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York Times reports excessive civilian death by IDF & ignore initial Hamas attack

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12.25.24 – We- - - News – Wednesday Hanukkah 01

Hezbollah Lebanon documents reveal guidelines & tactics, fearing Israel

12.25.24 – We- - - News – Wednesday Hanukkah 01

IDF unveils Hezbollah's massive seized weapons arsenal to media

12.25.24 – We- - - News – Wednesday Hanukkah 01
 Hamas claims Israel imposes new conditions on cease-fire; Netanyahu calls it a lie

12.25.24 – We- - - News – Wednesday Hanukkah 01
 Israel expands rocket alert zones as Houthi missile attacks persist

12.25.24 – We- - - News – Wednesday Hanukkah 01
 Houthi leaders in Israel's sights, as some push for action on Iran

12.25.24 – We- - - News – Wednesday Hanukkah 01
 Syria charm is fooling the West; a unified rebel mirrors extremist leadership

12.24.24 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday
 Negotiating team returns from Qatar: Israel struggles to understand Hamas' angle

12.24.24 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday
 Israel signs deal to buy more Arrow-3 interceptors to counter Houthi threat

12.24.24 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday
 Raid on hospital in Jabaliya north Gaza: Terrorists eliminated, arrested

12.24.24 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday
 Placed in December 24 spot – Tuesday
 IDF cleared a third corridor in northern Gaza, creating a pathway to the sea

12.24.24 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday
 PA security bans Al Jazeera broadcasts, presenting hostile mercenaries as heroes

12.24.24 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday
 West Bank attack statistics decline in 2024 amid IDF operations & PA security

12.23.24 – Mo- - - News – Monday
 Yemen Houthi leadership decapitation and precision attacks could shift the balance

12.23.24 – Mo- - - News – Monday
 Images of RPG use by PA security in Jenin, terrorists confident to brandish weapons

12.23.24 – Mo- - - News – Monday
 Desalination plant, café resort: prepares IDF for extended stay in Gaza

12.23.24 – Mo- - - News – Monday
 Huge deal: Israel sells air defense system to Slovakia for 2 billion shekels

12.23.24 – Mo- - - News – Monday
 48 injured, 3 seriously, in fire at boarding school in Jerusalem

12.23.24 – Mo- - - News Placed in December 23 spot – Monday
IDF building two bases on Mount Hermon, prepared for winter isolation

12.23.24 – Mo- - - News – Monday
Israel won't accept Jihadist presence in buffer zone west of Damascus

12.22.24 – Su- - - News – Sunday Q3 Moon 4:19pm
Mossad chief urges strike on Iran over Yemen Houthi attacks on US & Israel

12.22.24 – Su- - - News – Sunday Q3 Moon 4:19pm
Houthi missile attack on central Israel school results in 40 million shekels in damage

12.22.24 – Su- - - News – Sunday Q3 Moon 4:19pm
Gunmen in the streets, snipers on rooftops, shooting all the time: PA fight in Jenin

12.22.24 – Su- - - News Placed in December 22 spot – Sunday Q3 Moon 4:19pm
US F/A-18 shot down over Red Sea, by missile cruiser of the Carrier Group

12.21.24 – Sa- - - News – Saturday
US & Britain struck Yemen this week, on threat that impacts global shipping lanes

12.21.24 – Sa- - - News – Saturday
Druze mayor flying Syrian flag, says Israel should take Damascus

12.21.24 – Sa- - - News Placed in December 21 spot – Saturday
Coalition airstrikes rock Yemen's capital Sanaa, removing fuel depots & power plants

12.21.24 – Sa- - - News – Saturday
Pope calls Gaza airstrikes cruelty, after Israeli minister's criticism

12.21.24 – Sa- - - News – Saturday
Second Yemen missile maneuvering at Mach 5, evaded interception

12.27.24 – Fr
Heavy rainfall, flooding expected for stormy Saturday forecast, ending Tuesday

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Heavy rainfall, flooding expected for stormy Saturday forecast
Israeli Meteorological Service issuing severe warnings for heavy rain and flooding risks after strong winds over 50 km/h hit the coastal plain, with a tree falling in Kiryat Yam, a lightning storm in northern Sharon, and over 40 mm of rain in Haifa; The storm expected to peak overnight Friday

Ynetnews|15:37

Red alerts have been issued across parts of Israel, with strong winds, heavy rainfall, and a risk of flooding expected through the weekend.

The weather began to intensify Friday, with rain already falling in the north and central regions, including a stunning lightning storm in northern Sharon. However, this is just a preview of the severe weather expected tonight and Saturday as the storm system peaks.

On Friday overnight there is a significant risk of flooding along the northern and central coastal plains, strong winds will blow across the mountains and coastline, and snow will fall on Mount Hermon.

On Saturday, intermittent showers will affect the north and coastal plains, accompanied by thunderstorms and hail. Coastal areas, especially between Haifa and Hadera, are at heightened risk of flooding, while snow will continue to fall on Mount Hermon. By the afternoon, rain will primarily focus on the northern parts of the country.

The Israel Meteorological Service issued a red warning—its most severe level—citing substantial rainfall expected in the Carmel and northern Sharon regions, with totals ranging from 75 to 100 millimeters overnight through Saturday afternoon. A red warning for flooding has also been issued for these areas. In the Gush Dan region and northern coastal plains, rainfall amounts of 50 to 75 millimeters are expected.

The highest rainfall in the past 24 hours occurred in Haifa, with 42 millimeters recorded. Other locations included 34 millimeters in Harashim near Karmiel, 20 millimeters in Safed, 11 millimeters in Kfar Nahum near the Sea of Galilee, and 16 millimeters in Herzliya. Tel Aviv saw little rain, while Jerusalem and the southern regions remained dry.

Coastal areas are also seeing strong winds tonight, with wind speeds exceeding 50 km/h in cities like Hadera, Ashkelon, and Ashdod. In Kiryat Yam, a tree was reported fallen in a parking lot.

On Sunday, rain will continue to fall intermittently, with thunderstorms in the north and along the coast. Snow will persist on Mount Hermon. There is still a slight risk of localized flooding along the northern coastline. By night, rain will spread to central Israel and as far as the northern Negev.

Rain is expected to continue on Monday, with ongoing flooding concerns along the coast. By Tuesday, the rains will gradually weaken and subside.

12.27.24 – Fr

IDF uses explosive-laden personnel carriers, APCs to clear booby-trapped areas in Gaza

12.27.24 – Fr

How IDF uses explosive-laden APCs to clear booby-trapped areas in Gaza

IDF develops a new method using the old M-113 armored personnel carriers, packing them with explosives, and remotely detonating them to clear booby-trapped areas in Gaza; method was also used in Lebanon against Hezbollah
Yoav Zitun, Einav Halabi|14:58

Explosions heard across central Israel on Thursday evening originated from a unique IDF tactic initially developed at the start of the current war and previously used in southern Lebanon. The method involves old M-113 armored personnel carriers (APCs) loaded with tons of explosives, which are remotely detonated to clear booby-trapped areas before troops enter.

Residents reported feeling intense blasts as far away as Tel Aviv, Hod HaSharon, and Jerusalem. One Tel Aviv resident described the explosions as "earth-shaking," while another in Hod HaSharon said, "The windows shook twice." The IDF has not issued a formal statement on the incident, though police attributed the noise to military activity in Gaza.

Led by the 401st Brigade under the 162nd Division, the operation followed intelligence from the Shin Bet and Military Intelligence Directorate. The IDF claimed the site housed terrorists, terror infrastructure, and ongoing hostile activity. Footage from Gaza showed partially clothed residents with hands raised being escorted by IDF forces surrounded by tanks. Additional visuals from the hospital showed signs of fire damage. According to Palestinian sources, the IDF gave hospital occupants 15 minutes to evacuate before communication with the facility's management ceased.

"Throughout the war, Hamas has used the hospital as a key operational center, sheltering militants and conducting terrorist activities," an IDF spokesperson stated. The military had previously operated in the area in October and warned against using the facility for military purposes.

The IDF emphasized efforts to avoid harming civilians, patients, and medical staff. "We are operating in a focused manner to minimize harm to uninvolved individuals," the spokesperson said.

Hamas accused the IDF of committing war crimes, alleging the forces "burned" Kamal Adwan Hospital and mistreated patients, staff, and displaced individuals during the operation.

"The decision to burn the hospital after storming it and abusing its occupants is a war crime and a flagrant violation of international laws and humanitarian values," a Hamas statement read. The group claimed the IDF systematically targets medical facilities and infrastructure in Gaza.

The Gaza Health Ministry, managed by Hamas, said the fate of medical staff and patients remains unknown following the operation. The ministry added that the IDF had recently forced evacuations at the Indonesian Hospital under similar circumstances, calling it a further display of "contempt for global humanitarian values."

The IDF rejected Hamas' accusations, asserting its compliance with international laws regarding medical facilities. Military officials stressed their efforts to facilitate the evacuation of patients and staff from Kamal Adwan Hospital to other facilities.

"The IDF, in coordination with international organizations and local health officials, has ensured defined evacuation routes using ambulances to guarantee continued medical care," a military statement read. The IDF highlighted ongoing actions to deliver medical supplies, food, and fuel to hospitals in the area.

Despite the IDF's efforts, the military condemned Hamas for its alleged systematic violations of international law. "Hamas exploits civilian infrastructure and endangers lives by embedding military operations within medical facilities," the spokesperson added.

As the war continues, the IDF's operations in Gaza and their impact on medical facilities remain a focal point of global scrutiny.

12.27.24 – Fr

Israel awaits Hamas decision to finalize the hostage release deal; families simmer

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Israel awaits Hamas decision to finalize the hostage release deal

Hamas has yet to provide the lists of hostages held for 448 days, as Jerusalem officials say 'Hamas needs to make a decision to finalize the deal'; US officials have presented hostage families with analyses suggesting that Hamas should agree to a deal before Trump takes office

Itamar Eichner, Yael Ciechanover|12:21

Senior Israeli officials said Friday that Hamas has yet to provide lists of hostages, and while negotiations continue, Jerusalem is urging Hamas to make a decision. "Hamas needs to make a choice and open the door to finalizing the deal," they said.

The families of Israeli hostages have been waiting for official word on a potential deal as they mark 448 days since 100 hostages, both alive and deceased, were taken by Hamas terrorists to Gaza.

Meanwhile, U.S. officials expressed optimism that a hostage deal could be reached, or at least an initial step, before President-elect Donald Trump takes office. "There are signs it's coming together, and there's still a good chance for a deal," they told family members' representatives. The U.S. also outlined why Hamas might consider reaching an agreement now, ahead of Trump's inauguration.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's recent comments, blaming Hamas for renegeing on previous agreements, have not fazed U.S. officials. They understand Netanyahu's political constraints, they said.

In the meantime, the mother of hostage Matan Zangauker has launched a crowdfunding campaign to support her fight for his release. "I can't rely on anyone else," she said. "I need the public's help."

Zangauker, a leader of the families' protest movement, voiced her frustration with the government's actions. "I see the government abandoning some hostages and leaving them to die in Hamas captivity," she said. "I'm furious. They're playing with my son's life. Israeli citizens have become pawns in the government's political game."

Despite the ongoing struggle, Zangauker clings to hope. "I picture hugging Matan every night before I sleep and every morning when I wake up," she said. "The knowledge that he's alive and knows what I'm doing for him is my light in this dark time."

While hopeful, Zangauker remains determined to reach a comprehensive deal. She criticized Netanyahu for proposing only a partial deal, arguing it involved "selecting between the lives of citizens." She also claimed the government had not authorized the negotiators to address ending the war, a key Hamas demand for releasing all hostages. "Our fight will not end with the first deal," Tsangoker stressed. "It will only end when Israel agrees to end the war in exchange for Matan and all the hostages."

She vowed to continue her struggle, even if it meant using more radical tactics. "We will apply all possible pressure until the government commits to ending the war in exchange for a full deal," she said. "We are planning more radical actions."

12.27.24 – Fr

THAAD system operated by US soldiers in Israel, intercepted Yemen missile

12.27.24 – Fr

US defense system intercepts Yemen missile for the first time since deployed
Deployed in October, the U.S.-supplied THAAD air defense system successfully intercepted its first ballistic missile early Friday, launched by Houthi rebels in Yemen; 'We've waited 18 years for this' says one of the American soldiers operating the system
Yoav Zitun|10:16

The U.S.-supplied Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system, deployed in Israel since October, successfully intercepted a ballistic missile launched by Houthi rebels in Yemen early Friday—marking its first operational use in the country.

The missile launch occurred against the backdrop of Israel's extensive air operation, "Operation Sounds of the Vineyard," targeting Houthi positions in Yemen on Thursday night. The operation, described as Israel's most significant strike against the terror group to date, prompted the missile launch in retaliation.

Sirens blared across central Israel, including the Tel Aviv area, Sharon, and Shfela regions, at 3:29 a.m. The interception prevented any casualties or direct damage.

However, Magen David Adom (MDA) reported treating 18 people for injuries sustained while rushing to shelters. Two others were treated for anxiety.

The missile launch briefly disrupted air travel. Four El Al flights en route to Ben Gurion Airport from Paris, Athens, Berlin, and Munich were rerouted over the Mediterranean. Landings resumed approximately 30 minutes after the sirens ceased.

Meanwhile, France condemned the Houthi attacks, including the ballistic missile launch and ongoing drone strikes against Israel. The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs called the attacks "unacceptable," stating they undermine regional stability and must stop. France reaffirmed its commitment to Israel's security and regional stability.

The THAAD system, operated by approximately 100 U.S. soldiers stationed in Israel, is designed to intercept missiles at high altitudes, even outside the atmosphere, using kinetic energy. Similar in capability to Israel's Arrow missile defense system, THAAD can target various stages of an enemy missile's flight path.

The U.S. deployed the THAAD system to Israel at its request, both as a strategic deterrent and a display of military support in the region. Israeli officials view THAAD as a significant enhancement to the country's multi-layered air defense systems, particularly in light of escalating threats, including from Iran.

12.27.24 – Fr

Israel remains vigilant with US on Lebanon border cleansing; withdraw in a month

12.27.24 – Fr

'Israel remains vigilant': A month into cease-fire agreement with Hezbollah

Military officials recount Hezbollah violations treated by the IDF and stress forces are ready to act against terror group if needed; US enforcement mechanism aids in easing tensions

Itamar Eichner, Lior Ben Ari, Yoav Zitun|07:18

The cease-fire agreement with Hezbollah on the northern border came into effect a month ago. Despite skepticism, suspicions, violations and mutual accusations, it's holding for now. IDF forces remain deployed in most of the areas where they operated during the ground operation.

However, the agreement's enforcement mechanism isn't fully functional yet. Lebanon has expressed doubts about Israel's willingness to withdraw from its territories at the end of the 60 days stipulated in the agreement. The IDF also doesn't regard the deadline as sacred.

During a Security Cabinet meeting held at the IDF Northern Command this past week, security officials reported a decrease in Hezbollah's attempts to violate the agreement. Simultaneously, there's been improvement in the work of the cease-fire enforcement mechanism, headed by a U.S. general.

Cooperation between Israel, the IDF and the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) has been described as excellent. Still, violations of various kinds take place. Israel is allowing the mechanism to address them while continuing to act independently when immediate threats are identified.

“That’s why we work alongside it, but we still enforce it ourselves at this stage,” an Israeli official said. “It looks better now than it did before, but like in Syria, Israel remains vigilant.”

According to IDF data, the IDF has eliminated 44 terrorists, conducted 25 strikes in Lebanon and documented 120 Hezbollah violations since the cease-fire began. Conversely, Lebanon accused Israel of violating the agreement in An-Naqoura, citing airstrikes, the raising of the Israeli flag in a Lebanese village and roadblocks, excavation work and explosions in areas like Yaroun and Kfar Kila — actions seemingly intended to achieve unfulfilled war goals.

Lebanese officials, meanwhile, doubt Israel's readiness to withdraw from Lebanese territories as stipulated. If Israel fails to do so, Hezbollah might respond with force, claiming Israel breached the agreement which could reignite regional escalation and place the Lebanese army in a precarious position against the Shiite terror organization. The Lebanese drew criticism the “slow pace” of the agreement’s enforcement mechanism, which they argue allows Israel to continue its operations in the country’s south. Beirut fears Israel aims to provoke Hezbollah into retaliating, thereby framing it as responsible for collapsing the cease-fire.

Hezbollah, though battered, has so far exercised relative restraint while issuing warnings about time running out.

The IDF remains prepared to stay in locations beyond the border if the Lebanese army fails to meet its commitments or achieve full control over the area. For now, Israel is dismantling weapons caches and tunnels in approximately 15-20 villages near the border while driving back Lebanese civilians attempting to return to the area. Meanwhile, the IDF enforces the cease-fire and has targeted dozens of terrorists approaching the border or preparing rocket launches against Israel.

One significant from which the IDF withdrew during the first month of the cease-fire was the Al-Khiyam region, the northernmost area where Israeli forces operated in, extending into Lebanon from the Upper Galilee and paralleling the northern Hula Valley.

The IDF drew back after the Lebanese army deployed in the area and began searching for and confiscating Hezbollah rocket launchers in the Litani and Saluki Valleys.

The cease-fire’s implementation is meant to proceed gradually for the IDF, with the withdrawal date — while set — not taken as immutable. The possibility of an extended presence in parts of southern Lebanon is being considered.

In recent days, most IDF activity has been focused on destroying underground complexes in the western sector, near villages where Lebanon has claimed violations. Attack helicopter strikes against identified Hezbollah operatives have also been reported in these areas.

Unlike the 2006 **cease-fire** under UN Resolution 1701, which ended the Second Lebanon War, this time, the enforcement mechanism is **led by an American general rather than weak UNIFIL inspectors.**

This change means that immediate **strikes will be carried out with minimal bureaucratic hurdles** if the **IDF detects** preparations by Hezbollah for **attacks against Israel** or short-term threats. For less immediate threats, such as the construction of **observation posts or bunkers**, the **IDF will report the location to the American** enforcement mechanism. **A drone will verify and document the violation** and the **Lebanese army will be required to address it.** Failing to do so will enable the IDF to act.

This approach **also extends to arms smuggling from Syria to Lebanon** for Hezbollah. By collaborating with the **American-led enforcement mechanism**, Israel aims to address potential threats effectively while **maintaining the option to act unilaterally if necessary.**

12.27.24 – Fr

Damascus governor wants peace with Israel; true intent or calculated manipulation?

12.27.24 – Fr

New Damascus governor wants 'peace' with Israel, says its fears are 'natural'

Maher Marwan, appointed by Syria's de facto leader Ahmad al-Sharaa, says many Syrians wish for coexistence as Israel remains skeptical

Daniel Edelson, New York, Lior Ben Ari|02:15

Maher Marwan, the new governor of Damascus appointed by Syria's de facto leader Ahmad al-Sharaa (formerly Abu Mohammed al-Golani), made a surprising statement calling on the United States to establish peace between Syria and Israel.

