

Ynet-News, Apr 28, 2024 – Sunday - Pesach day 7
Traditional Pesach - April 22 to 30, First-Fruits April 26 :
Possible Abomination Day June 20, 2024
Pesach Apr 21-28 First-Fruits April 29

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Pro-Palestinian protests at US universities show no sign of slowing

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Prominent PA leader eliminated in southern Lebanon airstrike by IDF

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Blinken & Kerry vie to sanction Israel for executing PA without trial; to halt aid

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Daily Mail reported only 40 Hamas hostages still alive & Qatar deal deadlock

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Sstlements & Police facing booby-traps & terror attacks in West Bank

4.20. 24 – Sa- - - News – Saturday

Blinken sanction IDF & denies military aid to Israel for violating PA human rights

4.20. 24 – Sa - - News Placed in April 20 spot – Saturday

Israel precise cruise missiles strike on Iran defense radar sends message to regime

4.28. 24 – Su

Pro-Palestinian protests at US universities show no sign of slowing

4.28. 24 – Su

Pro-Palestinian protests at US universities show no sign of slowing

Demonstrations calling on the US government to stop supporting Israel continue to take over local university campuses, worrying Jewish communities around the world
Reuters|13:45

Pro-Palestinian protests at U.S. universities showed no sign of slowing as they spread coast-to-coast over the weekend and police crackdowns and arrests continued into another week while students vowed to stay in tent encampments until their demands are met.

The students' demands range from a ceasefire in Israel's war with Hamas to calls for universities to stop investing in Israeli enterprises involved with the country's military to an end for U.S. military assistance for Israel.

Pro-Palestinian protests have spread to college campuses across the U.S., stoked by the mass arrest of over 100 people on Columbia University's campus more than a week ago. The Columbia campus was peaceful on Saturday and there were no reports of arrests of disturbances overnight, a school spokesman told Reuters.

But crackdowns continued at a handful of campuses on Saturday including a lockdown at the University of Southern California (USC) and a heavy police presence. More than 200 people were arrested at a handful of schools including 80 late on Saturday at Washington University in St. Louis. Among those arrested at Washington University was 2024 Green Party presidential candidate Jill Stein.

"They are sending in the riot police and basically creating a riot in an otherwise peaceful demonstration. So this is just shameful," Stein said in a statement.

Washington University said in a statement that those arrested would be charged with trespassing.

On Sunday, dueling demonstrations were set to begin at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles. Outside groups were planning to demonstrate in favor of and against the pro-Palestinian encampments.

Members of the Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice planned to support students' right to protest.

In opposition, however, a group called Stand With Us will hold a "Stand in Support of Jewish Students" rally to "stand up against hatred and antisemitism."

The nationwide protests have caught the attention of President Joe Biden.

White House national security spokesman John Kirby told ABC News on Sunday that the president knows there are very strong feelings about the war in Gaza.

"He understands that, he respects that and as he has said many times, we certainly respect the right of peaceful protest," Kirby said. "People should have the ability to air their views and to share their perspectives publicly, but it has to be peaceful."

Kirby added that the president condemns antisemitism and condemns hate speech.

At USC, leadership has canceled the main commencement ceremony after it called off the valedictorian speech by a Muslim student who said she was silenced by anti-Palestinian hatred.

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass said on Sunday she believed that canceling the commencement was a decision "they had to make."

"They were expecting about 65,000 people on campus, and they just did not feel that it was going to be safe," Bass said on CNN's "State of the Union."

4.28. 24 – Su

Netanyahu, Biden speak on hostages & Rafah operation

4.28. 24 – Su

Netanyahu, Biden speak on hostages, Rafah operation

US President reiterates 'clear position' on military operation in Rafah in a phone call with Netanyahu; military spokesperson says more humanitarian aid going into the Strip 'than ever before'

Yoav Zitun, Itamar Eichner, Daniel Edelson, New York, Reuters|13:29

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and US President Joe Biden spoke on the phone on Sunday and discussed the need to release Israeli hostages, the Iranian attack against Israel, and Biden's position on the IDF's planned military operation in Gaza.

"President Biden spoke earlier today with Prime Minister Netanyahu. The President reaffirmed his ironclad commitment to Israel's security following the successful defense against Iran's unprecedented missile and drone attack earlier this month. They also reviewed ongoing talks to secure the release of hostages together with an immediate ceasefire in Gaza," a White House statement on the conversation between the two read.

"The President referred to his statement with 17 other world leaders demanding that Hamas release their citizens without delay to secure a ceasefire and relief for the people of Gaza. The President and the Prime Minister also discussed increases in the delivery of

humanitarian assistance into Gaza including through preparations to open new northern crossings starting this week," it added.

"The President stressed the need for this progress to be sustained and enhanced in full coordination with humanitarian organizations. The leaders discussed Rafah and the President reiterated his clear position."

Meanwhile, IDF Chief of Staff LTG Herzi Halevi approved on Sunday military plans that might be put into action in the planned operation in Rafah. "Food, water, medical supplies, shelter equipment and other aid - more of it is going into Gaza than ever before," IDF Spokesperson Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari said.

