



November 2, 2023

The Latest:

- More than three weeks into Israel's War with Hamas, heavy fighting continues in Gaza. Eighteen Israeli soldiers have been killed, as well as hundreds of terrorists.
- Israel's updated official numbers are now saying that at least 242 Israelis are still being held captive by Hamas in Gaza.
- Full details on these developments and more are below.

Key Resources From Jewish Federations

- The JCRC of Greater Washington is holding a webinar with renowned Arab world affairs expert Ehud Yaari today (**Thursday, November 2**) at **4 p.m. ET**. Register [here](#).
- The Jewish Agency for Israel invites you to join us on **Sunday, November 5 at noon ET** together with our partners at the National Institutions Building--the World Zionist Organization, Keren Hayesod, and the Jewish National Fund--to mark the Shloshim (traditional 30 days of mourning) since the tragic events of October 7. In memory of those who were murdered on that dark day, we will hold a ceremony at our Jerusalem headquarters, and it will be streamed live on the Jewish Agency's Facebook page.
- In the latest episode of our podcast, The Glue, Eric Fingerhut talks about the ramifications of the war in Israel with Becky Caspi, the Director-General of Israel and Overseas and Aaron J. Goldberg, the Director of the Israel Office of The Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles. To listen, click [here](#).
- Refer to the Community Mobilization Center [Resource Hub](#) for the latest talking points, tools and resources to help you speak up for Israel.
- [This](#) site shows a map of the October 7 massacre, with a red dot for every person killed and a black dot for every person abducted by Hamas. Clicking on any dot will show the name and picture (if available) of the victim, along with their age and last-known location.
- For full details about the home front and military operations, see [this](#) update. And for information on the latest overall numbers from the conflict, see [here](#).
- Readers can access a Jewish Federations toolkit of resources [here](#).
- Additional resources can be found at the end of this update.

Israel Defense Forces Operations

The **ground operation** continues in full force. Amid fierce fighting, Gaza City itself is now more or less surrounded by IDF forces after troops broke through Hamas' forward positions and perimeter defenses. The fighting will now take place in a more dense urban area.

Overnight, IDF troops and tanks clashed with Hamas militants killing dozens of terrorists (watch video of ground troop operations [here](#)). The Golani Infantry Brigade led the extensive battles against Hamas members who had fired missiles, set off explosive devices, and hurled grenades at the forces. The military says the Golani troops fought back, assisted by artillery and tank shelling and by calling in an airstrike and missile strikes by the Navy. In addition, the Nahal Infantry Brigade also encountered a group of Hamas gunmen who opened fire at them and directed an aircraft to strike and kill the terror cell. Among the terrorists killed overnight was Muhammad A'sar, the head of Hamas' Anti-Tank Missile Unit in the Gaza Strip.

The IDF has confirmed that **18 soldiers have been killed** in the battles in Gaza. Read about the recently fallen soldiers [here](#) and see the full details of all those from the IDF killed since October 7, [here](#).

In one incident overnight, Hamas sent a large group of women and children to act as **human shields** against IDF troops who were attacking a key compound of the terror group in the Gaza Strip. Two Israeli soldiers were killed in the assault on Hamas's Central Jabaliya Battalion base.

See a message from Lt-General Hertzl Halevi, the IDF Chief of Staff, to all troops [here](#), and photos [here](#).

According to the IDF, since the beginning of the war, more than 11,000 sites belonging to Hamas and other terror groups have been hit.

Yesterday, 61 trucks carrying humanitarian aid entered Gaza from Egypt, despite repeated reports that Hamas is using emergency supplies for its own terror purposes. Listen to [this](#) conversation between a commander of Hamas's Western Jabaliya Battalion and a Gazan resident, with the participation of the director of the Indonesian Hospital. The call, which was intercepted by Israeli Military Intelligence, confirms that Hamas controls energy distribution in Gaza, prioritizing terrorist needs over the needs of their civilian population. In the phone call, a Hamas commander repeatedly alludes to Hamas taking fuel from the hospital's stocks, "working as a government for the sake of the country." See a photo of the hospital [here](#).

