

IDF launches new operation in Gaza City, troops raid UNRWA compound used by Hamas

Residents say fighting in area is some of the heaviest since war's start; IDF says it killed dozen of terror operatives in past day during combat in Shejaiya and Rafah

By [Emanuel Fabian](#) and [Agencies](#) Today, 1:58 pm



Israeli troops operating in the Gaza Strip in an undated photo released by the military on July 8, 2024 (Israel Defense Forces)

The Israel Defense Forces launched a new operation early Monday morning in southern neighborhoods of Gaza City, following what it said was intelligence of Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad infrastructure and terror operatives in the area.

Palestinian media outlets reported that Israeli ground forces advanced into Gaza City's Tel al-Hawa neighborhood, following a large wave of airstrikes. Tel al-Hawa is located in the south of Gaza City, close to the Netzarim Corridor, where

the military maintains a semi-permanent presence.

The **corridor, built around a road south of Gaza City, enables the IDF to carry out raids in northern and central Gaza while allowing it to control access to the north** for Palestinians seeking to return after fleeing south. It also enables Israel to coordinate deliveries of humanitarian aid directly to northern Gaza.

On **Sunday, the IDF had called on Palestinians to evacuate the Tuffah, Daraj, and Old City** neighborhoods of Gaza City and head to shelters on the western side of the town, near the coast. In an updated announcement on Monday, the IDF called on Palestinian civilians in the Sabra, Rimal, Tel al-Hawa, and Daraj neighborhoods to evacuate and head toward the designated "humanitarian zone."

The **army said it was opening up a corridor for Palestinians** to leave the area.

The **humanitarian zone is located in the al-Mawasi area on** the southern Strip's coast, in the western neighborhoods of Khan Younis, and in central Gaza's Deir al-Balah.

[#عاجل !! نداء عاجل الى كل السكان والنازحين المتواجدين في مناطق الصبرة، الرمال، تل الهوا والدرج في بلوكات 687,](#)

[835 ,784 ,783 ,777 ,725 ,724 ,705 ,704 ,703 ,702 ,693 ,690 ,688](#)

pic.twitter.com/CGFFL9fsJW من أجل أمنكم – عليكم الاخلاء بشكل فوري الى مأوي دير البلح في المنطقة الإنسانية

— افياخي ادراعي (@AvichayAdraee) [July 8, 2024](#)

Israeli troops were also still battling Hamas in the Shejaiya neighborhood, located in the east of Gaza City.

In a statement on Monday morning, the military said it was also operating at UNRWA's headquarters, located near the Rimal neighborhood, where the IDF previously found significant Hamas tunnel infrastructure and killed and captured numerous gunmen.

The IDF said it had intelligence of new Hamas and Islamic Jihad activity and infrastructure in Gaza City, including weapon caches and detention and interrogation rooms used by the terror groups.



Palestinians flee following a warning by the Israeli military to evacuate an area of Gaza City on July 7, 2024 (Omar AL-QATTAA / AFP)

“The IDF will continue to act in accordance with international law and against the Hamas and PIJ terror organizations, which systematically operate and carry out terrorist activity from inside civilian infrastructure, including UNRWA compounds, which are used by them to plan and carry out terror activity against the State of Israel,” the military said.

Gaza City **residents said on Monday morning that they were seeing some of the heaviest fighting since the start of the war amid** the new operation, including artillery and tank fire in the area, as well as airstrikes.



UNRWA's headquarters in Gaza City, February 8, 2024. (Emanuel Fabian/ Times of Israel)

The Gaza Civil Emergency Service said they believed there were casualties in eastern Gaza areas but emergency teams were unable to reach them because of ongoing offensives in Tel Al-Hawa, Sabra, Daraj, Rimal, and Tuffah suburbs.

The raid in the southern Gaza City neighborhoods was being carried out by troops with the 99th Division.

