



War in Israel: Update on Current Situation

June 27, 2024 - Gaza War Day 265

Past updates can be found [here](#).

Israel Defense Force (IDF) Activities

- An [IDF soldier](#) was killed overnight during an anti-terror operation in the West Bank city of Jenin when **troops came under attack**. An armored personnel carrier (APC), operating as a frontline medical evacuation vehicle, drove over a large explosive charge buried deep under the road. When the charge exploded, several soldiers were injured. A rescue force that arrived on the scene was then hit by a remotely-operated explosive charge. One officer was killed and sixteen troops were injured, including one soldier who was critically wounded.
- Earlier today, Palestinian media reported a series of Israeli strikes as well as the advancement of tanks in **Gaza City's Shejaiya neighborhood**. The IDF withdrew from Shejaiya in April, but reports suggest that many Hamas operatives have since moved back.
- Amid growing fears about the outbreak of full-scale war **in the north**, numerous Western countries have issued new travel guidance to their citizens. Yesterday Germany and Holland recommended that all their citizens in Lebanon leave the country immediately.

Hostages

- US Vice President Kamala Harris [met](#) last week with a former Israeli hostage who was the victim of sexual torture during her captivity in Gaza; the Vice President also spoke with women who survived other conflict-related sexual violence around the globe.
- On Monday, the Hostages and Missing Families Forum released a difficult [video](#) (warning: graphic content) of the moment Israeli-American Hersh Goldberg-Polin, Or Levy and Eliya Cohen were captured by Hamas terrorists.
- Listen to [this MSNBC interview](#) with Hersh Goldberg-Polin's parents, about the latest potential hostage deal and the experiences they have endured over the past eight months since their son was abducted.
- Read more about the three young men depicted in the video:
 - Berkeley-born 23-year-old [Hersh Goldberg-Polin](#) is known as a devoted brother to his two sisters and a beloved son to his American-born parents, Rachel and Jon. He is a Jerusalemite who immigrated to Israel with his family at the age of seven, a nature and music lover, a major soccer fan, and a world traveler. He spent last summer exploring Europe and attending music and trance festivals. Hersh is described by loved ones as a quiet child and a voracious reader. He was taking refuge in a bomb shelter with fellow partygoers at the Supernova music festival when Hamas terrorists hurled a grenade into the room, seriously injuring him and killing others. The last messages he sent that morning to his parents were, "I love you guys" and "I'm sorry."
 - [Or Levy](#) works in tech and is raising his two-year-old son, Almog, together with his wife Eynav. The 33-year-old, whose name means light, is described as an intelligent and happy young man who is always smiling and helping others. On the morning of October 7 Or and his wife traveled to the Nova music festival and left their young child with family. They sought refuge in a shelter that was overpowered by terrorists using grenade fire, which killed most of the people in the shelter, including Eynav. Or was later abducted into Gaza. Their son Almog celebrated his third birthday last week, without his parents by his side.

- [Eliya Cohen](#) is a 27-year-old young man who was living in Tel Aviv with his girlfriend Ziv before he was abducted by Hamas terrorists from the Nova music festival. He is described by his mother as a boy with “a huge, big heart.” He enjoyed dancing at parties in Israel and around the world, where he met many friends. He is also an animal lover. His mother called on the international community to first of all believe what happened on October 7. “They’re just civilians that went to dance. Just young people who went to celebrate life.”

Israeli Public Opinion

- Pew Research has published the results of a new study on how **Israeli society** has remained united and divided since October 7. Among the findings:
 - 28% of Israeli adults say there are very strong conflicts between Israeli Arabs and Israeli Jews, down from 46% last year.
 - 18% say there are very strong conflicts between religious people and people who are not, down from 29%.
 - 24% see very strong conflicts between those on the political left and right, down from 32%.
 - See full results [here](#).

International

- [According to the Washington Post](#), Israel has received nearly **\$6.5 billion in military aid** from the US since October 7.
- In honor of International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict, Jewish Federations joined over 50 organizations to sign a letter addressed to the **UN Secretary-General** calling for an unbiased and independent investigation and for Hamas to be held accountable. You can read the full letter [here](#).
- As the International Criminal Court in The Hague continues its investigations, it has been noted that if it issues arrest warrants in the Gaza War, there will be serious legal and political consequences for “Palestine” which, unlike Israel, is a state party to the Court’s treaty. See more [here](#).

Supreme Court Ruling

- On Tuesday, Israel's Supreme Court handed down a landmark decision about conscripting ultra-Orthodox (Haredi) men to the IDF.
- The issue of IDF exemptions for Haredim has been around for decades but has taken on significantly greater urgency and importance because of the shortage of manpower for the military since October 7, and the resulting extensions of service required by many non-Haredi Israelis.
- The Supreme Court had granted the government numerous extensions, over many years, to enable it to come up with legislation to deal with this issue, while finding the status quo to be inequitable and thus unconstitutional.
- This week, the Court announced a unanimous 9-0 decision, saying that the state must begin to draft eligible Haredi men, and/or to impose sanctions on those who do not enlist. The Court stated clearly that the government does not have the authority to exempt ultra-Orthodox men from the draft and will be required to cut funding to institutions who do not send their eligible students to military service.
- The ruling was penned by acting Chief Justice Uzi Fogelman, who wrote that "the inequality between those willing to sacrifice their lives in war and those unwilling to do so is a most extreme case of disparity and inequality which cannot be accepted."
- Israel's Ministry of Defense will now need to determine how many Haredim it can and will draft, and how soon that can happen. It will no doubt be a logistical and organizational challenge for the IDF to implement the decision quickly.
- Haredi politicians have already issued harsh statements against the decision, and widespread protests are expected. The Coalition is pushing to pass legislation that it sees as a compromise on the issue, but many obstacles remain before that could be completed.

Stories of Heartbreak, Heroism, and Hope

- [Karina Arieiv](#) is a 19-year-old resident of Jerusalem, the daughter of Albert and Ira. Described by her sister Sasha as "the sweetest person," Karina dreams of studying either psychology or sociology to help

others. She was taken captive from Kibbutz Nahal Oz by Hamas terrorists on the morning of October 7. Three months later, Hamas released a propaganda video showing her bloodied and bruised face, with terror in her eyes. Her sister pleaded, "Ask people to pray for Karina Bat Ira and do whatever they can to bring her home."

- [Kaid Farhan Elkadi](#) resides in the Bedouin community of Rahat in southern Israel. On the morning of October 7, he was abducted from Kibbutz Magen while guarding a packaging facility. The 53-year-old is married and father to 11 children.