

04152026 NEWS SPECIAL Don't miss Lev U'Neshama NOTE at end!

Please Note:

I am now home from having triple bypass surgery. I will attempt to start looking at the news and sending something out in the near future but it will be very abbreviated with only titles and links You can also subscribe to one of the many Israel reviews that are mailed out daily.

Thank you for your patience. rdb

Trump says no need to extend Iran ceasefire, as talks to end war continue

CENTCOM chief says blockade on Iran 'fully implemented' after 36 hours; IAEA head says any deal with Tehran needs 'very detailed' oversight of nuclear program

By [Agencies](#) and [ToI Staff](#) Today, 12:12 pm Updated at 6:05 pm

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/trump-says-no-need-to-extend-iran-ceasefire-predicts-an-amazing-two-days-ahead/> **Sometimes you have to question what this guy is doing. - rdb**

Iran used Chinese spy satellite to target US military bases in Middle East – report

IRGC bought satellite in late 2024 after it was launched into space, and directed it to monitor bases before and after missile and drone strikes on them, Financial Times says

By [Reuters](#) and [ToI Staff](#) Today, 10:02 am

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/iran-used-chinese-spy-satellite-to-target-us-military-bases-in-middle-east-report/>

Iran's economy could collapse within three months under naval blockade, experts warn

An expert on Iran's military noted that Iranian authorities have previously declared that if they are denied access to their ports, they will prevent other countries in the region from using theirs.

By [OMID HABIBINIA/THE MEDIA LINE](#) APRIL 15, 2026 17:12 Updated: APRIL 15, 2026 19:17

<https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/iran-news/article-893114>

Netanyahu sets goals for Lebanon as IDF outlines conditions and ceasefire talks

PM says Israel aims to dismantle Hezbollah and expand buffer zone as negotiations resume after decades; military outlines demands but receives no orders to prepare for ceasefire

[Yossi Yehoshua](#) | 13:09

<https://www.ynetnews.com/article/skzxx86hbe>

Conflicting reactions to direct talks with Israel underscore Lebanon's deep internal rift

While Hezbollah utterly rejects negotiations with Israel, the camp opposed to the terror group has voiced encouragement; Lebanese are weary of war but aren't convinced talks will succeed

By [Nurit Yohanan](#)

and [AFP](#) Today, 5:56 pm

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/conflicting-reactions-to-direct-talks-with-israel-underscore-lebanons-deep-internal-rift/>

One hurt as Hezbollah fires over 40 rockets at northern Israel

IDF says it hit over 200 targets in Lebanon over past day; foreign press group urges vigilance after IDF posts altered image of slain Hezbollah-linked reporter

By [Emanuel Fabian](#) and [Stav Levaton](#)

Today, 2:28 pm

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/one-hurt-as-hezbollah-fires-over-40-rockets-at-northern-israel/>

Israel boxes Paris out of Lebanon talks, halts arms buys as French disconnect grows Reacting to criticism of fighting against Iran and Hezbollah, Jerusalem calls France irrelevant and accuses it of harming security, though French official says claim 'total BS'

By [Nava Freiberg](#)

Today, 4:51 pm

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-boxes-paris-out-of-lebanon-talks-halts-arms-buys-as-french-disconnect-grows/>

Qatar warns 'full-fledged' Iran war impact about to hit global economy

At an IMF discussion in Washington, Qatari Finance Minister Ali Ahmed Al-Kuwari warned that the world will soon face huge economic ramifications resulting from the war with Iran.

By REUTERS/APRIL 15, 2026 19:40

<https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/article-893136>

In Iran, the conflict is unresolved. But in the US, Israel is losing the war

Many Israelis see the war as a shared fight against an existential threat, but Americans take a poor view of both the conflict and Israel; amid it all, Netanyahu is relying on Trump's fickle goodwill

By [Ben Sales](#)

Today, 6:04 pm

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/in-iran-the-conflict-is-unresolved-but-in-the-us-israel-is-losing-the-war/>

Cops detain 70 Palestinians hiding in garbage truck while trying to enter Israel

Police arrest Israeli driver of vehicle used in attempt to smuggle dozens of apparent Palestinian laborers through West Bank checkpoint

By [Agencies](#) and [Tol Staff](#) Today, 3:17 am

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/cops-detain-70-west-bank-palestinians-hiding-in-garbage-truck-while-trying-to-enter-israel/>

'Only those who serve decide': Reservists Party launches campaign against haredi, Arab parties

The campaign serves as a reference to a 2019 campaign by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's ruling Likud party that targeted journalists.

