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11.26.24 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday
Netanyahu on Lebanon only cease-fire: 'I promised victory and we will achieve victory'

11.26.24 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday
Police arrested woman smuggling 6,000 M-16 bullets from north to West Bank

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Northern Israel not ready for political game or defeatist agreement full of concessions

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Lebanon media announced cease-fire to be after 10 pm, as IDF reached Litani River

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US agreement surrenders Israel & allows Hezbollah to prepare for next war

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Disaster in Red Sea: Tourist ship sinks off Egyptian coast; 17 travelers missing

11.25.24 – Mo- - - News – Monday

Rabbi murdered in the UAE similar to Rabbi killed in Mumbai 16 years ago

11.24.24 – Su- - - News – Sunday

Cease-fire subject to approval by Cabinet, some issues possible within the week

11.24.24 – Su- - - News – Sunday

Amid war, these Israeli universities shine in global rankings

11.24.24 – Su- - - News – Sunday

Hezbollah targets Galilee & Haifa areas, 2nd time Sunday, over 150 rockets

11.24.24 – Su- - - News Placed in November 24 spot – Sunday

Iran reverse-engineered US & Israeli missiles, provide proxies with modern technology

11.24.24 – Su- - - News – Sunday

Court remands settler after attack on IDF & Police in Hebron, three others released

11.23.24 – Sa- - - News – Saturday

UAE Chabad emissary's car abandoned; suspected killed by Iran-linked cell

11.23.24 – Sa- - - News Placed in November 23 spot – Saturday

Israel strike on Beirut apartment fails to kill Hezbollah operations chief

11.23.24 – Sa- - - News – Saturday

IDF strikes Beirut, 8-story building brought down, teaming with people

11.29.24 – Fr

Israel warrant appeal does not meet ICC criteria for direct appeal under the Rome Statute

11.29.24 – Fr

ICC prosecutor recommends rejecting Israel's appeal against Netanyahu, Gallant warrants Karim Khan submitted a document to the ICC Appeals Chamber, recommending the rejection of Israel's request regarding the Netanyahu and Gallant, stating that 'the decision is procedural and does not directly concern the court's jurisdiction'

Itamar Eichner|15:52

The International Criminal Court's chief prosecutor, Karim Khan, has requested the dismissal of Israel's appeal against arrest warrants for Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu and former Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, arguing that the appeal does not meet the criteria for direct appeal under the Rome Statute.

Khan argues that the decision in question is procedural and does not directly address the court's jurisdiction, making it non-appealable under the Rome Statute. He stated that the decision pertains to the timing and verification of Israel's appeal, not the court's authority. "The pretrial chamber is the appropriate forum to address this issue," he noted.

The prosecutor has asked to dismiss Israel's appeal and its request to suspend the arrest warrants issued by the pretrial chamber due to procedural inadmissibility. On Wednesday, Israel submitted two documents to the ICC's appeals chamber in response to the arrest warrants. As first reported by Ynet, Prime Minister Netanyahu decided at the last moment to inform the court of Israel's intention to appeal.

In the first 14-page document, Israel rejects the pretrial chamber's claim about its authority to issue the arrest warrants. In the second 13-page document, Israel dismisses the court's refusal to return the investigation to Israel.

Israel is asking the appeals chamber to suspend the arrest warrants against Netanyahu and Gallant, hoping the ICC will reconsider its stance before facing "hellish sanctions," as promised by those close to elected U.S. President Donald Trump.

11.29.24 – Fr

Evacuated residents return north February 1, with grants & assist to rebuild & revitalize

11.29.24 – Fr

Government's plan to facilitate the return of northern residents

Evacuated residents return on February 1 with grants based on family size; the government will also assist in rebuilding and revitalizing affected communities, and the state will finance housing for displaced residents until reconstruction are complete
Itamar Eichner|14:21

Yossi Shelly, the director-general of the Prime Minister's Office, is set to present a comprehensive plan for the return of northern residents to their homes, according to a report on Friday. The proposal is expected to be submitted for government approval at its upcoming meeting in Nahariya.

Under the plan, residents are scheduled to begin returning on February 1, incentivized by financial grants tailored to family size. For instance, an average family of two parents and four children would receive approximately 60,000 shekels, while couples without children could be eligible for grants of 20,000 to 25,000 shekels.

Those returning later will receive reduced amounts, as the state will cover the cost of their temporary housing in hotels or rented apartments until their return.

The process will be gradual, to complete the return by the end of the academic year on July 1. The government will also assist in rebuilding and revitalizing affected communities. Residents whose homes were destroyed, such as in Metula and Nahariya, will receive additional financial aid beyond existing compensation funds. The state will finance housing for displaced residents until reconstruction or renovations are complete, with clear timelines established for the recovery process.

Initial assessments reveal extensive damage: over 500 homes were completely destroyed, and another 1,000 sustained varying levels of damage. Rebuilding costs are estimated at 1.5 billion shekels, with an additional 2 billion shekels required for renovations. The plan also calls for significant investment in restoring public infrastructure, including roads, parks, and fences.

The initiative aims to restore normalcy while providing fair and comprehensive support to affected residents. The one-time grants are calculated based on the date residents cease state-funded temporary accommodations and the number of children eligible for child allowances. Those not housed in hotels will still qualify for grants if eligible for daily return or relocation allowances.

11.29.24 – Fr

PM & top security observing battles between rebel forces of Aleppo & Syria army

11.29.24 – Fr

Netanyahu to convene security meeting amid Syria developments

The PM will hold a meeting with top security officials to discuss the ongoing battles between rebel forces and Assad's army; 'Any instability in a neighboring country could impact us, but there may also be opportunities' Israeli officials say

Itamar Eichner|12:48

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will hold a special security phone meeting on Friday with top security officials to discuss the developments in Syria, where fighting continues between rebel forces and Assad's army, and the implementation of the ceasefire agreement in Lebanon that took effect two days ago.

Israel is closely monitoring the situation in Syria as rebel forces are fighting along the Syrian-Iranian axis and threatening the Assad regime. Israeli officials say, "This is something we need to follow closely to see how it develops." They also note, "It's not necessarily something that will affect us in the short term, but any instability in a neighboring country could impact us. It appears there may even be opportunities for change here."

In northern Syria, battles between rebel forces and Assad's army continued this morning, two days after a surprise offensive launched by the rebels. The rebel attack in the northern provinces of Aleppo and Idlib is the largest against the Syrian army since 2020

when a ceasefire was declared in the region. Reports indicate that the rebels are advancing in rural areas of these provinces, with 14,000 residents displaced by the fighting.

Meanwhile, Israel is also tracking the ceasefire's implementation in Lebanon. The IDF struck Hezbollah operatives for the second time in a day, after identifying the movement of a truck-mounted launcher.

The strike took place in the eastern sector near the Litani River, where Hezbollah operatives were identified preparing to launch from a truck mounted with multi-barrel and long-range rockets.

11.29.24 – Fr

Hezbollah chief says group scored 'divine victory' in war against Israel

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Naim Qassem, the successor of Hassan Nasrallah, spoke for the first time since the ceasefire saying 'The agreement is under Lebanese sovereignty, and we defeated the enemy because it was forced to justify it'; Qassem claimed a historic victory as 'One of the signs of the enemy's defeat is that our people are returning to their homes, while its settlers are not'

Lior Ben Ari|11:45

The head of the Lebanese terror group Hezbollah, Naim Qassem, said in a televised address on Friday that the group had scored a "divine victory" against Israel even greater than that declared after the two foes last fought in 2006.

Nearly 14 months after Hezbollah began launching rockets into Israel as part of a "supportive front for Gaza," during which the group's slain leader, Hassan Nasrallah, stated that the fire would not cease until the fighting in Gaza stopped, Qassem opened his remarks by declaring Hezbollah's decision to stand by the Palestinians.

He asserted that Hezbollah did not want war, but felt a "religious and humanitarian obligation" to support Gaza. "We repeated that we do not want war, but we are ready for one if Israel forces it upon us."

Qassem claimed, "We are on the verge of a divine victory, greater than the victory of 2006." He added, "The war began with the goal of destroying Hezbollah, returning civilians to the North, and building a new Middle East. Israel expected to achieve its objectives quickly after striking our leadership and capabilities. Hezbollah managed to stand firm on the frontlines and began hitting Israel's internal front."

IDF's achievements against Hezbollah are tremendous and we should talk about it

He further said, "The resistance has proven through this war that it is prepared, and Nasrallah's plans were effective and accounted for all developments. Israel gambled on internal conflicts, but that gamble failed due to cooperation (in Lebanon, Hezbollah). The resilience of the resistance shocked the world, frightened the Israeli army, and brought despair to the enemy."

Regarding the ceasefire reached under UN Security Council Resolution 1701, Qassem stated, "The agreement is under Lebanese sovereignty, and the resistance is present on the ground. We hold our heads high because we have the right to defend ourselves. One of the signs of the enemy's defeat is that our people are returning, while settlers are not returning on the other side." In response to criticism in Israel about the end of the fighting, Qassem said, "We defeated the enemy because it had to justify the agreement."

As reported by Arab media outlets, the agreement includes "the disarmament of all armed groups in Lebanon," meaning that only the Lebanese army will be authorized to carry weapons. "The coordination between the resistance and the Lebanese army will be at the highest level," Qassem stated. "No one is betting on a disagreement between us. The primary focus of the agreement is south of the Litani River, which confirms the Israeli military's withdrawal from all areas it occupied."

11.29.24 – Fr

Saudi Arabia abandons pursuit of US defense treaty over Israel stalemate on Gaza

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Saudi Arabia abandons pursuit of US defense treaty over Israel stalemate

Saudi Arabia has shifted from seeking a full US defense treaty to a scaled-down military pact, tying normalization with Israel to concrete progress on Palestinian statehood; Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman initially sought a two-state solution pledge but renewed demands amid Israel's actions in Gaza

Reuters|08:42

Saudi Arabia has abandoned its pursuit of an ambitious defense treaty with Washington in return for normalizing relations with Israel. It is now pushing for a more modest military cooperation agreement, two Saudi and four Western officials told Reuters.

In a drive to get a wide-ranging mutual security treaty over the line earlier this year, Riyadh softened its position on Palestinian statehood, telling Washington that a public commitment from Israel to a two-state solution could be enough for the Gulf kingdom to normalize relations.

But with public anger in Saudi Arabia and the wider Middle East at fever pitch over Israel's military actions in Gaza, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has again made recognition of Israel conditional on it taking concrete steps to create a Palestinian state, two Saudi and three Western sources said.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is still eager to secure normalization with the Saudi powerhouse as a historical milestone and a sign of broader acceptance in the Arab world, Western diplomats said.

But he faces overwhelming opposition at home to any concessions to the Palestinians following the Oct. 7 Hamas attacks and knows any gesture in the direction of statehood would fracture his ruling coalition, they said.

With both leaders shackled by their domestic powerbases, Riyadh and Washington hope a more modest defense pact could be sealed before President Joe Biden leaves the White House in January, the sources said.

A full-blown U.S.-Saudi treaty would need to pass the U.S. Senate with a two-thirds majority - and this would be a non-starter unless Riyadh recognizes Israel, the six sources said.

The pact now under discussion would involve expanding joint military exercises and drills to address regional threats, mainly from Iran. It would foster partnerships between U.S. and Saudi defense firms, with safeguards to prevent collaboration with China, the sources said.

The agreement would promote Saudi investment in advanced technologies, especially drone defense. The U.S. would increase its presence in Riyadh through training, logistics, and cyber security support, and may deploy a Patriot missile battalion to enhance missile defense and integrated deterrence.

But it would not be the kind of binding mutual defense treaty that would oblige U.S. forces to protect the world's biggest oil exporter in the event of foreign attack.

"Saudi Arabia will get a security deal which will allow more military cooperation and sales of U.S. weapons, but not a defense treaty similar to that of Japan or South Korea as initially sought," said Abdelaziz al-Sagher, head of the Gulf Research Institute think-tank in Saudi Arabia.

While Trump's plan to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict excludes any provisions for Palestinian statehood or sovereignty, he is a close ally of the Saudi crown prince.

Palestinian and some Arab officials worry that Trump and his son-in-law Jared Kushner - architect of the "Deal of the Century" and also a close ally of the crown prince - may ultimately persuade him to support the plan.

How the prince reconciles Saudi priorities with this shifting diplomatic landscape will be pivotal, defining both his leadership and the future of the peace process, diplomats said.

The current U.S. administration has not given up hope for a deal on security guarantees before Biden leaves office in January, but several obstacles remain. One person in Washington familiar with the talks said there was reason to be skeptical about whether there was enough time to strike a deal.

U.S. officials are mindful that the kingdom is still interested in formally cementing the guarantees it has been seeking, especially to gain access to more advanced weapons, but are uncertain whether it would prefer to get it done under Biden, or wait for Trump, the source said.

"We continue to discuss and have many lines of effort on the table (with the Saudis)," the U.S. official said.

The White House National Security Council declined to comment when asked about efforts toward reaching a deal on U.S. security guarantees for Saudi Arabia.

Netanyahu's office declined to comment when asked about the Saudi position on Palestinian statehood.

A defense treaty giving Saudi Arabia U.S. military protection in exchange for recognizing Israel would reshape the Middle East by uniting two long-time foes and binding Riyadh to Washington at a time when China is making inroads in the region. It would allow the kingdom to shore up its security and ward off threats from Iran and its Houthi allies, to avoid a repeat of the 2019 strikes on its oil facilities, which Riyadh and Washington both blamed on Tehran. Iran has denied any role.

A senior Saudi official said the treaty was 95% complete but Riyadh opted to discuss an alternative agreement, given it was not doable without normalization with Israel.

Depending on the format, a scaled-down cooperation agreement could be approved without going through Congress before Biden leaves office, two of the sources said.

There were other stumbling blocks in the negotiations to secure a mutual defense treaty.

For instance, there was no progress in the talks about civil nuclear cooperation because Saudi Arabia refused to sign a so-called 123 Agreement with the U.S. that would have denied Riyadh the right to nuclear enrichment, the six sources said.

Saudi objections to articles related to human rights proved to be another area of disagreement, one Saudi source close to the talks told Reuters.

'The big prize'

While the Saudi leadership strongly advocates Palestinian statehood, it remains uncertain, according to diplomats, how the crown prince would respond if Trump revives the deal he floated in 2020 to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The plan marks a dramatic shift in U.S. policy and international agreements by overtly aligning with Israel and deviating sharply from the long-standing land-for-peace framework that has historically guided negotiations.

It would allow Israel to annex vast stretches of land in the occupied West Bank, including Israeli settlements and the Jordan Valley, and recognize Jerusalem as the "undivided capital of Israel" - effectively denying Palestinian claims to East Jerusalem as their capital, a central aspiration in their statehood goals and accordance with U.N. resolutions.

By legitimizing Israeli annexations, the Trump plan is viewed by many as a severe blow to the two-state solution and Palestinian hopes of statehood.

Saudi officials insist that the creation of a Palestinian state by previous international agreements, including East Jerusalem as its capital, remains an essential condition for long-term regional peace and stability.

Without it the cycle of violence will continue to jeopardize any normal relations, they say.

"How can we imagine a region integrated if we sidestep the Palestinian issue?" a senior Saudi official said. "You can't prevent the Palestinian right to self-determination."

And in some of the harshest criticism of Israel since the start of the Gaza war, Crown Prince Mohammed called Israel's military actions in Gaza "collective genocide" in his address to an Arab and Islamic summit in Riyadh this month.

The potential for Saudi normalization with Israel, however, could be revisited in the future, perhaps once the dust settles after the Gaza war - and possibly under a different Israeli government, diplomats said.

Fawaz Gerges, a Middle East expert at the London School of Economics, said Trump would leverage all possible avenues to secure historic normalization between Saudi Arabia and Israel.

"For Trump, Saudi Arabia is the big prize," said Gerges.

"As to how normalization could happen despite repeated Saudi leader's insistence they will not recognize Israel until a real path to a Palestinian state is set, Trump could promise a ceasefire in Gaza in return for normalization and tentative promise to support a Palestinian state, without obliging Israel to make any real concessions to the Palestinians."

11.29.24 – Fr

9 injured, 3 serious in West Bank bus stop shooting; terrorist killed by 6 IDF soldiers

11.29.24 – Fr

At least 9 injured, 3 seriously in West Bank shooting attack

Initial reports suggest suspected terrorist opened fire on bus near Ariel located in the West Bank before being neutralized; IDF reports assailant acted alone following suspicions of a second terrorist

Elisha Ben Kimon, Yoav Zitun|04:37

At least nine Israelis were injured, three of them seriously on Friday in a suspected shooting attack toward a bus in the West Bank, Magen David Adom (MDA) reported. Reports of the shooting said it took place at the Gitai Avisar Junction near Ariel in the West Bank.

The IDF reported shortly after the terrorist was neutralized on the scene, that he was the only assailant present after forces launched a manhunt for a second terrorist thought to have escaped the scene.

The terrorist was Samer Hussein, 46, a father of five from a Palestinian village south of Nablus. He had previously served time in an Israeli prison.

In one recording from the scene, bursts of gunfire targeting the bus can be heard. In another, cries from within the bus are audible, alongside visible bloodstains and shattered glass on the floor.

At 12:13 p.m., Magen David Adom's Yarkon district call center received a report about the incident. Paramedics dispatched to the scene reported nine casualties with some suffering gunshot wounds and others injured by shattered glass and added the wounded were evacuated to a nearby hospital. Paramedics said that one of the wounded suffered moderate injuries and the rest minor ones.

An initial investigation revealed that the terrorist arrived from his village by car via the Tapuah Junction, which lacks security checkpoints. He stopped approximately 150 meters from the bus station at the junction and then opened fire at a bus that had stopped there. Six IDF soldiers, who are regularly stationed in the area, fired at the terrorist and eventually eliminated him.

The IDF suspects that the terrorist didn't act alone and is working to locate accomplices who provided him with the vehicle and weapon. The investigation also confirmed that he used a standard M16 rifle. The IDF recently intercepted two armed terror cells in counterterrorism operations within the same area. Large forces were deployed in the area, setting up roadblocks. An IDF reserve unit securing the junction neutralized the first terrorist, who was killed on site. The injured included both soldiers and civilians wounded by gunfire and shrapnel.

Initial investigation into the incident suggested the terrorist exited his vehicle in the area and opened fire toward the bus as he noticed it.