This comes against the backdrop the Jerusalem's expectation of Hamas's response to the Egyptian hostage deal proposal, and the increasing international pressure against Israel amid possibilities that the International Criminal Court (ICC) at the Hague will issue arrest warrants against Israeli officials.

"Over the last few weeks, the amount of humanitarian aid going into Gaza has significantly increased. In the coming days, the amount of aid going into Gaza will continue to scale up even more," Hagari added in a statement.

Hagari said the aid increase is a result of using Israel's Ashdod port, as well as a new crossing into northern Gaza and increased aid from Jordan entering through the Kerem Shalom border crossing at the southern tip of Gaza.

Israel is also working with U.S. Central Command to construct a "temporary maritime pier," which will allow ship-to-shore distribution, Hagari said.

"Getting aid to the people of Gaza is a top priority —because our war is against Hamas, not against the people of Gaza," he added.

Addressing the possibility of the ICC issuing arrest warrants against Israeli politicians and military, Hagari said, "The Israel Defense Forces operates according to international law. We make vast efforts to minimize harm to the civilians that Hamas is hiding behind — because we see the suffering of civilians as a tragedy, while Hamas sees the suffering of civilians as a strategy."

"That's why Hamas intentionally hides among civilians; that's why Hamas wages war from within civilians; and that's why Hamas has been stealing aid meant for civilians in Gaza," the statement added.

4.27. 24 – Sa

Foreign Minister Katz says hostage deal would defer Rafah operation

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Foreign Minister Katz says hostage deal would defer Rafah operation

Katz reaffirms Israel's top priority is the release of all Israeli hostages held in the Gaza Strip and that a deal would come first against the planned military operation

Reuters | 14:45

Foreign Minister Israel Katz said on Saturday that a planned incursion into the southern Gaza city of Rafah could be suspended should a deal emerge to secure the release of Israeli hostages held by Hamas.

The comments came as international mediators push for a deal to achieve a cease-fire in the six months of devastating fighting in Gaza and the release of Israeli hostages taken during Hamas' October 7 assault that sparked the war.

"The release of the hostages is the top priority for us," Foreign Minister Israel Katz said during an interview with local Channel 12 television. Asked if that included putting off a planned operation to eliminate Hamas battalions in the city of Rafah, Katz answered, "Yes."

He went on to say: "If there will be a deal, we will suspend the operation." Though Katz is a member of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's security cabinet, he is not a member of the narrow-forum war cabinet overseeing the Gaza offensive. Israel, which launched its war to annihilate Hamas after the Islamist terror group's October 7 attacks on Israeli towns, says Rafah is home to four Hamas combat battalions reinforced by thousands of retreating fighters, and it must defeat them to achieve victory.

But Rafah, which abuts the Egyptian border, is sheltering more than a million Palestinians who fled the Israeli offensive through the rest of Gaza and say the prospect of fleeing yet again is terrifying.

Earlier on Saturday, Hamas said it had received Israel's official response to its latest cease-fire proposal in Egyptian-and-Qatari-mediated negotiations and will study it before submitting its reply.

On Thursday, the United States and 17 other countries appealed to Hamas to release all of its hostages as a pathway to end the crisis.

Hamas wants to parlay any deal into a permanent end to the fighting - short of a formal peace, as the Islamist group is sworn to Israel's destruction. Israel plans to pursue the war until Hamas's governing and military capacities are dismantled.

As Hamas issued a new video showing two of the hostages pleading for their release and sending love to their families, thousands of Israelis gathered in Tel Aviv in protest, demanding that the government do more to secure their release.

Some 1,200 people were killed on October 7, according to Israeli tallies, in the deadliest single attack in Israel's history. Israel's offensive in Gaza has killed more than 34,000 Palestinians, according to health authorities in Hamas-ruled Gaza.

4.26.24 – Fr

Prominent PA leader eliminated in southern Lebanon airstrike by IDF

4.26. 24 – Fr

Prominent Palestinian terrorist eliminated in southern Lebanon airstrike, IDF says
Mosab Khalaf, senior member of Palestinian terrorist group Jamaa Islamiya, killed in
Israeli drone strike in southern Lebanon's Meidoun; army says Khalaf collaborated with
 Hamas' Lebanon branch to orchestrate attacks against Israel
Yoav Zitun, Lior Ben Ari|12:49

Israeli Air Force aircraft struck and killed Mosab Khalaf, a senior member of the
Palestinian terrorist organization Jamaa Islamiya, in the village of Meidoun in southern
Lebanon, the IDF said Friday evening.

According to the IDF, Khalaf was implicated in planning numerous terrorist attacks
against Israel. The army added that Jamaa Islamiya has been actively plotting assaults
from Lebanese territory, particularly targeting the Har Dov region and other northern
areas of Israel.

The IDF said that Khalaf collaborated with Hamas' Lebanon branch to orchestrate these
attacks. His elimination is part of Israel's strategy to impair the terrorist group's ability to
execute planned attacks along Israel's northern border.

