



## Israel at War

Thursday, March 6, 2025

**Day 517, 59 Hostages Remain in Captivity**

### Latest Updates

#### Ceasefire Agreement

- The ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas **officially ended** at midnight last Saturday night, following the earlier freeing of all those scheduled to be released in the first phase of the deal, including the agreed upon hostages, bodies of hostages, and terrorists from Israeli prisons.
- While **fighting has not resumed**, Israel has halted the passage of 600 daily trucks into the Strip, until additional hostages are released. Israel says that the pause is in accordance with the agreement, and with international law, and that there is still four months' worth of food, medication and other essential supplies in Gaza. Negotiations are still ongoing.
- On Sunday, White House Middle East Envoy Steve Witkoff **announced a new proposal** for a ceasefire. Under his plan:
  - The **ceasefire would be extended** through Ramadan (which began last weekend) and Pesach, which would be a total of 42 days.

- On **Day 1** of the deal, Hamas would release half of the remaining live hostages as well as half of the bodies it is holding, in exchange for a very large number of Palestinian prisoners.
- On **Day 42**, the other hostages would be released.
- After Cabinet deliberations, **Israel agreed to the Witkoff proposal**, but Hamas refused to accept the stipulations.
- Earlier today, Witkoff said that **additional progress had been made on reaching a deal** but did not elaborate further.
- Yesterday, **Egypt presented a proposal** it referred to as an “alternative to President Trump’s Palestinian relocation plan,” to a summit of Arab leaders taking place in Cairo. Under the Egyptian proposal, Hamas would relinquish control over Gaza to a group of “technocrats” — non-political managers who would rule the Strip for six months. After this, the Palestinian Authority would assume control of Gaza. The plan also envisions a massive, multi-billion-dollar reconstruction effort for the Strip. Israel expressed its opposition to the plan because it did not require Hamas to disarm or dissolve.
- Last night, the **US Administration was reported to have engaged in direct talks with Hamas**, which, if true, would be unprecedented. Israel expressed disapproval of any direct talks with a terror organization.

## Hostages

- US President Donald Trump **met with a group of eight released hostages** in the Oval Office yesterday, and said **“We’ll get them out,”** referring to the hostages still held in Gaza.
  - Naama Levy, one of the released hostages, told the president, “You were our hope when we were there, and now you’re their hope.”
  - Trump also issued a new ultimatum to Hamas, demanding that the terror group immediately release all remaining hostages or be destroyed. In his **social media post**, he wrote, “Shalom Hamas’ means Hello and Goodbye – You can choose. Release all of the hostages now

— not later — and immediately return all of the dead bodies of the people you murdered, or it is OVER for you.”

## IDF Report on October 7

- Earlier this week, both the IDF and the Shin Bet (Shabak) released some of its findings **related to October 7**.
- The IDF outlined how it had failed in its mission to protect Israel’s citizens and accepted responsibility for its shortcomings. The main conclusions can be divided into four areas:
  - **“The Conceptzia”**
    - This refers to the **incorrect perceptions** and concepts that the IDF held to be true prior to the war.
    - Firstly, the military **viewed Hamas as an irritant**, and not a major threat (as opposed to Iran and Hezbollah).
    - It believed that **Hamas was uninterested in a large-scale war**, and that if anything, the terror group would focus on rocket attacks against Israel, but never a ground invasion.
    - The IDF incorrectly thought that the **high-tech border fence with Gaza** could easily stop an attack, and that, even if there were a penetration, only a small group of fighters, at most, would infiltrate the fence, and could be quickly stopped by troops.
  - **Intelligence:**
    - Military Intelligence (as well as the Shin Bet) did have some evidence, for a long while, about plans for an attack, but **believed such plans were unrealistic** and unfeasible.
    - They also estimated that Hamas leader **Yahya Sinwar was a pragmatist** who would not advocate a large war against Israel.
    - According to the report, the decision for a large-scale attack was taken by Hamas in **April 2022**. By September 2022 the terror group was largely ready, but preferred additional time for more

planning and training. The report noted that Hamas initially considered carrying out the attack on the first night of Pesach in 2023 but ultimately delayed by a further six months.