Meanwhile, in Gaza City's Shejaiya neighborhood, troops with the 98th Division killed

dozens of Hamas operatives — involved in anti-tank attacks and rocket fire on Israel — including by calling in airstrikes, the IDF said.

In Shejaiya, an officer with the 7th Armored Brigade's 82nd Battalion was seriously wounded late Sunday, the army said.

The IDF has been operating in Shejaiya for the past week and a half.

Separately, in the Gaza Strip's southernmost city of Rafah, the IDF said troops with the 162nd Division had killed more than 30 gunmen over the past day, as well as located tunnel shafts and weapons. The offensive in Rafah began in early May.

The war in Gaza broke out on October 7 with Hamas's unprecedented attack on southern Israel, in which thousands of terrorists murdered some 1,200 people and took 251 hostages.



IDF vehicles transport a group of soldiers and journalists inside the southern Gaza Strip, July 3, 2024. (AP Photo/Ohad Zwigenberg, Pool)

In response, Israel launched a ground invasion in Gaza with the declared objectives of dismantling Hamas and getting the hostages back.

The Hamas-run Gaza health ministry says more than 38,000 people in the Strip have been killed or are presumed dead in the fighting so far, though the toll cannot be verified and does not differentiate between civilians and terrorists. Israel says it has killed more than 15,000 combatants in battle and some 1,000 terrorists inside Israel during the

October 7 attack.

Israel's toll in the ground offensive against Hamas in Gaza and in military operations along the border with the Strip stands at 326. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-launches-new-operation-in-gaza-city-troops-raid-unrwa-compound-used-by-hamas/>

Security officials 'shocked' by PM's announcement of Gaza nonnegotiables — reports Netanyahu said to have sent list of his hostage deal red lines to media without any input from negotiating team, as officials were about to start meeting over next stage of talks

By [Tol Staff](#) Today, 3:30 pm



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu speaks during a news conference at the Sheba Tel Hashomer Hospital in Ramat Gan, June 8, 2024. (Jack Guez/Pool Photo via AP)

Security officials were caught off-guard on Sunday when Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu publicly announced a list of “nonnegotiables” for the ongoing hostage negotiations with Hamas, Hebrew media reported Monday.

The prime minister’s list of red lines was distributed to the media just as officials convened for a meeting about the next stage of indirect talks with the terror group, without those officials knowing about the list or signing off on its publication, the reports said.

Two unnamed officials told Kan news they were “shocked” by the announcement, and reported that some of those present at the meeting assailed the prime minister for the move.

“Negotiations have to be conducted behind closed doors — not in press releases, and definitely not the moment before the start of a meeting to determine the next stage of talks,” sources familiar with the discussion told Kan.

An unnamed security official told the Ynet news site that the statement by Netanyahu’s office was “inappropriate

Israel has been negotiating on and off for months with Hamas for the release of the hostages held by the terror group since October 7, when thousands of terrorists invaded southern Israel, killing some 1,200 people and taking 251 hostages, and sparking the ongoing war in the Gaza Strip. Israel says 116 now remain in Gaza, many of them no longer alive.



Demonstrators protest for the release of Israelis held hostage in the Gaza Strip, outside Hakirya Base in Tel Aviv, July 7, 2024. Photo by Itai Ron/Flash90

Negotiations mediated by Qatar, Egypt and the US have so far failed to secure a truce in Gaza and release of hostages since a weeklong ceasefire in November saw Hamas free 105 hostages and Israel release 240 Palestinian security prisoners.

Over the weekend Hamas said it dropped its demand that Israel agree upfront to end the war, raising hopes for a deal, though it has also said it is seeking guarantees from mediators that the fighting

will not resume.

In his statement on Sunday, Netanyahu listed as one of the “nonnegotiables” an assurance that weapons would no longer be smuggled into Gaza from Egypt.

Officials **told Ynet that while the condition itself was not out of line with what is being discussed,** the prime minister should not have spoken about such a delicate issue publicly at this stage.

“It endangers the discussions that are being conducted with Cairo, and negatively affects all the talks,” they said.