Hezbollah-affiliated Lebanese network Al Mayadeen reported Friday afternoon that an
Israeli drone attacked a civilian vehicle near the village of Meidoun in western Bekaa
Governorate, killing two people. Lebanese sources told Sky News Arabia that the target
of the attack was a Hamas operative.

This latest strike is part of an ongoing low-intensity war between Israel and Hezbollah,
characterized by cross-border exchanges of fire. Israel has adopted a strategy of targeting
and assassinating prominent leaders and commanders of Hezbollah and allied terrorist
groups in Lebanon and Syria.

Earlier Friday, Saudi channel Al Hadath reported additional strikes in southern Lebanon's
Kfarkela. Hezbollah's Al Manar channel later reported Israeli strikes in southern
Lebanon's Aaramta.

4.26. 24 – Fr

International Court (ICJ) plan to arrest Israel PM & officials – failed by US veto

4.26. 24 – Fr

US decides against sanctioning Haredi battalion, report
Blinken outlines decision in letter to House Speaker saying Israeli government presents
new information; official tells Ynet move likely the result of pressure from leaders from
all side of political divide, Israeli public response to sanctions imposed during war
Itamar Eichner|06:54

The Biden administration has decided not to impose sanctions on IDF's Netzah Yehuda battalion although it had determined that the soldiers involved had committed "gross human rights violations" against Palestinian civilians in the West Bank, ABC News reported on Friday. They would therefore remain eligible for U.S. military aid because of steps taken by the military, to address the problem, the network said.

Although the decision of the administration has not yet been announced, ABC News said that it was outlined in an undated letter from Secretary of State Antony Blinken to House Speaker Mike Johnson, that was seen by the network.

The U.S. determination "will not delay the delivery of any U.S. assistance and Israel will be able to receive the full amount appropriated by Congress," Blinken wrote. "The Israeli government has presented new information regarding the status of the unit and we will engage on identifying a path to effective remediation for this unit," he said in his letter. "But this will have no impact on our support for Israel's ability to defend itself against Hamas, Iran, Hezbollah, or other threats."

Blinken said last week that sanctions were being considered under the so-called Leahy law. "This is a very important law, and it's one that we apply across the board. I think it's fair to say that you'll see results very soon," he said.

An official told Ynet that the decision to avoid sanctioning the Haredi battalion may have been made after Israeli leaders from across the political spectrum appealed to the administration to reconsider their position and after the Israeli public response over such a move during war.

Responding to the Israeli appeals and avoiding sanctioning the battalion, could have further implications including an American veto, should the International Court of Justice (ICJ) decide to issue warrants to arrest senior Israeli officials, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Defense Minister Yoav Gallant and Chief of Staff Herzi Halevi. The prosecutor at the ICJ would likely not move to issue such warrants without a green light from Washington.

In a relevant decision, Netanyahu agreed to allow a visit of Hamas Nuchba terrorists imprisoned in Israel, by an Israeli judge and two judges from the UK to ensure their rights were not being violated. This decision was a result of Israel's effort to convince the British government and the international community that Israel was respectful of international law, and to avoid being subjected to an arms embargo.

4.25. 24 – Th

18 world leaders call on Hamas to release hostages, 'deal is on the table'

4.25. 24 – Th

Biden, 17 other world leaders call on Hamas to release hostages, 'deal is on the table'

Leaders from 18 countries call on Hamas to release the 133 hostages now to end the crisis in Gaza, including the leaders of the US, UK, France and Germany; Senior White House

official says statement is also a result of hostage Hersh Goldberg-Polin's video
Itamar Eichner, Daniel Edelson, New York|10:08

On Thursday, the 202nd day of the war in Gaza, the leaders of 18 countries called on Hamas to release the 133 hostages, which would end the crisis in Gaza.

The 18 signatories were the leaders of the United States, Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Spain, Thailand and Britain. The 18 countries all have citizens held by Hamas six months after Hamas launched its October 7 assault on southern Israel and killed 1,200 people.

"We call for the immediate release of all hostages held by Hamas in Gaza for over 200 days. They include our own citizens. The fate of the hostages and the civilian population in Gaza, who are protected under international law, is of international concern," according to the statement issued by the leaders.

"We emphasize that the deal on the table to release the hostages would bring an immediate and prolonged ceasefire in Gaza, that would facilitate a surge of additional necessary humanitarian assistance to be delivered throughout Gaza and lead to the credible end of hostilities. Gazans would be able to return to their homes and their lands with preparations beforehand to ensure shelter and humanitarian provisions. We reiterate our call on Hamas to release the hostages and let us end this crisis so that collectively we can focus our efforts on bringing peace and stability to the region," the statement also says.

A senior official in the White House said that the joint statement comes following the release of the video of hostage Hersh Goldberg-Polin, which was received by the White House on Monday - before Hamas made it public - and is currently undergoing a review process with experts. "He was wounded in the hand while saving his friends from grenades, and we are in contact with the Egyptians and others to get him out and get everyone out," the American official said.