Magen David Adom paramedic Itamar Hakhamov recounted, "We arrived at the scene in large numbers and found casualties lying near the bus, fully conscious and suffering from gunshot wounds."

"We immediately provided them with initial medical treatment and evacuated them to the hospital in stable condition. Additional MDA teams treated several people with shrapnel injuries from glass and evacuated them to the hospital with minor injuries," he added

11.29.24 – Fr

IDF eliminate 40 terrorists, arrests 100 in Jabaliya Gaza raid; using efficient tactics

11.29.24 – Fr

IDF eliminates 40 terrorists, arrests 100 in ongoing Jabaliya raid

Givati Brigade soldiers' work in one of Gaza's most dangerous locations moves to its third month, with experienced troops aiming to snuff any embers left of Hamas in the area

Yoav Zitun|04:21

The Givati Brigade's Reconnaissance Unit successfully raided a large school complex in the heart of Gaza's Jabaliya refugee camp, which consists of several multi-story buildings, in only three hours on Wednesday.

The operation, carried out by a little over two platoons, resulted in the arrest of about 100 Hamas terrorists and the elimination of 40 others — 22 in close-range encounters and another 18 via airstrikes — all without any casualties among the soldiers.

"Less than a year ago, we would've deployed two or three brigades over several days for a divisional-level operation in such a location. Today, it's executed by a battle-tested battalion and a half against a terrorist organization that's being systematically defeated," one of the operation's commanders told Ynet on Thursday.

The Jabaliya raid is the longest IDF operation since forces transitioned to a new operational model favoring limited incursions into Gaza, with the IDF's active ground maneuver phase having ended approximately 10 months ago.

The raid, conducted by the 162nd Division, is now entering its third month. As anticipated early on, it's proving to be longer and different from previous operations. The reason lies in the IDF Southern Command's tactical shift: dividing the northern third of Gaza and encircling populated areas while filtering Gazan civilians fleeing southward toward Gaza City from Hamas and Islamic Jihad terrorists.

The approach faced international criticism. However, the IDF has repeatedly stressed that there were no signs of starvation in Jabaliya, Beit Lahiya or Beit Hanoun. Just this week, Jordanian troops dropped aid packages in the Palestinian enclave.

Further, Israel's Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT), in cooperation with foreign bodies, held special operations to prepare humanitarian aid delivery for conflict zones. Dozens of aid trucks enter this area daily via Israel's Erez border crossing.

Southern Command's spearhead division estimated the raid will likely continue for several more weeks, as Jabaliya's stronghold still houses between 100 and 200 terrorists. According to military data, 1,500 terrorists have been killed in the raid so far — a significantly higher figure than in comparable raids or divisional attacks during the ground operation's first phase.

The data also reveals that approximately 1,200 terrorists have been captured and interrogated, with intelligence from these interrogations directly supporting the soldiers' progress in real-time.

This intelligence provides new targets, locations of explosives and even the positions of combat tunnels still present in Gaza. Some of these interrogations take place in the field, conducted by Unit 504 investigators and Shin Bet agents.

During Wednesday night's raid, field investigators identified several Hamas company and platoon commanders among the detainees, who surrendered without resistance.

"We're not reaching levels seen in the West Bank yet. We're facing anti-tank fire and significant explosives, but the forces are learning from the extensive experience they're gaining as time passes," the IDF said.

"We're achieving greater operational efficiency with fewer troops and are getting closer to fully defeating Jabaliya," it added. In the past 48 hours alone, 80 terrorists have been eliminated and the IDF has managed to drive about 75,000 Gazans southward throughout the operation.

The high numbers from Wednesday night's operation were largely due to the forces' surprising and deceptive maneuvers, as well as progress made by Kfir Brigade troops in Beit Lahia, marking the young infantry brigade's most significant test to date.

The raid has so far involved around 1,500 airstrikes, some conducted during a period when the IDF had shifted its primary focus to Lebanon and had fewer aircraft available for operations in Gaza.

“Our goal is to provide complete safety to the residents of Netiv HaAsara, near Beit Lahia, or to the residents of Sderot, who can see Jabaliya from their balconies. Even if it’s challenging and will take more time, it’s being done thoroughly, systematically and methodically,” the IDF stressed.

11.29.24 – Fr

IDF tallies Hezbollah conflict; 12,500 targets, 100 special operations, 1,500 terror sites

11.29.24 – Fr

12,500 targets, 100 special operations: IDF tallies Hezbollah conflict after cease-fire
Military report details over a year of fighting against terror group during which it seized military intelligence, eliminated Hezbollah commanders and struck thousands of targets
Yoav Zitun|01:02

The IDF published on Friday a summary of the prolonged conflict with Hezbollah, which ended this week with a cease-fire agreement after nearly 14 months.

While ground operations in the Gaza Strip are expected to continue for years, the IDF Northern Command is preparing for ongoing cease-fire enforcement strikes and warning fire until Lebanese Army forces complete their deployment south of the Litani River, allowing Israeli forces to gradually withdraw and return to Israel.

According to military data, 121,000 communication devices, computers and electronic devices, along with documents, were seized and confiscated in Lebanon during dozens of covert operations preceding the two-month-long ground campaign that concluded earlier this week.

Additionally, 13,000 anti-tank missile launchers, anti-aircraft rockets and missiles, as well as 12,000 explosives, UAVs and various explosive devices, were captured or destroyed. The military estimated that over 155,000 items were seized in total.

The military assessed that Hezbollah holds less than 30% of its UAV fleet from before the war — still numbering several hundred. According to the IDF, at least 2,500 terrorists were confirmed to be eliminated, though the actual number is believed to be around 3,500 with twice as many injured.

Among those killed were Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, his designated successor Hashem Safieddine and 13 other senior figures. The fatalities include 4 division commanders, 24 brigade commanders, 27 battalion commanders and 63 company commanders.

As part of the campaign against Hezbollah's elite Radwan Force, approximately 160 military headquarters, 150 weapons depots and over 1,500 terror infrastructure sites were destroyed. Overall, 1,600 Hezbollah military headquarters from various units and more than 1,000 weapons depots were targeted.

The Israeli Air Force reported fighter jets flew 14,000 hours and attacked in 11,000 offensive sorties. In total, 360 terror infrastructures were attacked in Beirut and the Beqaa Valley alongside about 1,000 additional targets — out of 12,500 Hezbollah assets struck across Lebanon since October 8 of last year, with intensified efforts since August. The Navy held 25,000 hours of maritime operations off the coast of Lebanon. On the ground, 14 brigades participated in the campaign, alongside over 100 special operations and 24 divisional raids.

Meanwhile, Israel continues to promise strict enforcement of the cease-fire agreement. On Thursday, the IDF announced it conducted its first airstrike since the cease-fire, after "terrorist activity was identified in a facility used by Hezbollah to store mid-range rockets in southern Lebanon."

The military has also opened fire in several additional instances of violations, including an airstrike targeting two Hezbollah operatives who approached a known terror asset in southern Lebanon used to launch dozens of rockets into Israel in recent weeks.

11.28.24 – Th

Housing settlements in Gaza & WB are the answer to October 7 & ICC warrants

11.28.24 – Th

Housing minister at Gaza border: Settlements are the answer to October 7, ICC warrants
Yitzhak Goldknopf criticizes court for targeting Israeli leaders while failing to prioritize release of 101 hostages held by Hamas; FM Sa'ar says Israel has no plans to govern civilian life in Gaza

Shilo Freid, Reuters|12:49

Housing Minister Yitzhak Goldknopf, during a visit to the Gaza border on Thursday, called for Jewish settlement in the coastal enclave as a response to the October 7 massacre and the International Criminal Court (ICC) arrest warrants against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former defense minister Yoav Gallant.

He criticized the ICC for pursuing alleged war crime charges against Israeli leaders instead of focusing on the release of 101 hostages still held by Hamas.

Goldknopf was photographed near the Netzarim Corridor access road alongside right-wing activist Daniella Weiss and the Nachala movement, which promotes settlement initiatives, including a plan labeled the "Map of the Garinei Hityashvut in Gaza," using a

Hebrew term referring to small groups or communities committed to establishing and developing new Jewish settlements.

Goldknopf is not the only minister showing interest in Gaza settlements. Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich advocated for the "voluntary emigration" of Gaza residents and the complete military reoccupation of the territory.

Speaking at a conference of the Yesha Council, a settler lobby, Smotrich claimed Israel could assume civil responsibility for Gaza, dismissing concerns over costs. "Even if it costs five billion shekels, I'd spread it over 50 years—this is what's needed to secure Israel's safety," he said, adding that military boots on the ground would be essential to combat terrorism and maintain security.

Smotrich also cited opportunities created by the incoming Trump administration to facilitate emigration. "If we talk about it less, we can achieve more. In two years, Gaza could have less than half its current population, creating an entirely different reality," he said, describing voluntary emigration as a "game-changer" for Israeli control over Gaza and the West Bank.

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar said on Thursday he believed that Israel would finish the 14-month-old war in Gaza when it "achieves its objectives" of returning the hostages and ensuring Hamas no longer controls the Palestinian enclave.

Sa'ar said Israel did not intend to control civilian life in Gaza, adding that peace was "inevitable", but couldn't be based on "illusions."

He also said that he believed that the United States would punish the ICC for having issued arrest warrants for Netanyahu and Gallant.

Israel has said it will appeal the ICC decision to move against Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity in the Gaza war.

But during a visit to the Czech Republic, Sa'ar said other countries were also dismayed by the decision, including the United States.

"I tend to believe that in Washington, legislation is going to take place very shortly against the ICC and whoever cooperates with it," Sa'ar told a joint press conference with Czech Foreign Minister Jan Lipavsky.

11.28.24 – Th

IDF to launch Hashmonaim Brigade; wearing Shabbat suits and hats on Hanukkah

11.28.24 – Th

IDF to launch new Haredi brigade during Hanukkah

Military recruiting 30 troops for Hashmonaim Brigade, with more primed to join later on, focusing on halachic lifestyle; brigade aims to build trust with Haredi community, offering combat roles with strict religious accommodations

Shilo Freid|09:22

The IDF announced on Thursday the launch of its new Haredi combat brigade, "Hashmonaim," named after the Hasmonean dynasty who led the Maccabean Revolt over 2,000 years ago, with recruitment symbolically timed to coincide with Hanukkah.

Initial enlistment will include 30 conscripts who have completed pre-draft assessments, with dozens more expressing interest. The brigade aims to establish one combat company of 60-80 soldiers and a reserve unit of Haredi recruits undergoing extended combat training.

Unlike previous initiatives, recruitment is focused on voluntary enlistment through dialogue with yeshiva leaders and Haredi community rabbis rather than through the 7,000 draft orders recently authorized.

The IDF hopes to build trust by demonstrating sensitivity to Haredi needs, including adherence to a strict religious lifestyle and halachic practices.

Recruits must commit to the brigade's regulations, including maintaining a Haredi lifestyle, modest speech and using filtered cell phones. They will be required to wear traditional Shabbat attire, such as suits and hats, during prayers and meals. Any violation of the rules will result in dismissal to standard service without special accommodations.

Training and courses will be conducted entirely within the brigade to prevent integration with non-Haredi units, addressing previous concerns about breaches of religious standards in existing frameworks.

Col. Avinoam Emunah, commander of the Hashmonaim Brigade, called the initiative historic. "I have the privilege of commanding the ultra-Orthodox brigade and being part of this extraordinary project that has the potential to bring meaningful change to Israeli society and the Jewish people as a whole," he said in a recorded message.

"For the first time since the founding of the IDF and the establishment of the state, we've created a brigade that allows the ultra-Orthodox community to enlist, fight and serve while preserving their way of life and their identity. I invite you—those who feel the calling to defend their land, their people and their country—to join us and take part in something historic, something unprecedented. Be part of the beginning of this blessing."

11.28.24 – Th

IDF strike rocket threat in S-Lebanon & warn residents of curfew 5 pm to 7 am

11.28.24 – Th

IDF jet strikes in southern Lebanon in first since cease-fire

Military says struck Hezbollah site housing medium-range rockets, reiterates commitment to preventing violations of cease-fire agreement; IDF Arabic-language spokesperson announces curfew south of Litani River

Yair Kraus, Yoav Zitun|08:43

The IDF reported Thursday afternoon targeting a Hezbollah site in southern Lebanon housing medium-range rockets, marking the first airstrike since the cease-fire took effect early Tuesday.

The military said the strike neutralized a terror threat and reiterated its commitment to preventing violations of the cease-fire agreement. IDF forces remain deployed in southern Lebanon to enforce the truce.

Meanwhile, IDF Arabic-language spokesperson Lt. Col. Avichay Adraee issued a statement on X, warning residents of southern Lebanon against movement south of the Litani River for the second day since the cease-fire took effect.

"It is strictly prohibited to travel or move south of the Litani River from 5 p.m. to 7 a.m. the following morning," Adraee wrote. "Those already south of the river must remain where they are. For your safety, adhere to these instructions."

Also on Thursday, the IDF reported that air defenses launched an interceptor missile in the Western Galilee following a false identification.

Massive scale of destruction in southern Lebanon's Nabatieh revealed as locals return after cease-fire takes effect

Earlier, the military said that the interceptor was deployed after detecting a suspicious aerial object in Lebanese airspace, adding that the incident had concluded.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi held a phone call with his Lebanese counterpart, Abdallah Bou Habib, to discuss Lebanon's situation following the cease-fire with Israel, Iran's Tasnim News Agency reported on Thursday.

According to the report, Araghchi claimed that recent developments in Syria are part of an Israeli-American plan aimed at destabilizing regional security.

11.28.24 – Th

Biden pushes Gaza hostage deal while Trump prepares to lay out Mideast agenda

11.28.24 – Th

Biden pushes Gaza hostage deal while Trump prepares to lay out Mideast agenda

Biden secures Lebanon cease-fire with global support, seeks Gaza breakthrough before Trump's inauguration; Egypt pressures Hamas while urging Israel to show flexibility, and Hamas signals readiness for a deal, but conditions remain firm as diplomatic efforts intensify across the region

Ynet|01:45

As his time in the White House draws to a close, U.S. President Joe Biden has repeatedly emphasized his intention to focus on resolving key issues in the Middle East. This week, he marked a significant achievement with the announcement of a cease-fire in Lebanon after nearly 14 months of fighting on the northern front. However, Biden is far from content and is now pursuing a new hostage deal with Hamas, nearly a year after the last one.

In this effort, the Biden administration is engaging with an unexpected – though perhaps not entirely surprising – partner: his predecessor and president-elect, Donald Trump. Although U.S. officials have expressed **skepticism** about the chances of **reaching a Gaza agreement before January 20**, citing what they describe as Hamas' "lack of willingness," The Wall Street Journal reported on Thursday that **Cairo is pressuring Trump's incoming administration to push Israel toward greater flexibility** on certain **sticking points** that Prime Minister Benjamin **Netanyahu has** been adamant about.

At the same time, **Egypt has delivered a blunt message to Hamas**: "You are isolated, especially following the cease-fire in the north." Egyptian officials further informed the group that **their demands for a full withdrawal of Israeli forces** from Gaza are **unlikely** to gain Netanyahu's approval.

Meanwhile, Axios reported that **Biden** conveyed a clear **message to Netanyahu** in their most recent conversation, **emphasizing** the opportunity created by the **northern cease-fire**. According to the report, two senior American officials disclosed that the conversation occurred shortly after the Israeli cabinet approved the Lebanon cease-fire agreement. "**We have an opportunity now – let's get the hostages out**," Biden reportedly told Netanyahu, who responded positively, indicating his willingness to try.

Should **Biden succeed** in brokering an **agreement between Israel and Hamas** in the next two months, **Trump may attempt to claim credit** for the achievement. Earlier this week, Trump's incoming National Security Advisor, Mike **Waltz, credited the cease-fire** in Lebanon **to Trump's influence, tweeting**: "Everyone is coming to the table because of President Trump." Netanyahu confidant and **Strategic Affairs Minister Ron Dermer** reportedly **briefed Trump earlier this month** at his Florida estate **on the Lebanon negotiations**.

According to Israeli officials who spoke with The Wall Street Journal, **Trump approved the plan** and expressed **hope** that the agreement **would be finalized before his inauguration on January 20**. Trump and Netanyahu, as far as is publicly known, have spoken at least three times since Trump's election victory. Biden's National Security Advisor, Jake Sullivan, stated on Wednesday that the **incoming administration is being kept "informed at every step"** regarding developments in the **Middle East**.

A senior Biden administration official noted that Trump's advisors agreed the Lebanon cease-fire was beneficial for all parties involved – Israel, Lebanon, and the United States. "The priority was to **act now, rather than later** – something Trump's team also recognized. This **agreement will save many lives** on both sides," the official stated. **Trump's stance on Gaza has been inconsistent** in the past. In July, he called on Netanyahu to "end it quickly," referring to the conflict. However, in October, **Trump** expressed support for Israel's campaign **against Hamas and Hezbollah, telling Netanyahu** in one of their conversations: "**Do what you need to do**." According to The Wall Street Journal, since winning the election, **Trump** appears to see a **strategic advantage** in **resolving the Gaza crisis before his inauguration**, just as Biden does.

"A flurry of **diplomatic activity is already underway**," **Egyptian and Arab mediators** told the American newspaper. **Qatar's** Prime Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani

is currently in Cairo, pushing for an agreement, amid reports that an Egyptian delegation has either recently arrived in Israel or plans to do so soon. Egyptian officials, after extended contact with Trump's team, are reportedly pressuring him to take an active role in resolving the Gaza crisis, believing that his involvement could encourage Netanyahu to move forward with an agreement.

"Over the coming days, the United States will make another push with Turkey, Egypt, Qatar, Israel and others to achieve a ceasefire in Gaza with the hostages released and an end to the war without Hamas in power," Biden tweeted on Wednesday. He reiterated similar sentiments in his remarks following the northern cease-fire.

Hamas: 'Ready for a cease-fire agreement'

On Wednesday morning, as Lebanese residents were seen returning to their destroyed villages and raising Hezbollah flags, Hamas welcomed the agreement between Israel and Lebanon. A senior member of Hamas' political bureau told AFP that the group was "ready for a cease-fire agreement" as well, which would include a hostage deal. "The announcement of the ceasefire in Lebanon is a major achievement for the resistance. It's a victory," he said.