"There exists a people who want coexistence. They want peace. They don't want disputes. We want peace, and we cannot be an opponent to Israel or an opponent to anyone," he said in an interview with U.S. public radio network NPR.

However, he acknowledged Israel's concerns, saying, "It's natural for Israel to be worried about certain factions." He added, " Israel may have felt fear, so it advanced a little, bombed a little, etc. We have no fear towards Israel, and our problem is not with Israel. And we don't want to meddle in anything that will threaten Israel's security or any other country's security."

A U.S. official confirmed that the new Syrian administration's message was relayed to Israel but noted that the White House isn't urging either side to take steps toward establishing relations at this time.

Direct dialogue between the U.S. and the Syrian rebels has been ongoing since the fall of Bashar Assad's regime, culminating in the removal of the \$10 million bounty on al-Sharaa's head due to his past jihadist activities.

Israeli officials have indicated that while the Americans understand Israel's security needs and concerns, they believe Israel should give the new regime a chance. Conversely, Israel maintains a far more skeptical stance.

Maher Marwan meeting Damascus residents

Syria's transitional government, led by al-Sharaa, recently announced several appointments, including new governors for the country's provinces, one of whom is Maher Marwan. The governors will serve for three months in the timeframe allocated to form the new government.

According to reports in Arab media, Marwan was born in Damascus in 1979. He actively participated in the protests in Syria starting in 2011 and has lived in Saudi Arabia, Damascus the city of al-Qaryatayn in the Homs countryside and later in Idlib. He studied at Idlib University and held various positions under the Syrian opposition, which now controls the country.

Israeli officials appear unfazed by the governor's remarks. Sources in Jerusalem told Ynet earlier this week, "The burden of proof is on al-Sharaa and his people. We mustn't forget their ideological foundations."

According to these sources, the "warm" messages from Damascus's new leadership remain an enigma as no one knows which direction the new regime will take. While al-Sharaa and his team are saying the "right things," the post-October 7 mood in Israel is marked by skepticism and fears of a "charm offensive" meant to deceive the West.

Al-Sharaa isn't affiliated with the Islamic State (ISIS). He was once active in al-Qaeda but left the organization years ago, pivoting toward other jihadist yet more Syrian nationalist-oriented paths. In the past, he also led al-Nusra Front during its affiliation with al-Qaeda and the group itself maintained ties with Israel.

Israel believes it's too early to predict al-Sharaa's intentions or his ability to maintain a unified and democratic Syria. Under Assad, Syria was united through brute force; al-Sharaa envisions a "different Syria," with parliamentary representation for all sects. He claimed he seeks no confrontation — not with Israel, nor with the Druze, Alawites or Turks. For now, it's clear that he and his team are working to calm tensions, whether out of genuine intent or as a calculated manipulation.

12.27.24 – Fr

Sirens sound Friday morning as missile from Yemen intercepted over Mediterranean

12.27.24 – Fr

Sirens sound in central Israel, Jerusalem area as missile from Yemen shot down
Attack comes hours after Israel conducted its largest air raid against Houthi targets in Yemen; IDF says investigating incident; 4 El Al flights en route to Ben Gurion Airport temporarily redirected to circle over Mediterranean before receiving clearance to land
Ynet|19:43

Air-raid sirens blared across central Israel, including the Gush Dan area, the Shephelah region and parts of the West Bank, following a missile launch from Yemen, the IDF reported Friday morning, less than a day after Israel launched its largest air raid against Houthi targets in Yemen to date.

According to an initial statement from the IDF, the sirens were triggered due to a missile crossing into Israeli airspace. Later, the military clarified that the missile was intercepted before entering Israeli territory, and the alarms were activated as a precaution against debris from the interception.

The incident disrupted air traffic, with four El Al flights en route to Ben Gurion Airport from Paris, Athens, Berlin and Munich temporarily redirected to circle over the Mediterranean Sea before receiving clearance to land.

Magen David Adom, Israel's national emergency medical service, reported no physical injuries or direct impacts. However, medics treated 18 individuals who sustained minor injuries while rushing to shelters and two others for shock.

Yemen, located over 1,000 miles south of Israel, has previously been the source of missile and drone launches by the Iran-aligned Houthi group, which has declared solidarity with Hamas during the ongoing war between Israel and Gaza. Further updates will be provided as the IDF investigates the incident.

12.26.24 – Th

Israel's largest Yemen hit: Control tower, power stations amid US coordination

12.26.24 – Th

Inside Israel's largest Yemen strike: Control tower, power stations hit amid tight US coordination

Israel's Air Force launches largest Yemen strike yet, targeting Sanaa Airport and other key locations; 'No Houthi leader will escape Israel's reach,' Katz says

Itamar Eichner, Lior Ben Ari, Yoav Zitun|11:54

Israeli officials confirmed the country's largest airstrike in Yemen since the war began, targeting Houthi-controlled sites in Sanaa and other key locations. The operation involved 25 aircraft, including fighter jets, reconnaissance planes and tankers, and hit infrastructure critical to Houthi operations.

Targets included Sanaa International Airport, where the control tower and landing aids were destroyed to prevent Iranian supply shipments. Civilian aircraft used by the Houthi government were also hit.

Additional strikes targeted Hodeidah's port, a power station with five turbines and oil facilities. Damage reports from Yemeni media indicated the airport's runways, terminal buildings and the Haziz power station south of Sanaa were also struck. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Israel Katz observed the operation from the Israeli Air Force command center alongside IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Herzl Halevi and Air Force Commander Maj. Gen. Tomer Bar. "We are determined to cut off this terror arm of Iran's axis of evil," Netanyahu said. Katz added, "Those who harm Israel will be hunted. No Houthi leader will escape Israel's reach."

Halevi emphasized the IDF's long-range strike capabilities, saying, "Once again, we've shown we can reach and eliminate any threat to Israel's citizens, with precision and power."

Houthi-affiliated Yemeni network Al Masirah reported three deaths and 16 injuries from the strikes on Sanaa airport. World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus was at the airport during the strike.

Writing on X (formerly Twitter), he said, "The air traffic control tower, the departure lounge – just a few meters from where we were – and the runway were damaged. At least two people were reported killed at the airport. One of our plane's crew members was injured. We will need to wait for the damage to the airport will be repaired before we can leave."

A senior Israeli official defended the operation: "If the Houthis don't understand force, they'll understand even more force." Another source suggested future escalations: "The Houthis only respond to direct action, and that action will come." Israel emphasized close coordination with the U.S., which provided intelligence for the strike. A source described the operation as a "Hanu-Christmas" collaboration, underscoring the partnership between the two nations.

The strikes follow a series of Houthi ballistic missile launches, with four incidents in the past week alone. These attacks triggered widespread nighttime alarms across central Israel, causing destruction at a school in Ramat Efal and in Tel Aviv. Israeli officials stressed that further measures are on the table to address the escalating threat.

12.26.24 – Th

Yemen air raid; 100 aircraft strike Sanaa Airport, power stations, aircraft & port

12.26.24 – Th

Israeli officials: '100 aircraft took part in Yemen air raid'

In largest strike so far, Israel hits Sanaa airport, disabling control tower and damaging aircraft, along with Hodeidah's port and power stations; Netanyahu: 'We are determined to cut off Iran's terror arm'

Lior Ben Ari, Yossi Yehoshua|08:14

Israeli officials confirmed that the Air Force carried out its largest strike to date in Yemen, targeting key infrastructure, including Sanaa International Airport.

According to Yemeni media, the control tower was rendered inoperable, and civilian aircraft used by the Houthi administration were also hit. Two people were reportedly killed in the attack.

The strikes extended to Hodeidah's port and a power station. Officials noted that 100 aircraft participated in the operation, which was coordinated in advance with the United States. "We said the Houthis would pay a heavy price. If they don't understand force, they'll understand even greater force," an Israeli source said, adding that this strike will not be the last.

Some reports claim all targets were civilian, with casualties reported, though exact numbers remain unclear. Additional strikes reportedly hit the Haziz power station near Sanaa and Hodeidah. Qatar's Al-Arabi network claimed the strikes caused partial power outages across the country.

During the attacks, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said from the Air Force command center: "We are determined to cut off Iran's terror arm."

Defense Minister Israel Katz added, "Those who harm Israel will be hunted. No Houthi leader will escape Israel's reach."

Al Mayadeen, a Hezbollah-affiliated Lebanese outlet, alleged the Israeli strikes in Yemen also involved U.S. Navy warships. Meanwhile, Sky News Arabia reported that the Israeli military has heightened its air defense and Air Force alert levels, anticipating a possible Houthi response.

Al Mayadeen also reported that two UN officials—the WHO director-general and the UN coordinator in Sanaa—were reportedly present at the airport in the Yemeni capital during the Israeli strike.

About an hour after the strikes began, reports surfaced online of a "second wave of strikes." Saudi-owned Al Hadath TV later reported that the strikes targeted seven sites in Sanaa, including energy and oil facilities, and three more in Hodeidah, including its port and power stations.

Another Saudi channel, Al Arabiya, reported that dozens of fighter jets participated in the attacks, targeting "Houthi command centers" in Sanaa. Meanwhile, Al Mayadeen claimed the Israeli strikes targeted civilian facilities and were coordinated with and supported by the U.S. and the UK.

'Zionists... you shall not sleep': Houthis threaten response

This attack follows last week's Israeli strike on Yemen—the first to target Sanaa since the war began and the third Israeli operation in Yemen since October 7. The Houthis have launched multiple missile attacks on Israel.

The strikes occurred as al-Houthi delivered his regular Thursday speech, a platform often used to boast about attacks on Israel. The reclusive leader, who has been in hiding for years, delivers speeches exclusively via television. Despite the reported strikes, Houthi-controlled TV channels continued broadcasting his address uninterrupted.

In his speech, al-Houthi said, "Israeli deterrence has failed against our country despite their attacks on civilian facilities in Sanaa and Hodeidah [referring to previous strikes]. The Israeli enemy knows our operations continue, are effective and impactful. Our missiles, which their air defenses failed to intercept, have caused significant frustration among political and security officials in Israel and the U.S."

About an hour after reports of the strikes began circulating, the Houthis issued a swift threat of retaliation. On one channel, they warned, "The Yemeni response is coming. Zionists... you shall not sleep."

Houthi spokesperson Mohammed Abdulsalam later added, "If the enemy thinks its crime will deter Yemen from supporting Gaza, it is delusional. Yemen will never abandon its religious and humanitarian principles."

The Israeli source told Sky News Arabia that Israel is preparing for a response: "The Israeli military has heightened the alert level of its air defense and air force, anticipating a possible Houthi reaction," the source said.

Speaking to Arab media, Houthi official Hezam al-Asad issued a warning: "The Israeli enemy should prepare for our response. Targeting electricity and the port is an attempt to stir public discontent in Yemen, but we are in an open battle with the Israeli entity, the U.S. and the UK. We have many options."

12.26.24 – Th

York Times reports excessive civilian death by IDF & ignore initial Hamas attack

12.26.24 – Th

IDF changed rules of engagement shortly after October 7 attack, report claims
New York Times, citing Israeli military commanders, reports IDF approved 'unprecedented' strikes against Hamas in Gaza, allegedly permitting up to 20 civilian casualties per attack; military denies allegations
Ynet|08:10

An investigation has revealed that the IDF dramatically changed its rules of engagement and restrictions on targeting civilians in Gaza immediately following Hamas' terror attack on October 7, 2023, the New York Times reported on Thursday. The shift led to what has been described as one of the most intense bombing campaigns in modern warfare.

According to the investigation, at exactly 1:00 p.m. on October 7, 2023, for the first time in the history of conflicts with Hamas, a senior IDF command issued an order granting mid-ranking officers extensive authorization to target thousands of locations in Gaza.

These included lower-priority Hamas operatives who had not been high-value targets in previous operations. Under these orders, officers were allowed to approve strikes that could risk the lives of up to 20 civilians — significantly more than the restrictions that had previously been in place.

Most strikes in past operations were only approved after officers determined there would be no civilian casualties. In some cases, up to five civilian casualties were permitted and rarely was the threshold raised to 10 or more.

According to a senior IDF officer interviewed by the newspaper, the military changed its engagement rules because it believed Israel faced an existential threat during the initial hours of Hamas' surprise attack which resulted in the massacre of 1,200 Israelis and the kidnapping of 250 others to Gaza. This was while terrorists were still present inside Israel.

The senior officer said it was imperative to exert significant force to neutralize the threat, executing thousands of strikes in a short time. This necessitated decentralizing strike authorization, typically reserved for senior command.

These critical hours were further complicated by the looming fear of a potential Hezbollah invasion from Lebanon, which required the IDF to divert considerable forces to that front.

The investigation claimed that in its effort to dismantle Hamas' capabilities in Gaza, Israel significantly weakened oversight mechanisms meant to prevent harm to civilians. It adopted "flawed" methods for identifying targets and assessing risks to innocents, ignored warnings from IDF officers and U.S. officials about deficiencies and failed to conduct thorough post-strike investigations or punish wrongdoers.

The paper noted that its findings were based on the review of dozens of military documents and interviews with over 100 soldiers and other sources, including over 25 individuals involved in strike approvals.

The report said that in order to significantly expand the target pool in Gaza — part of the pledge to counter the attack on Israel and destroy Hamas — the number of Palestinian civilians who could be endangered in each strike was also increased.

The outcome, according to the investigation, was the IDF dropping nearly 30,000 bombs and munitions on Gaza — more than the total used in the next eight months combined. The investigation found that another order issued by IDF command at 10:50 p.m. on October 8 indicated the scale of civilian casualties deemed acceptable during those early days of the war.

According to the order, strikes on military targets in Gaza could cumulatively risk the lives of up to 500 civilians daily. This limit was reportedly removed two days later, allowing officers to approve an unlimited number of strikes they deemed lawful.

A 500 casualty limit: precaution or quota?

IDF sources told the outlet that the removed restriction was actually a precaution meant to limit the number of strikes per day. However, Prof. Michael N. Schmitt of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, argued that mid-level officers might have interpreted it as a "quota" of permissible civilian deaths per day.

Following the **limit's removal**, Hamas-controlled authorities in Gaza often reported daily **death tolls exceeding 500**, though it remains **unclear how many were civilians, terrorists** or casualties from previous days.

The investigation highlighted Shaldan al-Najjar, a senior Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) terrorist, as an example. During Operation Protective Edge in 2014, the **IDF** reportedly **took numerous precautions to keep civilians away from his house before attacking it**. These included **calls to neighbors** warning of the impending strike and implementing the **"roofknock" procedure**, commonly used before **targeting buildings** suspected of containing weapons or tunnel entrances.

As a **result**, everyone, including al-Najjar himself, **evacuated with no casualties**. However, when the **IDF** targeted a house he visited on October 10, 2023, no prior **warnings** were issued. The **strike** killed al-Najjar along with 20 of his **extended family** members, including children and a two-month-old baby.

In some cases **targeting Hamas leaders**, senior **IDF** officers approved **strikes knowing** they could **endanger over 100 civilians** each — actions the outlet described as "crossing an **extraordinary threshold** for a modern Western military."

The **IDF** reportedly **conducted strikes at such a rapid pace** that the pre-war target bank was depleted within days. As a result, the **military adopted a new and "unproven" system** for **identifying targets**, relying on artificial intelligence heavily.

According to the report, a system called "The Gospel" was used to **cross-reference information** from various sources, including **phone calls, satellite imagery and cellular tracking**. The **IDF** also maintains **extensive databases**, one of which is known as "Lavender," containing phone numbers and **addresses of suspected terrorists**.

A chaotic mood

Israel's **control over Gaza's communication** networks **allowed** for the **monitoring and tracking** of Palestinian **phones**. However, six IDF officers told the outlet that these **databases sometimes** contained **outdated** information, increasing the **risk** of **misidentifying civilians as terrorists**.

The investigation further alleged that the **IDF frequently relied on a simplistic statistical model to assess risks to innocents** during strikes. Sometimes targets were bombed just hours after being identified, allegedly increasing the likelihood of errors.

The model mainly **estimated risks based on cellular activity** in broad areas **near strike zones rather than detailed intelligence** tracking of specific structures as was customary in previous Israeli operations.

The **IDF's** air campaign was most **intense during the initial weeks of the war**. **Palestinians claim** that **15,000 people were killed in the first two months** — a figure reported by Gaza's Hamas-controlled Health Ministry, which **does not distinguish between civilians and terrorists** and has faced **skepticism over its data**.

Regardless, amid international outrage during that period, the **IDF** reportedly **reduced** its **use of bombs from November 2023 onward** to **conserve munitions** and tightened strike protocols, including **halving the number of civilians** allowed to be **endangered** in low-priority strikes.

Despite this, the death toll in Gaza continued to rise, with Palestinians claiming over 45,000 fatalities to date.

The dramatic and extensive investigation comes as Israel faces allegations of genocide in Gaza, including a petition filed against it by South Africa in the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

Israel firmly denies these accusations, stressing its compliance with international law and its efforts to minimize civilian harm, such as mass evacuation orders for entire cities, leaflets dropped from the air and warnings via social media.

Israeli officials frequently highlight Hamas and other terror groups' use of civilians as human shields, embedding terrorists and weaponry in residential buildings and hospitals. According to the outlet, IDF officers must ensure that the risks posed by airstrikes are "proportional" to the military value of the target and take feasible precautions to protect innocent lives under international law.

However, the investigation stressed that officers have considerable discretion because the rules of warfare are ambiguous regarding what constitutes a feasible precaution.

The report, citing about a dozen sources who spoke to the New York Times, claimed that some IDF officers involved in the bombing campaign became far less stringent about adhering to military protocols after the shock of the October 7 massacre.

While some commanders worked hard to maintain compliance, five senior officers reportedly described the mood in the military using the term "harbu darbu" (A Hebrew slang expression coined from the Arab harb wadarb: Battles and war).

The outlet noted it received a 700-word response from the IDF and included excerpts of it alongside interviews with senior officials to understand the policies. The IDF confirmed that the rules for approving strikes changed after October 7 but stressed that its forces have "consistently been employing means and methods that adhere to the law."

IDF officials explained that the changes to strike protocols were made in the context of an "unprecedented and hardly comparable to other theaters of hostilities worldwide." The response cited the massive scale of Hamas' deadly terror attack, the terrorists' use of civilians as human shields and the extensive tunnel network as factors influencing military target selection and the ability to take various precautions before strikes.

12.26.24 – Th

Hamas official says situation in Gaza makes compiling hostage list difficult

12.26.24 – Th

Hamas official says situation in Gaza makes compiling hostage list difficult

Arab outlet cites official as saying talks between Israel and the terror group continue;

Israel denies receiving list detailing live hostages in Hamas captivity

Einav Halabi, Lior Ben Ari|03:44

A senior Hamas official told the Qatari newspaper Al-Araby Al-Jadeed Thursday overnight that claims suggesting Mohammed Sinwar was inflexible and refused to provide a full list of living Israeli hostages as part of efforts to ensure a hostage and cease-fire deal are false.