According to the U.S. official, the leader of Hamas in Gaza, Yahya Sinwar, is the one who makes the decisions - and he personally rejected the hostage release deal, thus insisting on keeping him in the category of vulnerable hostages. The official noted that Biden on Wednesday met 4-year-old Abigail Edan - an American and Israeli citizen who was released from Hamas captivity after 50 days, and whose parents were murdered on October 7 - and spent more than an hour with her and members of her family.

"He just let her play like a 4-year-old girl does. She played in the Oval Office, crawled under the Resolute Desk like the famous picture of John F. Kennedy Jr. when he was a child," the official said. She also played on the White House lawn and in the playground on the premises while the president discussed US efforts to free the hostages with her family, according to the official.

The headquarters of the families of the hostages praised the statement.

"We welcome the statement by world leaders calling for the immediate release of all the hostages, and which puts the issue of the hostages at the top of the world's priorities and

call on other leaders to join this call. The statement is the product of hard work carried out by the families of the hostages in recent months in front of decision-makers from all over the world, with the aim of bringing home all the hostages - the living for rehabilitation and the murdered for burial," the families said in a statement.

The senior US official pointed out that it is Hamas that continues to reject deals centered around the hostages that would bring an immediate cease-fire.

"There is a deal on the table that would bring a cease-fire immediately to Gaza with the release of women, wounded, elderly and sick hostages that is ready to go. We have worked it out in meticulous detail and Hamas has rejected that. Because of that, we still have fighting ongoing in Gaza," according to the official.

The official added that Hamas' claim that Israel does not allow residents to return to the northern Gaza Strip is "false." Under the agreement on the table, during the first weeks of the cease-fire, conditions were set that would allow residents to safely return to northern Gaza and receive humanitarian aid to the United Nations.

"There is great destruction, so you first want to establish safe places. It would be dangerous for the population to return without preparation. This was agreed upon after months of negotiations, including consultation with humanitarian experts. If there is a release of women, the elderly and the sick and there is a cease-fire then conditions will be established that will allow a return residents. That's why Hamas' claim is not true."

Referring to Hamas leader in Gaza, Yahya Sinwar, the American official said: "I think justice will come to him. There were several times when the negotiations made great progress outside with Hamas leaders living in luxury hotels, but Sinwar is the ultimate decision-maker."

According to the official, the question came to Sinwar about "whether he'll agree to release the vulnerable category of hostages to secure ceasefire and relief for Gazans, and the answer that comes back from Sinwar personally, is 'No.'"

On the question of whether Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is doing everything to reach a hostage deal, the American official said: "It is a very difficult negotiation. There were times when the Israelis, for one reason or another, did not want to put certain issues on the table. Six weeks ago, I might have given a different answer, but during President Biden's conversation with Prime Minister Netanyahu on the eve of Iran's attack it was a central issue."

"Right now, the core truth is that there's a deal on the table that meets nearly all of the demands that Hamas has had, including key issues. There were times when we thought that Israel could perhaps give more, but this is a negotiation and there are tactical matters," the official said. "The view of the Egyptians and the Qataris and those who are fairly deeply involved is that the answer that came back from inside Gaza was totally not constructive."

"We do see some indications that there might be an avenue here, but I'm not totally confident because a lot of times we hear things from leaders of Hamas outside Gaza that do not reflect the Hamas leadership inside," the official said. "There is a proposal on the table that is a road map for ending the crisis and Hamas should release these categories and then we can move forward."

4.25. 24 – Th

EU Parliament votes for unprecedented condemnation & sanctions on Iran

4.25. 24 – Th

EU Parliament votes for unprecedented condemnation of Iran

In majority vote of 357 to 20, EU decides to expand sanctions on Tehran regime's missile and drone production projects, reiterates support for Israel's security and calls for IRGC to be designated a terror organization, demands Iran comply with nuclear deal
Itamar Eichner|08:26

The European Parliament on Thursday voted in favor of an unprecedented condemnation of Iran following its massive attack on Israel earlier in the month. The vote which passed with an overwhelming majority of 357 to 20, reiterates the EU's "full support for the security of the State of Israel and its citizens and condemns the simultaneous rocket launches carried out by Iran's proxies Hezbollah in Lebanon and Houthi rebels in Yemen against the Golan Heights and Israeli territory before and during the Iranian attack."

The EU also decided to expand the sanctions placed on the Iranian regime and on its missile and drone projects and demands that these sanctions be "urgently put in place and call for more individuals and entities to be targeted."

In a statement, the EU said the votes reiterate the parliament's "long-standing call to include Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps on the EU list of terrorist organizations, stressing that such a decision is long overdue due to malign Iranian activities. It similarly calls on the Council and EU Foreign Policy Chief Josep Borrell to add Hezbollah in its entirety to the same list."