The senior Hamas official also stated the group had informed mediators in Egypt, Qatar, and Turkey of its readiness to negotiate a ceasefire and a "serious hostage deal."

Predictably, he accused Israel of disrupting previous progress. Hamas also reiterated its commitment to cooperating with efforts toward a ceasefire in Gaza but maintained its conditions. "We are determined to stop the war against our people under the conditions we agreed upon: a ceasefire, the withdrawal of Israeli forces, the return of the displaced, and the completion of a hostage deal," the group announced.

Qatar's Prime Minister Al Thani also commented on the northern agreement on Wednesday, saying, "Consultations with Egypt regarding a Gaza ceasefire are ongoing. We hope the agreement in Lebanon will lead to a ceasefire in Gaza. We have also agreed with Egypt on joint humanitarian aid projects."

11.27.24 – We

PA leader Abbas names successor Rawhi Fattouh on his departure

11.27.24 – We

Palestinian leader Abbas names interim successor in case of departure

Rawhi Fattouh tapped interim Palestinian Authority chairman until elections held; PA officials claim US-Saudi pressure aims to reshape leadership, possibly preparing PA to govern Gaza post-war

Einav Halabi|15:38

Palestinian Authority (PA) Chairman Mahmoud Abbas on Wednesday named Rawhi Fattouh as his interim successor should he leave office.

Fattouh, 75, a former speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council, would serve as president for a 90-day transitional period until elections are held, in accordance with Palestinian law.

The decision surprised many within the PA, with officials noting Abbas had not consulted senior figures, including Hussein al-Sheikh, secretary-general of the PLO Executive Committee, who is seen as a contender for the presidency. Some officials speculated the move was influenced by a U.S.-Saudi initiative to reshape the PA, potentially positioning it to take control of Gaza after the war.

"The U.S. requested Abbas appoint a deputy who could assume leadership, which he saw as an effort to sideline him," one official said. "His decision ensures he remains central to the PA's leadership."

Three key candidates are seen as potential successors to Abbas: Mahmoud al-Ablou, known for his hardline views; Jibril Rajoub, a former security chief and sports administrator; and Mohammad Mustafa, the current prime minister focused on economic reforms.

While Abbas, 89, struggles with waning public support, some Palestinians view his rule as preferable to alternatives like Hamas, particularly after the October 7 Hamas attacks. However, analysts warn his eventual departure could trigger violent power struggles that might destabilize the PA.

Compounding the PA's challenges is longstanding Israeli political instability. Abbas's outreach to former defense minister Benny Gantz gave way to dealing with a government that imposed measures undermining the PA's economy, including bans on Palestinian workers.

Critics argue successive Israeli governments, led by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, weakened the PA while empowering Hamas, further eroding its authority in the West Bank.

11.27.24 – We

IDF destroyed largest strategic Hezbollah missile production site before cease-fire

11.27.24 – We

IDF says destroyed 'most strategic' Hezbollah missile production site

Military says underground facility in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley used to produce precision-guided missiles with Iranian support; site, near Syrian border, hit before cease-fire took effect

Yoav Zitun|14:11

The IDF announced Wednesday that it bombed a Hezbollah missile production site in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley shortly before the cease-fire went into effect.

IDF spokesperson Daniel Hagari described the site as Hezbollah's largest precision-guided missile production facility, located in an underground compound near the Syrian border.

"Due to its proximity, the site was a central point through which thousands of weapons components and even terrorist operatives were smuggled from Syria and Lebanon," the military said in a statement.

The IDF also struck areas near the facility, including a key compound used by Hezbollah's elite Radwan forces for training exercises aimed at an invasion of northern Israel.

"Hezbollah's production capacity in Lebanon has increased over the past decade with Iranian support as a mechanism for arming the terrorist organization with precision-guided missiles, after several attempts made by Iran to smuggle missiles to Hezbollah were thwarted by Israel," the IDF said.

D model of Hezbollah's largest missile production site in the Beqaa Valley

"As part of this effort, several production sites were established throughout Lebanon, which centered upon the site that was struck on Tuesday."

The military claimed Iranian operatives worked alongside Hezbollah at the site, aiding in its construction and operation. "This is Hezbollah's most strategic missile production infrastructure in Lebanon that was struck during the war. The strike was made possible following precise intelligence that was collected and built over the years," the military added.

11.27.24 – We

IDF urges Lebanese to stay north of the Litani at night & avoid Israeli forces

11.27.24 – We

IDF urges Lebanese civilians to stay north of the Litani River at night

Military warns civilians against moving south as forces enforce cease-fire framework; 4

Hezbollah operatives, including commander, detained for entering restricted zone; 'If

enforcement fails, we will apply even greater force,' IDF chief says

Itamar Eichner, Lior Ben Ari, Yoav Zitun|09:47

IDF Arabic-language spokesperson Lt. Col. Avichay Adraee called on Lebanese civilians to avoid returning to their homes south of the Litani River between 5 p.m. Wednesday and 7 a.m. the following morning. "Anyone south of the Litani must remain in place," he said.

Meanwhile, IDF forces detained four individuals who approached troops in southern Lebanon. A statement from the Prime Minister's Office later identified the suspects as Hezbollah operatives, including a local commander.

The detentions come as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Israel Katz instructed the IDF to restrict civilian access to villages near the southern Lebanon border as part of the initial implementation of a cease-fire framework. The Prime Minister's Office said that the IDF "will continue to take firm action against any violations."

IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Herzl Halevi said that "the fighting in Lebanon was resolute, but the enforcement of this agreement will be even more determined. According to the rules approved yesterday by the defense minister, the prime minister and the Cabinet, Hezbollah operatives approaching our forces, the border area or villages within the marked zone will be targeted. We do not intend to conduct months of warfare, displace people from their homes and fail to restore security."

Halevi emphasized the readiness of ground forces, supported by aerial and naval assets, to enforce the cease-fire and deter any violations. "There are ground forces on site—Northern Command and ground forces will be the first to confront those returning to villages with deterrence, firepower and capabilities, most of which are coordinated with aerial operations. We have tools in the air and vessels capable of striking in the western sector. If this enforcement fails, we will reassess and apply even greater force. We are committed to creating a new reality for the residents of northern Israel."

Lebanon's army announced its deployment south of the Litani River in coordination with UNIFIL, in line with the Lebanese government's commitment to implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1701. The Lebanese military urged residents of southern villages, particularly those in the Tyre, Bint Jbeil, and Marjayoun areas, to return to their homes while cautioning them to avoid areas with Israeli forces, as they "may come under enemy fire."

11.27.24 – We

Hezbollah claims victory over Israel, chanting for Shiites who ran Israelis from Galilee

11.27.24 – We

Hezbollah claims victory while others criticize costly toll in Lebanon

Son of slain Hezbollah leader posts video from his destroyed Dahieh home, praising 'steadfastness' and 'sacrifice' of Lebanese people; Lebanese daily Nidaa al-Watan slams terror organization, calling losses group's first defeat since inception

Lior Ben Ari|09:02

The son of slain Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah on Wednesday shared a video from his destroyed home in Beirut's Dahieh district, praising the "steadfastness" and "sacrifice" of residents and claiming victory over Israel. Other residents of the Hezbollah stronghold celebrated by chanting support for Nasrallah and the Shiite group.

In southern Lebanon, returning villagers expressed joy to the Hezbollah-affiliated Al-Mayadeen network, claiming they had triumphed over Israel. Some pointed to the continued displacement of Israelis from Galilee as proof of their success.

Nasrallah's son posts message from his destroyed Dahieh home
by TaboolaSponsored Links.

The Lebanese army handed out leaflets to returning residents, warning of unexploded munitions. Defense Minister Maurice Salim told Al Jazeera that 10,000 troops would be deployed to the south, asserting Lebanon's commitment to international resolutions. "Our sovereignty is based on the army's presence on the southern border. There will be no other force in Lebanon besides our army and UNIFIL," he said.

However, not everyone celebrated the supposed victory. The Lebanese daily Nidaa al-Watan criticized the celebrations, arguing that Hezbollah's losses overshadow any claims of success. "Many of Hezbollah's leaders are no longer alive. Where is the victory without them?" the paper wrote.

It called the destruction of southern border villages, tunnels and defenses a catastrophic blow. The paper also highlighted the displacement of southern residents and the government's failure to provide shelter during the war, labeling these outcomes the worst defeats Hezbollah has faced since its founding.

11.27.24 – We

Forces nab Iran buried cache of arms smuggled for West Bank terror in Jenin

11.27.24 – We

Forces nab Iran arms smuggled for West Bank terror

IDF and Shin Bet thwart smuggling of advanced and plentiful mines, explosives, rifles and small arms sent by Tehran from Syria to bolster terror in West Bank

Yoav Zitun|07:50

The IDF and Shin Bet said on Wednesday that they had thwarted an effort to smuggle Iranian weapons sent to terror operatives in the West Bank.

The IDF Spokesperson's Unit said the weapons originated in Iran and were intended to arm terrorist operatives in the area of Jenin. "Subsequently, another location was revealed where the majority of the cache was buried." The Shin Bet refused to disclose the exact location of the bust.

The operation led to the seizing of "rockets, 40 powerful Claymore explosives of various types, some geared to activate remotely, bombs, mortar launchers, sniper rifles and additional weapons."

The details of the intercepted shipment revealed that it had been sent by Unit 4000, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) intelligence's special operations division.

According to the IDF, the shipment included "33 improvised Claymore explosives, wireless activation systems for Claymore explosives, six RPG-7 launchers, three 107mm

rockets, 24 RPG-18 and RPG-22 rockets, 40 standard large Claymore explosives including detonators, two 60mm mortar barrels, 20 60mm mortar shells, six long M16 rifles and one M4 rifle and with ammunition, seven Hunter sniper rifles and 37 pistols (Glock and XD-9).”

The IDF and Shin Bet identified Jawad Ghafari, and the Special Operations Unit of the Quds Force in Syria, as responsible for the shipment. They said that the delivery had been coordinated with the Quds Force's special operations unit in Syria (18840), under the command of Unit 840 leader Etsar Bakri.

"In recent months, Israeli security forces have identified attempts by Iranians to resume smuggling advanced weapons into Israel, intended for the West Bank," the statement read.

“This is part of an ongoing Iranian campaign to destabilize the region's security by arming terrorist cells to carry out attacks against Israeli civilians and IDF troops. The ISA and the IDF will continue to monitor and thwart in advance any Iranian activity aimed at smuggling weapons into Israel and the West Bank," the IDF said.

11.27.24 – We

Lebanon cease-fire, push Hamas to ready a deal through Egypt, Qatar & Turkey

11.27.24 – We

Following Hezbollah cease-fire, Hamas signals willingness to advance a deal. Despite Hamas' upper echelon decimated by Israeli forces, existing leadership inside the enclave have congratulated Lebanon on the cease-fire with Israel, saying the group would welcome a similar agreement that would include return of the hostages.
Einav Halabi, AFP|05:20

As the agreement between Israel and Lebanon unfolded, a senior member of Hamas' political bureau declared on Wednesday that the Gaza-based organization is “ready for a cease-fire agreement,” which would also include a deal for the release of hostages. In an interview with the French news agency AFP, the official praised progress in Lebanon, calling it “a major achievement for the resistance” and “a victory.”

The Hamas official further stated that the organization had informed mediators in Egypt, Qatar and Turkey of its willingness to reach a cease-fire agreement and a “serious hostage deal.” However, he accused Israel of having disrupted previous progress on such negotiations.

Despite cautious optimism expressed by the Hamas official, reports from Gaza on Wednesday morning described renewed attacks, including heavy artillery shelling and gunfire near Kamal Adwan Hospital in the northern part of the Strip.

Sami Abu Zuhri, another senior Hamas figure, told Reuters that the group “appreciates the right of Lebanon and Hezbollah to reach an agreement that protects the people of

Lebanon and we hope that this agreement will pave the way to reaching an agreement that ends the war of genocide against our people in Gaza.”

Meanwhile, reports from Gaza indicated that displaced residents staying at a school in Beit Lahia were instructed to leave the area and move through a humanitarian corridor to Gaza City, hinting at preparations for further strikes in the region. At the same time, other reports noted that, through international coordination, several wounded patients and their companions were evacuated from Gaza Wednesday morning to receive medical treatment in the UAE, Jordan and Egypt.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) addressed the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza, stating that “hunger has reached critical levels, with people scavenging through weeks-old garbage for food scraps.” The agency warned that “with winter approaching, conditions are rapidly worsening, and survival is impossible without immediate humanitarian aid.”

In recent weeks, Israel reached out to Turkey, signaling openness to Turkish involvement in mediation efforts for a hostage deal. While senior officials in both Israel and the White House have repeatedly denied this, President Joe Biden mentioned in his Tuesday address regarding the Lebanon cease-fire that “the U.S. will also work with Turkey to push for an agreement in Gaza.” However, Turkey's involvement remains highly contentious within Israeli leadership, largely due to President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's positions and actions since the outbreak of the war.

The agreement with Lebanon was finalized after nearly 14 months of conflict. On October 8, 2023, Hezbollah joined the fighting against Israel, just one day after Hamas launched its surprise attack. Since then, the Lebanese front has been closely tied to the conflict in Gaza.

Hezbollah's Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah, prior to his elimination, had declared it a foundational principle that Lebanon was linked to Gaza. He said that as long as fighting continued in Gaza, Hezbollah would continue its attacks. However, the new cease-fire agreement has allowed Israel to sever the link between the two fronts, ensuring that the cessation of hostilities in Lebanon remains independent of the ongoing conflict with Hamas in Gaza.

11.27.24 – We

North residents fear return despite cease-fire; harder moving in mid-school exams

11.27.24 – We

Residents of north afraid to return home despite cease-fire

While Netanyahu specified the reasons for the cease-fire agreement with Hezbollah, evacuated residents are not buying it, saying that returning now is tantamount to surrender; 'I'm not buying it. We saw what they did to the poor residents in the south' Israel Moshkovitz, Roni Green Shaulov|03:15

Fourteen months after Hezbollah joined Hamas in the fight against Israel, a cease-fire took effect at 4:00 a.m. on Wednesday, announced by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in a pre-recorded televised statement. But for residents who were evacuated from their homes in northern Israel over a year ago, the agreement offers little reassurance. Many are rejecting its terms outright, claiming it fails to provide the basic security they deserve.

Many families from northern Israel are demanding to stay in their evacuation locations until at least the end of the school year, unwilling to uproot their children from their current schools.

"From the moment we were evacuated, we've been dreaming of going back home to Kiryat Shmona," Yifat Elmalich, a mother of three, told Ynet. "But we want to return with full security, to give our kids freedom, to heal emotionally, and to bring them back mentally healthy."

She shared the heavy fears weighing on her and the difficulty of making a decision. "We don't want to go back to a life of constant fear – of rockets falling or terrorists infiltrating. This agreement feels weak and not in our favor. I have three daughters in different schools, and just as hard as it was to uproot them from the city, it will be just as hard to uproot them from here in the middle of the school year. For now, we're leaning toward staying put. Our house was damaged by shrapnel, and we still don't feel fully safe in the city."

Hofit Mor, who was evacuated with her husband and four children from Moshav Kfar Yuval in the Upper Galilee, is also skeptical. "I'm against the agreement. It feels like it's bringing us back to square one, to where we were before the war," she said. "Right now, I'm staying in the Jezreel Valley and letting my children finish the school year here so they don't have to go through more upheaval. Beyond that, our house is only 100 yards from the border. I was born and raised in Kfar Yuval, but after seeing the disaster in the Gaza border region, we realized the danger we were living in. Under these conditions, I'm not going back."

Tali Hassin, also from Kfar Yuval and a mother of four, is renting an apartment in Afula, where her children are enrolled in local schools. "Our home in the moshav took a direct hit; it's uninhabitable. There's no water, no electricity, some of the walls are destroyed, and the entire house is covered in soot. On one hand, the kids want to go back to their friends and to their familiar spaces at home. But on the other hand, there's immense anxiety about returning. Once the house is repaired and we can organize our belongings, there's a chance we'll consider it – of course, only if there's peace and security. As it stands, I'm not going back. I have nowhere to live, and there's not enough quiet to feel safe."

Michael Biton, 77, a resident of Kiryat Shmona for 67 years, has been staying in the student dormitories at Jezreel Valley College. "My wife and I, along with our three children and 13 grandchildren – all residents of Kiryat Shmona – are now living near each other in the dormitories. Since 1967, we've lived under fire from Lebanon. In 1969,

my wife was injured by rockets and left disabled. There was maybe a 20-year pause, but since then, Hezbollah has grown into a terror monster."

'For the residents of the north, this agreement isn't a solution – it's a threat'

"My wife and I will return because we have nowhere else to go," he added, "but our children won't come back until the school year ends. My grandchildren are enrolled in schools here in the Jezreel Valley." Still, he stressed, "if the agreement is violated, we'll have no choice but to pack our bags and leave for good.

"I lost my brother and two nephews in a bombing attack in the city in 1973. Despite that, we stayed. We love the city deeply. On holidays and weekends, all of Israel comes to visit us. In my eyes, Kiryat Shmona is the most beautiful city in the world, and I dream of returning to it. I want to live the rest of my life there in peace," he concluded.

Nava Erez, 76, from Kibbutz Hanita in the western Galilee, also has been staying in the student dormitories at Jezreel Valley College, along with her daughter and grandson.

"Since yesterday, my stomach has been in knots from all the uncertainty, from not knowing what's going to happen with my life," she said.

"My house suffered minor damage from a missile blast, but it's still livable. The moment the community leaders tell me it's safe to return, I'll grab my grandson and load up all our belongings. Only the council leaders and community managers know the area and are responsible for us. If the prime minister tells me to go home, with all due respect, my peers and I will wait for their instructions."

Residents of Shlomi, evacuated over a year ago to the Royal Hotel in Jerusalem, are voicing deep fears over the new Israel-Lebanon agreement, which they believe fails to deliver real security. Among them is Inbar Ben Harush, a mother of two teenagers.

Speaking to Ynet, she didn't hold back. "This is a catastrophe for all of Israel, especially for us in the north. It's basically saying, 'Prepare to be conquered in the Galilee.'

Hezbollah will return to the villages in southern Lebanon, rearm, and rebuild their tunnels. It's only a matter of time."