- **The Eve of October 7th**

- The IDF also **ignored numerous signs** on the night of October 6, including the activation of a large number of Israeli SIM cards in Gaza, which it turned out were for terrorists to be able to communicate by cell phone once inside Israel.
- Israel's **senior leadership were largely not informed** of these developments, and those who were, did nothing.

- **October 7**

- From the reports, it has emerged that one of the biggest problems on October 7 itself was that it took several hours for the IDF chain of command to **understand that the Gaza Division had been attacked, overrun and then fallen in the very opening hour or so of the attack**. The Gaza Division was the only significant military presence in the area.
- The report also says that the **IDF General Command did not understand the extent or the severity of the attack** for many hours.
- Only **767 IDF troops were present along the entire 36-mile border** with Gaza, and they faced and onslaught of some 5000 – 5800 terrorists.
- The **security fence was breached in 114 separate locations** and additional Hamas fighters entered Israel on paragliders speedboats and from the sea.
- The fence itself was marked by numerous cameras atop sentry-towers, but **all but one of these towers were destroyed** by Hamas drones in the opening moments of the attack.
- The IDF code phrase “Parash Peleshet” was broadcast from the Gaza border. This was the term to be used indicating the **most severe border penetrations** and attacks. However, even this “extreme scenario” had been defined as “dozens of Hamas

infiltrators,” and not the more than 5,000 who crossed the border on the day.

- IDF reinforcements engaged terrorists on the roads, on the junctions around the south, and in the city of Sderot. However, it wasn't clear to the troops or the commanders how **dire the situation was in the border communities and kibbutzim**; few soldiers made it to those locations for several hours.
- The newly released reports also hinted at the **failures of the country's political leadership**. The Shin Bet report says that the government chose to try to keep the situation in Gaza calm, rather than confronting Hamas, and that it facilitated large payments from Qatar to keep the regime functioning. So far, the government has resisted appointing an inquiry into its own failings on October 7, saying it should wait until after the war is over.
- The IDF's **Chief of General Staff Hertzi Ha-Levi** ended his term yesterday, two years ahead of time, as he assumed responsibility for his failures on October 7. He has been replaced by Lieutenant General Eyal Zamir.

## Other Developments

- In a move decried by many, Israel's Justice Minister Yariv Levin initiated the process of **removing the country's attorney general**, Gali Baharav-Miara, from her post yesterday, saying she has politicized her office and “repeatedly thwarted the will of the government.” Levin, who has long threatened to take action against Baharav-Miara, set in motion various bureaucratic processes required under the law to fire the attorney general, including trying to set a date for a hearing on his motion in the Cabinet. The process could take months; it will almost certainly be challenged in the Supreme Court.
- On Monday, IDF forces **conducted a drone attack** on the commander of the naval forces of Hezbollah's elite Radwan Force, who was in southern Lebanon in violation of the ceasefire agreement. In the course of the three-

month ceasefire, Israel has eliminated over 80 Hezbollah terrorists who were in violation of the agreement.

- Also Monday, a terrorist carried out a **stabbing spree** at Haifa's central bus station. A 70-year-old Arab-Israeli man was killed, and four others were injured, including a 15-year-old boy. The terrorist, a 20-year-old Israeli Druze man, was shot and killed. Israel's Druze leaders strongly condemned the attack.

## For Further Reading

- [Trump's Gaza Plan: Change of Narrative](#)
- [The Financial Situation of Evacuees in Israel](#)
- [Why Israel Should Keep Open the Possibility of Palestinian Statehood](#)
- [The Long-Awaited Victory Over Hamas Was Not Achieved—What Now?](#)
- [Speech by Israel Prime Minister Elicited Various Reactions, Reflecting the Complex Security Challenge in Southern Syria](#)
- [Where are America and Israel Going in Syria?](#)

Am Yisrael Chai!

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