The Home Front

The country continues to mourn the massacre of October 7 and learn more about the detailed planning in advance of the attack:

- Read [here](#) about the Bedouin community in Rahat, which is mourning its losses away from the public eye.
- Watch [this](#) chilling interrogation of one of the October 7 terrorists where he speaks clearly about the orders he was given for that day. Israel now says that it believes at least 3,000 terrorists crossed into Israel during the October 7 attacks.
- Journalists, diplomats and others have been shown horrifying video footage of the massacres from October 7. Yesterday, a special viewing was held for members of Knesset, although many could not bear to watch (see [here](#)).

- In [this](#) television interview, a Hamas leader says the group plans to commit additional massacres and attacks until it destroys Israel completely.
- See the names and details of all who were killed, [here](#).

The level of **rocket fire** from Gaza remains low compared to the early days of the war, but there has been a barrage against Tel Aviv and the center almost every day. For reasons unknown, many rockets are fired “on the hour.”

In the **north**, Hezbollah has continued its low-intensity attacks along the Lebanese border, while the IDF strikes at cells and the sources of fire. Late Tuesday night, the IDF intercepted a surface-to-air missile launched from Lebanese territory.

International Response

Germany announced that it will completely ban all activities of Hamas, already a designated terrorist organization in the country, as well as the pro-Palestinian group Samidoun, effective next Wednesday. The country’s Interior Minister said, “With Hamas, I have today completely banned the activities of a terrorist organization whose aim is to destroy the state of Israel.”

In the UK, the cover of The Sun newspaper featured the faces of the 32 Israeli children who have been held hostage by Hamas since October 7, under the banner “Bring them home.” The paper continued with a headline that read, “32 innocent children were snatched by terrorists. This is why Israel must fight the evil of Hamas.” See [here](#).

Thai officials held direct talks with Hamas in Iran last week over the fate of 22 of the kingdom’s nationals taken hostage by the terror group on October 7. Negotiators met Hamas officials in Tehran on October 26 and were given a pledge that the Thais would be released at the “right time.”

Israel’s Diaspora Affairs and Combating Antisemitism Ministry has earmarked \$2.5 million for civic advocacy efforts to combat antisemitism and promote Israel’s stance globally. The financial injection comes as part of the ‘Voices of Israel’ initiative, a response to the heightened needs as a result of the war. The program encourages organizations and companies worldwide to engage in advocacy; they are offering a matching fund model to double their investment in these efforts.

Israel’s Prime Minister Netanyahu continued his conversations with **world leaders** yesterday, including with Thai Prime Minister Srettha Thavasin, where he expressed his sincere condolences over the murder and abduction of Thai nationals and conveyed his appreciation for the Thai workers and their contribution to the economy. Netanyahu also spoke—for the third time since the outbreak of the war—with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and briefed him on the situation regarding the fighting. The Prime Minister thanked the Chancellor for his continued support of the State of Israel.

See [this](#) letter from the presidents of Israeli universities to their colleagues overseas.

Efforts on the Ground

Israelis of all stripes have come together to support soldiers and bolster morale in the country, many sharing inspiring tales. Read about the struggles of the evacuees, and the help they receive, [here](#).

Read [here](#) about how fallen Israeli soldiers’ organs are saving lives.

Israel’s economy has been hard hit by the war. Since October 7, more than 46,000

workers have been laid off or put on unpaid leave, according to data the Labor Ministry published. The majority, approximately 70%, are on unpaid leave.

[Watch](#) volunteers at Jerusalem's Hadassah Hospital helping raise spirits. And see [this](#) soldier's request to people everywhere, as he goes into battle.

In a timeless tradition, soldiers often write messages on rockets or grenades before they are deployed. In [this](#) picture, you can see an IDF member has written "This one is for Chandler Bing," a reference to the death this week of the actor who played Bing's character on the beloved sitcom Friends.