For Inbar, residents feel completely overlooked in the decision-making process. "The leadership doesn't care about us. Our opinions, the opinions of our children—they mean nothing to them. Nobody asked us, nobody consulted the local authorities, and the fact is, everyone opposes this agreement. It's going to cost us our children's lives."

She didn't mince words about her lost faith in those in power. "We've lost trust in our government and its leadership. Maybe we can still restore faith in the IDF, but the lies we've been told for years won't disappear overnight. Once again, they're blatantly lying to us, saying: 'Go back; everything will be fine.' I'm not buying it. We saw what they did to the poor residents in the south."

Matan Davidian, 36, shares her concerns and is even more blunt, calling the deal "a surrender agreement." "We're going home to a situation far worse than the one we left," he said. "In the past, when there was fire from Lebanon, we responded immediately. Now, we'll need approval from other countries, which means we won't respond at all – we'll just 'contain.' Our children can't be human shields."

Matan pointed out that Hezbollah's threat is far greater than just holding anti-tank missiles. "They're firing them from villages in southern Lebanon – villages this agreement will let them return to. We've been warning for years that Hezbollah has a

plan to invade the Galilee. Hamas just acted on their plan faster. They would've taken over Nahariya and Haifa. This agreement doesn't eliminate that threat." He also stressed the need for a proper security buffer zone in the north. "There must be a buffer zone at least 6 miles deep, controlled by the IDF, to ensure there are no rockets or tunnels. Residents of southern Lebanon saying they'll return to their homes? They're part of Hezbollah's Radwan Force."

For the evacuees from Shlomi, the idea of returning north under the current security situation is unthinkable.

"If they tell me to go back tomorrow, I'll take my kids and move somewhere else. Anyone with common sense would do the same," Matan declared. Inbar added, "We're willing to stay here another year or even two if we have to, but we'll only return when there's real security, not just a 'sense of security.'"

Matan called on the government to reevaluate its approach and rebuild trust. "The government needs to think carefully and restore both security and faith. For the residents of the north, this agreement isn't a solution – it's a threat." Inbar wrapped up with a plea. "We truly want to go back, just not like this. Let families with children in schools stay where they are. Changing schools again isn't an option, especially not in the middle of the school year, and especially during matriculation exams. Let the kids finish the year. They've lost enough already – don't make life harder for them."

11.27.24 – We

Appeals for Erdogan to mediate Hamas hostage deal, as Turkey chants Death to Israel

11.27.24 – We

Israel appeals to Turkey to help mediate Hamas hostage deal

Government is willing to receive Erdogan's help in pressuring Hamas to complete a new deal despite repeated denials and the Turkish president's anti-Israel rhetoric as Hamas' power center moves to Istanbul

Nadav Eyal|02:25

Israel reached out to Turkey in recent weeks expressing willingness to receive its help in mediation efforts for a potential hostage deal with Hamas in Gaza.

Despite repeated denials from senior Israeli and White House officials, U.S. President Joe Biden mentioned in his speech on Tuesday regarding the cease-fire in Lebanon that "over the coming days, the United States will make another push with Turkey, Egypt, Qatar, Israel and others to achieve a cease-fire in Gaza."

Amid these discussions, Shin Bet chief Ronen Bar completed a secret visit to Turkey about 10 days ago. A senior Israeli official clarified that Turkey wouldn't act as a mediator in the hostage deal but could exert pressure on Hamas, especially since some of its leadership recently relocated from Qatar to Istanbul.

A White House official similarly denied Turkey's direct involvement in Gaza. "I think President Biden was referring to the fact that certain parties involved are currently in Turkey, which brought it into the picture," according to the official. "This wasn't to suggest that Turkey is mediating or negotiating. That said, we'll leave no stone unturned in trying to make progress."

The inclusion of Turkey in these efforts is contentious within Israel's leadership, partly due to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's positions and actions since the war began. For example, President Isaac Herzog's visit to the UN climate summit in Baku was recently canceled in part because Turkey refused to allow Herzog's plane to fly over its airspace.

Erdogan, who claimed that Turkey had severed diplomatic ties with Israel two weeks ago though Jerusalem had not been formally notified, boasted about preventing Herzog's plane from crossing Turkish airspace. "Turkey is committed to demonstrating its stance on several issues and we will do so," he said.

Since the war's outbreak, Erdogan has frequently criticized Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Israel's policies in Gaza, following the October 7 massacre and the onset of the war.

Turkish parliament members calling for death to Israel

About a month into the war, Erdogan declared that "Israel is a terrorist state committing genocide in Gaza" and claimed that " Hamas is a party that won the elections in Palestine," even though the last elections held in Gaza took place in 2006 and Hamas took control of the territory in 2007 after clashes with Fatah.

In April, during a Turkish parliamentary session amid the ongoing war, chants of "Death to Israel" were heard from the gallery while Erdogan praised Hamas and in an unprecedented statement accused Israel of orchestrating attempted coups in Turkey over the past decades. " Hamas is a resistance movement, not a terrorist organization. Israel? It has surpassed Hitler," he said.

Erdogan's rhetoric has continued in recent months. In September, he called on Muslim nations worldwide to unite against what he referred to as "the expansionist threat" of Israel in the Middle East, alleging that Israel seeks to conquer regional states.

"Israel won't stop at Gaza. After seizing Ramallah, it will target the lands of Syria and Lebanon," Erdogan asserted, further claiming that Israel might even aim to occupy Turkey.

"They'll set their sights on our homeland, between the Tigris and Euphrates. That's why we say ' Hamas resists on behalf of Muslims.' That's why we say ' Hamas isn't only defending Gaza but Islamic lands, including Turkey,'" he declared.

11.27.24 – We

ICC decision, equating Israel to Hamas, breaches its own principles of justice

11.27.24 – We

'ICC decision breaches its own foundational principles'

former Canadian justice minister Irwin Cotler, who liaises with Netanyahu and ICC Prosecutor Karim Khan, discusses life under Iranian assassination threats, urges international unity against authoritarian regimes' transnational repression
Felice Friedson/The Media Line|01:06

Irwin Cotler, a prominent human rights advocate and former Canadian justice minister, sat down this week with The Media Line for a comprehensive interview. The conversation spanned critical issues such as assassination threats against him from the Iranian regime, the International Criminal Court's (ICC) actions against Israeli leaders including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and the broader implications for international justice and democracy.

In May, Cotler shared about the challenges Israel faces on the international stage, including allegations of war crimes, the ICC's actions and the global rise in antisemitism, which Cotler described as a threat not only to Jews but to democracies worldwide. A year under threat: The Iranian regime's targeting of Cotler
Cotler began by revealing the profound personal impact on him and his family of being targeted by the Iranian regime. In November 2023, upon returning from Washington, DC, he and his wife were met by Canadian law enforcement at Montreal's Trudeau Airport.

"I was told then, to use their words, that there was credible evidence of "an imminent and lethal threat," Cotler recounted. "From then on, I had 24-7 protection, which included armored cars outside my house" and "security people accompanying me on any encounter that I was engaged in, whether I went to a medical appointment or whether I went to a family gathering."

For over a year, Cotler lived under constant surveillance and security measures, a reality he initially kept private. The situation became public following a detailed front-page report by The Globe and Mail, which prompted both houses of the Canadian Parliament to unanimously condemn the Iranian regime's assassination threats and express support for Cotler's advocacy work.

"In a rather divisive Parliament, which we have in Canada ... to get a unanimous resolution of both houses of Parliament is highly unusual," Cotler noted. "I hope that sends a message ... to the Iranian regime that their culture of impunity will not persist, that they will be held accountable, but equally to the Iranian people, that we stand in solidarity with them."

The roots of Iran's hostility: Cotler's advocacy against the regime

Cotler attributed the Iranian regime's animosity toward him to his decades long, outspoken criticism of their actions.

"I recall that the 21st century began with, on January 3, 2000, the supreme leader of Iran saying ... there can be no resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict without the annihilation of the Jewish state," Cotler stated. "This open and public call for genocide is a standalone violation of the Genocide Convention."

He emphasized that **such rhetoric** constitutes **incitement to genocide**, a punishable offense under international law irrespective of subsequent actions. **Cotler** has consistently called for **holding the Iranian leadership accountable** for what he describes as a “sevenfold threat”:

Cybersecurity threats: Conducting **cyberattacks and disinformation campaigns**, and Massive domestic repression: Systematic violations of human rights within Iran. “My advocacy has always been ... pro-Iranian, pro-the Iranian people,” Cotler emphasized. “It has been against the **Iranian regime**, which I feel is **betraying its own heritage**, its own **values**, and its own people.” Cotler has been instrumental in **advocating** for the designation of **Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a terrorist organization**—a move **Canada adopted** six months ago **after years of his lobbying efforts**.

Cotler asserted that **Iran’s targeting of him** is part of a broader pattern of transnational repression **executed by authoritarian regimes**. “This is a larger phenomenon than myself,” he said. “It’s a looking glass into the need to combat the **Iranian regime’s culture of criminality and impunity**, and to support more the Iranian people, who are the **targets of massive domestic repression**.”

He cited the cases of **Masih Alinejad, an Iranian American journalist** and women’s rights advocate who **faced assassination attempts**, and former U.S. National Security Adviser **John Bolton**, who **was targeted by Iranian operatives**. Cotler called for a unified international response to counter such threats.

“I’ve recommended to the Canadian government that they establish a separate department and **agency to deal with** the phenomenon of transnational **repression and assassination**,” he revealed. “It needs to be prioritized on the agenda, and we need to set aside the necessary resources and manpower for that purpose.”

The **threats** have profoundly altered Cotler’s daily life, **restricting his personal freedoms** and impacting his family.

“I have security 24-7. I **no longer have any freedom** of movement because **I must be accompanied** in **whatever I do**,” he explained. “It’s made a major change in our life.”

He shared a poignant anecdote involving his **granddaughter**, who, upon seeing the security presence, innocently **asked**: “**Ima [Mom], tell me the truth. I’ll still love Saba [Grandpa]. I’ll still love him. ... What crime did he commit?**”

Cotler also expressed disappointment over missing significant personal events due to security concerns, such as his 60th law school reunion at McGill University.

“I was very much looking forward to it. ... But then my **security people got word** ... that there was apparently evidence of an **imminent and lethal assassination attempt within** the next **48 hours**,” he said. “Of course, I **could not go to my law school reunion**.”

The ICC and Israel: Scrutinizing Karim Khan’s actions

A **significant** portion of the discussion focused on the International **Criminal Court’s actions against Israeli leaders**, specifically Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former defense minister Yoav Gallant. Cotler was critical of ICC Prosecutor Karim Khan’s approach.

"I believe that he has gone about this in a wrong way," Cotler asserted. "The special prosecutor should be called out for the manner in which ... he has not adhered to his own principle of cooperation."

Cotler elaborated on his attempts to facilitate dialogue between Khan and the Israeli leadership.

"At the request of the special prosecutor, Karim Khan, and with the cooperation of the prime minister of Israel, I helped facilitate meetings between them," he explained. "Well, on the very day that the ICC's team was supposed to come to Israel ... Karim Khan, the special prosecutor, peremptorily canceled that visit and on the same day held a press conference ... calling for arrest warrants against both Netanyahu and Gallant, along with Hamas leaders."

Cotler viewed this move as a breach of the ICC's foundational principles.

"To me, that was a breach of his own principle of cooperation, let alone also the principle of complementarity," he emphasized.

Cotler added that when he heard Khan was going to issue arrest warrants against Netanyahu and Gallant, he told the ICC prosecutor, "If you do that, the effect will be to incentivize ... antisemitism as well."

Cotler accused Khan of applying double standards, contrasting the ICC's leniency toward Venezuela's Nicolás Maduro with its aggressive stance on Israel: "Previously he [Khan] had visited with the Venezuelan dictator Maduro. ... He agreed not to institute arrest warrants with respect to the Venezuelan dictator ... but yet he called for arrest warrants against the prime minister and defense minister of a fellow democracy."

"You can't go ahead and give the Venezuelan dictatorship a waiver from an arrest warrant because you said you cooperated with them, and then call for an arrest warrant against a democracy when they have been willing to cooperate and you have not cooperated with them," Cotler argued.

He underscored the importance of the principle of complementarity, which holds that the ICC should defer to a country's own judicial processes if they are robust and independent.

"I have taken the view that Israel always had to use the very words of the prosecutor, Karim Khan himself, 'a robust and independent judiciary,' and that should be sufficient for purposes of combating an ICC warrant," he stated.

Cotler has strongly advocated for Israel to establish an independent state commission of inquiry to investigate any alleged misconduct, which he believes would strengthen Israel's position against the ICC's charges. He revealed that he has directly communicated this recommendation to Prime Minister Netanyahu and former defense chief Gallant.

"Well, I have conveyed that to the prime minister before," Cotler stated. "I've said that I believe that there should be an independent commission of inquiry. I'm just reaffirming now what I've said before and have conveyed to him."

When asked if there was any chance the arrest warrants could be revoked, Cotler expressed optimism. "I do believe that it can be pushed back," he affirmed. "I recommended directly to the prime minister and to ... Yoav Gallant, at the time the

defense minister. ... The defense minister was responsive to this, but I believe that Israel should have and still should establish an independent state commission of inquiry."

He explained that such a commission would demonstrate Israel's commitment to investigating any allegations internally, thereby reinforcing the principle of complementarity. "That would allow the prosecutor to clearly state that Israel is undertaking its own independent investigation," he explained. "Under the principle of complementarity, the ICC should not substitute its judgment for that of an independent judiciary and an independent legal process."

Cotler noted significant public support within Israel for such a commission. "The last polling I saw showed a dramatic support for that amongst the Israeli public. Over 70% were in favor of such an independent state commission of inquiry, only 8% against," he shared.

"The United States has called what the ICC has done as outrageous, given as well the false moral equivalence that has been created between a democracy like Israel ... and not only a terrorist organization, but a genocidal antisemitic terrorist organization like Hamas"

Cotler expressed concern that the ICC's actions could have serious repercussions for Netanyahu and other Israeli officials, potentially restricting their international travel. "The community of democracies ... have said, with the exception of Germany ... that they would abide by the decision [to arrest Israeli leaders]," he said. "I believe that ... there are sufficient grounds, both with respect to the evidence and with respect to the law, for a democracy ... to say that while it has been a founding member of the ICC ... it can refuse to institute the arrest warrant."

He criticized the ICC's alleged moral equivalence between Israel and Hamas.

"The United States has called what the ICC has done as outrageous, given as well the false moral equivalence that has been created between a democracy like Israel ... and not only a terrorist organization, but a genocidal antisemitic terrorist organization like Hamas," Cotler remarked.

Addressing the question of the ICC's jurisdiction over Israel, which is not a member state, Cotler explained the complexities involved.

"We filed a brief with the ICC saying that they had no jurisdiction because Israel was not a state party and Palestine was not yet a state," he recounted. "However ... Palestine was admitted as a state party to the ICC. ... The ICC, in a majority judgment, did say that it had a jurisdiction."

Despite disagreeing with this decision, Cotler acknowledged that the ICC's stance complicates the legal landscape.

"We have strong enough arguments ... to call on both the ICC to reverse its decision, the special prosecutor to withdraw the arrest warrants," he asserted.

Cotler discussed the responses from international leaders, including U.S. President Joe Biden and President-elect Donald Trump, who have criticized the ICC's actions. While Trump suggested imposing sanctions on Karim Khan, Cotler advised against such measures.

"I'm not in favor of sanctioning the ICC," he stated. "I prefer the route of calling out the decisions as being outrageous, which they are, but not of imposing sanctions."

He emphasized the importance of addressing the issue through legal and diplomatic channels, maintaining the integrity of international justice systems.

Cotler addressed concerns about Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's stance, as Canada is a founding member of the ICC and may be obligated to enforce arrest warrants.

"I believe that we can independently say why we would not honor an arrest warrant," Cotler said. "I hope to be meeting with him shortly and to convey that personally to him." He suggested that Canada's legal framework provides grounds to refuse compliance with the ICC warrants, especially given the circumstances.

Throughout the interview, Cotler stressed the critical need for democracies to stand united against authoritarian regimes and uphold the principles of justice.

"This must serve as a wake-up call ... for the community of democracies," he urged. "We need to have the other G7 countries [take action]."

He criticized actions like Australia's refusal to allow former Israeli Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked to enter the country for a security conference.

"I thought that was shocking. ... Punishing the leaders of that democracy without any basis whatsoever," Cotler remarked. "That's the only way I can characterize what the Australian government did."

Finding hope amid challenges

Despite the grave issues discussed, Cotler concluded on a hopeful note, expressing faith in the eventual triumph of justice and democratic values.

"I'm a strong believer in what Martin Luther King said, that in the end of the day, the arc of history will bend towards justice," he reflected. "While we are going through difficult times, I do believe that at the end of the day, the arc of history will bend towards justice." When asked about what he misses most due to the security constraints, Cotler shared: "I just miss the freedom that my family could have to live a normal life with freedom of movement. ... I would love to be able to go back to the normal movement of any citizen in any democracy."

He also expressed gratitude for the support he has received: "I'm very encouraged by the strong support of both houses of the Canadian Parliament ... and the very, very strong support that I've gotten from the Iranian people themselves."

"In the end, justice will prevail," Cotler affirmed.

The story is written by Felice Friedson and reprinted with permission from The Media Line.

11.27.24 – We

IDF withdraw from Lebanon within 60 days, UNIFIL replaces by January 27

11.27.24 – We

IDF could start withdrawing from Lebanon within hours

The cease-fire started at 4 a.m., and under the approved agreement the IDF must leave over the next 60 days, but a senior US official says this withdraw could begin shortly; It will include removal of dozens of Israeli flags that IDF soldiers have placed in Lebanese army posts

Itamar Eichner, Yoav Zitun, Daniel Edelson, New York|00:09

The cabinet approved a **cease-fire** agreement in Lebanon that **requires the IDF** should **withdraw within 60 days**, but the **Americans say** that the process may be **shorter** and, in fact, the **withdrawal** from southern Lebanon **may begin within the next day**.

In the **day before the cease-fire** went into effect, the **IDF launched non-stop attacks** in Daheih and **in central Beirut and other areas** in Lebanon, including on the **Syrian border**. **Hezbollah**, for its part, **launched non-stop volleys to the north**, and also fired into the Hadera area. But at 4:00 a.m., the shooting stopped and the cease-fire began, which, unlike the one in Gaza during the hostage deal, **is supposed to be permanent, not temporary**.