According to the official, Hamas has provided such a list — including those its members managed to contact through the factions responsible for holding them. Israel has consistently denied that such a list was delivered throughout the talks.

The official added that the terror organization has held talks with other factions holding hostages, but that it was impossible to communicate with all of them due to the situation in Gaza. He further said Hamas has affirmed during negotiations its willingness to provide a complete list of living hostages once the situation in Gaza stabilizes and after a cease-fire is achieved.

The official also noted that the local leadership of the Izz ad-Din Al-Qassam Brigades, Hamas's military wing, operates in "harmony" with the terror group's political leadership, asserting there's "complete agreement" between them.

He said Khalil al-Hayya, who served as former leader Yahya Sinwar's deputy, has effectively been authorized to make decisions in the negotiations as the head of Hamas's negotiation team.

Al-Hayya is part of a leadership council Hamas established following Sinwar's assassination, which includes four other key Hamas figures: the movement's leader abroad Khaled Mashal, Hamas leader in the West Bank Zaher Jabarin, the head of Hamas's Shura Council Muhammad Darwish and senior official Nizar Awadallah.

The outlet also reported that one unresolved issue pertains to the release of Palestinian prisoners. According to the report, the release of some "high-profile" prisoners — including Marwan Barghouti, Ahmad Sa'adat, Abbas al-Sayed, Abdullah Barghouti, Ibrahim Hamed and Hassan Salameh, along with two senior Islamic Jihad officials — would be postponed to the final stage of the deal. An Israeli source reiterated that Barghouti would not be released.

Egyptian sources told the outlet that "the negotiations for a Gaza cease-fire are steps away from the finish line. Agreements have been reached on contentious points during the latest round of talks. One of the issues expected to be resolved concerns the lists of hostages and prisoners."

12.26.24 – Th

Ben-Gvir Temple Mount visit & prayer for troops, hostages & complete victory

12.26.24 – Th

Ben-Gvir visits the Temple Mount and 'said a prayer'

Minister of National Security announces that he prayed at the holy site in honor of the Hanukkah holiday, contrary to the status quo; Prime Minister's Office responds that there is no change in the status quo; Minister has called for the establishment of a synagogue on the Mount

Liran Tamari, Moran Azulay, Einav Halabi|01:57

National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir visited the Temple Mount this Thursday morning and, according to his office, "offered a prayer" there, in defiance of the status quo. According to Ben-Gvir's office, his ascent to the Mount was in honor of Hanukkah, and he prayed there for the peace of IDF soldiers, the return of the kidnapped alive and the fallen, and "complete victory" in the war.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was informed of Ben Gvir's intention before he visited the Temple Mount, and the Prime Minister's Office was quick to respond to his announcement that "the status quo on the Temple Mount has not changed." In previous cases where Ben Gvir ascended the Temple Mount, the Prime Minister's Office was forced to disavow his statements. In the past, it has even stated that "the determination of policy on the Temple Mount is directly subordinate to the government and its head."

Ra'am party Chairman Mansour Abbas sharply criticized the conduct of the Minister of National Security, telling Ynet that "Al-Aqsa is an Islamic place of prayer; Ben Gvir continues to provoke the Muslim world with Netanyahu's approval."

This is not the first time Ben-Gvir has spoken out in favor of violating the status quo on the Temple Mount. In the past, he said: "I am the political echelon, and the political echelon permits Jewish prayer on the Temple Mount." On another occasion, he called for a synagogue to be built there.

Ben Gvir visited the Temple Mount while the coalition is outraged by his conduct, and sources claim that "it is impossible to deal with him." The Minister of National Security continued to vote this week against the coalition as it tries to pass the 2025 budget; not passing the budget would lead to the automatic dissolution of the current Knesset.

12.26.24 – Th

Israel met Vatican ambassador Tuesday over Pope's criticism of Israel war in Gaza

12.26.24 – Th

Israel summons Vatican ambassador over Pope's criticism, but says 'not a reprimand' Following harsh remarks by Pope Francis accusing Israel of targeting children in Gaza, the Foreign Ministry summoned the Vatican ambassador to express its displeasure; Despite the summons, Foreign Ministry have said they do not view this as an official reprimand

Itamar Eichner|16:03

Following harsh statements made by Pope Francis against Israel in the past week, and under the directive of Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar, Foreign Ministry Director General Eyal Bar-Tal summoned the Vatican's ambassador to Israel, Archbishop Adolfo Tito Yllana, for a meeting. The meeting, held on Tuesday at the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem during the approach of the Christmas holiday, was not classified as a reprimand. However, Bar-Tal expressed Israel's strong displeasure with the Pope's comments.

In response to the pope's remarks, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Oren Marmorstein issued a rare and strongly worded statement, saying: "Cruelty is when terrorists hide behind children while trying to kill Israeli children. Cruelty is holding 100 hostages for 442 days, including infants and children, and abusing them," Marmorstein wrote in Israel's official response.

"Unfortunately, the pope chose to ignore all of this, as well as the fact that Israel's actions were directed at terrorists who used children as human shields. The pope's comments are particularly disappointing, as they are disconnected from the real and factual context of Israel's fight against jihadist terrorism – a multi-front war imposed on Israel since October 7."

On Saturday, Pope Francis accused Israel in a sermon to Vatican officials of spraying Palestinian children in Gaza with machine guns and bombing schools and hospitals. "With great pain, I think of Gaza, of so much cruelty, of children sprayed with machine guns, of the bombings of schools and hospitals. Such cruelty," the Pope said. On the following day, he escalated his tone, repeating in his weekly Mass that Israel is cruelly spraying children with machine guns.

Israel issued a sharp condemnation a day after the pope criticized the country for an airstrike in Gaza that killed seven children from a single family. "Yesterday, children were bombed. This is cruelty, not war," the Pope said.

Israeli officials claim that the pope's remarks have caused significant damage to Israel's image in the Christian world and accuse the Vatican of applying double standards and singling out the Jewish state for criticism.

On Monday, Ynet first reported that Israeli President Isaac Herzog may visit the Vatican in light of the Pope's escalating remarks. Advanced negotiations are currently underway to coordinate the president's visit. During the visit, Herzog is expected to meet with the pope, who has already extended an invitation.

12.25.24 – We

Hezbollah Lebanon documents reveal guidelines & tactics, fearing Israel

12.25.24 – We

Radwan documents uncovered in Lebanon reveal guidelines, and fear of Israel

The Radwan Force documents found during operations in southern Lebanon add to understanding of elite unit, which gave its operatives detailed instructions on how to

camouflage themselves in the field and avoid Israeli surveillance; 'The enemy must be made to think that we are on high alert,' states the document, which dealt with 'fear of Israeli eavesdropping'

Lior Ben Ari, Yoav Zitun|15:47

In addition to the many weapons that IDF forces located in southern Lebanon, it also found personal documents of the Radwan Force, the elite unit of the Hezbollah terrorist organization that suffered many losses during the war. The documents reveal, among other things, the unit's methods of operation, and some of them contain detailed instructions for operatives regarding camouflage in the field: "It is forbidden to smoke hookahs or light a light," and, due to concerns about Israeli eavesdropping, "one must speak in encrypted form."

The documents are handwritten and, in addition to names, numbers and personal details about elements in the unit, we can learn about the unit's activities, whose goal before the October 7 massacre was to penetrate Israeli territory and take control of areas near the border. For example, one of the documents details the dimensions of six Hezbollah firing positions.

Another page details instructions for the terrorist organization's operatives - "How to avoid detection?" Among other things, it states that camouflage and cleanliness must be maintained during work, that hookahs are prohibited, and that lights must not be turned on while in bed. The operatives are also told that they must keep records at all times, and that they are not allowed to leave their shift before submitting a situation assessment. One of the documents seized was written in August 2020, and one section states that "the enemy must be made to think that we are on high alert." The same document also mentions a fear of Israeli eavesdropping: "We must talk in encrypted form about internal affairs, because the Israelis are monitoring everything." The page also dealt with the outbreak of the coronavirus, which was relevant at that time.

In recent months, the IDF spokesman has revealed the Radwan Force's method of operation. In October, about a month after the start of the ground operation in Lebanon, Brigadier General Daniel Hagari said that "for years Hezbollah has been planning how to invade our territory on command - and now we are revealing the method." He noted that the forces had turned civilian villages in southern Lebanon into fortified combat complexes and fortified staging areas under dense vegetation. "The organization built a system of underground combat complexes under dense vegetation, in which it kept various weapons," he said.

In fact, Radwan's force used civilian homes as part of preparations for an attack against Israel. The IDF confiscated large quantities of weapons used by the terrorist organization and many documents that belonged to the organization. The documents contain a great deal of tactical information about the organization: tables with operative numbers, battalion numbers, lists, personal reminders, important phone numbers, including those of operations rooms.

They also reveal information about the personal lives of Radwan Force operatives, including requests for leave by operatives for personal needs such as a wedding or a family member's surgery. All of this indicates the organization's very orderly and meticulous conduct, before the major upheaval it has undergone in recent months and the assassination of its leaders.

12.25.24 – We

IDF unveils Hezbollah's massive seized weapons arsenal to media

12.25.24 – We

IDF unveils Hezbollah's massive weapons arsenal

Extensive collection of weapons and equipment confiscated from Hezbollah's Radwan Forces, intended for a large-scale invasion of Israel goes on display; Seized arsenal includes 85,000 items, including advanced missiles, explosives and weapons, disrupting Hezbollah's capabilities following recent ground operations in southern Lebanon
Yoav Zitun, Yair Kraus|13:30

The IDF revealed for the first time the massive arsenal seized from Hezbollah's Radwan Forces in the border area with Lebanon. Nearly a month after the northern cease-fire began, the IDF on Wednesday showcased the significant collection of weapons and equipment Hezbollah had prepared for a large-scale invasion of Israel. The plan, described as far deadlier than the October 7 massacre in southern Israel, was thwarted during IDF ground operations.

IDF forces confiscated at least 85,000 weapons and intelligence items, with additional findings still being uncovered along the Lebanon border. Tens of thousands of other pieces of weaponry were destroyed in Lebanon during the campaign but were not retrieved due to logistical limitations.

The display, open to foreign media, featured anti-aircraft guns mounted on jeeps, hundreds of advanced anti-tank missiles (including long-range models), modern AK-47s, heavy machine guns, sniper rifles from both Eastern and Western manufacturers, explosives of varying sizes, and ammunition boxes on a scale suitable for a small, advanced army. The exhibition also included chemical warfare masks intended for use by Hezbollah fighters in gas and smoke-filled conditions, as well as GoPro cameras meant to document the planned invasion of the Galilee.

6,840 RPG launchers, rockets, and anti-tank missile systems (including 340 Kornet missiles)

20 military vehicles

9,000 explosives and explosive devices

60,800 pieces of electronic equipment, communication devices, computers, and documents

2,250 artillery shells and high-trajectory missiles

2,700 light weapons
2,860 additional weapons and equipment
60 anti-aircraft missiles
300 observation tools and binoculars

The IDF reported that ground maneuvers were conducted in about 30 Shiite villages along the 130-kilometer border, stretching from Rosh Hanikra to Mount Dov. However, Hezbollah still retains hundreds of thousands of weapons, including heavy rockets, precision missiles, and drones, although the majority of its arsenal was destroyed during Operation "Northern Arrows," according to the IDF.

The IDF clarified that it did not enter approximately 50 additional Shiite villages used by Hezbollah, located on both sides of the Litani River. In recent weeks, Israeli forces in southern Lebanon have continued targeting Hezbollah operatives who violate the cease-fire agreement. Over the past month, more than 40 operatives have been eliminated, in addition to the approximately 3,000 Hezbollah fighters killed and 7,000 injured over the last year out of the group's estimated 30,000 military personnel.

Meanwhile, the Lebanese Army has begun deploying along the border, and IDF has withdrawn to Israeli territory from those areas. Engineering operations to destroy Hezbollah bunkers and internal combat tunnels are ongoing. The IDF emphasized that the initial 60-day period of the agreement does not represent a "sacred deadline" and that the stages of the agreement will be implemented gradually under an "American umbrella." This is the first time the U.S. is leading the enforcement mechanism, which is already operational as Israeli residents return to evacuated Galilee communities.

"As part of the learning process about the achievements of IDF's ground maneuvers, an extensive exhibition is currently showcasing the weapons seized by IDF forces," the IDF said in a statement. "These weapons were intended to be used by Hezbollah to harm Israeli civilians as part of their plan to 'conquer the Galilee.' Following the ground operations, these capabilities have been significantly disrupted and are now on display at the exhibition."

12.25.24 – We

Hamas claims Israel imposes new conditions on cease-fire; Netanyahu calls it a lie

12.25.24 – We

Hamas claims Israel imposes new conditions on cease-fire; Netanyahu calls it a lie
 Terror organization claims cease-fire and hostage release talks are "serious," but accuses Israel of setting new conditions on several issues. Prime Minister says ' Hamas is renegeing on the understandings that were reached'

Yael Ciechanover, Itamar Eichner, Alexandra Lukash|09:51

A day after Israel's team negotiating a cease-fire and hostage deal returned from Qatar, Hamas issued a statement at noon on Wednesday claiming that the negotiations were progressing "seriously," but accused Israel of "imposing new conditions" on several issues, which allegedly has delayed reaching an agreement. Shortly before the terrorist organization's statement, families of hostages held captive in Gaza delivered a statement from Tel Aviv's Hostages Square, on the 446th day of the war.

After Hamas' statement, the Prime Minister's Office issued its own statement which said that "The Hamas terrorist organization continues to lie, is reneging on understandings that have already been reached, and is continuing to create difficulties in the negotiations. However, Israel will continue its relentless efforts to return all of our hostages."

Hamas addressed the negotiations, claiming that "negotiations on the cease-fire and prisoner exchange are continuing seriously in Doha, with Qatari and Egyptian mediation, and the movement has shown responsibility and flexibility." In addition, the terrorist organization claimed that Israel "has posed new issues and conditions related to withdrawal (from areas in Gaza), a cease-fire, hostages, and the return of displaced persons (to the northern Gaza Strip), which is delaying the achievement of the agreement - which was achievable."

At the same time, Egyptian sources claimed to the Qatari newspaper Al-Araby Al-Jadeed that "the cease-fire negotiations in Gaza are 'steps away from the finish line.' Agreements have been reached on the points that were in dispute during the last negotiation period." According to the sources, "one of the points that is expected to be resolved is the one related to the lists of hostages and prisoners," and they added that "there is a proposal to delay the release of a list of 10 prisoners with heavy sentences whose names were provided by Hamas, including Marwan Barghouti."

Earlier, the Hostages and Missing Families Forum announced that the statement by their representatives comes "against the backdrop of various reports regarding negotiations for the return of their loved ones."

'There will be no victory and no security until they return'

In her statement, Yishi Miren Lavie, wife of hostage Omri Miren, emphasized that "446 days ago, Omri was kidnapped in front of my eyes and in front of our little daughters' eyes, after we were held hostage for a few hours as a family. Some 446 days ago, I joined the community. A community that no one wants to be a part of. A community of more than 200 families. The community of the families of the kidnapped. Some 446 days ago, I did not even understand the magnitude, I did not even know how long this terrible journey together would continue."

"Today, after 446 days, I know that I will never be able to disconnect from this community," she added.. "But I also know that the terrible journey that was forced upon us must end and the journey of rehabilitation must begin. For everyone. Everyone must be saved, everyone must return, whether it is to the embrace of the family or to a proper burial in an Israeli grave. I call out to the decision-makers - think of Roni and my mother. Hear them in your head as I hear them every day - 'Where is Dad?' 'When will Dad come

back?', 'I want Dad.' Think of all the little children who are just waiting for a hug from their father, grandfather, aunt. Think of all the children of the State of Israel who have been denied the right to lead a normal life and who have been living in a state of war for more than a year.

"And my Omri, if this reaches you - like 446 days ago, today too: I love you, I'm waiting for you and I'm watching over our girls. I promised you with a farewell look then and I promise you today too, we will do everything until you return, until you see Roni and Alma running toward you. Until you hear the word 'father' again. We don't give up, we don't despair and we won't stop as one community fighting until everyone is here."

Shir Sigal, Keith's daughter, said she is making the statement "as the daughter of Keith, who over a year ago was certain that he would be the next to be released home - a moment after he and my mother were brutally separated when she was returned to Israel in a deal." According to her: "There are moments in history when every decision is fateful, and these days are exactly like that. Every moment of postponement or hesitation, every delay in negotiations or in the process of returning our brothers and sisters home - could cost human lives and prevent us from being able to return the murdered and fallen for a proper burial in our country."

Shir added that "from the stories of my mother and other hostages who were returned, and also according to all professional sources - it is absolutely clear: the hostages do not have time. We must return them home before the harsh winter in the tunnels. My mother, Aviva, survived 51 days of hell in Hamas captivity - and miraculously returned home. Since she was returned, she has been breathing this pain every moment. Her pain has no respite - pain for my father, her husband, and for all the children, parents, brothers and sisters who are still there."

Yuval Or, whose son was killed and whose grandchildren were kidnapped to Gaza, said: "We did not choose to lose our son. We did not choose for our grandchildren to be kidnapped. But now we have a choice - to continue the cycle of blood or to stop it. We choose to stop."

On Tuesday night it was reported that negotiations for a deal are continuing, but at the moment there is no certainty whether an agreement has been reached. The possibilities range from an immediate deal within a few days, to no deal at all. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said regarding the return of the negotiating team from Doha that "the negotiating team, which includes senior officials from the Mossad, Shin Bet and IDF, will return to Israel from Qatar, after a significant week of negotiations. The team returned for internal consultations in Israel regarding the continuation of negotiations for the return of our hostages." The statement did not provide further details.

In Israel, officials emphasized that the return of the team after 10 days in Qatar does not indicate a breakdown in talks. Following a prolonged negotiation process, the team now needs to conduct consultations. Israeli officials are placing blame on Hamas in Gaza, particularly on the leader of Hamas' military wing, Mohammed Sinwar, for creating difficulties and refusing to provide a full list of hostages, allegedly in an attempt to extract further concessions.

"There's no collapse of the talks, but we've reached a point where decisions need to be made in Israel whether to continue with a deal without the lists," said an Israeli official

familiar with the details. “ Hamas has consistently lied. Even last time, Hamas claimed it had no women among the hostages, which was false. The question now is whether to play into their hands. We need a solid foundation to proceed with the deal, to determine whether we are releasing prisoners in exchange for bodies or live hostages. The terms are different, and we won’t start an agreement based on lies.”