The parliament called out Iran's "persistently failing to comply with its legal safeguard obligations under its nuclear deal and urged the Iranian authorities to "immediately abide by these requirements and address all related outstanding issues." It also recognized Iran's role in destabilizing regional security, including by supporting Hamas and called for an immediate implementation of UN resolution 1701 on the Israel-Lebanon border.

Foreign Minister Israel Katz hailed the EU decision. "The world now understands Iran must be stopped before it is too late," he said. "The free world sees that Iran is a danger to world order and to peace and is the largest exporter of terror in the world."

4.25. 24 – Th

Egypt & China advance hostage negotiations to pause Rafah offensive

4.25. 24 – Th

Egypt in efforts to prevent Israeli offensive on Rafah

Arab media reports Egyptian proposal to jumpstart hostage negotiations in exchange for suspension of Rafah assault; IDF says awaiting greenlight from government after preparations in place for operation
Lior Ben Ari, Yoav Zitun|06:51

Egyptian officials said on Thursday that their government was attempting to stop a possible Israeli offensive on Rafah. The Egyptian Foreign Ministry spokesperson said earlier that such an operation could cause a humanitarian catastrophe and that the international community is opposed to it.

"Any attempt to ignite the situation in Gaza and increase pressure on the Palestinians, causes tensions in the relations with Israel," the spokesperson said. "This would not prevent Israel from communicating with all parties to the conflict, to bring about a solution to the crisis."

Meanwhile the IDF said it was finalizing preparations for a Rafah offensive and is awaiting a greenlight from the government to proceed. Once that is given, the military said it would take three weeks to move civilians sheltering in the area, to safety. Over a million Palestinian civilians displaced by fighting elsewhere in the coastal enclave are sheltering in sprawling tent encampments or with relatives across the highly crowded city whose population numbered around 300,000 before the outset of the war. The IDF said it has already observed 150,000 people leave Rafah for Khan Younis in the past month after troops left the city. On Thursday, images showed thousands flocking to the Rafah shores to escape the scorching heat.

Officials told the Qatari Al Araby outlet that Egyptian officials discussed the matter with visiting Mossad Chief Ronen Bar and IDF Chief of Staff Herzi Halevi on Wednesday. They also discussed how best to advance negotiations for the release of hostages held captive by Hamas in Gaza.

According to the report, the Israeli officials would be discussing the matter with the war cabinet and relay the outcome of the meeting back to Cairo. "Egypt presented a new proposal based on the Paris summit and is in intense discussions with the Israelis to prevent an assault on Rafah."

The Saudi Al-Hadath channel quoted Egyptian sources as saying a proposal made to Israel was to suspend plans for an operation in Rafah in exchange for the negotiations on hostages to resume adding that Hamas offered to suspend all attacks on Israel in exchange for a cease-fire that would last one year.

Hamas officials are expected to meet with member of the Fatah movement in China on Friday after the Chinese invited them to discuss "the challenges stemming from the war and the opportunity to resolve their disputes."

Hezbollah fired dozens of rockets at Galilee Wednesday, keeping residents away

4.24. 24 – We

Gallant: Half of Hezbollah commanders killed, others hiding

Military says some 40 targets of Iran-backed group came under Israeli strikes in recent hours after dozens of rockets land in Israel and one home on the border takes a direct hit
Yoav Zitun|07:51

Israel came under attack from Hezbollah on Wednesday when dozens of rockets were fired at the Galilee. Israel responded by attacking targets in South Lebanon.

Defense Minister Yoav Gallant who was visiting the IDF Northern Command and meeting with its senior officers, said that half of the commanders of Hezbollah's forces have been killed and the rest were in hiding. "From the military operational perspective this is a critical time," he said.

In a statement, the military said IDF fighter jets and artillery struck approximately 40 Hezbollah terror targets in the area of Ayta ash Shab in southern Lebanon, including storage facilities, weaponry, terror infrastructures, and additional targets used by the Hezbollah terrorist organization in the area.

According to reports in the Saudi media, Israel was conducting massive strikes it described as a fire-belt, for the first time since the cross-border violence began soon after the Hamas massacre in the South. Lebanese media outlets claimed earlier that at least 17 strikes against Hezbollah targets were carried out by the IDF.

Earlier a home on the border took a direct hit from a Hezbollah anti-tank missile and dozens of rockets were reported to have landed in open areas. Hezbollah claimed responsibility for the fire.

Gallant said the government's top priority is to bring the residents of the north, who were evacuated at the start of the war, home safely.

4.23. 24 – Tu

Hezbollah renews rocket & drone attacks on north Israel

4.23. 24 – Tu

Hezbollah deepens rocket, drones attack on northern Israel amid commander elimination
Sirens blared in the shores of Acre for the first time since December, as Hezbollah claims responsibility on recent wave of attacks, saying it is a retaliation for the elite commander Mohammad Khalil Atiyeh

Ynetnews|08:56

Hezbollah claimed responsibility on Tuesday for firing rockets and attack drones toward Nahariya and Kiryat Shmona, asserting that the targets were military. The terror group

also stated that the attack was in response to Israeli strikes in southern Lebanon, and the assassination of a Hezbollah commander.

