PIJ go to waste, demands the fight continue, as is briefing the local press that any agreement would be a collaboration with Israel

Yossi Yehushua|09:53

Officials in Israel say Iran is attempting to disrupt any cease fire agreement by putting pressure on the terror group's leadership currently in Lebanon.

The Iranians see any such agreement as total capitulation because the Palestinian Islamic Jihad is the closest faction to Tehran and had thus far failed to reach any major achievement in the fighting that began earlier this week.

Until the PIJ succeeds in inflicting major harm on Israelis, either by rocket fire, anti-tank fire, or terror attack, Iran will pressure the group to continue to fight.

Tehran finances the PIJ to the tune of tens of millions of dollars and is likely seeing that investment go to waste. In their effort to prevent a ceasefire, Iranian officials have begun briefing local media that such a move would be regarded as cooperation with Israel.

The Gaza-ruling Hamas organization, which has thus far refrained from joining the fight or assisting the PIJ, would like to see this round of cross-border fighting end, in order to minimize the financial cost to the Strip, which has its borders closed and produce prevented from entering. The 18,000 Gazans who have work permits for jobs in Israel and contribute to the local economy are also barred from leaving the strip. Despite the IDF and security services regarding Operation Shield and Arrow a success thus far, with commanders of the PIJ coming under targeted attacks, Defense officials are bracing for a terror strike that could come not only from Gaza but also from the West Bank, and present the PIJ with the achievement it needs before it would agree to cease its fire. Israel has succeeded, up to now, to keep Hamas and the northern part of the Gaza Strip out of the battle and is keeping a tight hold over the West Bank, but a successful terror attack could change that picture

5.11.23

After 507 rockets; Gaza wants IDF to stop killing leaders & cancel flag march

5.11.23

IDF resumes strikes on Gaza terror targets as fighting enters third day

Israeli fighter jets attack Islamic Jihad rocket-launching positions in northern Gaza after rockets fired toward Israeli border communities; 'Our capabilities become more complex, enabling us to achieve successes even mid-conflict,' IDF spokesman says
Elisha Ben Kimon, Einav Halabi, Attila Somfalvi|03:07

The Israel Defense Forces resumed strikes on terrorist targets in the Gaza Strip Thursday morning as Operation Shield and Arrow against Islamic Jihad entered its third day.

The IDF launched an attack on Islamic Jihad rocket-launching positions in the northern Gaza Strip – about an hour after rockets were fired towards Nirim and Kisufim adjacent to the Gaza border. There were no reports of casualties or property damage.

The Ashkelon Regional Council also reported identifying rocket impact in open areas in its territory.

The IDF later announced that it had targeted Islamic Jihad mortar launchers in the northern Strip. Meanwhile, Egyptian-mediated efforts toward a cease-fire continue in the background.

Speaking to the Ynet studio, IDF spokesman Read Admiral Dani Hagari stated that the military and Shin Bet internal intelligence service are operating with unprecedented synergy, leading to the successful killing of the head of the Islamic Jihad's rocket forces, Ali Hassan Ghali, in his hideout in Khan Younis in the southern Strip early Thursday.

"We must distinguish between last night's attack and the attacks we carried out at the beginning of the conflict because it is challenging to locate people in hiding," said Hagari. "We discovered Ghali's safehouse and the Air Force executed a swift plan, hitting only his hideout. Ghali was responsible for the 507 missile launches toward Israel [Wednesday] and was killed last night, along with two other high-ranking militants who were with him. The IDF and Shin Bet have been working together for years, but what characterizes the recent period is that we are generating joint capabilities. We train together on operational methods. For example, just yesterday, [IDF] Chief of Staff [Herzi Halevi] and Shin Bet [Director Ronen Bar] sat together in a bunker. It should be understood that working together through partnership in combat produces better results and achievements. Our capabilities become more complex, enabling us to achieve successes even mid-conflict."

According to Hagari, "This synergy is not only apparent in Gaza but also in the West Bank, in the Central Command, night after night in a coordinated manner. This successful effort has been ongoing for years and is continuously improving."

When asked why Islamic Jihad was able to launch rockets despite strikes on launchers and firing mechanisms, Hagari replied that "our attacks are precise, but attacking rockets is always a complex matter, especially when they are located in one of the most densely populated areas in the world, and their locations change constantly. We are no longer dealing with militants who come with a launcher, but with rockets that are timed and this makes it more complex. It challenges us, and we are developing new methods."

