

War in Israel: Update on Current Situation

June 19, 2025 - October 7 War, Day 621, 53 hostages remain in captivity

This morning, Iranian ballistic missiles hit numerous sites in Israel, including Soroka Hospital in Be'er Sheva, the largest medical facility in the south. 200 people were wounded. [Click here](#) for our statement.

United States Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee has announced that the US will assist Americans who want to leave Israel. See details below.

Unless significant news breaks in the interim, the next update will be sent next week.

Tomorrow, Friday, June 20, Jewish Federations will host a special briefing at 11 a.m. ET.

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Jewish Federations of North America's Israel office has activated its emergency protocols and is in close contact with the government, the military, missions and partners on the ground to assess the situation.

Iranian Attacks on Israel

- Just after 7 am Israel time, **23 missiles were launched at Israel** from Iran, setting off alarms in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and the south.
- At least **four impacts were reported** in the Tel Aviv area and one in Be'er Sheva. Despite enormous damage, no deaths have been reported, but some 200 people were injured. This was the largest and most destructive missile barrage in recent days.
- Initial forensic examination of the remains of the missiles indicates that they carried cluster warheads that split into smaller bombs upon impact, causing much more damage in a wider radius.
- One missile scored a **direct hit on the hospital**, inflicting heavy damage, but, miraculously, no deaths. At Soroka, the rocket struck the unprotected surgical ward of the hospital that had [been evacuated of all patients](#) yesterday. See

details, photos, and video [here](#). This move “miraculously saved dozens, if not hundreds, of lives.” Nonetheless, most parts of the large hospital have suffered damage. Watch [this footage](#) and see [these photos](#) of rescuers arriving and operating at the hospital.

Following the attack, **Israel’s President Isaac Herzog** said:

"A baby in intensive care. A mother by their bedside. A doctor rushing between beds. An elderly resident in a nursing home. These were some of the targets of Iran’s missile attacks on Israeli civilians this morning. Soroka Hospital, located in Be’er Sheva, is one of Israel’s finest — serving the entire Negev region, caring for Israelis of all faiths and our neighbors the Palestinians who come especially to be treated there. Its devoted staff — Jews and Arabs — work side by side in extraordinary harmony, united by the mission to heal. I send strength and support to the medical teams, to the patients, and to the residents of Be’er Sheva and all cities attacked across Israel this morning. In moments like these, we are reminded of what’s truly at stake, and the values we are defending."

- Evidence suggests that Iran deliberately targeted the hospital.

Hundreds of patients at Soroka have now been moved to other hospitals around the country and all hospitals are taking measures to protect patients and staff, including by moving entire wards to underground facilities when these exist. Most non-urgent and elective patients have been sent home from most hospitals and only urgent care is being provided. Hospitals are releasing newborn babies after 12 hours.

Damage was also reported at **Holon’s Wolfson Hospital**, just outside Tel Aviv, when a nearby four-story building suffered a direct hit, causing major damage. Among the many homes that were damaged was that of former Likud Minister Dani Naveh.

- At the site of the missile impact in Holon, the Commander of the IDF Home Front Command said, “This incident is an **exceptional example of civilian behavior** — the civilians heard the alert, went down to the shelter and that saved their lives.” Watch [this footage](#) and see [these photos](#) of the damage and rescue soldiers at the site.
- Iran also continues to launch a significant number of UAVs (**Unmanned Aerial Vehicles** - drones) at Israel, which activate sirens, but so far, have all been shot down by the military.
- Hospitals across central Israel are grappling with a **new wave of trauma cases**, as repeated missile barrages from Iran have caused injuries unlike those seen in past rounds of fighting. Medical teams are treating a sharp rise in severe blast wounds, crush injuries from collapsing buildings, and psychological distress. See more [here](#).

Operation Rising Lion: Israel's Attacks on Iran Continue

- Overnight, 40 **Israel Air Force fighter jets** struck dozens of [military targets](#) in Tehran and other areas throughout Iran, using over 100 munitions. The [nuclear reactor in the area of Arak in Iran was targeted](#), including the reactor's core seal, which is a key component in its plutonium production. Construction of the reactor began in 1997, but was never completed due to international community intervention. Additionally, the IAF struck a nuclear weapons development site in the area of Natanz.
- The IDF also struck a site in Iran yesterday that is [used to manufacture anti-tank missiles](#) and other weapons for proxies like Hezbollah. See video [here](#).
- While dozens of Israeli fighter jets have been operating in the skies of Iran and striking military targets belonging to the Iranian regime, the challenge of distance remains significant. Many targets are **more than 1,000 miles from Israel, requiring mid-air refueling** for many jets. The air force’s aerial refueling aircraft support these fighter jets, and have performed over 600 aerial refuelings in the skies of the Middle East thus far. See [this footage](#), [photos](#) of IAF fighter jet aerial

- refueling, and [photos](#) from inside an IDF refueling aircraft.
- Talk persists of Israel, or possibly even the United States, **targeting Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khomeini**, or finding other ways to topple the government. This morning, Israel's Defense Minister Israel Katz directly threatened Khamenei in response to ballistic missiles striking the hospital. He added that Israel will now start attacking new kinds of strategic targets "to remove the threats hanging over the State of Israel and to shake the ayatollah's regime." Read more [here](#). Reza Pahlavi, the eldest son of the last shah (king) of Iran and the former crown prince, said plans are in place for a 100-day transitional period if the Islamic Republic regime falls. Pahlavi reassured Iranians on Tuesday [in a video statement](#); he said that opposition forces have a plan for the country's future.
- Yesterday, Israel reportedly **hacked into Iranian television transmissions**. It disrupted a news program, replacing it with video footage of an anti-regime demonstration from a few years ago and a logo showing the Israeli name for the war, Rising Lion.
- For reasons that are not entirely clear, the Iranian regime has [instructed all citizens](#) to **delete WhatsApp from their phones**, claiming that it presents a security threat. The government in Tehran has previously issued similar instructions during periods of anti-regime protests.