The **IDF's withdrawal** from Lebanon **will be gradual** and **may begin** as early as **Wednesday under heavy air cover**. It will also include the **removal of dozens** of Israeli **flags** that IDF soldiers have placed in Lebanese army posts and positions they have occupied in Lebanese territory.

A senior **U.S. official** said that **during this two-month** period the "**Lebanese army** forces will begin **deploying in the south**. This is a process that cannot happen overnight or within days. This is **intended to prevent** the situation from creating a **vacuum**. We are not saying that at the end of the 60 days the **IDF will withdraw**, but much before. This will be a **gradual** withdrawal **in several areas** where the IDF is present. The **Israelis will withdraw** completely **no later than 60 days, perhaps** as early as the **50th day**."

The official added that, "**unlike previous agreements**, especially in 2006, this time there is an **agreed-upon map**. The **Lebanese army will** receive **permission** from the Lebanese government to **deploy** and fulfill its mission and guarantee that they will **deploy in the south** and **make sure that Hezbollah moves** to the north, and that **all its heavy weapons** are removed. They will patrol the area and guarantee that if any infrastructure or weapons remain they **will be removed** and it will **not be possible to rebuild** such **infrastructure** in this area."

The enforcement mechanism will be upgraded, he said. "The **U.S. and France will join** an existing **mechanism** that was created shortly after the Second Lebanon War and includes **UNIFIL**, Israel and Lebanon. The **U.S. will head that mechanism**, and will **receive** complaints **from both sides** for any possible violation." We will work with the Lebanese Army to **make sure every violation is addressed**. There will be **no American soldiers in the area**, but there will be **military assistance** to the Lebanese army in cooperation with the **French army**."

He noted that "there is another element called the **Joint Military Commission**, - which includes the armies of other countries that **will provide equipment, training and financial resources** to the **Lebanese army** and the Lebanese security services. Unlike in the Second Lebanon War, here we are obliged to stay on the ground, see what is happening and follow Hezbollah or other terrorist organizations."

The same senior American emphasized the importance of rebuilding Lebanon. "From the lessons of the past, Hezbollah was the only one that did reconstruction work in southern Lebanon. This time it is in the interest of all of us to support economic growth and rebuild Lebanon. Hezbollah is very weak militarily and this is the opportunity for Lebanon to exercise sovereignty over its territory, elect a president and attract foreign investors so that it can return to economic normality and independence."

"Israel had great achievements on the battlefield, but it is impossible to achieve long-term security only on the battlefield," he clarified. "This requires a political solution that is supported by the military achievements. Hezbollah did not ask permission from the people of Lebanon when it decided to join the Hamas attacks. This is a war that most Lebanese did not want, and it is important that they be able to return home safely." He referred to the speech of U.S. President Joe Biden, saying that the president "made it clear that if there is an immediate threat to Israel, then Israel - like any country in a similar situation - will have to deal with it. If we use the tools we have in Lebanon and don't take our eyes off the ground this will not be necessary. We are confident that if Israeli action is necessary it will not happen soon and, in any case, it will be rare."

The same senior official expressed hope that the agreement in Lebanon will lead to an agreement in Gaza as well. "What happened today has the potential to be a game-changer in Gaza. If there is anything that can put pressure on Hamas, on people who do not really care about the lives of their people and even their own lives - it is the reality, in which they see that Hezbollah has decided to abandon them. This can lead to a change in the reality on the ground."

He emphasized that President-elect Donald Trump's people were informed about the contacts: "President Biden thinks that normalization is the ultimate change in the Middle East. It can change the whole picture. A lot of work has been done, let's see if we can do anything else in the time that remains. Everything that is done will not be done without Trump's people, who know it is in the best interest of the U.S. and the Middle East."

In response to the question of whether Iran was involved in the talks, the official replied: "I did not negotiate with Iran, and it should not influence what happens in Lebanon. Only the people of Lebanon should make decisions through the speaker of the Parliament, the prime minister, and if, God willing, he is elected, then through the president."

Addressing the Israeli claim that the United States threatened not veto future resolutions in the Security Council if there was no agreement, the senior American official said: "No. This point did not come up. Not only did we not threaten, the issue never came up at all."

11.27.24 – We

Cease-fire in Lebanon began 4 am: 3 provisions of agreement, and US guarantees

11.27.24 – We

Cease-fire in Lebanon began at 4 a.m.: These are the 13 provisions of the agreement, and the US guarantees

Agreement will end fighting in the north after almost 14 months; But the dissolution of Hezbollah does not appear in the agreement; Biden spoke with Netanyahu who confirmed that 'Israel maintains freedom of action in enforcing it'

Itamar Eichner, Daniel Edelson, New York | Yesterday | 15:41

On October 8, 2023, Hezbollah joined the fighting against Israel, a day after the surprise attack launched by Hamas. Almost a year and two months later, on Tuesday night the Security Cabinet approved the agreement that will put an end to fighting in the north.

According to the plan, the cease-fire will come into effect at 4 a.m. on Wednesday. The agreement passed in the Security Cabinet with 10 in favor and one against, Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir.

"Israel appreciates the US contribution to the process, and maintains its right to act against any threat to its security," the Prime Minister's Office said in a statement after the announcement of the cease-fire.

The statement added that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu "spoke to U.S. President Joe Biden and thanked him for the U.S. involvement in achieving the cease-fire agreement in Lebanon and for the understanding that Israel maintains freedom of action in enforcing it."

U.S. President Joe Biden announced the cease-fire from the White House Rose Garden on Tuesday afternoon in Washington.

"I have good news from the Middle East. I spoke with the Prime Ministers of Israel and Lebanon, they approved the cease-fire proposal between Israel and Hezbollah." Biden thanked French President Emmanuel Macron, saying: "Let's be clear - if Hezbollah violates the deal, Israel will retain the right to defend itself. In the same way, Lebanon's sovereignty must be maintained and a new beginning allowed for it."

Biden also said that "Hamas now has a choice to make; the only way out of this is to release the hostages and in the process end the fighting. In the coming days, the U.S., with the help of its partners, Egypt, Turkey and Qatar, will try to push for a cease-fire agreement in Gaza. The U.S. remains ready to conclude the historic agreements with Saudi Arabia for full normalization with Israel. I continue to believe that peace is possible. I will not stop working to achieve it."

The dissolution of Hezbollah does not appear in the agreement, which only says that it will not operate in southern Lebanon. In addition, there is no commitment that Hezbollah operatives will not return to the border area. On the other hand, the U.S. guarantee letter, which is a side agreement, allows for Israeli intelligence flights, but the planes will be prohibited from breaking the sound barrier.

Prime Minister Netanyahu listed the reasons that he said led to his decision to agree to the cease fire, including "the delay in armaments that will be resolved soon," but did not call on the residents of the north to return to their homes.

These are the 13 points included in the agreement:

* Hezbollah and all other armed groups in Lebanese territory will not carry out any offensive action against Israel.

* At the same time, Israel will not carry out any offensive military action against targets in Lebanon, including on the ground, in the air and at sea.

* Israel and Lebanon recognize the importance of Resolution 1701 of the UN Security Council, which calls for the withdrawal of Hezbollah and other forces from Lebanon south of the Litani River.

* These commitments do not negate the right of Israel and Lebanon to exercise their right to self-defense.

* The official Lebanese security forces and army will be the only armed entities that will be allowed to carry weapons or operate their forces in southern Lebanon.

* Any sale, supply and production of weapons or materials related to weapons to Lebanon will be under the supervision and control of the Lebanese government.

* All unauthorized facilities for the production of weapons and materials related to weapons will be dismantled.

* All military infrastructure and bases will be dismantled, and all weapons without a permit that do not comply with these obligations will be confiscated.

* A committee will be established that will be acceptable to Israel and Lebanon to oversee and assist in ensuring the enforcement of these commitments.

* Israel and Lebanon will submit reports on any expected violations of these commitments to the committee and the UNIFIL force.

* Lebanon will deploy its official security forces and military forces along all borders, crossing points and the line that defines southern Lebanon, as shown in the deployment plan.

* Israel will gradually withdraw south of the Blue Line within 60 days.

* The U.S. will promote indirect negotiations between Israel and Lebanon to reach a recognized land border.

Alongside this, the United States provided guarantees to Israel. These are the sections that are included in the U.S. guarantee letter:

* Israel and the U.S. intend to share sensitive intelligence concerning violations, including any infiltration by Hezbollah into the Lebanese army.

* The U.S. may share information provided by Israel with the Lebanese government or commission to allow them to address the violations.

* The U.S. is committed to cooperating with Israel to curb Iran's destabilizing activities in Lebanon, including preventing the transfer of weapons, affiliates and others from Iranian territory.

* The US recognizes Israel's right to respond to threats coming from Lebanese territory in accordance with international law.

* In the southern region, Israel reserves the right to act at any time against violations of the commitments. Outside the southern region, Israel reserves the right to act against the development of threats directed against it, if Lebanon is unable or unwilling to thwart these threats. If Israel decides to take such steps, it will inform the U.S. of this wherever possible.

* Israeli flights over Lebanon will be conducted for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance purposes only and will not break the sound barrier.

'The war will not end until we achieve all our goals'

Netanyahu released a pre-recorded statement ahead of the announcement of the cease-fire, which allowed him to side-step questions from reporters.

"I promised you victory, and we will achieve victory. We will complete the elimination of Hamas, we will return all our hostages, we will ensure that Gaza will no longer pose a threat to Israel, and we will return the residents of the north safely to their homes," said the prime minister at the beginning of his statement that was recorded before the debate on approving the cease-fire in the cabinet. "The war will not end until we achieve all our goals, until we return the residents of the north safely home. It will happen, just as it happened in the south. My friends, the residents of the north, I am proud of you, your ability to endure, I am fully committed to your future."

Netanyahu also detailed Israel's actions in the various sectors of the war, including the struggles against Iran, Hamas in Gaza, the terrorist organizations in the West Bank, the Houthis in Yemen and the pro-Palestinian militias in Iraq. Referring to the war in the north, Netanyahu said that "Hezbollah chose to attack us from there on October 8. We set it back decades."

We eliminated Nasrallah; we eliminated all the senior officials of the organization and thousands of terrorists, and we destroyed most of the rocket capabilities and the infrastructure it built near our border," he added. "We have eliminated thousands of terrorists and destroyed the underground infrastructure near our border for years. We have attacked strategic targets throughout Lebanon and brought down dozens of terrorist towers in Dahieh. All of this sounded like science fiction, But it's not science fiction, we did it."

"At every moment of managing this campaign, I observe all fronts simultaneously. That is what I did at the beginning of the war when I decided to focus on Gaza and not open a broader front in Lebanon. That is what I did several months ago when the conditions ripened to go north, and then we decided to focus on Hezbollah," he said. "That is what I did after the missile attack from Iran, when we meticulously decided on the time and nature of our response. And that is what I am doing today. I observe all the fronts simultaneously and see the broad picture. I am determined to give our courageous soldiers every resource to keep them safe and bring us victory."

"Therefore, this evening I will bring a ceasefire outline for the cabinet's approval. The length of the cease-fire depends on what happens in Lebanon. With the United States' full understanding, we maintain full freedom of military action. If Hezbollah violates the agreement and tries to arm itself, we will attack. If it tries to rebuild terrorist infrastructure near the border, we will attack. If it launches a rocket, if it digs a tunnel, if it brings in a truck carrying rockets, we will attack."

The prime minister listed the reasons for the cease-fire in the north:

"The first reason is to focus on the Iranian threat, and I will not expand on that.

"The second reason is to give our forces a breather and replenish stocks. And I say it openly, it is no secret that there have been big delays in weapons and munitions deliveries. These delays will be resolved soon. We will receive supplies of advanced weaponry that will keep our soldiers safe and give us more strike force to complete our mission.

"And the third reason for having a ceasefire is to separate the fronts and isolate Hamas. From day two of the war, Hamas was counting on Hezbollah to fight by its side. With

Hezbollah out of the picture, Hamas is left on its own. We will increase our pressure on Hamas and that will help us in our sacred mission of releasing our hostages."

11.26.24 – Tu

Netanyahu on Lebanon only cease-fire: 'I promised victory and we will achieve victory'

11.26.24 – Tu

Netanyahu on coming cease-fire: 'I promised victory and we will achieve victory'
In pre-recorded statement, almost a year and two months after Hezbollah in the north joined the surprise attack by Hamas in the south, the prime minister addresses a cease-fire in Lebanon; 'This is not the same Hezbollah, we set it back decades'
Itamar Eichner|12:39

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu delivered a pre-recorded statement Tuesday evening following a meeting of his political-security cabinet and ahead of the cease-fire in the north which is expected to take effect Wednesday morning according to the plan - almost a year and two months after Hezbollah joined the fighting against Israel, after the surprise attack by Hamas in the south.

"I promised you victory, and we will achieve victory. We will complete the elimination of Hamas, we will return all our hostages, we will ensure that Gaza will no longer pose a threat to Israel, and we will return the residents of the north safely to their homes," said the prime minister at the beginning of his statement that was recorded before the debate on approving the cease-fire in the cabinet. "The war will not end until we achieve all our goals, until we return the residents of the north safely home. It will happen, just as it happened in the south. My friends, the residents of the north, I am proud of you, your ability to endure, I am fully committed to your future."

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"We eliminated Nasrallah; we eliminated all the senior officials of the organization and thousands of terrorists, and we destroyed most of the rocket capabilities and the infrastructure it built near our border," he added. "We have eliminated thousands of terrorists and destroyed the underground infrastructure near our border for years. We have attacked strategic targets throughout Lebanon and brought down dozens of terrorist towers in Dahieh. All of this sounded like science fiction, But it's not science fiction, we did it."

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These delays will be resolved soon. We will receive supplies of advanced weaponry that will keep our soldiers safe and give us more strike force to complete our mission.

"And the third reason for having a ceasefire is to separate the fronts and isolate Hamas. From day two of the war, Hamas was counting on Hezbollah to fight by its side. With Hezbollah out of the picture, Hamas is left on its own. We will increase our pressure on Hamas and that will help us in our sacred mission of releasing our hostages."

Netanyahu said he would put the cease-fire accord to a vote of his full cabinet later in the evening, after Israeli television news reported that the more restricted security cabinet had earlier approved the deal.

"We will enforce the agreement and respond forcefully to any violation. Together, we will continue until victory," he said.

"In full coordination with the United States, we retain complete military freedom of action. Should Hezbollah violate the agreement or attempt to rearm, we will strike decisively," he said.

He added that there were three reasons to pursue a cease-fire – to focus on Iran, replenish depleted arms supplies and give the army a rest, and finally to isolate Hamas.

U.S. President Joe Biden will deliver remarks in the White House's Rose Garden later Tuesday and is expected to announce the cease-fire, according to reports.

Netanyahu, whose last press conference he held was on September 2 after the bodies of six hostages were located, did not have to face reporters and their questions since he pre-recorded his statement. The prime minister delivered the statement after the cabinet meeting regarding the cease-fire, which US President Joe Biden and French President Emmanuel Macron are expected to announce tonight after 10:00 p.m.

The cease-fire itself is expected to take effect Wednesday at 10:00 a.m., after the Lebanese government also approves it. U.S. President-elect Donald Trump was updated on the details of the agreement. A senior Lebanese official clarified to Al-Hadith that "the cease-fire agreement in Lebanon is not related to the hostages held by Hamas. The agreement is not related to the Gaza front."

A few minutes before the cabinet meeting, the IDF launched a wave of attacks in Daheih, which in Lebanon they called "the most intense attacks since the beginning of the war."

At the same time, an attack was also reported in the heart of Beirut. According to the IDF, 20 terrorist targets of Hezbollah were attacked in just 120 seconds. Among the targets were also the branches of the Hezbollah Bank.

The attacks in Dahieh - and in the center of Beirut - continued even after that. At the same time, Hezbollah launched barrages into the northern cities, and incessant alarms were heard in Haifa, Acre, Nahariya, Ma'alot and other localities. In addition, UAVs penetrated the Western Galilee with alert sirens heard from Rosh Hankara to Haifa.

11.26.24 – Tu

Police arrested woman smuggling 6,000 M-16 bullets from north to West Bank

11.26.24 – Tu

Israel Police foils two major arms smuggling attempts from north to West Bank
Young woman from Kafr Qassem arrested on suspicion of attempting to smuggle 6,000 M-16 bullets, for which she was reportedly promised several thousand shekels; Arrest follows a similar case in which two men were caught trying to smuggle 20,000 bullets
Israel Moskovitz|11:19

Northern District Israel Police officers arrested a 22-year-old woman from Kafr Qassem on Monday night on suspicion of attempting to smuggle 6,000 bullets intended for M-16 rifles.

She was apprehended while traveling south from northern Israel toward the West Bank. Police plan to request an extension of her detention at the Nazareth Magistrate's Court.

Authorities believe the ammunition was destined for the Palestinian territories to be used by terror organizations. Investigators also suspect the woman was promised several thousand shekels for transporting the bullets. The arrest follows a separate case involving two young men caught smuggling 20,000 bullets, also intended for the West Bank. "Every piece of ammunition that reaches the territories poses a potential threat to our soldiers and civilians," said Chief Superintendent Oshri Amor, deputy commander of the Northern District's central unit. "We take these cases with utmost seriousness. Our unit has been waging a relentless campaign against the smuggling of weapons into the Palestinian Authority."

Police suspect criminal gangs exploit women with no prior criminal record, such as the arrested suspect, to serve as couriers. "Around 10 p.m. last night, a central unit team, assisted by officers from Migdal HaEmek, noticed a private vehicle driven by a young woman heading south," said Amor.

"She appeared to be part of a larger smuggling ring involved in stealing and transferring weapons from northern Israel to the West Bank. A thorough search of her car revealed six boxes of ammunition containing 6,000 bullets. She was likely en route to the Palestinian territories to hand over the ammunition," he added.

Police continue their crackdown on arms smuggling, targeting networks that threaten national security.