12.25.24 – We

Israel expands rocket alert zones as Houthi missile attacks persist

12.25.24 – We

Israel expands rocket alert zones as Houthi missile attacks persist

Houthi missile launches trigger growing alarm zones, from 68 localities last Thursday to 169 overnight; following failed Tel Aviv interception, IDF expanded alerts, sending over 300,000 more residents to shelters compared to previous night
Saar Haas|07:13

For the fourth time in a week, a ballistic missile launched from Yemen triggered alarms across central Israel overnight. Millions of residents in 169 localities, including Beit Shemesh, Modiin, Ra’anana and Ramat Hasharon, were awakened by sirens at 4:22 a.m., marking the broadest alert coverage yet.

The expanded alert system follows a failed interception on Saturday night, when a Houthi missile struck a school in Ramat Efal. The IDF acknowledged the delayed alert in that incident and announced adjustments to ensure wider warning zones. “Lessons have been learned and implemented,” the military said.

The new policy’s impact has been immediate. Compared to 143 localities affected the previous night, alarms were heard in 169 localities early Wednesday morning. This policy aims to mitigate risks from falling interceptor debris, which in recent incidents caused damage in residential areas, including Be’er Ya’akov.

The IDF said that the latest missile was intercepted before entering Israeli airspace, with alarms activated as a precaution against potential falling debris. However, the expanded alert zones meant over 300,000 additional residents were directed to shelters compared to earlier missile launches.

Until recently, alarms were not sounded for missiles intercepted outside Israeli territory. For example, two Houthi missile launches earlier this month were intercepted without triggering sirens. The IDF explained that the change was prompted by recent incidents, including the Ramat Efal strike, where a missile warhead breached the defense system and caused significant damage.

The new approach reflects a balancing act between safety and the disruption caused by frequent alarms. “The updated alert policy ensures maximum protection,” the IDF said, but it has also led to millions of Israelis being awakened almost nightly.

As the Houthi missile campaign intensifies, Israeli authorities face growing challenges in managing both security risks and the psychological toll on the population. For now, the sirens—and the sleepless nights—are unlikely to abate.

12.25.24 – We

Houthi leaders in Israel's sights, as some push for action on Iran

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Houthi leadership in Israel's sights as some push for action on Iran

Israeli lawmakers weighing 2 strategic approaches as tensions escalate; IDF advocates targeting Houthis directly to hold them accountable for their actions, while Mossad contends striking their Iranian patron in Tehran would send far more decisive message
Yossi Yehoshua|06:54

Many Israelis were forced to rush from their beds to the bomb shelter in the dead of night for the fourth time in a week. Although the ballistic missile launched from Yemen Wednesday morning was successfully intercepted, the Houthis continue to establish themselves as a central threat following the cease-fire in the north and the dismantling of much of Hamas' capabilities in the south.

The combination of missiles and drones in this sector has created a reality where sirens sound every other day and even at night.

As anticipated in Israel, the third Israeli Air Force strike in Yemen has only increased the Houthis' appetite to continue launching attacks. The Houthis even added a new drone infiltration route to the one they previously used — via the Mediterranean, crossing the Sinai Peninsula to Gaza and then to the western Negev.

Meanwhile, Israel is still debating whether to strike Iran, as proposed by Mossad Director David Barnea, or Yemen, as suggested by the IDF. Barnea presented his proposal to the Security Cabinet, arguing that such a move could deter the Houthis and pressure Tehran to rein in their Yemeni branch.

However, a senior IDF official countered, claiming that Iran's influence over the Houthis is not comparable to its hold over Hezbollah, describing the Houthis as "a kind of independent and unruly child." According to the official, such a strike would not achieve the goal of deterring the Houthis and could instead reopen a direct front with Iran. Barnea believes Iran is currently deterred by Israel, especially after the latest strike and even more so on the cusp of U.S. President-elect Donald Trump's return to the White House. Defense Minister Israel Katz addressed the issue twice within 12 hours, reiterating that Israel would target the Houthis without mentioning Iran.

"We won't tolerate the Houthis continuing to fire on the State of Israel," Katz said. "We'll deal with the Houthi leaders in Sanaa and across Yemen." Indeed, targeting the

organization's leadership is a potential option, aligned with a policy where indiscriminate fire from Yemen toward Israel may be met with a similarly broad response.

The challenges in this sector are well-known, with intelligence gaps being the foremost issue — not because the IDF's intelligence and Mossad have neglected the threat but because they've faced far more urgent missions in Lebanon, Syria, Iran and Gaza.

The second challenge is the distance, which makes strikes complex and costly. On the other hand, these operations serve as live training for potential strikes in Iran. Throughout the war, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has almost always sided with the Mossad chief's position over the military's when disagreements arose. These decisions have proven effective, as seen in operations like the pager operation and Hassan Nasrallah's elimination. It's possible Netanyahu will align with Barnea's approach again. In the meantime, nighttime alarms courtesy of Yemen are likely to continue.

12.25.24 – We

Syria charm is fooling the West; a unified rebel mirrors extremist leadership

12.25.24 – We

Israel concerned Syria's 'charm offensive' fooling the West
IDF demands Syrian villagers surrender weapons; Israel warns US about extremist Islamists in Syria's new government despite Ahmad al-Sharaa's conciliatory tone; The 'Houthi dilemma' adds further challenges
Itamar Eichner|06:38

As Donald Trump avoids commenting on U.S. operations in Syria, Israeli officials express concern over what they perceive as excessive enthusiasm from the outgoing American administration toward Syrian rebel leader Ahmad al-Sharaa, formerly known as Abu Mohammed al-Golani.

Direct dialogue between the U.S. and the rebels has been ongoing since the fall of the Assad regime, culminating in the lifting of a \$10 million bounty on al-Sharaa's head, once placed for his jihadist activities.

While Washington acknowledges Israel's security concerns, it advocates giving the new Syrian government under al-Sharaa a chance. Israeli officials, however, remain cautious, saying, "The burden of proof is on al-Sharaa and his team. We must not forget their ideological roots."

The IDF is currently active in the buffer zone and the Syrian Golan Heights, areas it secured after Assad's fall. Tensions in local villages have risen, despite some cooperation.

In Jubata al-Hashab, IDF troops reportedly demanded residents surrender their weapons, promising military action if compliance was not met within 48 hours. Similar incidents occurred in other villages, including Khader and Maariah, where protests over the weekend led to clashes.

Israel's immediate priority is securing its northern border communities. Officials believe the IDF should maintain its presence while monitoring the new Syrian government's alliances and regional dynamics.

Al-Sharaa has publicly emphasized inclusivity, pledging parliamentary representation for all ethnic groups and avoiding conflict with Israel, Druze, Alawites or Turks. However, Israeli skepticism runs high, especially following the October 7 attacks, with concerns over a potential "charm offensive" masking ulterior motives.

Al-Sharaa, formerly affiliated with al-Qaeda and once the leader of Jabhat al-Nusra, has distanced himself from extremist Sunni terror groups, embracing Syrian nationalism instead. While he speaks of a unified, democratic Syria, Israeli officials question his ability to deliver on these promises.

Locals protest Israeli presence in southern Syria

Meanwhile, Israel anticipates eventual tension with the new Syrian government over its presence in the buffer zone, particularly as al-Sharaa consolidates power. Observers suggest that adherence to the 1974 Disengagement Agreement could stabilize the region if Syrian forces refrain from threatening Israel, a dynamic that held for nearly five decades under Assad.

Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar expressed doubts during a classified session of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee: "The new Damascus government mirrors Idlib's extremist leadership. They present themselves as moderate to the West, which is eager to legitimize them to facilitate refugee repatriation."

Israel continues quiet dialogue with Turkey, whose interests in Syria are significant. Talks between Israeli intelligence agencies, including the Mossad and Shin Bet, and Turkey's MIT intelligence service are underway. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has called for a policy review on relations with Turkey amid these discussions.

The Houthi challenge

The Houthis have intensified their missile launches toward Israel, with millions in central Israel awakened by alarms four times in the past week. A missile struck a school in Ramat Efa, while another landed near residential buildings in Tel Aviv, causing significant damage.

Israel faces a strategic dilemma amid these attacks, with factors including the upcoming U.S. administration change on January 20, the Houthis' distant location complicating military action and the broader desire to address threats from Iran.

Currently, U.S.-Israeli cooperation against the Houthis remains close. The U.S. leads a coalition of 12 nations targeting Houthi operations at sea, but its effectiveness has waned. With fewer commercial ships traversing the Red Sea and Suez Canal, the Houthis have largely shifted focus away from maritime attacks.

Israeli officials note the Houthis are emboldened, in contrast to low morale among other Iranian-aligned groups, which have faced significant setbacks. Once obscure, the Houthi militia is now gaining support in the Arab world and has been sustaining operations against Israel for over a year.

Israel plans to engage with the incoming Trump administration on addressing both the Houthi threat and the broader Iranian issue. Meanwhile, Sa'ar has launched a diplomatic campaign to expand the international designation of the Houthis as a terrorist organization.

Already labeled a terrorist group in the U.S., Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, the UAE, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and Israel, Sa'ar emphasized the global risk they pose. "The Houthis are a threat not just to Israel but to the region and world order. Their direct attacks on one of the world's busiest shipping lanes challenge international stability. Declaring them a terrorist organization is the first and necessary step," he said.

Amid this backdrop, Defense Minister Israel Katz visited an Arrow missile defense battery with Air Defense Command head Brig. Gen. Gilad Biran. Katz praised the unit for their success in intercepting a ballistic missile launched by the Houthis overnight. Katz received an operational briefing from 136th Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Eyal Frankel and other officers. "Israel has the best air defenses in the world," Katz said. "Millions rely on you. They wake up to alarms but trust you to handle the threat. We won't tolerate continued Houthi attacks on Israel. Just as we dealt with Sinwar in Gaza, Haniyeh in Tehran and Nasrallah in Beirut, we will deal with Houthi leaders in Sanaa and across Yemen."

Katz added, "We will target their infrastructure and leadership to eliminate the threat. Those sponsoring Houthi terror in Hodeidah or Sanaa will pay the full price. We trust only the IDF to protect our citizens and won't allow new threats to emerge. Today's missile warfare is the first of its kind, and you will continue defending Israel's skies while we strike decisively to remove these threats."

12.24.24 – Tu

Negotiating team returns from Qatar: Israel struggles to understand Hamas' angle

12.24.24 – Tu

Negotiating team returns from Qatar: Israel struggles to understand Hamas' angle
Team returns after a 'significant week' of negotiations, Prime Minister's Office says, without providing further details; Most deal components are nearly finalized, but Hamas continues to refuse to provide a complete list of living hostages
Itamar Eichner|15:14

The Gaza cease-fire negotiating team, which includes senior officials from the Mossad, Shin Bet, and IDF, "will return to Israel from Qatar after a significant week of talks," the Prime Minister's Office reported on Tuesday evening.

"The team is returning for internal consultations in Israel regarding the continuation of the negotiations for the return of our hostages," the Prime Minister's Office said in a statement, with no further details provided.

Negotiations for the release of hostages held by Hamas, who have been held in captivity for 445 days, are ongoing, but it remains unclear whether an agreement will be reached. The possibilities range from an immediate deal in the coming days to no agreement at all. In Israel, officials emphasized that the return of the team after 10 days in Qatar does not indicate a breakdown in talks. Following a prolonged negotiation process, the team now needs to conduct consultations. Israeli officials are placing blame on Hamas in Gaza, particularly on the leader of Hamas' military wing, Mohammed Sinwar, for creating difficulties and refusing to provide a full list of hostages, allegedly in an attempt to extract further concessions.

“There’s no collapse of the talks, but we’ve reached a point where decisions need to be made in Israel whether to continue with a deal without the lists,” said an Israeli official familiar with the details. “Hamas has consistently lied. Even last time, Hamas claimed it had no women among the hostages, which was false. The question now is whether to play into their hands. We need a solid foundation to proceed with the deal, to determine whether we are releasing prisoners in exchange for bodies or live hostages. The terms are different, and we won’t start an agreement based on lies.”

Ruby Chen, the father of soldier Itay Chen, who is among the hostages, expressed his frustration, saying he is waiting for Hamas' response. He also noted that Prime Minister Netanyahu's recent statement in The Wall Street Journal – saying he would not agree to a cease-fire until Hamas is removed – did not help foster trust between the parties.

The gap between Israel and Hamas on the terms of the deal reportedly is not large, which allows for the possibility of an agreement. Both sides seem to agree on certain issues, such as the Philadelphi Corridor and the Rafah Crossing, as well as the terms of the cease-fire and the gradual release of hostages.

There is also consensus on what is required from Israel in the deal. What is required from Hamas, however, is to release a full list of live hostages, which would include categories such as women, children, soldiers, the elderly, sick and injured. A previous list of 33 hostages included some who have since died, and Noga Argamani, who was rescued. Israeli officials estimate that a significant number of hostages will be released in the first phase of the deal, a demand to which Hamas is refusing to agree so far.

A delicate negotiation

The key question now for Israel is whether Hamas truly wants a deal. This remains the primary point of contention in the talks and, with no clear resolution in sight, the outcome remains uncertain. It could happen tomorrow – or never.

Israeli officials believe Hamas will not give up. But the group may find it difficult to relinquish its hold on such valuable assets – its living hostages — even though its members face no real danger.

If some of the hostages are released, Hamas will be left with what is often called a "Gilad Shalit" situation, referring to the Israeli soldier released in a 2011 deal in exchange for 1,027 prisoners. This leaves many wondering what Hamas intends to do next. It is possible they believe Israel lacks the strength to press its demands.

Egyptians, Qataris and Americans are all putting pressure on Hamas, but so far, it has not responded.

While there had been optimism in recent days due to ongoing daily communication with Hamas and some progress in talks, it is now difficult to predict what will happen.

According to sources, if an agreement is reached, the release of hostages would happen immediately once a cease-fire begins, with the first phase likely to take place within a day or two.

12.24.24 – Tu

Israel signs deal to buy more Arrow-3 interceptors to counter Houthi threat

12.24.24 – Tu

Israel signs multi-billion deal to buy more Arrow-3 interceptors to counter Houthi threat

Defense Ministry purchased a new stock of Arrow-3 interceptors from the Israel Aerospace Industries to enhance protection against ballistic missile threats; Each interceptor costs approximately \$4 million, and the move follows an uptick in missile attacks by the Houthis from Yemen

Yossi Yehoshua|13:40

The Defense Ministry and Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) signed a major production contract Wednesday to expand the supply of Arrow-3 missile defense interceptors for the Israeli military.

The deal, valued at billions of shekels, marks a significant boost to Israel's air defense capabilities. The agreement, led by the Israel Missile Defense Organization (IMDO) within the Directorate of Defense Research and Development (DDR&D), will provide the IDF with a large number of Arrow-3 interceptors.

The signing ceremony, held at the Defense Ministry headquarters in Tel Aviv, was attended by Maj. Gen. (Res.) Eyal Zamir, director general of the ministry; Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Dr. Daniel Gold, head of the DDR&D; IAI CEO Boaz Levy; and other senior officials.

The Arrow system, which includes the Arrow-2 and Arrow-3 interceptors, was jointly developed by Israel and the United States to counter long-range ballistic missile threats. During recent conflicts, the system demonstrated exceptional performance, intercepting ballistic missiles with high success rates.

The Arrow-3 achieved a historic milestone during the current war, becoming the first system to conduct an operational interception in space. It played a critical role in defending against missile barrages from Iran and the Houthi militia in Yemen, including on April 14, 2024 and October 1, 2024.

“The Arrow-3 system has proven to be an unparalleled defense asset,” Zamir said. “With this agreement, we reaffirm our commitment to Israeli innovation and the security of our nation.”

The Arrow-3 program is a cornerstone of Israel's multi-layered missile defense strategy, which also includes David's Sling and Iron Dome. IAI leads the system's development through its MLM Division, with support from U.S. partner Stark Aerospace and Israeli firms such as Elbit Systems, Tomer and Rafael.

Zamir emphasized the dual benefits of the deal, noting that it would not only bolster national security but also inject billions into the local economy, supporting thousands of jobs.

Boaz Levy, CEO of IAI, highlighted the technological achievements of the system. "The Arrow-3 is a testament to Israel's innovative spirit and strategic cooperation with the U.S. It operates at exceptional altitudes with unmatched precision, reinforcing our defense capabilities and ensuring a technological edge over adversaries," Levy said.

Defense Minister Israel Katz called the agreement a "strategic milestone," adding: "This deal reflects the strength of Israel's defense industry and the groundbreaking capabilities of the Arrow-3 system, which has set a global standard in missile defense."

Gold praised the Arrow-3 as "the pinnacle of Israeli technology," noting its role in countering extensive ballistic barrages during the war.

"This system is not just a technological marvel but a symbol of Israel's resilience and strategic superiority," Gold said.

The agreement underscores the Ministry of Defense's commitment to advancing Israel's defense infrastructure while supporting its technological independence, the ministry said in a statement. Officials say the deal will ensure the IDF remains prepared for emerging threats and maintains its qualitative edge on the battlefield.

12.24.24 – Tu

Raid on hospital in Jabaliya north Gaza: Terrorists eliminated, arrested

12.24.24 – Tu

Raid on a hospital in Jabaliya: Terrorists eliminated, arrested

For the first time since last December the IDF operated at the Indonesian Hospital in northern Gaza; "Over the past month, terrorists carried out attacks against IDF troops from the area of the hospital," according to the IDF; Patients and staff were evacuated in coordination with the IDF

Yoav Zitun|11:08

IDF and Shin Bet forces killed five terrorists and arrested dozens more in the area of the Indonesian hospital in Jabaliya in the northern Gaza Strip, as part of a targeted counterterrorism operation that began overnight. According to the IDF and Shin Bet, one of the terrorists arrested participated in the October 7 massacre.

The mission was carried out by soldiers from the Givati Brigade, under the command of Division 162, following preliminary intelligence information from Military Intelligence

and the Shin Bet about the presence of terrorists and terrorist infrastructure in the hospital area. The operation has ended, the IDF spokesperson announced on Tuesday evening.

According to a statement from the IDF and Shin Bet, over the past month, terrorist attacks have been carried out from the area of the hospital area, anti-tank missile attacks. Terrorists also planted explosive devices and booby traps in the area surrounding the hospital's compound.

To minimize harm to the civilian population in the area, the forces allowed residents, patients, and hospital staff to evacuate in an orderly manner before and during the operation, according to the IDF. The evacuation was coordinated by the IDF's Gaza District Coordination and Liaison Administration, together with local health system officials, and via defined evacuation routes and with ambulances for transportation to additional hospitals in the Gaza Strip to ensure continued medical treatment.

