



Israel at War

Friday, July 26, 2024

Day 294

Latest Updates

Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Activities

- On Wednesday, the IDF and Shin Bet recovered the remains of five hostages: Maya Goren, IDF Staff Sergeant (res.) Oren Goldin, IDF Staff Sergeant Tomer Ahimas, IDF Sergeant Kiril Brodsky, and Ravid Arie Katz. They were all abducted by Hamas on October 7th and recovered as part of an [operation in Khan Yunis](#) that killed at least 70 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Hamas-run health ministry. See [here](#) for the full list of those still held hostage.
- Israel [retaliated](#) last Saturday to a drone attack on Tel Aviv on the previous day by Houthi rebels from Yemen that targeted a branch office of the US Embassy. The Houthis have fired missiles on ships in the Red Sea since Israel launched its military campaign in Gaza in the wake of October 7th, but this was the first successful direct attack on Israeli soil. After Israel struck back on Saturday, the Houthis claimed to launch another barrage of missiles towards Israel.
- A knife-wielding Canadian citizen was [shot dead](#) on Monday by Israeli guards near the border with Gaza in Netiv HaAsara. An official with Israel's Interior Ministry said that the 22-year-old man, who has not been identified, entered the country on a tourist visa.

- Israeli officials have **decided** that approximately 15,000 displaced children, many of whom are living in hotels, will begin the new school year in the places where they are temporarily residing.
- The Israeli military **issued** call-up notices to 1,000 members of the ultra-Orthodox community on Sunday. The call follows a Supreme Court **ruling** last month that the defense ministry could no longer grant blanket exemptions to Jewish seminary students.
- Two Israeli soldiers were **wounded** on Thursday in a drive-by shooting on the Route 55 highway in the West Bank near the Palestinian village of Nabi Ilyas. One soldier was moderately wounded, and the other was in good condition. A third soldier was treated for minor injuries on-site. The IDF is searching for the assailants and has increased its presence in the area, encircling nearby Palestinian towns. The wounded soldiers were taken to Meir Hospital in Kfar Saba.
- Cpt. Ariel Topaz, 24, from Pardes Hanna, who was seriously wounded two weeks ago in a car-ramming attack near a military base in central Israel, **died** yesterday of his injuries.

Prime Minister Netanyahu's Speech

- On Wednesday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu **addressed** a joint session of Congress to bolster support from the US government for the Jewish State and its ongoing military campaign in Gaza.
- Jewish Federations President and CEO Eric Fingerhut **accompanied** Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-NC), who is chairing the ongoing hearings on antisemitism on college campuses, as she walked into the chamber.
- Netanyahu's address before Congress, which was his fourth, was the most ever for a foreign leader; Winston Churchill spoke three times in the same setting. It was the 10th address to a joint session by any Israeli leader, which is also a record.
- While many had hoped that the prime minister would announce a ceasefire and hostage deal during his speech, he did not do so, **provoking** disappointment and anger from hostage families.

- Dozens of Democratic lawmakers refused to attend, including former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, who called it “by far the worst presentation of any foreign dignitary invited and honored with the privilege of addressing the Congress of the United States.”
- Presumptive Democratic presential nominee, Vice President Kamala Harris, did not attend the speech because of a prior commitment on the campaign trail, but she and Biden separately met with Netanyahu yesterday. Republican VP nominee J.D. Vance also did not attend the speech due to a campaign commitment. Netanyahu is visiting former president Donald Trump at Mar-a-Lago today.
- While Netanyahu dismissed the protesters as “not many,” there were in fact thousands of protesters at the Capitol, outside Union Station, on the National Mall, and in other locations in the district. At the train station, pro-Palestinian protesters set an American flag ablaze, along with an effigy of Netanyahu; they also spray-painted the Christopher Columbus fountain and adjacent Liberty Bell reproduction with messages like “Free Gaza,” “All Zionists are bastards,” and “Free Palestine.” These reprehensible actions drew sharp rebukes from US politicians.

Ceasefire Talks

- Today’s scheduled departure of the Israeli negotiating team that is attempting to secure a deal mediated by Egypt, Qatar, and the US has been postponed until next week so that Netanyahu and Biden can have time to discuss strategy.
- Last Saturday night, a group of eight lawmakers from Likud sent the prime minister a letter that warned him not to make too many concessions to Hamas while negotiating a hostage release. The letter said that precisely because bringing the hostages home is a “top moral priority,” the government must “significantly intensify offensive operations and military control throughout the Gaza Strip” to defeat Hamas and trigger a ceasefire.
- A clear majority of the Israeli government, including Aryeh Deri’s ultra-Orthodox Shas Party, is in favor of a ceasefire.
- A senior US official has said that the two sides seem to be close to a deal, though similar assessments have been made several times in recent months to no avail.

International

- The Biden administration has [released](#) about half of the shipment of heavy bombs it has withheld from Israel since May over concerns the IDF would use them in densely populated areas of Gaza.
- A senior Emirati official [suggested](#) this week that Abu Dhabi would be willing to contribute troops to a postwar peacekeeping force in Gaza, signaling a possible role in future governance arrangements and making the United Arab Emirates the first Arab country to publicly back the effort.

Israel at the Summer Olympics

- Israeli swimmer and doctor from the US, Anastasia Gorbenko, is Israel's Olympic flagbearer for the 2024 Paris Olympics.
- [88 Israeli athletes](#) will [compete](#) in 15 sports at the Paris Olympics this week. Israeli officials are optimistic about matching or even exceeding their record of four medals from Tokyo.
- The awarding of a gold medal would offer a rare opportunity to hear the Israeli national anthem amid strong anti-Israel sentiment at the Games, including ongoing protests.
- However, The National Security Council has [warned](#) Israelis traveling to Paris for the Olympics that global jihadist and Iran-backed terror organizations are [planning attacks](#) on Israelis and Jewish targets there. Israeli athletes have received death threats in which terrorists have vowed to [repeat](#) the deadly [attack](#) at the Munich Summer Games in 1972, in which 11 Israelis athletes were killed.

Further Reading

- [What Kamala Harris Really Thinks About Israel and Gaza](#)
Mark Segel

- [Lessons for Postwar Gaza from the American Experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan](#)
- [Israel's Next War: The Mounting Pressure to Fight Hezbollah in Lebanon—and Why That Is So Dangerous](#)

Jewish Federations Resources

Jewish Federations have collectively raised over \$845 million and allocated more than \$450 million for humanitarian needs and economic support in Israel since October 7. For an updated list of allocations, click [here](#). Read this [JTA](#) story about our work: “The man allocating \$800M in post-Oct. 7 donations to Israel on where the money goes.”

Jewish Federations' Backgrounders:

[At-Risk Youth](#) | [LGBTQ Community](#)
[Young Children](#) | [Volunteers](#)
[Women](#) | [Pastoral Guidance](#)
[Bedouin Communities](#) | [Food Security](#) | [People with Disabilities](#)

Resources: Readers can see links to resources, background, research and other information on the current war [here](#); can access a Jewish Federations toolkit [here](#), and can refer to the Community Mobilization Center [Resource Hub](#) for the latest talking points and tools.

Details: For information on the latest overall numbers from the conflict, see [here](#).

Read the latest communication from the Community Mobilization Center [here](#).

Am Yisrael Chai!

Mark Segel

Mark Segel

Executive Director of Combating Antisemitism
813.769.2811