11.26.24 – Tu

Northern Israel not ready for political game or defeatist agreement full of concessions

11.26.24 – Tu

Northern municipal heads, reserve soldiers oppose Netanyahu: 'Not ready for a defeatist agreement'

Rocket and drone warning sirens sound throughout northern Israel for nearly an hour as cease-fire looms; opponents call on cabinet to not agree to a deal with Lebanon that does not include taking territory on border that would remain under IDF control; 'Any deal

that would bring Hezbollah terrorists back to the border near our homes would be criminal negligence'

Yair Kraus, Yael Ciechanover|11:05

Rockets and drones fired from Lebanon set off warning sirens in dozens of communities throughout northern Israel on Tuesday as municipal heads from the conflict line in the north and hundreds of commanders and soldiers from the Israeli Reservist-Generation of Victory movement called on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the members of the political-security cabinet not to promote any agreement with Lebanon if it does not include the taking of territory along the border that will remain under the control of the IDF and guarantee the safety of the residents. At the same time, about 10 people demonstrated in front of the Begin Gate in Tel Aviv against the promotion of a cease-fire in the north.

The sirens continued for nearly an hour as the IDF announced that if the targets were being monitored by the Israeli Air Force and efforts to intercept the aerial targets are ongoing, according to the IDF.

As the cabinet meeting intended to approve the cease-fire between Israel and Hezbollah convened, a letter from the heads of the northern communities and reserve fighters stated: "We, the residents of northern Israel, who have been evacuated from our homes for more than a year, together with the officers and reserve fighters who were active in the defense battle in our sector and in the attack battle deep in Lebanon, call on the cabinet, the government of Israel, and its leader not to sign any agreement that does not include a sterile buffer zone of several kilometers north of the border. An agreement that brings back the Hezbollah terrorists to the border near our homes is criminal negligence that will be remembered forever."

The heads of the municipalities and the reserve fighters emphasized: "We, who paid the heaviest personal and national price, cannot remain silent in the face of a decision that will result in the trampling of everything we have achieved with blood and sweat. This is not what we fought for. This is not what we lost hundreds of soldiers for, this is not what we sacrificed everything for. We are not ready for our sacrifice and that of our families to become a political game or a defeatist agreement that is full of concessions and fear."

11.26.24 – Tu

Israel & US team Dershowitz, Cuomo, Cotler, Freeh & Levin challenge ICC morality

11.26.24 – Tu

Former NY Gov. Andrew Cuomo joins Israel defense team for ICC case

Cuomo joins Netanyahu's legal team to challenge ICC arrest warrants, eyeing a political comeback with a potential NYC mayoral run; Emphasizing solidarity with Israel, he joins a high-profile team led by Alan Dershowitz, defending against what they call unjust international bias against Israel

Daniel Edelson, New York|08:56

Former New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, who stepped down amid allegations of sexually harassing 11 women, has joined Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's legal team to counter arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court in The Hague. "I am proud to be on the legal defense for the prime minister against the arrest warrant at the ICC and I am proud to stand against antisemitism," he declared.

Cuomo, eyeing a potential run for New York City mayor next year, is showing increasing interest in Israel – a strategic move to court the Jewish vote in the city, home to the largest Jewish community outside of Israel. Since returning to public life last year, he has engaged in pro-Israel lobbying, strengthening his political ties with a significant voting bloc in local elections.

"This is the moment that counts. This is the moment that is going to be in the history books. ... This is the moment that true friends stand up, shoulder to shoulder and fight for the State of Israel," Cuomo proclaimed at a New York event for the National Committee for the Advancement of Jewish Education. Cuomo, a trained lawyer and former New York State Attorney General, is the brother of former CNN star Chris Cuomo, who also got entangled in his brother's scandal and had to leave his job.

The legal team was assembled by Netanyahu's close friend, Professor Alan Dershowitz, and includes prominent figures in the American and global legal systems. Among them are former U.S. Attorneys General, former Canadian Justice Minister Irwin Cotler, former FBI Director Louis Freeh, and Fox News host attorney Mark Levin.

Dershowitz and the team will argue that the ICC has no jurisdiction over Israel, which is not a member of the court, and that Israel's judicial system is independent and effective. "Israel has one of the best and most independent legal systems in the world, one that is both willing and able to investigate its own leaders. The Israeli courts have convicted and imprisoned a former prime minister, a former president and several ministers. Hamas has no such judicial system," Dershowitz wrote in a Wall Street Journal column, where he announced the members of Netanyahu's legal team. "The U.S. should sanction the institution. This process is already under way in Congress and should be pursued." He stated that the issuing of arrest warrants against Netanyahu and former Defense Minister Yoav Gallant reflects blatant discrimination by the international institution and equates Israel's defensive actions with Hamas's acts of terrorism. "Without making comparisons to the Holocaust, the ICC – which along with the International Court of Justice has shown bias against Israel for years – would probably have issued warrants against the Jewish fighters in the Warsaw ghetto along with the Nazis who were seeking to murder them. By pursuing these illegal and unjustified warrants, the ICC has lost its credibility."

Dershowitz also promised to prove that Israel's actions in Gaza do not violate any international laws or the laws of war.

"Even if the inflated numbers of casualties provided by the Hamas Health Services were accurate, the proportion of civilians to combatants killed by the Israel Defense Forces would be lower than in any comparable war anywhere in the world," he argued. "This

certainly **doesn't qualify as genocide** or any other war crime. In addition, the efforts by Israel and the international community to send **food and other provisions into Gaza** have been **stymied by Hamas and by gangs** who have stolen the shipments."

He emphasized that this is **not just a legal battle but also a fight for global public opinion**. "This case will be tried in a courtroom in The Hague. It will also be tried in the court of public opinion, both in the U.S. and throughout the world. For that reason, I am assembling a team of world class lawyers from around the globe to help defend Israeli leaders against the false charges."

Dershowitz hopes the legal team will refute the charges and restore public confidence in international law. "The court undermines the rule of law and international morality," he wrote. "Our goal is to defend Israeli leaders and preserve the rule of law from corruption."

11.26.24 – Tu

Lebanon media announced cease-fire to be after 10 pm, as IDF reached Litani River

11.26.24 – Tu

Report from Lebanon says cease-fire to be announced tonight

20 terror targets in Beirut area struck hours before cease-fire set to be announced; IDF troops reach Litani River in 1st since war as forces operate at the river's bend closest to the border with Israel

Yoav Zitun|07:26

Lebanese broadcaster Al-Jadeed reported that an announcement of a cease-fire with Israel brokered by the U.S. and France will come shortly after 10 p.m. in Lebanon. According to the channel, Lebanese caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikat will also make a statement.

Late Tuesday afternoon, the IDF announced that the Israeli Air Force completed a series of intelligence-based strikes on 20 terror targets in the area of Beirut. These strikes included 13 terror targets in the Dahieh area, a key Hezbollah stronghold in Beirut. Among the targets struck were a Hezbollah aerial defense unit center, an intelligence center, command centers, weapons storage facilities, an operations room, an artillery storage facility, and terrorist infrastructure sites, according to the IDF.

Seven other targets struck were components of Hezbollah's financial system, including headquarters, storage facilities, and branches of the Al-Qard Al-Hassan Association, which are used by Hezbollah to collect and store its terrorist funds. Several days ago, the Minister of Defense announced financial sanctions on 24 senior depositors of the Al-Qard Al-Hassan Association due to their involvement in terror funding.

Also on Tuesday, IDF forces for the first time in the war reached the Litani River around its bend, which is nearest to the border with Israel.

The forces intend to reach the Beaufort Castle, where Hezbollah has been entrenched and where fierce battles took place in the 2006 Second Lebanon War.

The IDF took control of areas where Lebanese army positions are located and pitched Israeli flags far inside Lebanese territory in recent days. They located Hezbollah weapons stores and underground fortifications and found dozens of rocket launchers loaded and ready for use. In their operations, the troops encountered Hezbollah fighters and engaged in battles.

The IDF Arabic language spokesperson had posted at least 20 warnings earlier on Tuesday telling civilians living in Beirut's Dahieh quarter, a Hezbollah stronghold, to evacuate for safety ahead of strikes on specific buildings and areas. Video clips from Beirut showed massive destruction caused by the attacks.

The security cabinet is scheduled to convene later on Tuesday to approve the cease-fire agreement. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has invited mayors in the north for a meeting, to hear their concerns but some of them have said that they would only meet before the cabinet votes to approve the deal.

11.26.24 – Tu

Netanyahu may not appeal ICC warrants, but wait for Trump to pressure court

11.26.24 – Tu

Netanyahu's dilemma: Appeal ICC warrants or wait for Trump?

PM calls meeting on ICC situation as some allies back appealing warrants, while others push to wait for Trump administration to unleash 'hellish sanctions,' aiming to pressure court into suspending them

Itamar Eichner|16:11

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is set to convene a meeting on Tuesday to discuss the arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague against him and former defense minister Yoav Gallant.

The decision will determine whether Israel will appeal these warrants. Israel has until Wednesday to officially notify the ICC if it intends to appeal the decision. Legal experts suggest Israel has grounds for a legal appeal, though this remains uncertain. The appeal can challenge the judges' arguments but not the warrants themselves.

In contrast, the political leadership suggests ignoring the warrants and delivering a "lesson" to the court through severe sanctions, which they believe will be imposed by the incoming administration of U.S. President-elect Donald Trump.

"The Americans plan hellish sanctions against any country that assists the court, and that's where it will end," an Israeli official said. "We shouldn't have to beg before a body we have no trust in."

However, court officials have provided indications Israel could manage the situation if it establishes an internal inquiry.

Given the strong responses from senior members of the incoming Trump administration to the court's decision to issue the warrants, Jerusalem is inclined not to appeal and to wait for developments on the international stage, namely Trump's entry to the White House on January 20.

"My assessment is that the court will eventually back down because the pressure on it will be unprecedented, and they have never experienced anything like it," an Israeli source familiar with the details remarked last week. "They will beg us to give them a way out. After they undergo a 'lesson' that brings them down to earth, we might then consider helping them climb down."

While there is no option to appeal the arrest warrants themselves, an appeal can be filed against the court's determinations with the appeals chamber. However, such appeals do not freeze the warrants, fueling skepticism in Israel about the appeals process. The appeals chamber includes diplomats from Mongolia, Peru and Japan—figures perceived as lacking legal expertise and familiarity with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Israeli officials fear ICC Prosecutor Karim Khan may pursue secret arrest warrants against IDF soldiers and officers. The issue is now shifting to the political arena, as the court's decision could directly impact Israeli leaders. The 124 countries party to the Rome Statute, which governs the ICC, would be legally obligated to arrest and extradite Netanyahu or Gallant if they enter their jurisdiction.

Gallant is scheduled to travel to Washington next Sunday for high-level talks with U.S. officials at the White House and State Department. This marks his first visit to the U.S. since the ICC issued an arrest warrant against him. The trip follows Netanyahu's previous ban on Gallant's U.S. visits before his dismissal earlier this month.

In response to the ICC decision, the White House has expressed strong opposition. National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby said that the United States "rejects the decision fundamentally," criticizing the prosecutor's haste and the errors in the process. He reiterated that the ICC lacks jurisdiction in the matter and confirmed ongoing coordination with Israel and other partners to determine the next steps.

As the U.S. is not an ICC member and has not signed the Rome Statute, Gallant faces no direct legal risk during his visit. However, the situation may complicate his travel route, as some European countries could potentially block the use of their airspace.

11.25.24 – Mo

US agreement surrenders Israel & allows Hezbollah to prepare for next war

11.25.24 – Mo

From total victory to total surrender!': Northern Israelis outraged over reports of Hezbollah cease-fire agreement

Residents and local leaders fear emerging truce will allow terror group to regroup and rebuild; 'What will our residents return to? A devastated city with no security and no future?' asks Kiryat Shmona mayor

Alexandra Lukash, Yair Kraus, Moran Azulay, Nina Fox|09:29

Reports of progress toward a cease-fire with Hezbollah have sparked significant frustration among residents of northern Israel, who fear that a potential agreement could allow the Lebanese terrorist group to rebuild and once again threaten their safety. An American official said Monday that "a cease-fire in Lebanon is imminent."

After more than a year of hostilities, residents are calling for a decisive resolution that exploits Hezbollah's current weakened state following the extensive Israeli bombing campaign, which has targeted much of its leadership.

Kiryat Shmona Mayor Avihay Stern expressed strong opposition to the reported deal, urging Israel's leaders to reconsider. "Before signing what feels like a surrender agreement, I call on our leaders to look into the eyes of Kiryat Shmona's children and think of their future," Stern said.

"This agreement brings the threat of October 7 closer to the north. How have we gone from total victory to total surrender? Why not finish what we started? We've crushed Hezbollah, yet instead of dismantling it completely, we're giving it the chance to recover. And what will our residents return to? A devastated city with no security and no future? This is madness," Stern warned.

Residents across the region are demanding that Israel "end the story" and eliminate Hezbollah's capabilities, ensuring long-term security before returning to their homes.

Moshe Davidovich, head of the Mateh Asher Regional Council in the Western Galilee, harshly criticized the emerging cease-fire agreement. "I ask myself whether I'm living in a dream or a delusion—or if the decision-makers in Israel's government are the ones delusional," Davidovich said in an interview with Ynet.

"I'm not the one under delusion, because to present this charade—after people have spent more than a year confined to bomb shelters, after children have wet their beds for over a year, after mental health here has been stretched to the absolute limit—is simply insulting," he added.

"Anyone who thinks we're just guinea pigs in a lab has clearly lost their way. And anyone who believes they can just flip a switch, say 'that's it, time's up,' and that life will return to normal with peace and harmony restored along the confrontation line is living in a fantasy. These are people sitting comfortably in central Israel, in ivory towers, steering us toward disaster.

"We have brave residents here who, for over a year, have lost their livelihoods, their businesses, their agriculture, their tourism and their homes. And yet they [the decision-makers] are playing with our lives. Woe to the nation led by such captains."

Davidovich warned that the consequences of the agreement would fall squarely on the shoulders of government leaders. He condemned their failure to reinforce northern shelters or provide sufficient missile-proof rooms, saying, "The blood will be on their hands. These are rash, unprofessional, unsafe and insecure decisions. We in the north are the state's bulletproof vest, its shield, and we pay the price. Tragically, we will continue to pay the price because we are ignored, we are invisible, we do not matter."

Asked about discussions with military officials, Davidovich revealed alarming developments in southern Lebanon in recent days. “What they’ve discovered just four or five kilometers away is extremely concerning. It’s not something from a year ago, or six months ago, or even a month ago—it’s recent, and it keeps me awake at night.” He specifically referenced threats near Rosh Hanikra: “Those bunkers uncovered three kilometers from Rosh Hanikra have left me sleepless since Saturday. I’m exhausted, I’m worried, and I fear for the future of Mateh Asher’s children and all the kids along the confrontation line. To force them to return home without proper protection is unconscionable.”

The head of the Mateh Asher Regional Council cautioned that residents would not feel secure under the proposed agreement, leading to an increasing number of families leaving the region.

“As the days pass, more and more families are leaving the Galilee and the north,” he said. “We will do everything in our power to stop this trickle from turning into a flood. But it’s already happening daily, and as long as people don’t feel safe, more families will leave. The responsibility for this will lie squarely on the shoulders of the decision-makers.”

Residential building in Nahariya takes direct hit from Hezbollah rocket, Sunday
David Shmuel, a resident of Nahariya whose home was struck by Hezbollah rockets Sunday, also shared his fears in an interview with Ynet, which was interrupted by another air raid siren. “Yesterday was a terrible day,” he recounted, describing how his daughter narrowly escaped harm by following safety protocols and rushing to a protected room. “She made it to the shelter, and two seconds later, a missile hit the building,” Shmuel said. “I was on the phone with her—she screamed, ‘The house is collapsing on me! I hear screams, glass shattering.’ She was in complete shock. She’s still not calm, but we’re okay, we’re healthy.”

Reflecting on over a year of life under fire from Lebanon, Shmuel described the situation as unbearable. “It’s tough. There’s no life, we’ve had no life for a year now. You can’t plan anything, can’t go anywhere, can’t go out freely, not even to do something simple like exercise outside.”

While residents long for peace, Shmuel voiced his opposition to the proposed agreement. “I don’t think now is the time,” he said. “I think until Lebanon is cleared of threats, the fire must not stop because it will return. Maybe in a year, two, or three—it will come back.”

“In the north, we’re used to this, but I think now is the time to end it for the long term, for decades. We must not reach a one-sided agreement today that serves no one, least of all us in the north.”

Politicians across spectrum blast emerging Lebanon agreement

Criticism of the proposed agreement has come from politicians across Israel’s political spectrum, including National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir. While refraining from issuing ultimatums or threatening to dissolve the government, Ben-Gvir called the agreement a “historic missed opportunity to eliminate Hezbollah.”

“I understand the constraints and the arguments, but this is a serious mistake,” Ben-Gvir said. “We need to listen to field commanders and local leaders. Now, when Hezbollah is reeling and desperate for a cease-fire, we must not stop. As I warned in Gaza, I am

warning again: Mr. Prime Minister, it's not too late to stop this agreement! We must push forward until total victory."

Likud MK Amit Halevi also expressed reservations, specifically targeting U.S. envoy Amos Hochstein, who reportedly set a deadline for both sides to finalize the agreement or face his withdrawal from negotiations. Israeli officials fear such a withdrawal could lead to a problematic Security Council resolution imposing a cease-fire.

Referring to Hochstein's role in brokering the 2022 maritime border agreement with Lebanon—widely criticized by the current coalition while in opposition—Halevi warned that any "Hochstein-style agreement" would be disastrous.

"The emerging deal relies on UN Security Council Resolution 1701 from 2006, but it should be based on Resolution 1559 from 2004, which calls for Lebanon's independence and the disarmament of militias, including Hezbollah," Halevi said. "Any agreement that does not include Hezbollah's removal from Lebanon fails to meet Israel's security needs and contradicts the Cabinet's decision to ensure residents can return home safely."

Likud MK Dan Illouz echoed concerns, calling reports of the near-deal with Hezbollah "deeply troubling."

"Instead of exploiting Hezbollah's weakness after two months of heavy blows, the agreement under discussion grants the organization strategic gains and endangers Israel's security," Illouz said.

He criticized the proposed deployment of the Lebanese Army in southern Lebanon, calling it "self-delusion." "This is the same army overseen by a government in which Hezbollah holds significant power. It's the same army that stood idly by as Hezbollah amassed a massive arsenal of rockets threatening Israel's citizens," Illouz said.

The international oversight mechanism included in the deal also drew skepticism. "It reminds me of past agreements—impressive on paper but toothless in reality. They did not last even a few months," he concluded.