The army emphasizes that "the operation was conducted after multiple warnings were issued to the Gazan Health Ministry regarding terrorist activity being conducted inside the hospital. The troops operated while mitigating harm to uninvolved civilians and enabling the activities of the hospital to continue as much as possible." The military activity in the area was carried out for the first time since December 2023. The IDF added that this is "a further example of how the Hamas terrorist organization systematically violates international law by exploiting civilian infrastructure and the Gazan population as human shields for its terrorist activities."

12.24.24 – Tu

IDF cleared a third corridor in northern Gaza, creating a pathway to the sea

12.24.24 – Tu

Satellite images reveal IDF corridor in northern Gaza: 'Half of Jabaliya gone' Experts say tactic mirrors Netzarim Corridor but targets densely populated urban areas; one-third of buildings razed, one-eighth of pre-war population remains
Ynet|06:28

Fresh satellite imagery shows Israel carried out mass demolition and erected military fortifications in residential areas of northern Gaza, The Washington Post reported on Monday.

The operations, which began October 5 in Jabaliya, Beit Lahia and Beit Hanoun, have displaced tens of thousands of Palestinians, with Israel stating the campaign will continue "as long as necessary."

According to the UN, over 100,000 Palestinians have fled the area in the past 11 weeks, leaving fewer than 50,000 residents—one-eighth of the pre-war population. Humanitarian groups reported severe restrictions on aid reaching the region.

Satellite images show entire neighborhoods razed, new roads constructed and extensive military fortifications established. Almost half of Jabaliya's refugee camp has been destroyed or cleared, with a military corridor now connecting western and eastern roads, creating a pathway from the sea to the Israeli border.

Experts likened the new corridor to the Netzarim Corridor, which once split Gaza into two. However, they noted that unlike the primarily agricultural areas of the Netzarim Corridor, these operations are in densely populated urban zones, describing it as "the demolition of Palestinian cities."

Destruction in Jabaliya: Nearly half of the refugee camp razed or 'cleared out' between October 14 and December 15

The IDF has reportedly built elevated defense platforms for nearly 150 military vehicles around Jabaliya by late October, with additional fortifications and roads appearing in satellite images through mid-December.

Palestinian residents and UN satellite data show over 5,000 buildings in Jabaliya, 3,600 in Beit Lahia and 2,000 in Beit Hanoun have been razed since the war began. Despite Israeli warnings delivered via leaflets, phone calls and drones urging civilians to evacuate, residents said, "There is no refuge from Israeli strikes."

Human rights groups have criticized the mass evacuations, saying IDF actions align with strategies outlined in the controversial "Generals' Plan," which proposed designating northern Gaza a closed military zone, forcing mass evacuations and besieging the area until terrorists surrendered or were killed.

Israel has denied allegations of forced displacement. Defense Minister Israel Katz and Strategic Affairs Minister Ron Dermer wrote to the Biden administration, saying, "Israel does not have a policy of forcibly evacuating civilians from Gaza, including the north." The Post highlighted statements from former defense minister Moshe Ya'alon accusing the IDF of "ethnic cleansing" and "war crimes." Palestinian accounts detailed relentless attacks on civilian neighborhoods, mass separations during evacuations and alleged abuse of those trying to flee.

A U.S. State Department spokesperson told reporters last week that they had "not seen" evidence of forced evacuations in Gaza, adding that such actions would constitute a "red line" for the U.S. government.

Satellite imagery also revealed significant changes to Gaza's geography, with IDF fortifications mirroring tactics used in past buffer zones, such as the Netzarim Corridor and Philadelphi Corridor.

The military corridor now divides northern Gaza, enabling what one expert described as "more systematic clearing operations" while imposing de facto borders restricting movement to the south. Satellite images show increasing destruction in Beit Lahia between November 15 and December 15.

With the war ongoing, negotiations over cease-fires and hostage exchanges remain contentious. Hamas has demanded that families be allowed to return to northern Gaza as part of any truce, a key sticking point in talks with Israel.

12.24.24 – Tu

PA security bans Al Jazeera broadcasts, presenting hostile mercenaries as heroes

12.24.24 – Tu

Palestinian Authority bans Al Jazeera in West Bank over terror crackdown coverage
Palestinian movement says decision comes following Qatari outlet's slanted coverage of
clashes between its security forces and terrorists in Jenin
Einav Halabi|02:10

The Fatah movement on Monday issued a ban on Qatari news outlet Al Jazeera and prohibited its entry into the West Bank, citing the channel's coverage of the Palestinian Authority's operations in the Jenin refugee camp as incitement against Palestinian security forces. The forces are leading an operation targeting armed terrorists affiliated with Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ).

The channel, which has become a mouthpiece for the Hamas terrorist organization, systematically portrays the Palestinian Authority negatively and incites against the security forces' activities in a manner that endangers their lives. Al Jazeera personnel were barred from covering the funeral of an officer killed in the Jenin refugee camp on Tuesday.

"To all Al Jazeera employees working in Palestinian territories, we hope you reflect on your actions and resign from this biased channel that has destroyed and continues to destroy the Arab world," Fatah wrote to the channel's staff.

"Al Jazeera floods the media with lies, especially in Palestine, siding with a group of hostile mercenaries in the Jenin camp and trying to present them as heroes resisting the occupation," it added. The statement was directed at Al Jazeera staff operating in Palestinian territories where the channel continues its activities.

This comes after Israel's court determined that the broadcasts posed a significant threat to national security back in June, leading to the suspension of the channel's broadcasts and operations in Israel under an order issued by the Communications Ministry.

12.24.24 – Tu

West Bank attack statistics decline in 2024 amid IDF operations & PA security

12.24.24 – Tu

'Terror meets the army': West Bank attacks decline amid IDF operations
Military data from 2024 shows number of West Bank terror attacks lowered significantly
year-on-year amid increased military operations and lessons learned from October 7
Elisha Ben Kimon|01:00

A significant decline in West Bank terror incidents was seen throughout 2024 as seen by recent military data. According to security officials, "only" 254 terror attacks took place compared to 847 in 2023 and 342 in 2022. The data also showed other violent incidents including hurling rocks and incidents also reduced with 1,188 incidents in 2024 compared to 3,256 in 2023 and 3,779 in 2022.

However, the number of Israeli casualties, including civilians and IDF soldiers, remained relatively stable over the past three years. Some 497 Palestinians were killed in clashes with the IDF in 2024, compared to 504 in 2023 and 155 in 2022.

Security officials claimed 97% of those killed were terrorists. Some 2,350 Hamas operatives have been arrested by the IDF Central Command since the war in Gaza began on October 7, 2023.

Jewish nationalist crime incidents also decreased, with 663 recorded in 2024 compared to 1,045 in 2023 and 947 in 2022. Whether this reflects a drop in activity or enforcement is unclear.

IDF Central Command chief Maj. Gen. Avi Bluth coined the term "terror meets the army – civilians live routine," guiding the IDF's strategy to push terror threats away from communities and roads.

The IDF identified high-risk areas in the region and implemented engineering measures to distance Palestinian villages and potential terrorists from Israeli locations. The army also established positions deep in Palestinian territory and restricted its divisions operating in the area, reducing civilian friction.

After lessons learned from October 7, Jewish settlements were provided with weapons to ensure readiness in extreme scenarios until the military arrives. The West Bank barrier has also been bolstered, with significant sections rebuilt and new technologies are being implemented to aid forces.

The nature of terror in the West Bank has evolved over recent years. In 2015, a wave of "lone wolf" attacks—unaffiliated individuals committing stabbings—proved hard to preempt and often inspired copycat attacks.

While this phenomenon persists to a lesser degree, local terror cells directed by Hamas and other terror organizations have resurged, leading to a rise in suicide attacks, especially via car bombings.

In the past three years, a new threat has emerged: armed groups hidden in refugee camps. These groups, especially in the northern West Bank, operate like small terror organizations with hierarchical structures. Backed by substantial funding, they've set up command centers, hideouts and infrastructure.

Terror camps are equipped with surveillance cameras and explosive traps, with terrorists often engaging the IDF in firefights. This model was inspired by the Lion's Den terror group in Nablus, which was dismantled by Israeli forces in 2022, though its successors remain active.

While these "camp brigades" lack unified coordination, Hamas and Iran fund and attempt to influence them.

Palestinian Authority security forces in Jenin

Armed parades in refugee camps, often just minutes from central Israel, present another challenge. These events are typically surrounded by civilians, making immediate responses complex. However, security forces identify and target the terrorists after the fact.

Jordan's eastern border with Israel poses its own difficulties. Despite the peace agreement with the country, Iran and Hamas frequently attempt to smuggle advanced weapons through the region.

This is often done by smugglers tossing weapons over the fence, later retrieved by Palestinians or Israeli Arabs. To counter this, the IDF has established a new division along the border, implemented new technological measures and enhanced cooperation with Jordanian forces.

The Palestinian Authority's (PA) security forces have been conducting operations against armed terrorists in Jenin and Tulkarm refugee camps for nearly two weeks. Progress has been relatively positive, though it's too early to determine its outcome. The PA aims to demonstrate governance and order, hoping the operation will bolster its case for taking control of Gaza after the war.

12.23.24 – Mo

Yemen Houthi leadership decapitation and precision attacks could shift the balance

12.23.24 – Mo

'The Houthis cannot be deterred': The militia that defies the US and challenges the world Yemeni rebels threaten Israel and global stability, paralyzing Red Sea trade despite US-led strikes; senior US officials express 'shock' over their advanced weapons, raising fears of increased Iranian support; Trump's return may signal tougher US stance
Ynet|14:00

In one of the most dangerous incidents for U.S. forces in the Middle East since the onset of the war in Gaza, a U.S. Navy F/A-18 fighter jet was accidentally shot down over the Red Sea by an American warship over the weekend. The incident coincided with U.S. airstrikes targeting Houthi positions in the Yemeni capital, Sanaa.

Both pilots safely ejected and were rescued, while the Houthi rebels quickly claimed responsibility for the downing. However, the Pentagon has not clarified whether the friendly fire was directly linked to the ongoing combat against the Iranian-backed group.

The episode underscores the broader challenge posed by Iranian proxies, not only to Israel but also to the United States and the international community.

Since the October 7 Hamas attack on Israel, the Houthis have launched what they describe as a campaign of "support for Gaza." This campaign has included barrages of

missiles and swarms of drones targeting Israel—some of which caused casualties—and strikes on civilian vessels in the Red Sea, effectively crippling one of the world's critical trade routes. One civilian ship was even seized.

The Houthi attacks place the Biden administration in a difficult position, as they coincide with U.S. efforts to mediate an end to Yemen's civil war and the Saudi-Houthi conflict. That war, which has killed tens of thousands of civilians in Saudi airstrikes, failed to defeat the Iranian-aligned militia.

President Joe Biden removed the Houthis from the U.S. list of terrorist organizations upon entering office, and a UN-brokered cease-fire between the Houthis and Saudi Arabia was reached in 2022. Over the past year, the U.S. has avoided direct, large-scale attacks on Houthi targets, seeking to preserve diplomatic efforts and prevent broader escalation in the region.

Still, Washington formed an international coalition to conduct limited strikes aimed at deterring Houthi activity in the Red Sea. Israel, meanwhile, has expressed frustration over what it perceives as insufficient U.S. actions against the militia.

Israel largely refrained from responding to Houthi attacks for months but launched its first strike in July, followed by additional attacks in September and last week. These strikes targeted strategic sites such as energy facilities and ports. Yet the Houthis vowed to continue their missile and drone campaigns.

Earlier Monday, the IDF intercepted a drone launched from Yemen—following two failed interceptions of ballistic missiles last week. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu urged Israelis to “remain patient and steadfast” and hinted at a coordinated international effort against the Houthis, possibly involving expanded U.S. operations.

“We will act with strength, determination and ingenuity,” Netanyahu said Monday.

“Even if it takes time, the result will be the same as with other terrorist arms.” He promised that Israel's recent strike in Yemen “will not be the last.”

As tensions remain high, the possibility of intensified U.S. and allied action could grow, particularly with President-elect Donald Trump set to re-enter the White House next month.

However, the U.S.-led coalition's ability to deter the Houthis has come into question as they had shown resilience against years of relentless Saudi airstrikes, often disregarding the severe suffering of Yemeni civilians. Two-thirds of Yemen's population lives under Houthi control.

A report Monday in The Wall Street Journal highlighted growing concerns in Washington and among international allies over the Houthis' acquisition of advanced missile and drone technologies from Iran. Western sources have also alleged Russian involvement, pointing to intelligence about Western ships in the Red Sea supplying the Houthis.

According to a U.S. defense official cited in the report, the coalition has destroyed 450 Houthi-launched drones. Despite these efforts, the Houthis' technological capabilities continue to pose significant challenges, exemplified by last week's failure of Israel's missile defense systems to intercept two ballistic missiles. One struck a school in Ramat Efal, while the other hit a playground in Tel Aviv.

The missile launched from Yemen to Israel last week, which struck Ramat Efal. As noted by Ynet military analyst Rob Ben-Yishai, experts who spoke to The Journal believe that the Houthis on Saturday fired a derivative of an Iranian-made ballistic missile with a maneuverable re-entry vehicle, designed to evade defense systems. “The scale, nature and extent of transfers of diverse military materiel and technology provided to the Houthis from external sources, including financial support and training of its combatants, is unprecedented,” a United Nations report said in November.

William LaPlante, the U.S. undersecretary of defense for acquisition and sustainment, warned last month that the Houthis “are getting scary” and that he was “just shocked” at technologies they now have access to. The rapid evolution of the Houthis’ capabilities has alarmed analysts. “In 2004, they were a besieged group hiding in the mountains,” said Mohammed Albasha, a U.S.-based Middle East security analyst for Basha Report. “Now, they’re chasing U.S. carriers with drones and missiles and striking 2,000 kilometers away in central Israel.” This transformation, analysts say, could intensify if Iran increases its support for the Houthis as it faces setbacks in Lebanon and Syria. Even if the U.S. escalates its operations, experts question whether the Houthis can be deterred.

Osamah Al Rawhani, a director for the Yemen-based Sana’a Center for Strategic Studies, an independent think tank, told The Wall Street Journal: “The Houthis don’t care what they lose as Yemenis. They want to win as a militia and take on global powers.”

Dr. Yoel Guzansky, a senior researcher at Israel’s Institute for National Security Studies (INSS), echoed the sentiment. The Houthis “don’t have a lot to lose” and “They cannot be deterred.”

Trump has not yet outlined specific plans to address the Houthi threat. However, during his election campaign, Trump subtly criticized the Biden administration’s military actions in the region, writing in August in a post on X that “Bombs are dropping all over the place” in the Middle East. Given his hardline stance on Iran, analysts anticipate a tougher U.S. policy on the Houthis under his leadership.

Mike Waltz, Trump’s incoming national security advisor, signaled this shift during a podcast interview with conservative commentator Ben Shapiro, promising to re-designate the Houthis as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO). “They remain an outstanding issue,” Waltz said. “I guarantee what you’re going to see very soon is a redesignation of them for what they are — a terrorist organization.”

President Biden removed the Houthis from the FTO list shortly after taking office, citing humanitarian concerns and the need to facilitate aid deliveries to Yemen’s civilians amid a dire humanitarian crisis. The FTO designation, first implemented by Trump in the waning days of his first term, carried severe sanctions, including penalties for any entities providing material support to the group.

In January 2023, following renewed Houthi attacks, Biden placed them on the less severe Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) list, which imposes sanctions but lacks the sweeping restrictions of FTO classification. Critics have argued that the SDGT label does not do enough to curb the group’s aggression.

Ben-Yishai predicted that Trump would lift the operational constraints Biden placed on U.S. forces in Yemen, potentially paving the way for a coordinated U.S.-Israel campaign to neutralize the Houthi threat.

Such a strategy could involve targeting the Houthis' leadership and degrading their ballistic missiles, drones, launch systems and production facilities—actions that Ben-Yishai said would mirror successful Israeli operations against Hezbollah's strategic assets in Lebanon and the Assad regime's capabilities in Syria.

Israel would likely require significant cooperation from U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) and the U.S. Navy's Fifth Fleet, which operates in the region with aircraft carriers, missile destroyers and other assets. The geographic distance and intelligence challenges make unilateral Israeli action improbable.

Ben-Yishai argued that a coordinated effort could prevent the Houthis from further destabilizing global order and the economy. He noted that while the Houthis are undeterred by strikes on their state infrastructure, leadership decapitation and precision attacks on their military capabilities could shift the balance.

12.23.24 – Mo

Images of RPG use by PA security in Jenin, terrorists confident to brandish weapons

12.23.24 – Mo

Images of alleged RPG use by Palestinian security forces in Jenin raise alarm in Israel. Palestinian Authority denies footage originated in Jenin, claiming such weapons weren't used in their operations; Israeli security reviews suggest otherwise, indicating images likely from Jenin and show weapons seized, not deployed, by PA forces. Einav Halabi, Elisha Ben Kimon, Yoav Zitun | 11:28

Footage circulating on social media on Monday purportedly shows members of Palestinian Authority (PA) security forces wielding RPG launchers in the Jenin refugee camp as part of an ongoing crackdown on local terror groups.

While the PA denied the images were from Jenin, a review by the Israeli security establishment concluded otherwise, indicating that the launchers are likely linked to weapons seized during the PA's internal campaign rather than arms actively used by the forces.

Israeli defense officials are investigating the rare images, which appear to depict a PA special forces operative holding an RPG launcher. Preliminary assessments suggest the weapon has low operational capability and was not used during recent clashes in Jenin. The presence of such weaponry, unprecedented in the West Bank, is considered significant, as similar arms have been smuggled by Iran through the porous border with Jordan.

PA security forces typically operate with AK-47 rifles, a limited number of machine guns and sniper rifles. Requests to Israel for additional arms have been denied in the past year,

despite recommendations from Israeli Central Command to bolster PA forces. Israeli officials speculate the RPG launcher may eventually be handed over to the IDF.

A senior PA official denied the authenticity of the images, alleging they were part of an incitement campaign by rivals such as Hamas or Palestinian Islamic Jihad to fuel public opposition to the PA. "These photos were not taken in Jenin, and PA forces have not used RPGs in the operation," the official told Ynet.

The controversy prompted statements from Israeli regional leaders. Yossi Dagan, head of the Samaria Regional Council, urged immediate military action, saying, "I demand that the defense minister and prime minister immediately launch a ground operation in Jenin, similar to what was carried out in Gaza and the north, to prevent a repeat of the October 7 scenes in Judea and Samaria and central Israel.

"It is no coincidence that Jenin has become the capital of terror. If the terrorists feel confident enough to brandish RPGs and heavy weapons, it means they are testing us. We must respond with an iron fist to stop this threat to Samaria—and from Samaria to the cities of central Israel."