Cease-fire? 'Islamic Jihad is getting humiliated'

The IDF spokesperson also addressed the ongoing cease-fire negotiations, stating that "the diplomatic echelons are dealing with it, and until there is an official announcement and a finalized agreement, we will continue to defend and attack as required. It is not easy to deal with a large number of actors that we need to come to an agreement with. We hope that this will happen, but until then, nothing is final."

Earlier Thursday, a senior Israeli official told Ynet that "It's in everyone's interest to wrap up [the campaign], but Islamic Jihad is getting humiliated so bad that it's struggling to come to terms with its complete lack of achievements and zero Israeli casualties."

According to foreign media reports, a cease-fire was supposed to come into effect at midnight but the IDF killed the head of Islamic Jihad's rocket unit at around 1:30am, along with his brother - Mahmoud Hassan Ghali, a commander in the military wing of Islamic Jihad - and another Islamic Jihad operative identified as Mohammed Abed Al-Jawad.

However, a diplomatic source stated that cease-fire negotiations continued afterward and throughout the night. According to the source, "the cease-fire may be delayed, but it has not broken down - and there is no doubt that Islamic Jihad will respond to the assassination."

The international mediators - Egypt, Qatar, the UN, and the United States - worked throughout the night to advance cease-fire negotiations. The Islamic Jihad's three key demands remain the main obstacle to an agreement.

First, Israel's targeted killing policy must stop; second, the cancellation of the nationalist Flag March on Jerusalem Day, which the government announced Wednesday will follow its usual route through the Old City's Damascus Gate; and third, the return of the body of

the security prisoner Khader Adnan, whose death led to the firing of 104 rockets towards Israel last week which sparked the current bout of fighting.

Earlier Thursday, IDF spokesman Hagari said that of the 507 rockets launched at Israel by Palestinian Islamic Jihad as of Thursday morning, some 110 fell short of the Gaza Strip border.

One of the incidents occurred when a rocket from a failed launch landed in Beit Hanoun in northern Gaza killing Rami Shadi Hamdan, 16, and Ahmed Muhammad a-Shabaki, 51. In a second incident, a failed rocket launch in Gaza City killed Layan Bilal Mohammad Abdullah Mdoukh, 10, and Yazan Jawdat Fathi Elayyan, 16, according to the IDF.

Also on Thursday morning, the IDF released a video of officers from the 200 Squadron of the Israel Air Force who can be heard calling off a drone strike in the Gaza Strip on an Islamic Jihad target after detecting two children in the area.

5.10.23

Sderot residents caught in two rapid missile strikes as they flee north

5.10.23

Sderot residents caught in rocket fire as they flee north

Traffic builds up at the northern exit of the city, located just one mile away from Gaza, as residents rush to take cover. The quiet did not deceive us says deputy mayor; one home takes direct hit

Matan Tzuri, Eitan Glickman|07:47

The first rockets shot from the Gaza Strip since IDF began Operation Shield and Arrow did not cause damage, but less than an hour after the massive firing began, a house in Sderot was damaged. The family members took cover in a protected area during the rocket strikes, and there were no casualties reported.

Cohen Solomon, the owner of the home that was damaged, said "Since this morning there were warnings that there would be attacks. Thank God we were in a protected space - me, my wife, and the children."

Deputy Mayor of Sderot, Elad Kalimi, who arrived at the scene, said, "The round we expected has arrived. I ask the residents not to wander where they shouldn't and to stay close to protected areas. We have been in an emergency situation for a day and a half. The quiet did not deceive us. I continue to ask that the army strike Gaza as deep as possible." He added that around 3,000-4,000 residents of Sderot have evacuated the city with the assistance of the municipality, and according to him, the number will continue to increase

Some residents chose to leave Sderot immediately after the first rocket strike, and a long line of cars was formed at the northern exit of the city. However, the residents on their

way out were urged to exit their vehicles and take cover on the side of the roads, as rocket fire continued.

"There are protocols; we leave the car and seek shelter," explained Uriah, who is familiar with the procedure, and stated that "there were tremendous explosions, these are heavy rocket strikes."

"There was a day and a half of quiet, and then the missiles started coming. There is a constant 'Code Red' here," she added.

Ofer Dahan, another resident of Sderot, said, "Everything is still ahead of us" - and indeed, minutes later, sirens were heard in central Israel.

"We were sure we were returning to routine, and then two heavy rocket attacks were launched toward the city. It seems that the conflict is just beginning," described Amos Houry from Sderot after the first rocket attack. "The residents of Sderot suffered even without the rockets, and now there are massive strikes toward the city," he said.