By [KESHET NEEV](#) APRIL 15, 2026 20:40 Updated: APRIL 15, 2026 20:49

<https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/politics-and-diplomacy/article-893142>

Netanyahu accepts Hungary invite despite ICC shift seeks guarantees against arrest in Budapest

PM holds first call with Hungary's incoming leader Peter Magyar, who plans to rejoin ICC; Netanyahu agrees to October visit but expected to demand immunity assurances amid arrest concerns

[Itamar Eichner](#) | 10:57

<https://www.ynetnews.com/article/hym2vvanzl#autoplay>

Hamas refuses to give up weapons, demands Board of Peace change Gaza ceasefire plan

Hamas has rejected the US-led Board of Peace's disarmament plan, demanding changes and accusing the mediator of pro-Israel bias.

By [SAM HALPERN](#), [AMICHAJ STEIN](#) APRIL 15, 2026 16:18 Updated: APRIL 15, 2026 19:17

<https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/article-893098>

Gaza flotilla aiming to break Israeli blockade sets sail from Spain

Organizers of the Global Sumud Flotilla say that more than 70 boats and 1,000 people from around the world will participate, with campaigners saying it's the biggest civilian-led mobilization of its kind

AP|11:43

<https://www.ynetnews.com/article/hycdt4a2wg>

Antisemitic Instagram king who wants to 'kill Israelis' launches bid for Congress

Dan Bilzerian, who feeds his 30 million followers antisemitism and conspiracy theories daily, announced run for the US House of Representatives; He believes 'Jews are the source of evil in the world' and that Israel should be destroyed: 'It's an evil country'

Tzippy Shmilovitz in New York|11:01

<https://www.ynetnews.com/jewish-world/article/hyrl1v62bl>

Masked men hurl firebombs at London synagogue in attempted arson attack

Neither bottle ignited, and no damage was caused to the Finchley Reform Synagogue, according to the Metropolitan Police and Community Security Trust.

ByMICHAEL STARRAPRIL 15, 2026 17:23

<https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/article-893115>

OP ED

Is Washington About to Replace One Iranian Tyranny with Another?

by [Pierre Rehov](#)

April 15, 2026 at 5:00 am



The issue is no longer whether the regime in Tehran is under strain — it clearly is — but whether Washington is preparing, consciously or not, to replace a brutal clerical dictatorship with a brutal military one. Pictured: Iran's then Supreme Leader, the late Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, prepares to award a medal to the late General Amir Ali Hajizadeh (L), then commander of the Aerospace Force of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), in the presence of the senior IRGC leadership, in Tehran on October 6, 2024.

(Image source: Office of the Iranian Supreme Leader)

A recurring illusion in American foreign policy is that removing the most visible layer of oppression in a brutal regime, as in Haiti, Afghanistan, Libya and Iraq, is enough to claim victory. It is politically convenient and media-friendly, but in the instance of the Islamic Republic of Iran, looks to be strategically disastrous.

Today, as pressure mounts on Iran and US President Donald J. Trump signals a willingness to seize a perceived opening — most recently through a 15-day ceasefire — the same illusion is once again taking shape. The issue is no longer whether the regime in Tehran is under strain — it clearly is — but whether Washington is preparing, consciously or not, to replace a brutal clerical dictatorship with a brutal military one.

Iran has two armies. One is the "Artesh," the regular national army that pre-dates the 1979 founding of the Islamic Republic. It presents itself as a standard professional military, and not as an ideological organization. The Artesh operates under strict government oversight, with embedded supervision that limits its autonomy. It is disciplined and not independent.

Iran's second army is the country's true center of power: the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), a parallel military created after the 1979 Islamic Revolution as a counterweight to the Artesh, which had previously been commanded by the Shah. The IRGC's purpose is to defend the revolution itself. It also [controls](#) a vast business empire that accounts for a large part of Iran's economy. It is structured with its own ground, naval and aerospace forces, and promotions depend as much on loyalty as competence.

The Basij, an auxiliary force of the IRGC, is a vast volunteer paramilitary network embedded throughout society, capable of suppressing civil dissent or protest at scale. The Basij exists to crush protests, hunt dissidents, and ensure the regime's survival through fear and repression.

The divide is clear: the IRGC and Basij form the fanatical core, while the Artesh represents a more

professional but tightly controlled layer. Neither has shown the slightest interest in any kind of liberalizing transformation.

The idea that a military structure could serve as a "moderate" transitional governing authority in Iran seems to rest on the fragile assumption that professionalism leads to moderation. Regional history says otherwise. From Egypt to Pakistan, militaries that stepped in to "restore order" entrenched their own authoritarian rule. Iran offers no reason to believe it would be different.

The former Shah's army, the Artesh, relegated to patrolling Iran's borders, may lack the theological zeal of the IRGC, but it has shown no commitment to dismantling the structures of repression.

Trump, for all his instinctive grasp of power dynamics, appears tempted by a shortcut — a rapid strategic win framed as geopolitical success. The reasoning is simple: weaken Iran's regime, fracture its internal balance, and allow a more pragmatic governing authority to emerge. The plan fits a transactional worldview, but the Iranian leadership, even at levels that might seem less ideological, is nevertheless shaped by the autocracy of the past 47 years.