12.23.24 – Mo

Desalination plant, café resort: prepares IDF for extended stay in Gaza

12.23.24 – Mo

Desalination plant, café resort: How IDF prepares for extended stay in Gaza

The IDF has launched a seawater desalination plant in northern Gaza, producing tens of thousands of liters daily for drinking and bathing—the first of its kind in enemy territory; nearby, a retreat center offers soldiers a café, massages, Internet and hotel-style meals, boosting morale during wartime

Yoav Zitun|08:39

Adjacent to a newly operational seawater desalination plant designed to serve soldiers in Gaza, the IDF has constructed a small beachfront retreat for its troops. This unique respite, situated amid the devastation of enemy territory, offers soldiers a rare break from their grueling missions in the Gaza Strip.

The retreat, established 14 months after the tanks and APCs of the Givati and 401st Armored Brigades first breached Gaza's gates on October 27, 2023, is an impressive haven of civilian-style comfort. Set amidst the rubble of the war-torn region, the complex includes artificial turf surrounded by modern, portable buildings. These spaces offer officers and their subordinates a chance to converse in a relaxed, private setting reminiscent of rear-base training facilities in Israel.

Within the facility, soldiers have access to mental health support from counselors and remote consultations with physicians via the Tyto device, as well as on-site care from a nurse and a paramedic. The paramedic, Shami—a 64-year-old reservist and medical assistant at the Tel Aviv Sourasky Medical Center—explains, "We have 99% of the

medications they might need here. It works well." Nearby, a physical therapist provides massages for sore backs and legs, while a mobile dental clinic, staffed by a young dentist and assistant, offers essential care.

Throughout the retreat, beanbags are scattered for lounging. One soldier relaxes with an iced energy drink, while another enjoys a hot cappuccino paired with meringue cookies. Soldiers can shower and use pristine restroom facilities that feel "just like home." In the center of the green lawn, a long table is laden with lavish breakfasts reminiscent of a hotel buffet. For lunch and dinner, a barbecue station operates nonstop, serving more than the standard wings and hotdogs—steaks and other premium cuts are grilled to perfection.

The retreat is adorned with the flags of visiting platoons and battalions, alongside a festive inflatable gateway to welcome each arriving unit. There's even a barber room where soldiers line up for haircuts from a reservist barber who left his business in Be'er Sheva to serve his fellow troops. Additional comforts include a coffee bar with a large espresso machine, popcorn and cotton candy stations, and a lounge offering Belgian waffles and fresh pretzels.

For spiritual nourishment, soldiers can visit a corner stocked with religious texts, teffilin sets, and prayer shawls, offered in a welcoming, non-coercive manner. Hygiene kits—including deodorants, toothbrushes, toothpaste, underwear, and socks—are distributed, alongside an area to upgrade personal combat gear like kneepads and gloves.

The facility's recreation area is still a work in progress, as evidenced by the PlayStation corner currently hosting only a demo game. Meanwhile, charging stations are scattered throughout to help soldiers recharge their phones and stay connected with loved ones back home. A separate room houses efficient washing machines and dryers, allowing troops to refresh their uniforms.

The crashing waves of the nearby beach provide a soothing backdrop, though soldiers are prohibited from accessing the shoreline, separated by barriers of concertina wire. Despite this, the view of the sea and the retreat's tranquil ambiance offer a much-needed escape.

"We've learned to cook for ourselves during combat operations, and we receive fresh meals several times a week," describes Sergeant Yaron Rabinovitch from the Nahal Brigade's 50th Battalion. Taking a bite of a hamburger wrap, he adds, "Each platoon gets a day here about every 10 days. It's rejuvenating. By the end of the third round, we get a short leave back home. This has been a game-changer."

Brigadier General Haim Malachi, the IDF's Chief Logistics Officer, who escorted me to the site in an armored jeep, shared, "Once a platoon finishes its day of rest here, we clean and reset the facility overnight for the next group, like a production line. This is something we've never done before."

The logistics team takes pride in their efforts. Chief Warrant Officer David Turjeman, head of food services for the Southern Command, enthusiastically showcases the array of premium refreshments stored in the retreat's refrigerators. "You know this is Gaza, right? Yet we've created a sense of home here, with iced coffee, espresso, protein shakes, toast, shakshuka, fresh fruit, and even ice cream on warmer days."

The retreat also features a cutting-edge desalination plant, capable of producing 60,000 liters of drinking water daily. "This is unprecedented in a combat zone," notes Colonel Michael Azulai, the Southern Command's logistics officer. "The facility's deployment reflects our readiness for prolonged operations, even if a ceasefire is reached in the context of a hostage exchange."

On the evening of my visit, a platoon from the Nahal 50th Battalion was enjoying a break after intense fighting in Jabalia. For these troops, this is no quick incursion but part of a sustained military presence. Similar refreshment centers have been established elsewhere along Gaza's key corridors, including on the Philadelphi Route, but none match the scope and quality of this new retreat.

Second Lieutenant Elishama Shpilman, a tank commander with the 401st Brigade, describes the improved working conditions: "Instead of dealing with sand and dust in the field, we now repair tracks and replace parts on a clean, level surface. My team's tank has covered all of Jabalia."

Sergeant Rabinovitch sums up the sentiment: "We didn't get a house, but the food is amazing, and the drinks are great. Last week in Jabalia, we learned to grill on our own. Overall, we're happy." His friend, Sergeant Daniel Vakrat, nods in agreement: "We didn't expect anything like this. It's an incredible morale booster."

12.23.24 – Mo

Huge deal: Israel sells air defense system to Slovakia for 2 billion shekels

12.23.24 – Mo

Huge deal: Israel sells air defense system to Slovakia for 2 billion shekels

Barak MX Integrated Air Defense System, produced by Israel Aerospace Industries, counters threats from fighter jets, helicopters, drones and missiles; It's the largest deal ever signed between the two countries

Navit Zomer|03:22

The Ministry of Defense is selling the BARAK MX Integrated Air Defense System, produced by Israel Aerospace Industries, to Slovakia for over 2 billion NIS (approximately \$550 million). This is the largest defense export deal ever between the two countries. The deal, led by the Defense Exports Control Agency at the International Defense Cooperation Directorate of the Ministry of Defense (SIBAT), "will further strengthen the bond between the two nations and enhance Slovakia's defense capabilities," the Defense Ministry said in a statement.

The BARAK MX system, which will be integrated into Slovakia's defense infrastructure, is an advanced air defense system that is designed to counter current and future aerial threats, including ballistic threats. Its operational success in Israel and around the world

underscores its reliability and effectiveness, making it a valuable addition to Slovakia's defense infrastructure, according to the ministry.

The system is known for its flexible capability to counter threats from various sources, including fighter jets, helicopters, UAVs, cruise missiles, surface-to-air missiles, and tactical ballistic missiles. With three interceptors for operational ranges of 35, 70, and 150 km, each equipped with an active radar seeker, dual-pulse engine, and powerful warhead, the system delivers unparalleled interception performance against a wide range of threats.

The deal was led by the head of SIBAT, Brig. Gen. (Res.) Yair Kulas, CEO of Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI), Boaz Levy, and Executive VP of Systems, Missiles, and Space Group at IAI, Brig. Gen. (Res.) Guy Barlev. It was signed on Monday by Defense Ministry Director General Maj. Gen. (Res.) Eyal Zamir at the Ministry's headquarters in Tel Aviv.

During the current war, Israel has sold weapons to the world worth 13 billion shekels. The volume of Israel's defense exports has doubled within five years, making Israel one of the 10 largest arms exporters in the world, a list led by the United States.

"The signing of this deal reflects Israel's technological and operational advantage in air defense and Slovakia's trust in the Ministry of Defense and the Israel Aerospace Industries, said the head of the Defense Ministry's SIBAT- International Defense Cooperation, Brig. Gen. (Res.) Yair Kulas. "We are proud of the Ministry of Defense's involvement in government-to-government agreements that will integrate Israeli defense industry systems in European countries at NATO standards."

Director General of the Ministry of Defense, Eyal Zamir, said that: "The expansion of Israeli defense exports during the war is a direct result of Israeli technologies proving themselves on the battlefield. We're seeing increased interest from more countries in the exceptional performance of the IDF and Israeli combat systems, both defensive and offensive. Defense exports are key to our security and economic strength. They enable us to keep developing the next generations of the world's most advanced combat systems. On behalf of the Defense Minister and defense establishment, I want to thank the Slovak Defense Ministry for choosing an Israeli air defense system and believe other NATO countries will follow their lead."

12.23.24 – Mo

48 injured, 3 seriously, in fire at boarding school in Jerusalem

12.23.24 – Mo

48 injured, 3 seriously, in fire at boarding school in Jerusalem

Dozens rescued from fire that broke out on street in central Jerusalem; Fire crews working to extinguish the fire and prevent its spread, while searching for additional trapped people

Liran Tamari , Gilad Cohen|02:03

About 48 people were injured in a fire that broke out in a building on David Yellin Street in Jerusalem, including three in serious condition, two in moderate condition and 25 in mild condition.

Ten fire and rescue teams from the Ha'Uma area station were dispatched to the scene. According to fire and rescue spokeswomen, the firefighters who arrived at the scene identified a fire on the top floor of the building, which houses a boarding school. The teams entered the building and identified a large number of girls trapped in the smoke and fire; Firefighters rescued them from the burning building. In parallel with the rescue operations, firefighters worked to extinguish the fire and prevent the spread of fire and smoke throughout the building.

Magen David Adom said in a statement that "at 7:49 a.m., a report was received at MDA's 101 hotline in the Jerusalem area about a fire in a residential building on David Yellin Street in Jerusalem. MDA medics and paramedics are providing medical treatment at the scene to a number of people injured from smoke inhalation." MDA and the fire department later reported that a total of 48 people were injured in the incident, including three seriously, at least two moderately, and the rest in light condition.

"We arrived at the scene in large numbers and saw a lot of smoke coming out of the building," an emergency medical technician from the MDA motorcycle unit, Eliyahu Ben Hamo, said. "We joined the fire brigade, who brought the injured people inside to us. We began with the initial triage of the injured, who were all fully conscious. We saw three injured people in serious condition and two in moderate condition who were suffering from smoke inhalation, and several young people who were walking near the building. We began by providing initial medical treatment while we loaded them into MDA mobile intensive care units and ambulances and transported them to various hospitals in the city."

12.23.24 – Mo

IDF building two bases on Mount Hermon, prepared for winter isolation

12.23.24 – Mo

IDF prepares to stay on Syrian Mount Hermon for the whole winter

Military constructing bases at two elevations on Syrian soil, incorporating hypothermia treatment rooms and reinforced structures to withstand heavy snow loads; Teams working urgently to complete the bases before the first snowstorm hits

Yoav Zitun|01:33

The IDF is in the midst of an intricate logistical operation, racing against the clock to establish military outposts at high altitudes on Mount Hermon before the arrival of the season's first snowstorm, according to a report on Monday.

The IDF's Technological and Logistics Directorate has opened access routes to the Syrian summit, facilitating the transport of tons of construction materials and equipment. According to the plan, the IDF will maintain a military presence on Syrian Mount Hermon – which borders Lebanon – at least until the end of the current winter.

Two primary outposts are being constructed on Syrian soil. The first, located at an elevation of 2,400 meters (7,874 feet), will feature specially reinforced modular buildings designed to house troops even under snow accumulations of up to six meters (nearly 20 feet).

At 2,800 meters (9,186 feet), near the peak of Syrian Mount Hermon, another base is being prepared. This new site will serve as a hub for IDF forces and is modeled after a Syrian military outpost abandoned by Assad regime troops approximately two weeks ago. IDF logistics teams are renovating the compound, cleaning, painting, repairing infrastructure and equipping it with essential facilities, including communications systems, living quarters, food storage containers and a massive water tank capable of holding 20,000 liters.

To combat freezing conditions, specialized de-icing systems are being installed to ensure military equipment and tools remain operational in subzero temperatures. The IDF also plans to deploy a newly acquired snow-melting machine, a technique inspired by foreign armies operating in similar extreme conditions. The goal is to sustain both operational and logistical functionality in temperatures as low as -10°C (14°F), even under a potential prolonged supply cutoff due to severe weather.

To meet these demands, the IDF's Logistics Brigade has dispatched teams from its Southern and Central commands to Syrian Mount Hermon. Working around the clock, including night shifts, the teams are reinforcing critical structures to withstand the heavy weight of snow accumulation.

Additionally, the IDF is equipping the outposts with hypothermia treatment rooms to provide swift and effective care to soldiers without requiring evacuation. Kitchens, gas cylinders for on-site cooking, and an ample stockpile of dry, frozen and canned food are being prepared to ensure readiness for any prolonged isolation scenario.

A broader winter preparedness initiative is already underway for troops in the Golan Heights, recently captured by the IDF. Thousands of specialized cold-weather items, including ski masks, snow boots, three sets of thermal uniforms, insulated overalls and tactical gloves, are being distributed to soldiers.

For accommodations, the IDF has opted to station troops in fortified outposts, supplementing them with portable living containers equipped with heating and generators to ensure comfort in harsh conditions.

As the operation unfolds, the IDF remains focused on completing these critical preparations before the region's weather deteriorates further, safeguarding both the operational effectiveness and welfare of its soldiers in this strategic, high-altitude terrain.

12.23.24 – Mo

Israel won't accept Jihadist presence in buffer zone west of Damascus

12.23.24 – Mo

Israel tells Syria it won't accept Jihadist presence in southern part of country

Message sent to de facto leader Ahmad al-Sharaa stresses Israel intends to maintain its security and will consider leaving buffer zone should stable government be established

Itamar Eichner, Lior Ben Ari | Yesterday | 16:40

Jerusalem issued a message to Syria's de facto leader Ahmad al-Sharaa (formerly Abu Mohammed al-Golani) saying any attempt by jihadists to move to the country's south won't be tolerated.

The message further clarified that if a responsible governmental authority forms in Syria, Israel might consider transferring control of the buffer zone to it. Until then, Israel will continue to ensure its own security. This comes a week after al-Sharaa said he had no intention of clashing with Israel.

A few days later, al-Sharaa said that Syria would adhere to the disengagement agreement signed in 1974 following the Yom Kippur War following the fall of Bashar Assad's regime. He called on the international community to ensure that Israel remains committed to the agreement as well.

Meanwhile, Jerusalem added in its message to Syria's new leadership that the Israeli military's presence in the buffer zone is motivated by defense and security concerns, particularly in preparation for potential incidents like those of October 7, 2023, originating from Syria. "We won't allow that to happen," officials in Jerusalem stressed.

During a recent Security Cabinet meeting held at the IDF Northern Command, participants discussed the situation in Syria and Lebanon, delving into security briefings they received. Israel understands that the rebels are trying to present a specific image to the Western world, but Jerusalem remains vigilant regarding developments in Syria.

The deterioration of security on the Syrian side since the fall of Assad's regime prompted Israeli forces to advance into the buffer zone between the two countries to neutralize threats. According to Lebanon's Al-Mayadeen network, Israeli forces have established seven permanent positions along the buffer zone in rural areas of Damascus, Daraa and Quneitra.

The report noted that two of these positions, located in the Mount Hermon area, "overlook Damascus and its western suburbs." Syrian channels have regularly reported on the Israeli military's advances toward Syrian villages, interactions with the local population and operations at various sites near the border in recent weeks.

12.22.24 – Su

Mossad chief urges strike on Iran over Yemen Houthi attacks on US & Israel

12.22.24 – Su

'Go for the head': Mossad chief urges strike on Iran over Yemen amid Houthi attacks
David Barnea recommends at high-level discussions targeting Iran in response to missile and drone launches of Yemeni militia; Netanyahu vows decisive action against Houthis
Lior Ben Ari, Itamar Eichner | 14:02

Mossad Director David Barnea has recommended targeting Iran rather than the Houthis in response to recent missile attacks on Israel, arguing that Israel should "go for the head, Iran," officials familiar with recent high-level discussions told Ynet on Sunday.

A report in the Saudi newspaper Asharq Al-Awsat cited Israeli security sources who believe the Houthis operate with relative independence but receive significant Iranian support, including funding, equipment, expertise and missile guidance.

Recent investigations revealed that missiles launched by the Houthis toward Israel featured advanced technologies, such as extended fuel capacities, allowing them to hover over targets longer and complicating interception. Israel's Arrow missile defense system reportedly struggled to counter these missiles effectively. Israeli political sources also disclosed ongoing efforts to convince the U.S. to launch a dual military operation targeting both Houthi forces in Yemen and Iran.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed on Sunday decisive action against Houthi missile attacks on Israel.

Speaking after a meeting of the Security Cabinet in the IDF Northern Command, Netanyahu linked the Houthis to Iran's "Axis of Evil" and emphasized international cooperation against their actions.

"As we have acted decisively against other terror arms of Iran's Axis of Evil, we will act against the Houthis," Netanyahu said. "In this case, we are not acting alone. The U.S. and other nations see the Houthis as a threat not only to international shipping but to the global order."

He assured Israelis that, despite potential delays, the results would mirror Israel's successes against other terror groups. "I ask citizens to remain patient and steadfast, as you have so far," he added. "Follow Home Front Command guidelines closely. You do that, and we will take care of everything else."

Ahead of the Cabinet meeting, Netanyahu and ministers reviewed a display of weapons seized by Israeli forces in southern Lebanese villages during ground operations. The briefing, led by IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Herzi Halevi and Northern Command head Maj. Gen. Ori Gordin, highlighted the discovery of Hezbollah weapons and ammunition stored in private homes.

Netanyahu also visited a mock tunnel designed to replicate command centers found during operations in Lebanon.

Meanwhile, the U.S. military confirmed that an F/A-18 fighter jet was damaged by "friendly fire" during an operation against Houthi targets in Yemen on Saturday. The two pilots were rescued, with one sustaining minor injuries. The Houthis claimed responsibility for downing the aircraft, saying their forces repelled the attack on their positions in Sanaa.

Houthi military spokesperson Yahya Saree asserted that their forces had also targeted the USS Harry S. Truman aircraft carrier and its associated destroyers using eight cruise missiles and 17 drones during simultaneous operations. Saree claimed the attack forced the carrier group to retreat and vowed continued action as long as the Gaza war persists. Overnight Saturday, a ballistic missile launched from Yemen struck Tel Aviv after evading Israeli interception attempts, directly wounding 16 people and injuring 21 others as they sought shelter.

The IDF confirmed an investigation into the failure of the missile defense systems and said that lessons learned are already being implemented to improve both interception capabilities and early warning systems.

"The air defense array is not airtight," the IDF said. "We urge the public to continue following Home Front Command directives to ensure safety."

12.22.24 – Su

Houthi missile attack on central Israel school results in 40 million shekels in damage

12.22.24 – Su

Houthi missile attack on central Israel school results in 40 million shekels in damage
Missile caused heavy damage to the elementary school near Tel Aviv, despite being 'partially intercepted'

Gad Lior|07:18

Once again, there has been huge damage from rockets falling on Gush Dan in central Israel. The damage from the missile fired from Yemen at an elementary school in the Ramat Efal neighborhood of Ramat Gan amounts to approximately NIS 40 million (\$10.8 million), according to estimates by the Tax Authority. The heavy damage was caused mainly to the school and also to nearby buildings and apartments, Ynet has learned.