Devorah Levi, a resident of the city who was in the commercial center during the attack, recounted, "I quickly ran to the bomb shelter. There were two rapid missile strikes, I knew it was coming."

5.10.23

Tel Aviv, central Israel and South under missile attack, by dozens of Gaza rockets

5.10.23

Tel Aviv, central Israel and South under missile attack, Sderot home sustains direct hit
Sirens blared shortly before 1.30 pm as dozens of rockets launched from Gaza targeted southern Israel in the initial barrage

Ynet|05:34

Tel Aviv and surrounding cities came under rocket attack on Wednesday, as heavy barrages continued to launch from Gaza.

A house in the southern city of Sderot sustained a direct hit from a rocket. There were no reported injuries from the impact after the owners were absent and a kindergarten was also hit in the area, was also hit, but was closed amid the security crisis.

Rockets were fired at the central planes and central Israel while Gaza border area communities sustained nearly constant fire since that latest attack began.

Beach-goers in Tel Aviv reported seeing intercepts just south of the city while intercepts were clearly heard in areas far north of the city.

Sirens blared shortly before 1.30 pm sending residents into shelters as rockets were intercepted by the Iron Dome missile defense system

The military was continuing to strike the Strip after an earlier attack killed at least one man described by the military as an operative of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad preparing to launch rockets at Israel.

Communities as far as the city of Ashkelon were targeted in the heavy rocket barrage

The IDF earlier instructed residents of the area to remain near sheltered spaces in anticipation of the attack, which came just a day after the military in a targeted operation, assassinated three senior PIJ commanders as well as military bases belonging to the Islamist faction.

Since then, and as special security measures were imposed on the south, expecting the Gaza faction to respond in an attack, no missiles were fired until this round.

5.09.23

All border cities residents near Gaza being evacuated by plan to northern hotels

5.09.23

Thousands evacuated from Gaza border to Dead Sea hotels

Hundreds of families from Gaza border communities boarded 25 buses to get away from the 'catastrophe' of rockets

Matan Tzuri|13:58

Thousands of Sderot residents were evacuated from the city Tuesday evening, accompanied by members of the Home Front Command as part of Mashav Ruach (Breeze) program, a response to Operation Shield and Arrow launched by the Israel Defense Forces early in the morning. The first phase of the evacuation included hundreds of families leaving on 25 buses. Most of them traveled to hotels in the Dead Sea.

Ramona Sayag, a Sderot resident who evacuated with her family, told Ynet that "a social worker called me and told me that I was going on vacation with the children due to the security situation. I know that if I had stayed then there would have been a catastrophe with the children."

Sayag told Ynet that "there is a feeling of fear. There are many dead in Gaza, and as soon as there are missiles here, it is one big catastrophe for the children."

Sayag said she was afraid to even leave the house to evacuate, "but I came here quickly in a taxi. As long as there are no missiles flying then it's fine. I'm glad we're being taken out to a different atmosphere."

"I wish that they would take care of this situation and that there would be something different here – both for us and for them. There are also children and people in Gaza just like us, except that there is also a different population there that presents us with different facts," she said.

Earlier, in the morning, hundreds of residents were evacuated from the enclave, in the framework of the Mashav Ruach program, an evacuation program coordinated and funded by the Defense Ministry, which is responsible for financing the stays in guest rooms, hotels and hostels. Local authorities are holding exit logs of departing families, and each Gaza border community has a designated location to house the displaced. Residents of Gaza border communities evacuated to the Shalom Hotel in Jerusalem, the El Hayam Hotel in Netanya, the Ana Hostels, Kibbutz Ramat Rachel, Kibbutz Sdot Yam, Kibbutz Ma'agan Michael, hotels and hostels in Eilat and to guest rooms in the north of the country. The first to evacuate were those with special needs, families on welfare and the elderly.

Sderot is preparing for another large evacuation on Wednesday, which will also include thousands of residents. The Mashav Ruach program was formulated by the National Emergency Authority (NAE) in the Ministry of Defense, in cooperation with the local authorities, based on previous rounds of fighting in Gaza.

The Ministry of Defense said that the program "is operated by local authorities and enables every resident in communities adjacent to the Gaza border to evacuate to accommodations defined in advance by the authorities with the help of the state. This is based on pre-existing contracts and early planning by the communities, which are tailored to their specific circumstances."

The local authorities of communities on the Gaza border held a situational assessment at noon on Tuesday to figure out how many families left and how many were remaining. In some communities, only "those with essential positions" remained, including emergency teams and dairy farmers.