The Iranian people, by contrast -- from the Green Movement in 2009 to the uprisings of 2017 and 2019, the protests after the death of Mahsa Amini in 2022, and even more powerfully in January 2026 -- have demonstrated not just a desire for reform, but a rejection of the Islamist regime itself. Women defying compulsory veiling, students confronting armed security forces, workers striking across sectors -- this is not a population asking for adjustments but a society demanding a complete break.

Any kind of real, long-term peace requires the total end of Iran's regime, not its adaptation. The Islamic Republic unfortunately cannot be reformed, any more than could the Afghan Taliban. The regime's legitimacy is rooted in a doctrine built on confrontation — both with the West and with its own population. Preserving any part of this ruling structure, whether through the IRGC or segments of the military, risks perpetuating the same destabilizing brutality.

Preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, while essential, addresses only one dimension of the threat. A non-nuclear authoritarian Iran remains capable of repression at home and destabilization abroad. Removing the threat of nuclear bombs does not create peace; it merely limits the scale of the potential catastrophe.

What makes the current moment so dangerous is that, if no credible alternative to the mullahs takes power -- one that is rooted in popular legitimacy -- the vacuum will not remain empty. It will be filled by the most organized, armed actors available — the IRGC and security apparatus -- the same forces that slaughtered more than [30,000](#) of their own citizens on the streets in just two days.

The pattern is not new. Remove the ideological leadership in Iran, and the military leadership takes over -- leading most likely to an even more unsparing grip on the unarmed Iranian people -- and even more difficult to combat. The faces change, but the repression, torture and hangings stay the same.

We have seen this devastation before -- in Haiti, Afghanistan, Libya and Iraq -- not to mention Iran itself starting in 1979. The Iranian regime's militaries are just as determined and deeply anchored. They are not interested in being reshaped. For Trump to declare victory based on a ceasefire, partial concessions, or the emergence of supposedly "pragmatic" actors would be catastrophically naïve.

The real danger for Washington is not failure, but the illusion of success. A deal signed, a regime weakened, a new brutal authority emerging — presented as a "solution." It is no different from British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's hapless 1938 declaration of "peace for our time." Then, the realization that, fundamentally, nothing has changed. Trump is right to confront Iran's regime, but the urgency to bring an end to the conflict appears to be heading toward an Iranian regime just as repressive as, or worse than, the current one.

Whatever happened to Trump's "[Help is on its way](#)"?

To say that economic collapse will make it easier for the Iranians to change their government if they wish might sound good, but it is fantasyland. They have no weapons.

The Iranian people are not asking for a redistribution of brutality. They are asking for a new system entirely.

Will Washington recognize this distinction, or will Trump's legacy, instead of peace, be -- in Syria as well -- that he simply exchanged one tyranny for another?

Pierre Rehov, who holds a law degree from Paris-Assas, is a French reporter, novelist and documentary filmmaker. He is the author of six novels, including "Beyond Red Lines", "The Third Testament" and "Red Eden", translated from French. His latest essay on the aftermath of the October 7 massacre "7 octobre - La riposte" became a bestseller in France. As a filmmaker, he has produced and directed 17 documentaries, many photographed at high risk in Middle Eastern war

zones, and focusing on terrorism, media bias, and the persecution of Christians. His latest documentary, "Pogrom(s)" highlights the context of ancient Jew hatred within Muslim civilization as the main force behind the October 7 massacre.
<https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/22443/replace-iranian-tyranny>



BS"D

STEP BY STEP

STEP BY STEP: Good news is that many friends and supporters of Lev U'Neshama (Heart and Soul) donated towards the Education Fund project to provide basic school supplies for actually 350 children within our Lev U'Neshama families.

We are grateful that the school supply part of our effort has been successful.

According to the Israel Population and Statistics office, Tzfat's population is about 40,000, and one third live at the poverty level. We do what we can so at least the children within our struggling LUN families can get the things they need.

Every week we are providing new sport shoes and eye exams/eyeglasses to the children on our request list. However, previous donations are rapidly dwindling. I am reaching out now before the fund has been emptied and we will have to say "no" to additional requests.

We work with two local shoe merchants who give Lev U'Neshama a discount but they advised us the cost of the shoes has increased. Also, we work with an accredited optician in town who also gives us a discount but his cost is stable.

Lev U'Neshama is an Israeli registered non-profit charity organization, volunteer run, no business expenses whatsoever and every \$ goes into our programs.

Shoes: \$45 per pair regular and \$60 for First Steps, baby shoes.

Eye Exam/Eyeglasses: \$60 per child.

Your support is urgently requested.

Or use the Zelle US to US bank transfer system (contact me at mortsmo@aol.com for bank information).

US Donors may also send checks made payable to

Simcha Smolensky, my son, who is also a volunteer. Send to:

Rabbi Simcha Smolensky, 6739 N Mozart St Chicago IL 60645

Your support will be appreciated.

Yaffa Smolensky