In comparison, a missile from Iran that hit the prestigious C&S residential complex in northern Tel Aviv on October 1, right before Rosh Hashanah, caused enormous damage to the apartments and restaurants there, which, as reported by Ynet, amounted to approximately NIS 50 million (\$13.5 million). Only a few weeks ago, repairs were completed at the site and the restaurants, including the famous Turquoise, reopened to diners.

Compared to the heavy damage caused in Ramat Efal over the weekend by the missile that the IDF determined was "partially intercepted," the damage from the missile that was not intercepted at all and hit a public park in Tel Aviv's Jaffa quarter on Friday night likely will amount to "only" a few million shekels, with most of the damage caused to the

park itself, as well as broken windows and **damage to furniture in hundreds of apartments and businesses in the area**. The Tax Authority told Ynet that the current estimate is that **about 350-400 claims will be filed** by residents in the area.

The Tax Authority's **compensation fund** takes care of the **compensation** and takes care of damaged **public property**, such as the Ramat Efal school and the public garden in Jaffa, and takes care of **repairs at these sites**.

Ynet recently reported that the **direct damage** in the northern Lebanese border towns and the **Golan Heights** is **estimated** at about NIS **2 billion (\$540,000)**, and the **indirect damage** to businesses is estimated at another NIS **3 billion (\$810,000)**. The direct damage from missile **strikes in the Gaza Strip** is estimated at about NIS **1.5 billion (\$405,000)**, and in recent weeks **reconstruction of the buildings** that were completely damaged in the kibbutzim on the border **with Gaza has already begun**. The direct damage from the strike **last month** in Ramat Gan was estimated at NIS **100 million (\$27 million)**, while the indirect damage **following the shutdown of economic activity on the main commercial street** is estimated to be about NIS **250 million (\$67.5 million)**.

12.22.24 – Su

Gunmen in the streets, snipers on rooftops, shooting all the time: PA fight in Jenin

12.22.24 – Su

Gunmen in the streets, snipers on the rooftops, shooting all the time: Palestinians fight Palestinians in Jenin

Rare clash between Palestinian Authority security forces and the armed Jenin Brigades in the West Bank city as observed by the Washington Post; The PA hints at a similar model in Gaza

Ynet|05:45

Jenin Brigades fighters **race through alleys** flooded with sewage **to evade the gunfire** that echoes all around. "Quickly," one of the fighters urges his comrades as they pass through patrols and barricades of the Palestinian Authority security forces. "Watch out," another **cautions at an intersection where an improvised explosive device had been planted**. This could have been a **response to the IDF raid** on the city and the refugee camp in the northern West Bank, but instead it is a report after two **Washington Post reporters witnessed up close a rare battle of the Jenin fighters against their internal enemy: the Palestinian Authority** .

It happened **two weeks ago**. After many years, Palestinian security **forces launched an arrest operation in the crowded refugee camp** in an attempt to regain control. The **PA**, supported by Western countries, is trying to prove that it can manage security in the limited areas it controls in the **West Bank**, as a reminder to the world **that it also seeks to control the Gaza Strip the day after the war ends**.

The U.S. newspaper reported that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has ruled out the return of the Palestinian Authority to Gaza as a governing body. However, according to a former senior Egyptian official who spoke to the Post on condition of anonymity, Israel has agreed to let the Palestinian Authority manage the Rafah crossing between Gaza and Egypt for a short period.

The PA launched "Operation Protect the Homeland" in November to retake control of Jenin camp by targeting "outlaws" and those "spreading chaos and anarchy and harming civil peace," security forces spokesman Anwar Rajab told The Post. "All these actions and policies undermine the work of the PA, and these groups give Israel an excuse to implement its plans in the West Bank."

According to Rajab, the "achievements" of the operation included the arrest of dozens of wanted individuals, the injury of others, the detonation of dozens of explosive devices, and the advancement of important routes into the refugee camp. The security forces killed three people during the operation: a gunman, a 19-year-old young man riding a motorcycle, and a 14-year-old boy.

Still, both sides appear to be showing relative restraint, according to the report. 'Don't want to see a single drop of blood being shed'

According to the Ramallah Health Ministry, which does not distinguish between terrorists and civilians, at least 21 people were killed in the long IDF raid on Jenin in September. The IDF said 14 terrorists were killed. The PA also occasionally clashes with armed Palestinians. Since the October 7 massacre, PA security forces have killed 13 Palestinians, including eight in total in Jenin.

"We don't want to see a single drop of blood shed," Sabri Saidam, an advisor to Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and a member of his Fatah central committee, told The Washington Post. "What we would like to achieve is a state of calm, to sit down with different factions and agree on the way forward."

A senior Palestinian source close to the PA chairman said on condition of anonymity that Abbas has decided that the Palestinian Authority will "impose its authority and there is no turning back."

But two weeks after the PA operation began, gunmen are still roaming freely in the Jenin refugee camp. The sound of gunfire can be heard around the clock. The UN agency for Palestinian refugees has closed schools, and businesses are also closed. In some of the neighborhoods, which were badly damaged in the Israeli raid in September, some families were left without electricity and water for days, according to the report.

Masked security personnel patrol the government hospital in Jenin. Snipers are stationed on the roof to prevent armed men from trying to hide in its grounds, a hospital source said. The Post's reporters heard gunfire from the roof. The source said several bullets pierced a window in the office, and patients and staff are afraid to come.

There is an enormous amount of anger at the security forces in the West Bank. Their men operate in a limited area and, according to agreements with Israel, they are not allowed to deal with violence from settlers and, of course, IDF raids. Many Palestinians see the forces as subcontractors of Israel and a tool of Abbas for corruption and the suppression of internal opposition.

'24 hours later there will be someone new in their place'

“The people want ‘law and order’, but apply the law right and people will stand with you,” said Arwad, 35, who spoke on the condition his last name be withheld out of concern for reprisal from Palestinian and Israeli authorities. “When the Israeli soldiers and jeeps come here, where is the law?”

Arwad's brother and father are in Israeli prison. Other relatives of his were killed by IDF fire. Even if the authority arrests wanted terrorists, he said, “the resistance will continue. Twenty-four hours later there will be someone new in their place.”

According to Rajab, the operation in Jenin targeted suspects wanted for criminal offenses, including shooting at hospitals and making explosive devices. He said this escalated when gunmen stole and burned two security force vehicles, and a car bomb exploded near a police station. On the ground, attempts were made to mediate a cease-fire between the gunmen and the security forces but, according to Firas Abu al-Wafa, Fatah's secretary-general in Jenin, the PA refused to compromise.

Wafa added that “If the situation in Jenin stabilizes, then the whole West Bank will be stable.” But if it doesn't, “there will not be stability across the West Bank.”

For several hours the shooting ceased, after the Palestinian Authority and the Jenin Brigades agreed to hold their fire. At sunset, several gunmen were seen emerging from the alleys; the day before, they had gathered in various areas of the refugee camp to confront the security forces.

Two PA vehicles stood at one end of the road, the forces firing stun grenades as a warning. An Israeli drone buzzed overhead. On the other side of the road, gunmen and camp residents gathered. Women and children waved Palestinian flags.

“We hope that the security forces leave the camp, because it's forbidden to shed blood,” said a camp resident, who has a child that was previously killed by IDF fire. The fighters are “defending their country.”

12.22.24 – Su

US F/A-18 shot down over Red Sea, by missile cruiser of the Carrier Group

12.22.24 – Su

US fighter jet shot down over Red Sea in apparent friendly fire incident

F/A-18 shot down during US attack against the Houthis; 2 US pilots rescued alive; This is the most serious incident to endanger American soldiers in more than a year of operations against the Houthis in Yemen; Overnight, U.S. warplanes targeted Houthi military sites

| 23:50

Two U.S. Navy pilots were shot down Sunday over the Red Sea in an apparent “friendly fire” incident, the U.S. military said, marking the most serious incident to threaten troops in over a year of America targeting Yemen’s Houthi rebels.

Both pilots were recovered alive after ejecting from their stricken aircraft, with one suffering minor injuries. But the shutdown underlines just how dangerous the Red Sea corridor has become over the ongoing attacks on shipping by the Iranian-backed Houthis despite U.S. and European military coalitions patrolling the area.

The U.S. military had conducted airstrikes targeting Yemen’s Houthi rebels at the time, though the U.S. military’s Central Command did not elaborate on what their mission was and did not immediately respond to questions from The Associated Press.

The F/A-18 shot down had just flown off the deck of the USS Harry S. Truman aircraft carrier, Central Command said. On Dec. 15, Central Command acknowledged the Truman had entered the Mideast, but hadn’t specified that the carrier and its battle group was in the Red Sea.

“The guided missile cruiser USS Gettysburg, which is part of the USS Harry S. Truman Carrier Strike Group, mistakenly fired on and hit the F/A-18,” Central Command said in a statement.

From the military’s description, the aircraft shot down was a two-seat F/A-18 Super Hornet fighter jet assigned to the “Red Rippers” of Strike Fighter Squadron 11 out of Naval Air Station Oceana, Virginia.

It wasn’t immediately clear how the Gettysburg could mistake an F/A-18 for an enemy aircraft or missile, particularly as ships in a battle group remain linked by both radar and radio communication.

However, Central Command said that warships and aircraft earlier shot down multiple Houthi drones and an anti-ship cruise missile launched by the rebels. Incoming hostile fire from the Houthis has given sailors just seconds to make decisions in the past. Since the Truman’s arrival, the U.S. has stepped up its airstrikes targeting the Houthis and their missile fire into the Red Sea and the surrounding area. However, the presence of an American warship group may spark renewed attacks from the rebels, like what the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower saw earlier this year. That deployment marked what the Navy described as its most intense combat since World War II.

On Saturday night and early Sunday, U.S. warplanes conducted airstrikes that shook Sanaa, the capital of Yemen that the Houthis have held since 2014. Central Command described the strikes as targeting a “missile storage facility” and a “command-and-control facility,” without elaborating.

Houthi-controlled media reported strikes in both Sanaa and around the port city of Hodeida, without offering any casualty or damage information. In Sanaa, strikes appeared particularly targeted at a mountainside known to be home to military installations. The Houthis later acknowledged the aircraft being shot down in the Red Sea.

The Houthis have targeted about 100 merchant vessels with missiles and drones since the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip started in October 2023 after Hamas' surprise attack on Israel that killed 1,200 people and saw 250 others taken hostage.

The Houthis have seized one vessel and sunk two in a campaign that has also killed four sailors. Other missiles and drones have either been intercepted by separate U.S.- and European-led coalitions in the Red Sea or failed to reach their targets, which have also included Western military vessels.

The rebels maintain that they target ships linked to Israel, the U.S. or the United Kingdom to force an end to Israel's campaign against Hamas in Gaza. However, many of the ships attacked have little or no connection to the conflict, including some bound for Iran.

The Houthis also have increasingly targeted Israel itself with drones and missiles, resulting in retaliatory Israeli airstrikes. The US attacks came less than a day after a Houthi missile evaded Israeli defenses and landed in Tel Aviv.

Overnight between Saturday and Sunday, Israeli fighter jets were recorded flying at low altitude in the Gush Dan area to patrol against Houthi drones following the increasing number of launches by the Houthis in recent days. On Saturday, half a day after the launch of the missile that caused extensive damage in Jaffa and injured 16 people, a combat helicopter intercepted a drone, likely launched from Yemen.

On the night between Wednesday and Thursday, at the same time as a Houthi missile hit a school in in the Ramat Gan neighborhood of Ramat Afal, Israel attacked for the third time since the start of the war in Yemen - and for the first time in the capital Sanaa. Dozens of fighter jets and other aircraft flew some 2,000 kilometers in that attack.

12.21.24 – Sa

US & Britain struck Yemen this week, on threat that impacts global shipping lanes

12.21.24 – Sa

'Second Arrow needed': IDF reviews strategy amid Houthi escalation

After 2 failed Houthi missile interceptions, senior official urges policy shift: 'Misses can happen, but the solution is launching an additional interceptor'; officials say no advancements in Houthi capabilities detected, but Yemeni rebels 'centers of gravity' remain elusive

Yossi Yehoshua | 15:53

"The moment the first missile missed, a second one should have been launched," a senior IDF official said Saturday evening following the investigation into the failed interception of a missile fired from Yemen, which struck Tel Aviv, causing extensive damage.

The official added that the same approach should have been applied in Thursday's attack, when a Houthi missile caused significant damage to a school in Ramat Afal.

Ynet has learned that in the past, the Arrow air defense system has fired a second missile against ballistic missiles like those fired by the Houthis toward Israel.

The Israeli air defense array's recent hiccups necessitate a reassessment of interception policies. According to sources familiar with the issue, the last two incidents did not involve an upgrade in Houthi capabilities or weaponry. However, the Yemeni terror group is believed to be learning and improving, which demands a similar response from the IDF.

Until now, defense officials have been cautious about launching a second interceptor due to practical concerns: each Arrow missile costs millions of dollars, alongside other operational considerations that remain classified. Still, no such policy is set in stone.

"We should have acted differently, and we will adopt a broader interception policy," a senior defense official said. "We've made progress in threat analysis. Misses can happen, but the solution is launching an additional interceptor. Both today and Thursday, it's likely that a second missile would have hit the target."

Military Intelligence had assessed that the Houthis would escalate their attacks on Israel following the Israeli Air Force's strikes in Yemen, a prediction that has already materialized. The IDF now expects the pace of missile and drone launches to increase further.

On Saturday afternoon, another drone, likely launched from Yemen, was intercepted after entering southern Israel near the Gaza border. A dramatic video captured an attack helicopter firing on the drone, which exploded mid-air.

Earlier in the week, another Houthi drone was intercepted off the coast of Tel Aviv on Thursday, while both a missile and a drone were shot down on Monday.

According to the IDF, the Houthis have fired over 200 missiles and 170 drones at Israel since the war began, most of which were intercepted or failed to reach Israeli territory. Learning from past attempts, the Houthis have altered their drone routes. Whereas they previously approached central Israel via the sea, drones are now entering through the Sinai Peninsula into Gaza and then targeting southern Israel.

Meanwhile, Israel is seeking a more effective response, focusing on identifying so-called "centers of gravity" to neutralize. However, no definitive targets have been identified yet.

Attention is now shifting to January 20, when Donald Trump is set to assume office, raising hopes that his administration might increase pressure on the Houthis. While the United States, alongside Britain, launched airstrikes in Yemen this week, the Houthis appear undeterred. The concept of "deterrence" holds little weight in the Houthi playbook. The IDF itself cannot yet engage in full-scale combat against the Houthis, making international coalition-building essential. Such a coalition would address a threat that impacts global shipping lanes and the world economy. It is unlikely that a challenge with global ramifications can be resolved by debating whether Israel launches one or two Arrow missiles.

12.21.24 – Sa

Druze mayor flying Syrian flag, says Israel should take Damascus

12.21.24 – Sa

Israeli military operation in Syria 'wise and correct,' Druze leader says

'Proud Israeli' Majdal Shams Mayor Dolan Abu Saleh: 'I love to be part of society in the State of Israel... we want this feeling to be mutual and not one-sided'

Felice Friedson/The Media Line|Yesterday | 15:20

Israelis across the country were shocked last week by news of the fall of Syrian President Bashar Assad's regime and of the Israeli military occupation of certain areas of Syria.

This development reverberated strongly in Majdal Shams, a Druze town on the Golan Heights that has been under Israeli control since 1967. The Media Line sat down with Majdal Shams Mayor Dolan Abu Saleh for an exclusive interview about how Israel's Druze population is reacting to these events.

Majdal Shams is considered the unofficial Druze capital of the Golan Heights and is home to nearly 12,000 residents, all of whom are Druze. Druze people make up the majority of the 24,000 Arabs living throughout the Golan. An additional 100,000 or so Israeli Druze live outside of the Golan in northern Israel and around Haifa. The town's ties to Syria run deep. For many families, there are relatives on the other side of the border, creating a complex set of loyalties and concerns.

Abu Saleh, now in his fourth term as mayor, spoke at length about the dramatic changes in Syria and their impact on the Druze community. "For every family here, there's family on the other side," he said, stressing the deeply personal nature of these political shifts. He described the fall of Assad as a transformative event, noting, "The people here are very, very happy that the dictator, the murderer of the people, is no longer in power. They hope there will be a new Syria of peace, humanity and human rights."

"Until October 7, the civil war in Syria did not pose a significant threat to residents of the Golan," Abu Saleh said. After that date, people worried about possible infiltration from Syria. "Hezbollah operated freely in Syria under Assad," he noted, explaining why residents feared that violence could spill over the border. "All this time, we saw cooperation between Hezbollah and Assad," he said.

The fall of Assad also brought the Druze community's historical questions of loyalty and identity into sharper focus. When Israel occupied the Golan Heights in 1967 and annexed the territory in 1981, it offered Druze residents Israeli citizenship, but many continued to identify as Syrian.

Today, Druze in the Golan remains eligible for Israeli citizenship, and the number of applicants has grown in recent years. Data from 2022 show that around 20% of Majdal Shams residents hold Israeli citizenship, while the rest have permanent residency without citizenship. Abu Saleh described himself as "a proud Israeli citizen," explaining that Israel provides security and a high standard of human rights.

“I love this place very much. I love to be part of society in the State of Israel,” he added. “Both personally and as a community, we want to feel an indivisible part of the State of Israel, not only in name, but also through receiving budgets and sharing resources from the state, and that this feeling will be mutual and not one-sided.”

Before discussing the broader historical context, Abu Saleh outlined his personal and political journey. He has served two terms as an appointed council head before being elected in Majdal Shams’ first and subsequent elections, now totaling four terms in office. He explained that the local council is administered under the Interior Ministry and that the town receives funding from Israeli government offices, just like any other local authority in Israel.

Majdal Shams drew wider attention in July 2024, when a Hezbollah rocket attack killed 12 children in the town. Abu Saleh called it “a great human tragedy,” adding that some of those wounded remained hospitalized for months.

The community received substantial philanthropic support from Israeli organizations and from the Jewish community abroad. “Many philanthropic actors came and embraced the families,” he said. This sympathy and support contributed to the sense that the Druze of Majdal Shams are integral to Israel’s fabric, not simply because of geography, but because of shared values and security concerns.

Regarding current security measures, Abu Saleh said the town works closely with local Israeli military divisions and the military’s Home Front Command, sometimes going beyond the official guidelines. Only about 60% of homes in Majdal Shams have bomb shelters, and the municipality is aware that more must be done to protect residents. He praised Israel’s decision to enter Syria to create a buffer zone, calling it “a wise and correct step” to protect Israeli citizens before threats cross into the country.