Hanan, a resident of a Gaza border community, left Tuesday morning with his family. "We are already practicing, to know what to do," he said. "It's unpleasant, to say the least. It puts everyone in a tizzy, but it's inevitable. For a long time there has been a feeling that Islamic Jihad is playing with us."

The heads of the authorities in the south were informed around 2:00 a.m. about the operation that was launched in Gaza. Itamar Revivo, head of the Ashkelon Coast Regional Council, said that his municipality has been preparing for such an event.

"We are in direct contact with the IDF and the security forces, and the Home Front Command. We announced the cancelation of all the frameworks, today is a day off for formal activities, but we also canceled the informal activities, roads were blocked, alternative roads were announced, we also closed the beaches, we canceled all the planned gatherings," Revivo said. "We are preparing to provide the necessary response for the residents."

The head of the Sha'ar HaNegev Regional Council, Ofir Liebstein, said that upon receiving the update about the operation, teams went in the early hours of the morning to the localities to disperse the celebrants at the Lag B'Omer bonfires.

"There are times when you have to react and there are times when you have to take the initiative. Usually after there is an operation by the ID, the quiet period is longer and I hope it will be like that this time as well," said Liebstein.

5.09.23

'No terrorist is immune': Netanyahu says Gaza fighting could last days

5.09.23

'No terrorist is immune': Netanyahu says Gaza fighting could last days
PM warns any escalation will be answered with a decisive response and that fighting could spread to other fronts; Gallant urges Israeli to not grow complacent
Itamar Eichner|13:56

After a tense day following Israel's initiated Shield and Arrow to eliminate Islamic Jihad's high command in the Gaza Strip, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned on Tuesday that any escalation on the Palestinians' part will be "answered with a decisive response."

Speaking at a televised press conference from the IDF headquarters in Tel Aviv flanked by Defense Minister Yoav Gallant and the heads of the IDF and Shin Bet, Netanyahu issued a warning to terrorist organizations in Gaza, stating that "no terrorist is immune," but also pointing out that the current operation may continue for several days and be expanded to other fronts.

"We are in the midst of a campaign, and in the coming days, we will need to be patient. In this campaign, we all stand together as brothers, and I appreciate the resilience that Israeli citizens are showing," he said.

Netanyahu also addressed criticism leveled against him for the initial weak response to last week's firing of over 100 rockets from Gaza, which came following the death of a jailed Islamic Jihad member on a hunger strike.

He also revealed he had already instructed to carry out targeted assassinations last week, and the defense establishment was prepared for the current situation that developed overnight Tuesday.

"We operated with precision and caution, in order to exploit the right moment for the successful completion of the mission. I fully understand the desire to strike back at those who harm us. It is understandable and even natural to respond in kind, but as it has been said, 'by way of deception thou shalt do war,' and that is how we always operate," he said.

Israel eliminated three Islamic Jihad commanders in a nighttime air raid in the Gaza Strip. The strike came in response to a brief bout of cross-border violence during which Islamic Jihad fired over 100 rockets into southern Israel.

Gallant warned Israeli citizens to not grow complacent as the threat of rocket fire still looms.

"We know how to replicate and carry out this action in other areas and against various threats. Anyone who tries to challenge us will witness Israel's might," he said.

"The iron rampart that protects Israel in its struggle against terrorist organizations is formidable. We operate in accordance with a deep and strategic worldview, and our actions are designed to implement a systematic approach and achieve Israeli interests. We

are blessed with an excellent defense establishment that allows us to act with creativity and courage.

He added that Israeli security forces might soon be called up to additional offensive actions both in Gaza and the West Bank.

"Israeli citizens need to understand that the situation is far from resolved and not to be complacent, as there is still a risk of rocket fire. The IDF soldiers may soon be called upon to carry out enhanced defense operations on the borders of Gaza and the West Bank," he said.

"The defense establishment is prepared for any scenario, and we are in it for the long haul. I wish continued success to the brave soldiers of the IDF, and I urge all Israeli citizens to heed the instructions of the Home Front Command."

5.09.23

Iran pressures Gaza respond against Israel; Hamas leaders aware of becoming targets

5.09.23

Iran pressures Hamas to join response against Israel

Iranian opposition outlet reports Hamas' leadership is torn between joining the response of Iran-backed Islamic Jihad against Israel and not wanting to be dragged into a round of fighting that would harm Gazans

Itamar Eichner|09:53

Following the launch of Operation Shield and Arrow on Tuesday in which Israel killed 3 Palestinian Islamic Jihad Commanders in a series of attacks in the Gaza Strip, Iran is exerting "heavy pressure" on Hamas to respond, according to Iran International, a news outlet associated with the Iranian opposition.