Opposition leaders have also voiced strong objections to the emerging agreement, emphasizing the need for Israeli military autonomy in protecting the country's northern residents and rejecting reliance on international forces.

National Unity Party leader Benny Gantz said that the defense of northern Israel must remain exclusively under the IDF, dismissing the involvement of international forces. "We cannot return to the reality of October 6," Gantz said during a conference on Israel's post-war economic recovery. "The IDF must retain full operational freedom to counter threats from Lebanon and continue offensive actions against Hezbollah's infrastructure until a desirable agreement is reached."

Speaking later at his party's Knesset faction meeting, Gantz reiterated, "Without delving into the specifics of the proposed agreement, one thing must be unequivocally clear: with or without a deal, only the IDF will protect the residents of the north. Not UNIFIL, and not the Lebanese Army."

Opposition leader Yair Lapid also expressed reservations while emphasizing the importance of a political resolution. "I sympathize with the residents of Nahariya and Metula, but ultimately, a political agreement is necessary," Lapid said. "The IDF has achieved tremendous successes in Lebanon—from unacknowledged operations to the elimination of Nasrallah and senior officials, and the ongoing strikes in Dahieh and

southern Lebanon. These operational achievements are remarkable, but they are meaningless without a political endgame."

Yisrael Beitenu leader Avigdor Liberman was more direct, labeling the deal "unreasonable" for not requiring the Lebanese government to disarm Hezbollah. "Israel's leadership remains trapped in the same flawed mindset, still living as if it's October 6, and nothing has changed," Liberman said during a faction meeting.

"This agreement is disastrous for Israel," he added. "The Iranians have already begun rebuilding Hezbollah, smuggling weapons again. Without mechanisms to create distance and ensure a security buffer, I tell the residents of the north: there's no reason to return home. We cannot accept a deal that absolves the Lebanese government while allowing Hezbollah to operate freely and prepare for the next war."

Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar stressed the importance of enforceability in any agreement. "The true test of any deal will not be in its wording or phrasing, but in enforcement," Sa'ar said. "This enforcement must focus on two points: preventing Hezbollah from moving south of the Litani River and stopping them from rebuilding their arsenal anywhere in Lebanon."

Sa'ar underscored the government's commitment to preventing a return to pre-October 7 conditions. "Any violation must be dealt with immediately. We will not sell the future for temporary peace in the present," he said.

11.25.24 – Mo

Disaster in Red Sea: Tourist ship sinks off Egyptian coast; 17 travelers missing

11.25.24 – Mo

Disaster in Red Sea: Tourist ship sinks off Egyptian coast; 17 travelers missing

The Sea Story ship with 45 people on board, including foreign tourists, was in the middle of a diving trip when contact was lost; 28 tourists and crew were rescued alive; search for the rest continues

Lior Ben Ari, news agencies|06:46

Egyptian media reported at noon on Monday that a tourist ship sank in the Red Sea, off the coast of Marsa Alam, and that 17 people on board were missing. According to sources who spoke to the Reuters news agency, 28 have so far been rescued alive, and the search and rescue operation is ongoing.

The boat, Sea Story, was carrying 45 people, including 31 tourists of varying nationalities and 14 crew, on a multi-day diving trip when it went down, according to a statement by the Red Sea Governorate.

The ship sailed Sunday from Porto Ghalib in Marsa Alam on Sunday, with plans to return to Hurghada Marina on Nov. 29. However, Monday morning at around 5:30 the ship's crew sent a distress signal when it was nearing the tourist town of Marsa Alam, and then it disappeared from the radar and contact with it was lost.

According to official data, the Sea Story is a cruise ship built in 2022 and can carry up to 32 passengers. At the time of the current voyage, there were 31 tourists and 14 crew members on board. The ship has 18 double cabins, and its main purpose is to go on diving trips to reefs in the Red Sea and to see the site of old boat wrecks. The Red Sea is a popular diving destination renowned for its coral reefs and marine life, key to Egypt's vital tourism industry.

11.25.24 – Mo

Rabbi murdered in the UAE similar to Rabbi killed in Mumbai 16 years ago

11.25.24 – Mo

His Chabad emissary son was killed by terrorists in Mumbai: 'It's happening to us all over again'

In 2008, Rabbi Nachman Holzberg's son and daughter-in-law, who were Chabad emissaries in Mumbai, were murdered by Islamist terrorists; Now the husband of the rabbi's granddaughter was murdered in the UAE. Just like his son Gabi, the rabbi says, 'Zvi was dedicated to his work, constantly trying to help more people'
Shilo Freid|02:31

Some 16 years after his son Gabi and his daughter-in-law Rivka were killed in an attack on the Chabad House in Mumbai, last weekend Rabbi Nachman Holzberg received the news of the murder of his granddaughter's husband Zvi Kogan in Dubai.

"We feel as if the whole tragedy is happening all over again. It's simply incomprehensible," Holzberg told Ynet. "Just like 16 years ago, it happens the week before the world gathering of Chabad emissaries, both then and now; my son Gabriel was 28 years old and Zvi was also 28 years old. There are a lot of things happening here together and it overwhelms everything."

There are not only parallels between the circumstances of the murder, but the lifestyles of Gabi and Zvi there are also similar in Holzberg's eyes.

"Everything that was said about Gabi, is also true of Zvi. He was dedicated to his work, constantly trying to help more people, everyone who entered the Chabad house would leave with a smile on their lips. Jew or non-Jew, winter or summer, Shabbat or weekday, he knew how to give the maximum to everyone."

Holzberg added: "He was one of the greats of the generation in love for Israel and the unity of Israel. All the sheikhs in Dubai loved him dearly, and the people of the country also loved him very much. He was always running for everyone, as far as he was concerned he had no privacy, he did not care for himself. When he would come to events in New York, he would return immediately because he felt that the place he needed him."

Holzberg calls on others to learn from his grandson's example. "I wish we would learn from him and try to follow his path, smiling at everyone, loving everyone. When my son

was murdered, no one asked whether he was from the Likud or Labor, whether he was right or left, whether he was secular or religious. When they came to kill Zvi they didn't think about whether he was from the right or the left, secular or religious. This is the point that needs to be conveyed from Zvi's story and Gabi's story - that everyone should take care of everyone. For example, everyone considers the hostages in the tunnels as if they were their own family. We are in a time with many orphans, families with parents who have lost sons. Think about them, take care of them, and everyone will take stock of themselves, how can they take care of someone else. That's how we will receive a great blessing and a complete redemption."

11.24.24 – Su

Cease-fire subject to approval by Cabinet, some issues possible within the week

11.24.24 – Su

Israel signals approval of Lebanon cease-fire agreement

Jerusalem has given preliminary green light to proposed agreement with Lebanon, subject to final approval by Cabinet; US envoy Hochstein informs Lebanese officials of Israel's decision

Nadav Eyal, Itamar Eichner, Lior Ben Ari, Yoav Zitun|15:49

Israeli, U.S. and Lebanese sources confirmed Sunday that Jerusalem has given a preliminary green light to a proposed agreement with Lebanon, subject to final approval by the Cabinet.

Responding to reports, an Israeli official said that while there is "a willingness and a general intention to move forward," some issues "remain on the table." The official added, "It's not finalized, but the direction is positive."

However, Ynet has learned that Amos Hochstein, the U.S. special envoy for the region and President Joe Biden's emissary, informed Lebanese officials of Israel's decision earlier in the evening.

Meanwhile, Hezbollah ramped up its rocket fire on Israel Sunday, launching over 255 projectiles since midnight, coinciding with a high-level meeting convened by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to discuss a potential cease-fire agreement in Lebanon.

Following the discussions, Israeli officials said there is a "real possibility" of reaching an agreement within the week, driven by an ultimatum from Hochstein. Sources familiar with the negotiations said Hochstein warned both sides that failure to finalize the deal in the coming days would prompt him to withdraw from the talks. Hochstein told Israeli officials that understandings with Lebanon are already in place, putting the onus on Israel.

U.S. officials reportedly suspect that Israeli delays may stem from political considerations. They cautioned that the matter could escalate to the UN Security Council, where the Biden administration might abstain from vetoing a cease-fire resolution, echoing a scenario from the final days of the Obama administration.

The Security Cabinet meeting included top defense officials and senior ministers, including Israel Katz, Gideon Sa'ar, Ron Dermer, Bezalel Smotrich and Itamar Ben-Gvir. Discussions focused on three key Israeli reservations about the proposed deal: Ensuring Israel retains operational freedom in response to violations by Lebanon. Clarifying language around disputed border points, an issue Israel refuses to commit to resolving.

Limiting France's role in enforcement mechanisms due to strained relations between Jerusalem and Paris over recent diplomatic tensions, including French support for international arrest warrants against Netanyahu and former defense chief Yoav Gallant. Despite these disagreements, Israeli officials described them as non-essential and expressed optimism about finalizing the agreement within days. U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for the Middle East Dan Shapiro is expected to visit Israel on Monday to discuss the deal's security dimensions.

Eight Israelis were injured in Sunday's rocket barrages from Lebanon, including one person who sustained severe injuries in the northern town of Kfar Blum. Israeli security sources said the escalation by Hezbollah was anticipated as a show of force ahead of a potential truce.

Between midnight and 6:50 p.m., Israel reported 541 air raid sirens triggered by 255 Hezbollah rocket launches—the highest number since the war began, excluding September 28, when 771 sirens were activated following the assassination of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, though with fewer rocket launches.

Hezbollah appears to be emphasizing its leader Naim Qassem's "Beirut-Tel Aviv" equation, a slogan aimed at mirroring Nasrallah's deterrence doctrine. The group released an AI-generated image warning, "What applies to Beirut applies to Tel Aviv."

In response, the IDF issued a sharp warning to Hezbollah through its Arabic-language spokesperson, Lt. Col. Avichay Adraee. "Anyone who thinks they are in a position to impose conditions should stop relying on Hezbollah's media mouthpieces for news," Adraee said. "Take a tour of Dahieh today and especially tonight, and you'll understand," he added, referring to Beirut's southern suburb where the terrorist group has a strong presence.

Shortly after, Israel launched a series of airstrikes on Hezbollah's stronghold in Dahieh. The IDF confirmed it struck 12 Hezbollah military command centers, guided by intelligence operations. Targets included Hezbollah's intelligence headquarters, the group's coastal missile unit and Unit 4400, which facilitates the transfer of weapons from Iran through Syria to Lebanon.

The military said that the command centers targeted were used for planning and executing terrorist operations against Israeli civilians and IDF forces in southern Lebanon. "These strikes are a key element in the IDF's effort to degrade Hezbollah's capabilities to carry out various terror attacks against Israel," the statement added.

While negotiations continue, Israel reportedly intends to expand its strikes on Beirut to further weaken Hezbollah's operational capacity. Despite the increased intensity of Hezbollah's rocket fire in recent days, a senior official familiar with the situation

suggested that the escalation indicates progress toward a cease-fire rather than a retreat from it.

More than 150 Hezbollah targets raided

Earlier Sunday, the IDF reported that Israeli forces launched a large-scale assault on more than 150 Hezbollah targets in southern Lebanon. The operation involved troops from the Golani Brigade, the 188th Armored Brigade, the 282nd Fire Brigade and the elite Yahalom combat engineering unit, operating under the command of the 36th Division. According to the military, dozens of Hezbollah terrorists were eliminated in air attacks and direct clashes. Forces also uncovered and destroyed weapons stockpiles, rocket launchers, underground tunnels and combat sites that posed significant threats to Israeli communities.

"Troops from the 188th Brigade have established operational control in the area, eliminating numerous terrorists and dismantling dozens of weapons caches, hundreds of buildings and terror-related infrastructure," the military said in a statement.

The Golani Brigade, meanwhile, conducted extensive operations in villages and rugged terrain in southern Lebanon, eliminating Hezbollah terrorists and targeting the group's terror capabilities. Yahalom operatives uncovered and destroyed key Hezbollah underground facilities filled with weaponry and combat equipment.

The 282nd Fire Brigade crossed into Lebanon for the first time in 24 years, launching attacks from Lebanese territory in conjunction with dozens of strikes targeting Hezbollah positions.

11.24.24 – Su

Amid war, these Israeli universities shine in global rankings

11.24.24 – Su

Amid war, these Israeli universities shine in global rankings

Eleven Israeli academic departments rank in world's top 50, per Shanghai Ranking, excelling in mathematics, chemistry and communications; long decline in computer science rankings halted, marking turning point for Israeli universities

Shahar Ilan|12:38

Last week, the prestigious Shanghai Ranking for academic institutions published its detailed 2024 departmental rankings, and overall, it was a positive year for Israeli academia.

The decline in computer science rankings was halted, with the Weizmann Institute's computer science department breaking into the top 100. Hebrew University climbed to 14th place globally in mathematics, with Israel boasting three universities in the top 100 for the subject.

Additionally, Israel's two technological universities, the Technion and the Weizmann Institute of Science, ranked in the top 40 in chemistry, a highly profitable field. In

journalism and communications, Israel emerged as a global leader, with Hebrew University and the University of Haifa both ranked in the top 30. Overall, 11 Israeli academic programs are ranked among the world's top 50.

It was also a strong year in the overall institutional rankings published in August. After several weaker years, three Israeli universities — the Weizmann Institute of Science, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and the Technion — were ranked among the top 100 globally.

The Weizmann Institute of Science led Israeli institutions, securing the 69th spot, slightly down from 68th last year. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem climbed from 86th to 81st place, while the Technion dropped from 79th to 85th, resulting in a swap between the two institutions. Additionally, the Technion was ranked 11th among the world's top technological universities.

The Shanghai Ranking, published annually since 2003, evaluates the research performance of academic institutions based on various criteria, including the number of Nobel and Fields Medal laureates among faculty and alumni, the number of scientific papers published in leading journals such as Nature and Science, and other research achievements. The ranking assesses over 2,500 universities worldwide, highlighting the top 1,000.

The high status of Israeli academia has become de rigueur, but it is important to remember that Israel is a country of just 10 million inhabitants. When calculating the number of institutions in the top 100 relative to population size, Israel ranks fourth in the world, trailing only Switzerland, Singapore and Denmark, and ahead of countries like France, Germany, the UK and Sweden.

Last week, rankings were also published for specific academic departments, including technological fields, which hold special significance for the Startup Nation. The good news is that the decline of Israeli programs in computer science has been halted. The Weizmann Institute, which dropped last year to the 100–150 range (exact rankings are only published for the top 50), returned to the top 100. Ben-Gurion University and the Technion, which also saw declines, regained ground, and the University of Haifa entered the top 100 for the first time.

However, Hebrew University's computer science department remains stuck in the 401–500 range. Despite these improvements, Israeli institutions are still far from the high marks of 2018, when the Weizmann Institute ranked 21st and Tel Aviv University was 37th.

If there is one scientific field where Israel truly excels, it is mathematics. The Hebrew University has advanced significantly, climbing from 25th place in 2020 to 14th. Tel Aviv University ranks 45th, and the Weizmann Institute is close behind in 46th. In 2020, only Hebrew University was in the top 50. Additionally, four other Israeli universities are ranked among the top 500. Israel's success in mathematics reflects the advantage for universities in fields where costly laboratories are unnecessary, and there is less competition for faculty.

Israel's ability to shine in resource-light disciplines is further evident in its strength in communications and journalism. Since 2020, the Hebrew University has risen from 30th place to 14th, while the University of Haifa has jumped from 42nd to 28th.

In chemistry, a field with significant economic potential, Israeli institutions have seen mixed results. The Technion and the Weizmann Institute, previously ranked between 50th and 75th, have made impressive gains, now ranking 32nd and 39th, respectively. However, other universities have struggled. The Hebrew University's chemistry department is currently ranked between 201 and 300, while Tel Aviv and Ben-Gurion universities are in the 401–500 range.

Relatively low ranking in economics

In total, Israel boasts 11 academic departments ranked among the top 50 globally. The Hebrew University leads with three subjects: mathematics (14), communications (14), and law (42). While law improved from last year's rank of 50, it remains well below its 2022 position of 30.

The Technion also has three departments in the top 50: chemistry (32), space engineering (40), and electronics engineering (48). The Weizmann Institute is recognized for two: chemistry (39) and mathematics (46). A surprising standout is the University of Haifa, which, despite being ranked between 601 and 700 institutionally, has two departments in the top 50: communication (28) and public management (41). Tel Aviv University has only one subject ranked: mathematics (45).

In economics, four Israeli universities are ranked, but only the Hebrew University places in the top 100, at 51–75. Tel Aviv University is ranked between 201–300, while Reichman University recently entered the rankings at 401–500.

In business administration, Israeli universities struggle to compete with the high salaries offered by private American institutions. Until 2022, Tel Aviv University was ranked 201–300, but since then, no Israeli university has made the list.

Some fields where Israeli universities once excelled have seen declines. In 2021, six Israeli universities ranked among the world's top 200 in education, with Haifa at 51–75. Today, only two universities—Tel Aviv and Haifa—remain in the top 200, both below 150. Similarly, the Technion's space engineering department, which ranked 16th globally in 2020, has gradually fallen to 40th. While still impressive, it reflects a notable decline.

11.24.24 – Su

Hezbollah targets Galilee & Haifa areas, 2nd time Sunday, over 150 rockets

11.24.24 – Su

Hezbollah targets central Israel for 2nd time in hours

At least five hurt in Petach Tikvah as homes and cars damaged; Over 150 rockets target Western, Upper Galilee regions, Nahariya and Haifa and surrounding areas; one man badly hurt others suffer light injury

ynet correspondents|05:16

Hezbollah launched a barrage of 10 projectiles at central Israel for the second time on Sunday. Emergency teams were dispatched to Petach Tikva where a rocket may have hit, amid reports of fire.

At the same time rockets targeted the Western Galilee and soon after a barrage was sent to Haifa and surrounding areas. At least three people were hurt when a rocket made a direct hit on a residential block.

11.24.24 – Su

Iran reverse-engineered US & Israeli missiles, provide proxies with modern technology

11.24.24 – Su

Hezbollah's 'diamond': New details on Israeli missile reverse-engineered in Iran
According to Israeli security officials, the Almas missile poses a real threat to IDF forces; Hezbollah begins manufacturing domestically to reduce dependency on Tehran
Ynet|03:43

Hezbollah has been using the Almas anti-tank missile, reverse-engineered by Iran from an advanced Israeli anti-tank missile that was captured by Hezbollah during the 2006 Second Lebanon War, the New York Times reported on Saturday.