Israel’s actions in Syria have drawn criticism from countries like Saudi Arabia and Egypt, but Abu Saleh defended the move. “The State of Israel needs to create a barrier that will protect its residents and citizens,” he said. “If the State of Israel is threatened in the future, it can manage the war outside its borders. That means that before its residents and citizens are harmed, it will be there to protect them.”

Before the outbreak of Syria’s civil war, Druze students from the Golan often attended Damascus University. Abu Saleh acknowledged that it was a positive experience for many at the time, but today, he favors Israeli academia. He believes that Golan Druze who complete their studies in Israel, have an easier time joining the Israeli labor market. Residents of Majdal Shams now work in fields such as medicine, engineering, construction, high-tech and civil service, and most families also engage in agriculture.

He emphasized that women in Majdal Shams play an active role, holding many central positions in local government and making up at least half of those working in professional fields. Abu Saleh’s eldest daughter is preparing for an academic career, and his wife runs the family business. He called for more factories and high-tech firms to set up locally, creating opportunities for women who prefer to work close to home. Regarding Syria’s future under the de facto leadership of Abu Mohammed al-Golani, some Druze are worried, but Abu Saleh sees reasons for optimism. He noted that new authorities released prisoners and preserved government institutions, which may indicate

a focus on human well-being. Still, he stressed the importance of ensuring that minority groups, like the Kurds, are not harmed and called for international dialogue with Turkey's president to address concerns over Kurdish safety.

Reflecting on his responsibilities as mayor during these tumultuous times, Abu Saleh acknowledged that the job is a great challenge. "The whole world looks at how a leader acts in such a situation," he said. "We will continue to protect our residents and the State of Israel, which protects us, and work toward a future where everyone can thrive."

Majdal Shams

The Syrian rebel flag hoisted in Majdal Shams (Photo: Felice Friedson/The Media Line) To mark the fall of the Assad regime, some residents of Majdal Shams raised the flag of the Syrian opposition last week.

"Seeing the Syrian flag fly in Majdal Shams instead of the flag of the Syrian regime is very different and very significant," Abu Saleh said. "But we, as a local authority that is under Israeli sovereignty, want to see here in the State of Israel the flag of the State of Israel, because the State of Israel is the one that gives us security."

"I think that we all hope for a situation in which Syria will receive the flag of Israel in Damascus. Until then, we will think about cooperating in raising the flags in a friendly manner."

12.21.24 – Sa

Coalition airstrikes rock Yemen's capital Sanaa, removing fuel depots & power plants

12.21.24 – Sa

Not Israel this time: Airstrikes rock Yemen's capital Sanaa

Day after Houthi missile strike on Tel Aviv, international coalition bombs Houthi strongholds, with reports of explosions and fighter jets over Sanaa; strikes, targeting military sites, follow Israel's third Yemen operation since war began

Lior Ben Ari, Yoav Zitun | 14:57

Less than 24 hours after a Houthi ballistic missile struck Tel Aviv, Yemen's Houthi-affiliated Al-Masirah channel reported airstrikes in the Yemeni capital, Sanaa, Saturday night.

Hezbollah-linked Al Mayadeen reported a powerful explosion and sightings of fighter jets over the city. While some outlets, including Iraq's pro-Iran Sabereen News, claimed the strikes were carried out by Israel, reports from Al Hadath and other sources indicated that an international coalition conducted the airstrikes targeting Houthi military positions.

According to Al Hadath, the strikes hit three key locations in Sanaa, including fuel depots, power plants and other military targets. This followed Israel's own strike on Yemen earlier in the week, marking the third such operation since the October 7 war began and the first to hit the Houthi stronghold of Sanaa.

In a statement, the IDF detailed that over 60 bombs were dropped during a mission involving dozens of aircraft covering nearly 2,000 kilometers (1,200 miles). The IDF

shared video footage of precision strikes on eight tugboats in Houthi-controlled ports, with audio of pilots confirming successful hits: "Alpha, beautiful hit," one pilot was heard saying.

The operation, named "White City," aimed to cripple Houthi port operations, with strikes on Rass Isa, Hodeidah and Al-Salif. The IDF claimed a severe economic impact on the Houthis, though Reuters reported conflicting accounts, with sources in Hodeidah claiming port activity remains partially operational.

The strikes began at 3:15 a.m. with a first wave targeting coastal areas and a second wave at 4:30 a.m. on sites in Sanaa, involving 14 fighter jets. Power outages and significant damage were reported, with at least nine fatalities, according to local sources.

The strike came just hours after a Houthi missile hit a school in Ramat Efal, collapsing the building. The missile was partially intercepted by the Arrow system, but its warhead exploded on impact.

Since October 7, the Houthis have launched over 200 missiles and 170 drones toward Israel, most of which have been intercepted or failed to reach Israeli territory. While the IDF emphasized the strikes were planned weeks in advance and unrelated to the missile launch, they mark a clear escalation in efforts to dismantle Houthi military capabilities. The Houthis continue to claim they are undeterred, framing their actions as a campaign in support of Gaza.

12.21.24 – Sa

Pope calls Gaza airstrikes cruelty, after Israeli minister's criticism

12.21.24 – Sa

Pope calls Gaza airstrikes 'cruelty' after Israeli minister's criticism

Pontiff condemns Israeli actions in Gaza after Diaspora Affairs Minister Amichai Chikli accused him of trivializing genocide for suggesting offensive bears genocidal traits
Reuters | 13:36

Pope Francis on Saturday again condemned Israeli airstrikes in Gaza, a day after an Israeli government minister publicly denounced the pontiff for suggesting the global community should study whether the military offensive there constitutes a genocide of the Palestinian people.

Francis opened his annual Christmas address to the Catholic cardinals who lead the Vatican's various departments with what appeared to be a reference to Israeli airstrikes on Friday that killed at least 25 Palestinians in Gaza.

"Yesterday, children were bombed," said the pope. "This is cruelty. This is not war. I wanted to say this because it touches the heart."

The pope, as leader of the 1.4-billion-member Roman Catholic Church, is usually careful about taking sides in conflicts, but he has recently been more outspoken about Israel's military campaign against Palestinian terrorist group Hamas.

In book excerpts published last month, the pontiff said some international experts said that "what is happening in Gaza has the characteristics of a genocide." Diaspora Affairs Minister Amichai Chikli sharply criticized those comments in an unusual open letter published by Italian newspaper Il Foglio on Friday. Chikli said the pope's remarks amounted to a "trivialization" of the term genocide.

Francis also said on Saturday that the Catholic bishop of Jerusalem, known as a patriarch, had tried to enter the Gaza Strip on Friday to visit Catholics there, but was denied entry. The patriarch's office told Reuters it was not able to comment on the pope's remarks about the patriarch being denied entry.

The IDF said on Saturday the patriarch's entry had been approved and he would enter Gaza on Sunday, barring any major security issues. Aid from the patriarch's office entered last week, the military said.

Israel allows clerics to enter Gaza and "works in cooperation with the Christian community to make it easier for the Christian population that remains in the Gaza Strip — including coordinating its removal from the Gaza Strip to a third country," a statement from the military said.

12.21.24 – Sa

Second Yemen missile maneuvering at Mach 5, evaded interception

12.21.24 – Sa

'There's no such thing as 100% protection, solution lies in offense'

For the second time this week, a missile from Yemen evaded interception; the IDF says lessons are being implemented, while experts stress it's too early to draw conclusions; 'Results align with statistical expectations; it's a journey and there's no end in sight yet'
Gal Ganot, Nina Fox | 11:09

On Thursday, the IDF said that it scored a "partial interception" after the warhead of a Houthi ballistic missile from Yemen exploded at a school in Ramat Efal, causing the building to collapse. However, in the latest missile launch early Saturday, it was clear the interception attempt had failed.

Multiple interceptors fired at the missile missed their target, including the Arrow system. The missile struck a public park in Tel Aviv, narrowly avoiding a major disaster. Twelve people were lightly injured, and nearby apartments sustained heavy damage.

The recent Houthi attacks serve as a stark reminder that the war is far from over and highlight the challenges Israel has faced in intercepting thousands of projectiles launched

since the October 7 Hamas massacre. These include ballistic missiles, cruise missiles and drones launched from Gaza, Lebanon, Iraq, Iran and Yemen.

While Iran has shown restraint in the wake of severe setbacks and concerns over Donald Trump's return to the White House, fighting with Hezbollah has ceased under a truce, and Hamas' military capabilities have been decimated.

The Houthis, however, persist in what they call a "campaign of support" for Gaza. Even recent Israeli airstrikes in Yemen have not deterred further missile launches.

Brig. Gen. (res.) Zvika Haimovich, a former commander of the Israeli Air Force's Air Defense Array, confirmed that unlike the incident in Ramat Efal, this time the interception attempt unequivocally failed.

"In this case, the clichés proved true—there's no such thing as 100% protection or a foolproof guarantee," Haimovich told Ynet. "No matter how many weapons systems are involved—Arrow, David's Sling or Iron Dome—success isn't certain. You use every available tool for the specific threat, but you cannot ensure an interception in every scenario."

Despite the two interception failures, Haimovich emphasizes that the overall interception rate remains high and cautions against drawing premature conclusions. "Two separate incidents happened close together in terms of time and the threat from Yemen. I wouldn't link them or jump to far-reaching conclusions. We're talking about dozens, even hundreds of launches—and over a broader time frame, the results align with statistical expectations," he said.

According to the IDF, the Houthis have launched more than 200 missiles and 170 drones toward Israel since the war began on October 7 last year. Most were intercepted or failed to reach Israeli territory.

Saturday afternoon, another drone that entered the Gaza periphery—likely launched from Yemen—was intercepted. A dramatic video showed an attack helicopter engaging the drone, which exploded mid-air. Earlier this week, a Houthi drone was intercepted off Tel Aviv's coast, and both a missile and a drone from Yemen were shot down on Monday. Combat helicopter downs drone over Gaza border region, Saturday

"We've been at war for 15 months, and it's not going to end tonight," Haimovich added. "The systems have performed excellently so far and will continue to do so. This is a competition, a process of mutual learning between us and our adversaries—Iran, the Houthis and various militias. Each side is trying to stay one step ahead of the other.

"While the threat has evolved, so have our capabilities. Since the beginning of the war, our Iron Dome, Arrow and David's Sling systems have shown significant improvement, thanks to this ongoing learning process. It's a journey with a beginning, a middle and no end in sight yet."

The IDF said that the failed interception overnight is still under investigation, with some lessons already implemented in interception and alert systems. "No further details regarding aerial defense activities and the alert system can be given due to information

security considerations," the military said in a statement. "We emphasize that aerial defense is not hermetic and the public must follow the Home Front Command instructions."

Brig. Gen. (res.) Doron Gavish, also a former Air Defense Array commander, explained the process behind the system's operations: "The air defense array functions in stages. First, the target is detected. Then, its type is identified, followed by the interception process. The initial stages worked as intended, which is why an alert was issued. However, the interception phase failed, likely due to a technical malfunction that caused the miss."

Gavish dismissed the possibility that a new type of missile had been used in the attack. "What we encountered is the same missile from the same family that has been launched at Israel previously," he said. "Hundreds of missiles have been fired at Israel, and in the overwhelming majority of cases, the systems' performance—especially the Arrow system—has been effective."

He emphasized that the incident underscores repeated warnings from the IDF that the public must adhere to Home Front Command instructions, as air defense systems are not foolproof. "This is not a new threat," he noted.

Gavish argued that the solution lies not just in defense but also in offense: "Defense is meant to mitigate the threat and save lives, but to truly address the enemy, offensive action is also necessary. We've seen the Air Force operating there, and in my view, if the Houthis continue launching missiles, this will not be the last strike."

Ynet military analyst Ron Ben-Yishai highlighted the difficulty of obtaining high-quality intelligence on the Houthis, given their distance from Israel. He stressed the urgency of quickly gathering intelligence to strike missile production and launch sites, noting that the Iran-backed Houthis have only a limited number of such facilities.

On Israel's interception challenges, Ben-Yishai pointed to the future deployment of the Iron Beam laser defense system, which will enhance the country's air defense capabilities.

Ben-Yishai outlined two potential reasons for the failed interception overnight. The first is that the missile was launched on a "flattened" ballistic trajectory or from an unexpected direction, meaning Israel's or U.S. warning systems in Saudi Arabia failed to detect it in time, leaving interceptors unable to maneuver effectively.

The second, and more likely scenario, according to him, is that Iran has developed a maneuverable warhead. Such a warhead separates from the missile during the final third of its trajectory and maneuvers mid-flight—executing pre-programmed course changes—to hit its designated target.

The warhead of any ballistic missile is hypersonic. Once it re-enters the atmosphere, it uses small rocket engines or fins for navigation during its maneuvering phase. This maneuvering, conducted at speeds of Mach 5 (five times the speed of sound), poses a significant challenge for air defense systems. Ben-Yishai noted that this could explain why the warhead of Thursday morning's missile struck a building in Ramat Efal.

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Ynet-News, December 20, 2024 – Friday 9th Month

12.20.24 – Fr- - - News – Friday

October 7 probe impossible without Shin Bet intelligence portion in January deadline

12.20.24 – Fr- - - News – Friday

Syrians protest Israeli presence in buffer zone, IDF prepare for an extended stay

12.20.24 – Fr- - - News Placed in December 20 spot – Friday

Erdogan declares Turkey will restructure Syria; urges US to halt Israeli invasion

12.20.24 – Fr- - - News – Friday

Netanyahu to skip 80th anniversary of Auschwitz liberation, to avoid ICC warrants

12.20.24 – Fr- - - News – Friday

Sweden follows Israel on Gaza aid; no funds to UNRWA, other agencies approved

12.20.24 – Fr- - - News – Friday

PA governor blames IDF protecting settlers; for West Bank mosque fire & graffiti

12.20.24 – Fr- - - News – Friday

CIA chief leaves Doha, no progress in negotiations over disagreements

12.20.24 – Fr- - - News – Friday

Power in Yemeni capital hit, left without electricity, could turn the public into chaos

12.20.24 – Fr- - - News – Friday

FBI foils ISIS attack planned on Israel New York Embassy; details under seal

12.19.24 – Th- - - News – Thursday

Mossad to reveal Hezbollah pager plan on CBS '60 Minutes' - Sunday 6:30 central

12.19.24 – Th- - - News – Thursday

Norway-UN resolution seeks Court opinion on Israel law banning UNRWA aid

12.19.24 – Th- - - News – Thursday

Suspected terror attack in Jerusalem: Elderly woman stabbed outside her home

12.19.24 – Th- - - News – Thursday

The Houthis will learn the hard way, Netanyahu warns

12.19.24 – Th- - - News – Thursday

Drone threat from Gaza neutralized by Israeli Air Force near border

12.19.24 – Th- - - News – Thursday

Hamas wants 7-day truce before hostage release; Israel demands soldiers in first phase

12.19.24 – Th- - - News Placed in December 19 spot – Thursday
Israel disabled Houthi Yemen fuel storages, a power station, sea ports & tug boats

12.18.24 – We- - - News – Wednesday
Court presses prosecutors over holes in Netanyahu corruption case

12.18.24 – We- - - News – Wednesday
 Hamas delegation to visit Cairo Sunday, negotiate prisoner release and deportation

12.18.24 – We- - - News – Wednesday
March recruits are the IDF in Jabaliya, clearing remaining Hamas in north Gaza

12.18.24 – We- - - News – Wednesday
IDF destroy underground Hezbollah headquarters & another storehouse in a Mosque

12.18.24 – We- - - News – Wednesday
Significant gaps in Hamas negotiations as CIA chief set to arrive in Qatar

12.18.24 – We- - - News Placed in December 18 spot – Wednesday
IDF establishes five reserve brigades, aged 38-58 to bolster border & local defenses

12.17.24 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday
PM visits troops on Mount Hermon: will remain awaiting other arrangements

12.17.24 – Tu- - - News Placed in December 17 spot – Tuesday
Turkey amasses force on Syrian border for imminent assault on Kurds

12.17.24 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday
IDF chopper lands near Damascus, troops on ground for 20 minutes

12.17.24 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday
Defense Minister Katz poses IDF to maintain freedom to operate in Gaza

12.17.24 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday
Syrian rebel supports 1974 Israel border; called for removal of Assad sanctions

12.17.24 – Tu- - - News – Tuesday
Smotrich push for WB annexation, demolished 1,000 PA structures this year

12.16.24 – Mo- - - News – Monday
Senior official: Hostage deal possible before Trump takes office

12.16.24 – Mo- - - News – Monday
Missile from Yemen intercepted over central Israel; 'Houthis will pay a heavy price'

12.16.24 – Mo- - - News Placed in December 16 spot – Monday
Recruits surpass projection for men & women; ultra-Orthodox low turnout

12.16.24 – Mo- - - News – Monday
Hostage release deal closer than ever, yet too soon to say what the outcome would be

12.16.24 – Mo- - - News – Monday
Irish PM supporting PA in UN court is respect for law; Israel closed embassy

12.15.24 – Su- - - News – Sunday
Massive Israeli airstrikes on Syria reportedly trigger a 3.0-magnitude earthquake

12.15.24 – Su- - - News Placed in December 15 spot – Sunday Full Moon 3:02am
Lebanon army deploys south, monitored by US; searches for Hezbollah weapons

12.15.24 – Su- - - News – Sunday
Cabinet to discuss WB terror surge & hostage deal with Trump adviser Boehler

12.15.24 – Su- - - News – Sunday
Coalitions debate renewing judicial reform & hostile attorney general's future

12.15.24 – Su- - - News – Sunday
Israel closes embassy in Ireland, citing hostility; opens new embassy in Moldova

12.15.24 – Su- - - News – Sunday
Manpower crunch forces IDF to rely on civilians using bulldozers in enemy territory

12.15.24 – Su- - - News – Sunday
Cabinet majority backs deal in hostage talks; Hamas could still derail it

12.15.24 – Su- - - News – Sunday
IDF hold talks with Syrian Druze residents in Golan 8 miles from the border

12.15.24 – Su- - - News – Sunday
US decisions to Iran; agreement or military action - will be made by Trump.

12.14.24 – Sa- - - News – Saturday
From Shiite to Sunni jihad; US & Turkey have completely opposing goals in Syria

12.14.24 – Sa- - - News – Saturday
Israeli leaders demand probe into ex-prosecutor calling for military disobedience

12.14.24 – Sa- - - News – Saturday
Rebel leader called UN to compel Israel, immediately stop attacks & leave Syria

12.14.24 – Sa- - - News Placed in December 14 spot – Saturday

Trump envoy to visit Israel Monday on Gaza deal; US military set for surgical raid

12.14.24 – Sa- - - News – Saturday

West Bank PA security escalating clashes between terror groups to restore stability

12.14.24 – Sa- - - News – Saturday

Israel 420 strikes on Syria since fall, Russians removing equipment from Syria