The Home Front

- As of 6 pm last night, workplaces have reopened and gatherings of up to 30 people have resumed. Shopping malls and other venues may reopen if they have a safe space or shelter that is easily accessible. Schools, however, will remain closed.
- **Ben Gurion Airport remains officially shut**, but rescue flights have commenced.
 - The **first flights** bringing Israelis stranded abroad back to Israel landed yesterday morning, five days after Israel's airspace was closed entirely to civilian aircraft.
 - The flights were part of **Operation Safe Return**, launched to bring home between 100,000 and 150,000 Israelis stuck abroad.
 - Almost 20 flights landed yesterday, bringing home some 2,000 Israelis. **Up to 40 flights could land today**.
 - El Al also announced that it expects to operate two repatriation flights from long-haul destinations, **one from New York and one from Bangkok**. The two flights are expected to take off tonight. Passengers assigned to these flights have been notified.
- As mentioned above, Amb. Mike Huckabee announced that US will assist American citizens in returning home. See full details [here](#). The Ambassador [posted](#) the following on X:

Urgent notice! American citizens wanting to leave Israel- US Embassy in Israel @usembassyjlm is working on evacuation flights & cruise ship departures. You must enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) (www.mytravel.state.gov/s/step). You will be alerted w/ updates.

- Leaving Israel **overland by Jordan** remains challenging. In addition to considerable security risks, lines at the border stretch for miles and can take up to six hours to cross.
- As mentioned earlier in the week, eight people were killed on Monday in a missile barrage launched by Iran at the center of the country and the Haifa area. Two of the four killed in Petah Tikva were staying in their apartment's safe room (*mamad*). Many Israelis are asking whether this means that public bomb shelters are safer. Read more [here](#).

The United States

- International and Israeli media are predicting that the US is on the verge of

entering the war. The Pentagon is now advancing a third naval carrier group to the region, a clear signal of the level of threat against Iran. President Trump has announced that he is considering joining the attacks on the Islamic Republic; he complained yesterday that he is "tired of talks" and that "nothing short of Iran's unconditional surrender" will suffice. See more [here](#).

- Three executive jets left Tehran yesterday for Oman. Since Iranian airspace is closed, it is assumed that Israel and the US allowed the planes to take off. Commentators have suggested that the passengers could be heading to Oman to engage in **secret talks with the US on a ceasefire** Iranian sources have denied that.

Other News

- Yesterday it was announced that IDF Staff Sergeant Stav Halfon, 20, was killed in battle in Gaza.
- Read: [Persian Jews in the U.S. watch Israeli strikes on Iran and dare to hope](#)
- [I'm Iranian – Israel's attacks give me hope](#)
- [Foreign Policy Article](#): "*Invoking the legendary British leader who is among Netanyahu's heroes, Netanyahu's elder son rushed to call his father "the Churchill of our time"... Netanyahu is fond of saying that Israel is "changing the Middle East." But change could end in many ways, both for the region and Israeli politics. Winston Churchill won an existential war, but his voters rejected him. The same might well happen to Netanyahu.*"

Numbers

As of today, since the beginning of Operation Rising Lion:

- Iran has launched over 400 **missiles**.
- Iran has launched hundreds of **UAVs** (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles)
- Israel has been hit in more than 40 **impact sites**.
- 24 **Israelis have been killed** by rockets.
- 838 **Israelis injured**: 11 in serious condition, 42 in moderate condition, 785 with light injuries
- 22,932 **damage claims** received by Israel Tax Authority:
 - 18,890 related to buildings.
 - 1,827 related to vehicles.
 - 2,215 related to other property.
- More than 5,000 people were **evacuated from their homes**.

On the Ground: Jewish Federations and Partners

- Jewish Federations' Public Affairs Department has announced a Six-Point Security Agenda to protect the Jewish community. See more [here](#).

As reported earlier:

- **For tourists trying to leave Israel** The Ministry of Tourism is gathering contact information for tourists wishing to leave the country by air, and coordinating their departure from Israel as quickly as possible with the responsible authorities.
 - This [online form](#) was produced for tourists to fill out. The information provided will be transferred to the official authorities responsible for coordinating the rescue flights.
 - The Ministry of Tourism does not have information at this stage regarding the format of the activity and the dates or destinations of the flights.
 - The Ministry of Tourism has opened a virtual office that provides tourists with information in both Hebrew and English.
- The service is available 24/7 through the following digital channels:
 - Email: virtual@goisrael.gov.il
 - WhatsApp (messaging app via phone number: +972-53-583-5808)

- Facebook page: Israel Virtual Tourist Office

For more information, please contact: Jewish Federations of North America's Dani Wassner dani.wassner@jewishfederations.org. Subscribe to this weekly update [here](#).

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