Israeli security officials said that the missile now poses a threat to IDF forces near the border and that Hezbollah has begun manufacturing the missiles inside Lebanon to reduce its reliance on Iran's weapons supply chain.

Previous reports have already documented Hezbollah's use of the Almas — (diamond in Arabic and Persian) — developed on the basis of the Israeli Spike missile made by Rafael Advanced Defense Systems.

According to the report, the reverse engineering was made possible after an entire system of the Spike missile — including a launcher and several missiles — was "left behind in the field" during the 2006 war.

Israeli security officials told the American outlet that after this oversight was discovered during an inventory review of equipment deployed in Lebanon and later recovered or destroyed, Israel recognized a significant risk of the weapon being delivered to Iran, dismantled and reverse-engineered.

Iran has previously developed weapons by reverse-engineering U.S. missiles and drones and concerns it would do the same with the Spike missile has ultimately materialized. According to Israeli intelligence, Iran's Almas missile, developed from the Spike, was first deployed during Syria's civil war in the past decade. However, they stressed that Hezbollah's use of these advanced anti-tank missiles during that time was relatively limited.

Hezbollah's first public use of the missile was in January when it released propaganda footage of an attack on an IDF naval base in Rosh Hanikra. The terror group has since

published additional videos showing missile launches targeting Israeli positions near the border.

In one video, a launcher was seen with visible markings that revealed it was manufactured in 2023, suggesting that missiles produced in Iran were quickly delivered to Hezbollah through smuggling routes from Iraq and Syria.

Now, according to Israeli security officials who spoke with the outlet, Hezbollah has begun producing the Almas missile domestically in Lebanon, aiming to reduce its dependency on Iranian shipments.

Iran continues to manufacture the missile for its own military, and some at Israel's Alma Research and Education Center fear it could be distributed to other Iranian proxies across the Middle East.

"It's highly likely that these weapons — both current and future models — will be deployed across the fronts where Iran's proxies operate, posing threats to various high-value targets (not only Israeli) over increasing ranges," the institute noted in an analysis from April.

According to the New York Times, the Almas missile already presents a "significant challenge" to Israeli forces during the conflict with Hezbollah. Israeli security officials noted that anti-tank missiles of this model were among the advanced weapons systems discovered by IDF troops during ground operations in southern Lebanon.

These missiles were described as some of the most sophisticated weapons seized, contrasting with a larger cache of less advanced arms, including Russian-made Kornet missiles.

In the same way that the Spike missile was based on advanced anti-tank systems like the American Javelin, the Almas is a state-of-the-art guided missile that "locks onto" its target. It has a reported range of up to 16 kilometers (10 miles). According to the Alma Research Center, operators don't need a direct line of sight to launch it as it can be fired from underground or via drones.

The institute further highlighted the missile's ballistic trajectory, enabling it to strike targets from above — a point where tank armor is typically more vulnerable.

The Israeli research center also identified at least three Almas models, each representing an upgrade over its predecessor. In June, Alma researchers reported that Hezbollah had likely begun using a fourth, more advanced version. Innovations in this model reportedly include the ability to transmit clear images during flight back to operators.

According to another research group, CAT-UXO, the Almas can carry two types of warheads: one designed for a two-stage explosion to penetrate armor more effectively and another employing a fuel-air explosive to create a massive conflagration upon detonation.

Mohammed al-Basha, a Middle East military expert with a Virginia-based risk management firm, told the American that the growing deployment of Iranian weapons produced through reverse engineering signals is "fundamentally altering regional power dynamics."

"What was once a gradual spread of older missile generations has transformed into rapid deployment of cutting-edge technology across active battlefields," He explained.

11.24.24 – Su

Court remands settler after attack on IDF & Police in Hebron, three others released

11.24.24 – Su

Court remands settler after attack on IDF brass, three others released

In the aftermath of the attack on Central Command chief Maj. Gen. Avi Bluth in Hebron over the weekend, police seek five-day remand, granted 2; IDF and police say prioritizing West Bank settler violence

Liran Tamari|01:18

A magistrate court in Jerusalem ruled that a West Bank settler suspected of violently attacking the military's chief of the Central Command Major General Avi Bluth, in Hebron on Friday, will remain in custody. Police said they were seeking a 5-day remand to investigate but the court granted ruled he will be detained for the next two days. Three other suspects were released.

According to police officials, the matter is considered a high priority and is being investigated alongside other incidents of attacks against IDF troops including the wounding of a soldier.

The four suspects face charges including assaulting a police officer, intentional property damage, assaulting a public servant, disorderly conduct in a public setting, and insulting a public servant.

During the hearing, a police representative detailed the events: "The 'Chayei Sarah' Sabbath in Hebron concluded over the weekend, with thousands attending. As part of the operational readiness, Major General Bluth was present in the area. During his tour, dozens surrounded him, shouted derogatory remarks, and attempted to approach him with the intent to assault."

He continued, "Police and Border Police forces intervened to separate the suspects from the general. During the incident, one suspect assaulted soldiers and police officers, while hurling insults in an attempt to get close to Major General Bluth. The police arrested the suspect, who was then taken to Hebron police station. There, he continued his violent behavior, causing damage inside the cell and making further threats toward the officers."

"This was a severe and violent incident that was fortunately contained," the police representative said, "I request a five-day extension of the respondent's detention to complete investigative actions." The judge acknowledged the substantial evidence in this case. One detainee complained, "They left us handcuffed all night."

On Friday, Defense Minister Israel Katz announced the cessation of administrative detention orders against settlers, following which at least three incidents involving Jews in the West Bank attacking IDF troops have been recorded.

On Friday night, dozens of wayward settlers attempted to assault Major General Bluth in Hebron. On Sunday, approximately 20 settlers threw stones at IDF and Border Police

forces near the Itamar outpost, and in another incident, hundreds clashed with forces in Hebron.

Eyal Gelman, head of the Hebron local council, condemned the violence, attributing the attack on Major General Bluth to "a group of intoxicated youths from central Israel." He stated, "During the Sabbath, many prayers were held for total victory, for the success and protection of our soldiers, and for the return of the captives. We strongly condemn any violence, especially against our brothers in the IDF and all security forces. I have urged the Israel Police to fully prosecute these few rioters."

Saturday's incident in Hebron occurred near the Kasbah in the Palestinian-controlled part of the city, where entry was prohibited. Some 500 Israelis gathered there, with some clashing with IDF, Border Police, and police forces. Some spat at officers, and one woman struck a Border Police officer. The event lasted several hours, during which forces blocked access to the Kasbah. However, they managed to throw stones at Palestinian shops, and several were arrested.

At nearby Itamar, settlers threw stones at an IDF and Border Police force, apparently after a nearby road was blocked. They also threw stones at a vehicle with an Israeli Arab inside, and one settler punched a Border Police officer. IDF reported that some rioters were masked and confirmed the arrest of five settlers.

11.23.24 – Sa

UAE Chabad emissary's car abandoned; suspected killed by Iran-linked cell

11.23.24 – Sa

Missing Chabad emissary's car found abandoned; suspected killed by Iran-linked cell
Mossad confirms terror attack; preliminary findings suggest 3 Uzbek operatives tailed Rabbi Zvi Kogan after he left his grocery store, killing him and fleeing to Turkey; Israeli intelligence agencies expected to coordinate with Turkish authorities to pursue leads
Itamar Eichner, Lior Ben Ari | Yesterday | 13:24

The disappearance of Chabad emissary Rabbi Zvi Kogan in the United Arab Emirates on Wednesday is now being treated as a terror attack, Israeli intelligence sources said on Saturday.

Mossad announced an "intensified investigation" after concluding that Kogan, who managed the kosher grocery store Rimon in Dubai, was likely kidnapped and murdered by an Uzbek terror cell allegedly directed by Iran to maintain plausible deniability.

The United Arab Emirates' Interior Ministry confirmed on Saturday night it was investigating the Kogan's disappearance. In a statement, the ministry confirmed that his family reported "that he has been missing and out of contact since last Thursday" and that "the specialized authorities immediately began search and investigation operations upon receiving the report."

The statement referred to Kogan as a Moldovan citizen, reflecting his dual citizenship, and did not mention his Israeli nationality. The ministry urged the public to rely on official sources for updates and to "avoid heeding malicious rumors or misleading news aimed at causing confusion."

Kogan, a close aide to Rabbi Levi Duchman, the chief rabbi of the Jewish community in the UAE, was last seen in Dubai on Thursday afternoon. His family reported their last contact with him was on Wednesday, prompting his wife to alert Chabad's security officer when he failed to attend scheduled meetings.

Investigators believe Kogan drove to Al Ain, approximately 90 minutes from Dubai, where his car was later found abandoned. His phone had been switched off, and preliminary findings suggest three Uzbek operatives tailed him after he left the grocery store.

These operatives, now believed to have killed Kogan, subsequently fled to Turkey. Israeli intelligence agencies are expected to coordinate with Turkish authorities to pursue leads.

A delegation from Israel has traveled to the UAE to assist in the investigation. Known for its comprehensive surveillance infrastructure, the UAE is regarded as the most monitored country in the world, with extensive closed-circuit cameras tracking nearly every street, raising hopes for a breakthrough in the case.

Rabbi Zvi Kogan at Holocaust memorial ceremony in UAE, 2021

Kogan, who married six months ago to a niece of Rabbi Gavriel Holtzberg, the Chabad emissary killed in the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, was a prominent figure in the Jewish and Israeli community in the UAE. A local Israeli resident described him as "a kind and active member of the community" and said his disappearance has left his family and the community devastated.

The Prime Minister's Office, on behalf of Mossad, issued a statement: "Zvi Kogan, an Israeli-Moldovan citizen and Chabad emissary residing in the United Arab Emirates, has been missing since Thursday afternoon. Following his disappearance and based on information suggesting a terrorist event, an intensive investigation has been launched in the UAE.

"Israeli intelligence and security agencies are working tirelessly out of concern for his safety and well-being. It should be noted that the National Security Council previously issued a Level 3 travel warning (moderate threat) for the UAE, advising against non-essential travel and recommending heightened precautions for those currently in the country."

11.23.24 – Sa

Israel strike on Beirut apartment fails to kill Hezbollah operations chief

11.23.24 – Sa

Israeli strike on Beirut fails to kill Hezbollah operations chief, reports say

Muhammad Haydar, Hezbollah's de facto military chief, reportedly survives attempt on his life; at least 11 reported dead and dozens injured in strike
Lior Ben Ari, Yoav Zitun|Yesterday | 09:49

An Israeli airstrike early Saturday in Beirut failed to eliminate Muhammad Haydar, Hezbollah's de facto military chief, Saudi outlet Al-Hadath reported, citing Israeli security sources.

Haydar, who rose to prominence after a series of assassinations of top Hezbollah leaders, was reportedly targeted in the strike but was not present in the building.

Hezbollah officials denied Haydar's presence at the site, telling Al-Hadath that "no senior Hezbollah commander was in the targeted building," while Lebanese media reported at least 11 deaths and dozens of injuries. The strike destroyed an eight-story residential in central Beirut, with extensive damage reported to adjacent buildings. Civil defense teams were said to be struggling to retrieve victims from the rubble. Lebanon's state news agency reported that five bunker-busting bombs were used in the attack, creating a massive crater. Footage from the scene showed widespread destruction, with the targeted building reduced to rubble. Hezbollah-affiliated Al Mayadeen reported that the building was "crowded with people" at the time of the attack.

The airstrike coincided with rocket fire from Lebanon into northern Israel, triggering air raid sirens in Haifa and surrounding areas. The IDF confirmed interceptions over the city but did not specify the number of rockets launched.

Earlier in the night, the IDF warned residents in Beirut's Dahieh district to evacuate ahead of planned strikes on Hezbollah targets.

The attack comes amid ongoing negotiations for a potential cease-fire. U.S. envoy Amos Hochstein, who returned to Washington after facilitating talks between Israel and Lebanon this week, is reportedly close to finalizing an agreement. However, sources familiar with the discussions told The New York Times that disagreements over implementation and enforcement mechanisms remain, including Israel's opposition to France's involvement in monitoring any deal.

11.23.24 – Sa

IDF strikes Beirut, 8-story building brought down, teeming with people

11.23.24 – Sa

IDF strikes Beirut, 8-story building brought down

Early morning attack comes without prior warning reports bunker busting bombs used in the attack as death toll rises; Hezbollah-affiliated media says emergency teams struggling to pull survivors from ruins

Lior Ben Ari, News Agencies|11.22.24 | 23:59

An eight story building was bombed by the IDF early on Saturday killing at least 11 people and wounding others, according to Lebanese media reports that claim bunker busting bombs were used in the attack. There was no warning from the IDF Arabic Language spokesperson, ahead of the attack on the Basta neighborhood, as had been the practice before strikes on the Dahieh district in the city or in South Lebanon.

The blasts shook the capital around 4 a.m. (0200 GMT), Reuters witnesses said. Security sources said at least four bombs were dropped in the attack.

It marked the fourth Israeli airstrike this week targeting a central area of Beirut, where the bulk of Israel's attacks have targeted the Hezbollah-controlled southern suburbs. On Sunday an Israeli airstrike killed a Hezbollah media official in the Ras al-Nabaa district of central Beirut.

The Hezbollah-affiliated Al Mayadeen network reported that the number of casualties was expected to rise because the building and others nearby were "teaming with people," and emergency teams were struggling to pull victims from the rubble.

At the same time sirens were activated in Haifa and surrounding areas and rockets were seen intercepted in the sky above.

The attack on Beirut came after U.S. mediator Amos Hochstein left Israel after meetings with officials in efforts to secure a cease fire. Hochstein indicated progress had been made after meetings in Beirut on Tuesday and Wednesday, before going to meet Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defence Minister Israel Katz.

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Ynet-News, November 22, 2024 – Friday Q-3 Moon 8th Month 7:29pm

11.22.24 – Fr- - - News – Friday Q-3 Moon 7:29pm
Knesset concerned Minister Katz setting stage for settler assault on PA

11.22.24 – Fr- - - News – Friday Q-3 Moon 7:29pm
Israel ponders giving aid management in Gaza to American security firm Orbis

11.22.24 – Fr- - - News – Friday Q-3 Moon 7:29pm
Katz halts administrative detention on West Bank settlers for vigilante justice

11.22.24 – Fr- - - News – Friday Q-3 Moon 7:29pm
IAF struck five Hamas terrorists who participated in October 7 attack

11.22.24 – Fr- - - News Placed in November 22 spot – Friday Q-3 Moon 7:29pm
Biden criticized ICC warrant on PM; there is no equivalence between Israel & Hamas

11.22.24 – Fr- - - News – Friday Q-3 Moon 7:29pm

Arab negotiation obstacles; Lebanon estimates cease-fire not even next week

11.21.24 – Th- - - News – Thursday

ICC issued arrest warrants for Netanyahu and Gallant over alleged Gaza war crimes

11.21.24 – Th- - - News Placed in November 21 spot – Thursday

Strike hits Syria & Iran high-profile meeting, killing at least 68 in Palmyra

11.20.24 – We- - - News – Wednesday

Hezbollah rocket strikes West Galilee kindergarten 35 minutes after children left

11.20.24 – We- - - News – Wednesday

Lebanon cease-fire agreement near, but hurdles persist in the details

11.20.24 – We- - - News – Wednesday

Border cities still under daily rocket threats, yet residents can renovate damaged homes

11.20.24 – We- - - News Placed in November 20 spot – Wednesday

Israel will apply martial law in Gaza with military outposts and coalition approval

11.19.24 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday

2 Israelis extracted from northern West Bank town after PA attacked & wounded

11.19.24 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday

Netanyahu visits Gaza troops: Hamas no longer controls Gaza, we will defeat them

11.19.24 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday

New GOP Congress ready for Judea & Samaria, part of Israel with Trump

11.19.24 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday

Gaza clerics say jihad not achieved; timing a mistake with relentless bombing of Gaza

11.19.24 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday

Israel proposes US sanction relief for Assad, to stop arms from Russia to Hezbollah

11.19.24 – Tu- - - News Placed in November 19 spot – Tuesday

70% of seized arms in Lebanon are Russian-made, imported through Syria

11.19.24 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday

Hamas punishing aid theft in Gaza, at least 20 thieves eliminated of about 500

11.18.24 – Mo- - - News – Monday

Criminals steal 3 machine guns from IDF troops taking a break in northern Israel

11.18.24 – Mo- - - News – Monday

Hezbollah demands changes; Lebanon will lose authority over air, sea and borders

11.18.24 – Mo- - - News Placed in November 18 spot – Monday
Hezbollah rockets damage Galilee homes as IDF artillery moved into Lebanese territory

11.18.24 – Mo- - - News – Monday
US families of Hamas massacre victims sue Iran in US Court, citing Iran funded actions

11.18.24 – Mo- - - News – Monday
IDF hits Beirut as response stalls till Tuesday, seeking clarification on US role

11.17.24 – Su- - - News – Sunday
Hostage fate sealed if deal not made; Hamas demand withdraw of all troops

11.17.24 – Su- - - News – Sunday
Confirmed; 5 arrested in late October leaked classified documents to foreign media

11.17.24 – Su- - - News – Sunday
US envoy Hochstein to advance Lebanon's response Tuesday; expectations are low

11.17.24 – Su- - - News – Sunday
Netanyahu & Mossad meet about 101 hostages; efforts for direct negotiations

11.17.24 – Su- - - News Placed in November 17 spot – Sunday
Herzog not attending climate conference: Turkey refused Zion plane in its airspace

11.17.24 – Su- - - News – Sunday
3 arrested firing flares at Netanyahu's home; this is not a protest - this is terrorism

11.16.24 – Sa- - - News Placed in November 16 spot – Saturday
Hezbollah-Israel conflict disrupts Syria's lucrative Captagon drug smuggling trade

11.16.24 – Sa- - - News – Saturday
Hezbollah rocket hits Haifa synagogue, as IDF hit Beirut in eight waves

11.16.24 – Sa- - - News – Saturday
Israel pounds Hezbollah stronghold in Beirut with relentless bombardment

11.16.24 – Sa- - - News – Saturday
Lebanese media mirrors Hezbollah's reluctance to accept cease-fire with Israel

11.16.24 – Sa- - - News – Saturday
Iran and Qatar behind South Africa's World Court case against Israel