



War in Israel: Update on Current Situation

May 29, 2025 - October 7 War, Day 601, 58 hostages remain in captivity

LATEST UPDATES

Yesterday marked 600 days since October 7, 2023, the start of the war and the taking of the hostages, 58 of whom have still not been returned.

In Israel, the solemn milestone was marked mainly by calls for the release of the captives, including demands that the government do more to reach an agreement.

President Isaac Herzog said, *“On that accursed day – the result of a terrible blindness, one of the greatest failures we have ever known – murderous, inhuman terrorists, human monsters, armed to their teeth, invaded our homes, our towns, our communities, rampaged and slaughtered us.”*

Tragedy

- Tragically, baby Ravid Chaim, who was born to Tzeela Gez after the May 14 terror attack that killed her while she was on her way to give birth, died this morning in the hospital. See photos and additional information [here](#).

IDF Activity

- To mark 600 days of the war, the military has released data about the number of wounded soldiers.
 - Over 17,500 soldiers have been injured.
 - Of those, 80% are under the age of 40.
 - Some 50% are suffering from emotional difficulties as a result of the war.
 - Of the total, 65% are reservist soldiers called up for duty.
- Fighting continues in Gaza, although there have been limited actual engagements between the IDF and Hamas terrorists. The military is thought to be holding some 40% of Gaza’s territory at present. It aims to reach 70% within two months if a ceasefire agreement is not reached.
- With Hamas’s infrastructure, its weapons and its number of fighters significantly depleted, Israeli casualties have been low. Most Hamas targets have been attacked in Israeli air strikes.
- The IDF has become the first military in the world to have an operational laser-based air defense system. According to official reports, the new system (see video [here](#)), which Rafael (an Israeli military contractor) developed, has been integrated into the Air Force’s Air Defense Branch. Over the

past few months, it has intercepted 30-40 incoming drones (see footage [here](#)), mainly along the northern border with Lebanon.

- The Israelis are also working on a more powerful and advanced “**Iron Beam**” laser system scheduled to become operational within months, when it will be deployed using existing Iron Dome batteries. The cost of a single Iron Dome interceptor is around \$50,000, but the cost of a laser interception is only \$5! The laser beam is also significantly faster than the physical interceptor and has a better success rate. On the downside, adverse weather conditions make it less efficient, and it has a shorter range (6 miles as opposed to Iron Dome’s 25-mile range).
- Yesterday, the **800th aircraft in the comprehensive US military equipment and weapons airlift** operation that commenced immediately following the outbreak of war, landed in Israel. In that time, over 90,000 tons of military equipment has been delivered to Israel via 800 flights and approximately 140 maritime shipments. Munitions, armored vehicles, individual protective equipment, and medical supplies are included.

Hostages, Ceasfire, and Diplomacy

- There are conflicting reports on the possibility of a new ceasefire and the return of some hostages.
- US Middle East Envoy Steve Witkoff has reportedly presented both Israel and Hamas with a **new version of his outline**.
 - The plan would include the release of **10 living hostages plus the bodies of 18 hostages** who are no longer alive.
 - The release would take place in **two rounds**, one on the first day of the deal and one on the seventh.
 - In exchange for the living hostages, **Israel will release 125** Palestinians in jail for life, and 1,111 Gazan prisoners who were arrested after October 7.
 - In response to the **release of the bodies** of the dead hostages, Israel will release 180 bodies of Gazans—also in two installments.
 - On the tenth day, Hamas will deliver a **full list that includes a detailed medical report on the condition of the living hostages**.
 - Both sides will agree to a **60-day ceasefire**, and at the end of this period, Israel can resume fighting or extend the ceasefire if further negotiations are successful.
 - The final part of the proposal involves the **IDF withdrawing from recently captured areas in Gaza** and returning the distribution of humanitarian aid to the United Nations.
- President Donald Trump referred yesterday to the rumors of a **possible Israeli air strike on Iran**. He said that he told Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that launching a strike at this time, while US-Iran negotiations are taking place, would be “very inappropriate.” Israel’s government said that reports of a planned, imminent strike on Iran were “fake news.”
- Earlier this week, Prime Minister Netanyahu met with **US Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem**, who was visiting Israel to discuss strategic regional issues.

Humanitarian Aid

- Israel has opened the [first three humanitarian zones](#), all of which are [now operational](#). The zones provide a Hamas-free environment where [aid can be distributed to Gazan civilians](#). By opening the zones, the IDF hopes to stop Hamas from stealing the supplies and re-diverting them to terrorism or other aims. Israel also wants to prevent Hamas from claiming credit for the food and other items brought in, thus limiting its appeal.
- All civilians who enter the zones are **screened before entry** is allowed, and Israeli forces control the perimeter. A US private contractor [distributes the supplies](#) within the zone.
- At present, **hundreds of thousands of meals** are handed out daily, which is expected to increase to close to 1 million.
- Earlier in the week, **riots broke out** at one new zone as many Gazans tried to seize food. Ultimately, the US contractors needed to fire in the air to disperse the rioters.
- Another [humanitarian zone](#) is expected to **become operational** in the coming days.
- Israel resumed **near-daily aid deliveries to Gaza** last week, after a pause since March 2. Since then, **665 aid trucks** have entered the Strip.
- Yesterday, Gazan civilians also **stormed Hamas's Al-Ghafari warehouse**, which was stocked with large amounts of flour and other supplies. Hamas personnel opened fire on the crowd, killing five, with the terror group later announcing that it "executed" five Palestinians who raided the warehouse.
- More on humanitarian aid [here](#).

Houthis

- The Iran-backed Houthis in Yemen **continue to fire missiles at Israel** on an almost daily basis.
- Most missiles are **intercepted or fall short** of their targets; no significant damage or injuries have occurred in recent weeks. Nonetheless, each launch triggers sirens across large swathes of the country, sending millions running to shelters.
- In response to the latest firings, **Israel again attacked Yemen yesterday**, destroying the last Houthi airplane.

For Further Reading

- [Is Gideon's Chariots the right strategy?](#)
- [Is a Reliable Nuke Deal with Iran Even Possible?](#)
- [EU hardens tone on Israel, but will it lead to concrete steps?](#)
- [President Trump: Kuwait Should Be Next!](#)