Meanwhile, preparations continue in Israel for an expected response from the Islamic Jihad for the targeted killing of the organization's top three operatives overnight.

Initially, it was believed that the terrorist organization would respond immediately with rocket fire toward Israel. However, recent updates suggest that the response will likely take place later on Tuesday.

Defense Minister Yoav Gallant also instructed the military to be ready to strike at any Palestinian group preparing to launch rockets at Israel.

Gallant held a situation assessment Tuesday afternoon, his second of the day after another meeting in the morning including IDF Chief of Staff Herzi Halevi, Mossad head David Barnea, and Shin Bet chief Ronen Bar. The security cabinet also convened later on Tuesday for further discussions.

According to the Iran International report, Tehran's pressure is causing a rift within Hamas' leadership. On the one hand, Hamas leaders in Gaza are aware of the toll Gaza's

civilians and economy would pay in the event of a confrontation with Israel, and the possibility of becoming targets themselves.

Furthermore, they don't wish for Gaza's population to pay the price of the actions of the Islamic Jihad.

On the other hand, Hamas leaders outside Gaza, including Saleh al-Aroui who supports cooperation with Iran and is pushing for the establishment of a defensive alliance between all Iranian proxies, are pressuring their home base to join the expected rocket fire.

Following the strike, Israel had communicated to Hamas that the operation targeted Islamic Jihad solely. A senior security official said that while a response to the strike is likely, Israel doesn't wish for the situation to escalate any further.

"Hamas has no desire in joining Islamic Jihad. It doesn't want to sacrifice the lives of its own people for an organization backed by Iran and stands against Hamas' interests," the official said.

Meanwhile, a spokesperson for the military wing of Hamas, Abu Hamza, denounced the attack as an "inhumane crime" and vowed to continue the path taken by the fallen leaders, which he claimed would ultimately lead to "the downfall of the enemy and its commanders."

He further called on the public to support the resistance and "oppose the Zionists", indicating a potential escalation in the future.

The strike targeted PIJ commanders Khalil Bahtini, the Islamic Jihad commander for the northern Gaza Strip; Tareq Izzeldeen, the group's intermediary between its Gaza and West Bank arms; and Jihad Ghanam, the secretary of the Islamic Jihad's military council. According to Palestinian reports, the targets' family members were also killed in the attack.

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Ynet-News, May 10, 2023 – Wednesday

5.09.23 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday

Killing of collaborator for Israel exposes PA tensions, suspicions, paranoia

5.09.23 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday

Gaza factions shocked but vowed to continue the path of fallen leaders

5.09.23 – Tu- - - News Placed in May 09 spot – Tuesday

Netanyahu, Gallant, Bar & IDF concerned with leaks; kept MK's out of decisions

5.09.23 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday

IDF operation "Shield & Arrow" closed Gaza Strip to settle West Bank terrorism

5.08.23 – Mo- - - News Placed in May 08 spot – Monday
Israel kills 3 Jihad commanders in 40 aircraft strike on Gaza

5.08.23 – Mo- - - News – Monday
American academic association votes to boycott Israel in June, failed in 2015

5.08.23 – Mo- - - News Placed in May 07 spot – Sunday
Six terrorist student cell in Bethlehem, plots revealed by Shin Bet, IDF & police

5.04.23 – Th- - - News – Thursday
IDF probe finds & fixes Iron Dome technical glitch during last Gaza barrage

5.04.23 – Th- - - News – Thursday
West Bank checkpoint soldier stabbed; MK demands a large-scale terror sweep

5.04.23 – Th- - - News – Thursday
Terrorists behind murder of Israeli family killed in West Bank IDF raid

5.04.23 – Th- - - News Placed in May 06 spot – Saturday
British embassy May 6, Tel Aviv reception in celebration of King Charles' coronation

5.04.23 – Th- - - News – Thursday
Protest of Gov` promise free education, lower food & gas prices & cost of living

5.04.23 – Th- - - News – Thursday
Ben-Gvir & Netanyahu parties butt heads over appeased response to 104 Gaza rockets

5.04.23 – Th- - - News Placed in May 04 spot – Thursday
Smotrich again transfers PA taxes to victims; while PA officials pay terrorist