Addressing the topic of the Israeli spirit in an address to the nation last night, President Isaac Herzog said, "I would like to speak of another source of great hope at this time, even now- in the fog, especially now. The Israeli spirit. An unbreakable spirit. The spirit of a storm which rose from ashes and destruction and is already blowing with all its might. This spirit has revealed itself mightily, in thousands of heroic stories from the frontline and the home front. It blows through each outreached hand, in the exemplary Israeli volunteerism and mutual responsibility, seeking to strengthen, to embrace, to support. It blows in every corner of our remarkable country – every corner. It is an eternal spirit, passed on to us from the generations before us, a spirit which will continue to guide us, generation to generation. This spirit is you--my sisters and brothers--the people of Israel. Israeli society is our true secret weapon. You are my greatest hope, our greatest hope... We have a solid country and a wonderful and magnificent people. We have important and powerful allies all over the world. We have Jewish sisters and brothers in the Diaspora who stand by us with all their might despite the attacks and threats against them. And above all, we have national resilience and unending strength." (You can watch the President's full address in Hebrew, [here](#) and read an English translation [here](#)).

Analysis

- "[A long, hard, and painful war.](#)"- David Horowitz
- [Did Israel's Arrow missile interception transform the Middle East?](#)
- Reads [this](#) analysis of the war, from an economic perspective, penned by two former governors of the Bank of Israel (equivalent to chairs of the Federal Reserve).
- Former MK Ksenia Svetlova: "[The primary victims of Hamas are Palestinian.](#)"

Other Resources

- Jewish Federations have produced a document answering questions about funding impacted localities and municipalities in Israel. See [here](#).
- Birthright Israel has opened [a volunteering program](#), where people from outside of Israel can come to Tel Aviv and take part in food rescue operations to prevent shortages in the Israeli market, including work to sort, pack and distribute goods for civil and military personnel.
- Read [this](#) Jerusalem Post piece on efforts by Jewish Federations of North America, who have announced that we have collectively raised \$554 million for the Israel Emergency Campaign. The campaign was launched on October 12th with an initial goal of [\\$500 million](#). To date, [\\$111 million](#) have been allocated to over 60 organizations in Israel to support frontline communities, the Fund for Victims of Terror, trauma relief, medical equipment, support for first responders and volunteer efforts. One hundred percent of all funds raised are making it into

the hands of the organizations that can do the most good on the ground.

- For those in Israel looking for help, critical information about the situation on the ground, or other assistance, see [this](#) resource page put together by Jewish Federations.
- See also [this](#) Jewish Federations information page on requests for personal protective equipment which are circulating and [this](#) update regarding volunteering.
- Read the latest communication from the Community Mobilization Center [here](#).
- As many funders struggle to distinguish between the multitudes of organizations looking for important resources, the Jewish Funders Network has produced [this](#) thorough page of guidance.
- Over 120 communities have held solidarity gatherings. [Watch here](#). For a guidebook on hosting a gathering in your community, [click here](#).
- Jewish Federations have launched [The Blue Ribbon Campaign](#), which symbolizes support and solidarity for the safe return of the hostages taken by Hamas. Wearing a ribbon publicly unites people of all religions, races, nationalities, ethnicities, ages, and generations and demonstrates for the people of Israel that they are not alone and that good people across the globe are with them and their families during this dark time.

Jewish Federations

The Community Mobilization Center is monitoring major developments in Israel and North America related to Israel's war to defend herself against Hamas, and will rapidly disseminate resources to help mobilize and support our local communities as they work to build and sustain civic and political support for Israel in this conflict. Read the latest communication from the Community Mobilization Center [here](#).

Our Israel Office, having activated emergency protocols, is working closely with our partners on the ground, and is in close contact with the Government of Israel and the IDF. We will continue to update as the situation develops.

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