Along the shores of Acre, sirens blared for the first time since December. Videos captured swimmers scrambling in panic, some fleeing the beach during the alerts.

Amidst this chaos, the network "Al-Mayadeen," affiliated with Hezbollah and echoing the organization's rhetoric, claimed after the firing into the northern region that "an Israeli military target had been struck" by an attack drone fired from southern Lebanon, adding that "the target was hit."

Following the firing on Israel's north, the Israeli Air Force launched a series of strikes against Hezbollah targets in southern Lebanon. Sirens warning of rocket fire were also activated in the community of Margaliot in Upper Galilee.

4.21. 24 – Su

Blinken & Kerry vie to sanction Israel for executing PA without trial; to halt aid

4.21. 24 – Su

U.S. no longer tolerant of alleged IDF human rights violations

Explainer: First time application of Leahy Law on IDF indicates shift in policy; law requires suspension of military aid to foreign force found in violation, until local authorities take disciplinary measures against perpetrators of alleged crimes

Daniel Edelson, New York|10:08

After the last obstacle was removed and the U.S. House of Representatives approved the unprecedented \$15 billion in military aid to Israel, the White House demonstrated what strings may have been attached, when according to reports, for the first-time sanctions could be imposed on a battalion in the IDF.

U.S. State Department officials briefed reporters that Secretary of State Antony Blinken was expected to announce American funding would not be extended to the ultra-Orthodox combat unit Netzah Yehuda Battalion.

According to the State Department, these soldiers are systematically harassing and violating the human rights of Palestinians on the West Bank and are therefore in violation of American law.

The sanctions will reportedly include, among other things, a prohibition on delivering American weapons to the battalion, and its soldiers and commanders will be barred from joint drills of the IDF and the American military.

Blinken said a decision has been made and will be put into effect within days. "I think you're referring to the so-called Leahy Law and our work under that," Blinken told a reporter who asked about the upcoming sanctions. So, this is a very important law, and it's one that we apply across the board. I think it's fair to say that you'll see results very soon."

The 1997 law by former Democratic Senator Patrick Leahy, prohibits the United States from providing military aid or training to security forces, the military, or the police when there is reliable information about human rights abuses.

The officials at State, said the matter had been under consideration for a while, even before the war and that the extremist rhetoric of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's far-right coalition partners Bezael Smotrich and Itamar Ben Gvir, contributed to the decision.

To enforce the law, U.S. embassies around the world and the relevant arms of the State Department must compile information and consider testimonies from human rights groups or from media reports, about the conduct of local security forces who are recipients of U.S. aid as they search for any blatant violations of human rights.

In those violations the State Department includes extreme conduct such as murder of innocents, torture, abduction and rape as a tactic of war. If there is credible information that a certain unit is involved in such conduct, the aid is suspended until the relevant government takes necessary disciplinary steps to bring those involved to justice.

The Leahy Law was enacted in the past in Turkey, Lebanon, Indonesia, Australia, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, Nigeria and St. Lucia.

The State Department did not specify what would be considered "credible" information, other than to say it must meet the standard of the U. S. courts. Officials, therefore, would rely on a variety of sources, including annual reports by human rights groups, records of government and non-governmental organizations and media reports.

Over the year, the law had been criticized by American military commanders who said it was applied to broadly and on occasion, interferes with training programs in foreign forces, on the other hand, rights groups and administration officials claim the law is not enforced enough and cite U.S. support for foreign militaries such as in Cambodia, despite documented human rights violations there.

An article published in the UK's Guardian newspaper last January cited what the publication claimed were internal State Department documents outlining methods used by successive administrations to protect Israel from such laws so as not to disrupt the supply of military aid, despite accusations that the laws were being violated.

In 2016, Senator Leahy and ten other Democrat members of Congress wrote then Secretary of State John Kerry demanding an investigation of Israel be launched after suspicions were raised that Israeli security forces, "executed" Palestinians without trial.

4.21. 24 – Su

Daily Mail reported only 40 Hamas hostages still alive & Qatar deal deadlock

4.21. 24 – Su

Shin Bet believes only 40 Hamas hostages still alive, report says

Daily Mail reports figure based on intelligence gathered by security agency; Shin Bet flatly denies report; 'The numbers presented in the report are solely the author's opinion and are not based on information provided by the Shin Bet'

Yoav Zitun|04:51

Intelligence from Israel's Shin Bet domestic security agency suggests only 40 out of the 133 hostages held by Hamas in the Gaza Strip are still alive, the Daily Mail reported on Sunday.

"[Intelligence] is much easier to access than before October 7 when we had limited access to Gaza and we didn't have a lot of possibilities of sources. The situation is completely different because we are there," an unnamed source told the Mail.

The Shin Bet denied the report, calling it "incorrect" and saying that it "does not reflect the views of the Shin Bet." "The numbers presented in the report are solely the author's opinion and are not based on information provided by the Shin Bet," the agency said in a statement.

Meanwhile, the War Cabinet is set to convene Sunday night for the first time in 12 days to discuss the current impasse in hostage talks with Hamas. The terror group is currently demanding a six-week truce in exchange for the release of less than 20 hostages, according to its response handed to mediators last week which coincided with the beginning of the unprecedented Iranian attack on Israel.

The meeting was rescheduled for last Thursday at the request of Ministers Benny Gantz and Gadi Eizenkot but was again postponed due to a strike on an air base in Iran's Isfahan Friday. Gantz and Eizenkot have called for a War Cabinet meeting to explore additional solutions for the hostage deal deadlock.

A senior official conceded that while hostage talks have made little progress lately, Israel is expecting Washington to pressure the Qatari mediators, and is exploring different avenues to break the impasse.

Qatar said last week it was "reconsidering" its mediating role in hostage talks due to the attacks against them by Israeli politicians. The Usaid that Doha is "an irreplaceable player" in negotiations.

4.21. 24 – Su

Sstlements & Police facing booby-traps & terror attacks in West Bank

4.21. 24 – Su

Israeli lightly injured after removing booby-trapped Palestinian flag in West Bank

Footage shows man approaching flag and kicking it, setting off an explosive device near northern West Bank settlement of Kokhav HaShahar

Elisha Ben Kimon|03:31

An Israeli was lightly injured by an explosive device while trying to remove a Palestinian flag near the northern West Bank settlement of Kokhav HaShahar on Sunday morning.

Footage of the incident shows the man approaching the flag and kicking it, setting off an explosive device. It is currently unclear whether the flag itself was booby-trapped or if the explosive device was placed nearby. Security forces and first responders were dispatched to the scene.

Meanwhile, IDF forces neutralized two terrorists who attacked them Sunday at the Beit Einun junction between Kiryat Arba and Gush Etzion. One of the terrorists lunged at the soldiers with a knife while the second assailant opened fire at them. There were no casualties among the soldiers.

Last week, a Border Police reservist was lightly wounded by sniper fire in the Singil Junction in the West Bank. This came just hours after the body of Israeli teenager Binyamin Achimeir, 14, was found with signs of violence. The body of Achimeir, a shepherd, was recovered at the end of an extensive search after his herd returned to the Malachi HaShalom settlement in the West Bank without him.

The boy's murderers are still at large as Israeli security forces are trying to piece together evidence collected from the scene and locate the assailants.

Meanwhile, the police arrested on Sunday six people in the Yitzhar settlement on suspicion of nationalist crimes, incitement and involvement in rioting in Palestinian villages in the unrest sparked by Achimeir's killing.

4.20. 24 – Sa

Blinken sanctions IDF & denies military aid to Israel for violating PA human rights

4.20. 24 – Sa

Report: US set to sanction IDF unit in historical first; Netanyahu: 'Absurd'

Axios reports U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken says sanctions against Netzah Yehuda Battalion expected 'very soon'; Israeli officials criticize Biden administration
Itamar Eichner, Daniel Edelson, New York|15:51

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken is expected to announce for the first time sanctions against the IDF ultra-Orthodox combat unit Netzah Yehuda Battalion for alleged human rights violations against Palestinians in the West Bank, U.S.-based news outlet Axios first reported Saturday.

The sanctions will include, among other things, a prohibition on delivering American weapons to the battalion, and its soldiers and commanders will be barred from joint drills between the IDF and the American military.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu criticized the Biden administration's intentions and said, "The IDF shouldn't be placed sanction on." He added, "While our soldiers are fighting the horror of terrorism, the intentions to place sanctions on an IDF unit is most

absurd and a moral outcry. My government will act against these moves with all means available to us.”

“I think you’re referring to the so-called Leahy Law and our work under that,” Blinken told a reporter who asked about the upcoming sanctions. So, this is a very important law, and it’s one that we apply across the board. I think it’s fair to say that you’ll see results very soon.”

Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich said, “The decision to enact sanctions against the IDF while Israel is fighting for its existence is crazy. We warned that the Biden administration’s sanctions against settlers will carry on to the IDF and the rest of the State of Israel. It’s part of a planned move to force Israel to agree to the establishment of a Palestinian state and to harm Israel’s security.”

The U.S. has moved in recent months against Israeli settlers in particular and placed economic sanctions against them as well.

The Netzah Yehuda Battalion was linked with previous violent incidents in the West Bank in the past, including an investigation against some of its soldiers following the death of a Palestinian elderly man who was detained for questioning.

Israeli officials reacted to the news and said it is unclear if the report is accurate, added the Americans have demanded clarifications regarding the Netzah Yehuda Battalion’s activities in the past after claims they were harming Palestinians.

One estimate says that the issue may be related to the implementation of an American law that includes a series of regulations prohibiting the U.S. State Department and Defense Departments from providing military aid to countries that violate human rights. In any case, even if sanctions are indeed imposed on the brigade, it’s unclear how they will affect the unit at this point.

4.20. 24 – Sa

Israel precise cruise missiles strike on Iran defense radar sends message to regime

4.20. 24 – Sa

Just a taste: Israel marks precise strike near Iranian nuclear facility

Israel attacked a base in Isfahan with a specially-equipped missile from a fighter jet, far from Iran's borders; reports say cruise missiles were launched from Iranian territory
Ynet|08:10

The New York Times reported on Saturday that according to its sources, Israel used at least one missile in the attack on Iran on Friday, launched from a fighter jet far from Iran or Israel's borders, which the Iranian air defense systems could not detect. The attack also reportedly involved cruise missiles launched from Iranian territory.

Western sources, including "Yedioth Ahronoth" journalist Ronen Bergman said that the use of these weapons sends a clear message to the Iranian regime. It's just a "taste" of

what it might face in a broader confrontation, thus deterring Tehran after its unsuccessful attack on Israel last week.

Two Iranian and two Western sources confirmed to "The Times" on Saturday that the precise attack on a military base in Isfahan hit an S-300 battery, a Russian-made air defense system responsible for detecting and neutralizing aerial threats near the nuclear site in Natanz. The accompanying photos published this morning strengthen these reports, showing damage to the advanced radar, a critical component of the battery deployed at the Iranian Air Force base.

The Times emphasizes that it's still unclear what weapon hit the site. Western and Iranian sources said that the attack involved both cruise missiles launched from within Iran and at least one missile launched from a fighter jet.

Iran officially insists that only cruise missiles launched from its territory were used in the attack and downplayed its significance. Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian described the cruise missiles in an interview with NBC as "toys" and emphasized that there is still no evidence that Israel was behind the attack. Supposedly the assertion was made to contain the event and avoid escalation.

According to Western sources, the missile in Friday's attack was launched from a fighter jet that stayed far from the airspace of Israel or Iran, and it included stealth technology that enabled it to evade Iran's defense systems. The sources stressed that neither the missile nor the fighter jet entered Jordan's airspace to ensure that the kingdom does not get dragged into any potential conflict after having assisted in Israel's defense last week. Sources added that Israel's retaliation was "calculated" and aimed to convey a message to Tehran about Israel's capabilities. Iran learned that Israel could penetrate Iran's defense systems and silence them using very few munitions compared to the hundreds of cruise missiles and UAVs Iran fired.

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Ynet-News, Apr 19, 2024 – Friday

: Traditional Pesach - April 22 to 30, First-Fruits April 26 :

Possible Abomination Day June 20, 2024

Ramadan – Ended April 10, Feast Fri Apr 12 Pesach Apr 21-28 First-Fruits April 29

4.19. 24 – Fr- - News Placed in April 19 spot – Friday

Primary Iran target for F-35s was a military base where UAVs were launched

4.19. 24 – Fr- - News – Friday

Tehran plays down reported Israeli attacks, signals no further retaliation

4.18. 24 – Th- - - News – Thursday

Palestinian membership bid in UN Security Council rejected by US veto

4.18. 24 – Th- - - News Placed in April 18 spot – Thursday
Gallant letter to PM slams Smotrich over refusal to fund extended Gaza aid

4.18. 24 – Th- - - News – Thursday
Qatar funds Gaza & criticizes Israel; the world should declare Qatar a terrorist state

4.17. 24 – We- - - News – Wednesday
Hostage negotiations frozen: After six months 'Sinwar is still mocking us'

4.17. 24 – We- - - News – Wednesday
13 injured, 4 seriously, in heavy rocket attack on northern Bedouin border town

4.17. 24 – We- - - News Placed in April 17 spot – Wednesday
Israel conducts over 900 West Bank raids during Ramadan; 300 arrested

4.16. 24 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday
Iran-Russia alliance deepens weapons trade as Moscow supports attack on Israel

4.16. 24 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday
IDF so far arrested 3,700 Hamas in the West Bank since Gaza war

4.16. 24 – Tu- - - News Placed in April 16 spot – Tuesday
Iran briefed Gulf Arabs on attack timing; Saudi intel passed to US, provided warning

4.15. 24 – Mo- - - News – Monday
IDF allowed PA women & children under age 14 to return to northern Gaza

4.15. 24 – Mo- - - News Placed in April 15 spot – Monday
Rafah operation postponed, Hamas reclaims Khan Younis, Israel focus on Iran

4.15. 24 – Mo- - - News – Monday
Jordan water agreement extended for help with missiles & drones from Iran

4.14. 24 – Su- - - News Placed in April 13 spot – Saturday
British French & German Ministries urge sanctions on Iran to curb Iran's proxies

4.14. 24 – Su- - - News Placed in April 14 spot – Sunday
Iran's 200 drones & 150 missiles of 46 tons intercepted by Israel & coalition jets

4.14. 24 – Su- - - News – Sunday
Over 200 drones & missiles fired from inside Iran Sunday, IDF jets intercepted 99%

4.12. 24 – Fr- - - News – Friday Ramadan end Feast
IDF says some 40 rockets fired by Hezbollah on Naftali & Galilee