Netanyahu’s other demands included that any potential deal must “allow Israel to go back to fighting until all the goals of the war are achieved” and cannot allow “the return of thousands of armed terrorists to the north of the Gaza Strip.”

“The plan that has been agreed to by Israel and that has been welcomed by President Biden will allow Israel to bring back hostages without infringing on the other objectives of the war,” the statement also declared.

Acknowledging **Hamas’s backing down from its demand for an upfront Israeli commitment to end the war and its return to the negotiating table,** the statement attributed the change to **“the prime minister’s firm position against attempts to stop the IDF’s ground operation in Rafah.”**

Israel has said that there were still “gaps” in Hamas’s response to the proposed deal — the details of which Netanyahu’s office appeared to publicize in its statement — but all sides are expected to step up negotiating efforts in the coming days.

An Israeli delegation led by Shin Bet chief Ronen Bar left for Cairo on Monday. Talks there were expected to address the issue of the Rafah Crossing between Egypt and the Gaza Strip, including smuggling issues.

In addition, US Central Intelligence Agency chief William Burns is expected to hold a four-way meeting in Doha this week with Mossad chief Ron Barnea, Egyptian intelligence head Abbas Kamel, and Qatari Prime Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani.

The statement from Netanyahu's office was met Sunday with anger by Israeli security officials and mediators, who, not for the first time, accused the prime minister of trying to sabotage the deal.

"Netanyahu pretends that he wants a deal, but is working to torpedo it," an anonymous security official told Channel 12. "He's dragging out the process, trying to stretch time until his speech in Congress [on July 24] and then the [Knesset] recess."

According to the security official, there was "no enthusiasm or drive" on the prime minister's part to finalize a deal for the hostages' release, and instead of discussions being driven by urgency, they were instead built on "smears and radicalized positions."

A second source questioned Netanyahu's desire to "emphasize the gaps" in the negotiations "just before the departure of the delegation," Channel 12 reported.

Opposition Leader Yair Lapid similarly slammed Netanyahu, asking rhetorically what the point of his statement had been.

"I have one response to the announcement from the Prime Minister's Office: What is it good for? We are at a critical moment in the negotiations, the lives of the hostages depend on it; why issue such provocative messages?" Lapid asked. "How does it contribute to the process?"

A senior official from one of the countries mediating between Israel and Hamas also accused Netanyahu of trying to sabotage the deal.

The senior official, speaking to The Times of Israel on condition of anonymity, said that the nonnegotiable demand to resume fighting after the first stage of the ceasefire and hostage release deal publicized by Netanyahu's office hit at the most sensitive aspect of the ongoing negotiations, as Hamas is seeking assurances from the mediators that Israel will not resume fighting after the initial phase.

They have instead kept in place relatively open-ended language regarding the transition from phase one to phase two that allows both Israel to feel comfortable enough that it has the ability to resume fighting if Hamas ceases to negotiate in good faith and Hamas to feel comfortable enough that the mediators will prevent Israel from resuming the war instead of implementing the permanent ceasefire that is stage two of the deal.

"Statements like the one made by the prime minister severely harm efforts to maintain that ambiguity," the senior official from the mediating country said.

"One cannot help but conclude that they are being made for purely political purposes," the official added, referencing Netanyahu's desire to appease far-right coalition partners who oppose the hostage deal under discussion. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/security-officials-shocked-by-pms-announcement-of-gaza-nonnegotiables-reports/>

Citing losses and destruction, Hamas figures in Gaza urge leaders to strike deal

Internal communications show senior officials in Strip wrote to group's chiefs in Qatar urging ceasefire despite reluctance of Yahya Sinwar, who may not be aware of war's toll

By [AP](#) and [Tel Staff](#) Today, 1:06 pm

Several senior Hamas figures in Gaza have urged the terror group's exiled political leadership to accept the ceasefire and hostage deal proposal championed by US President Joe Biden, according to internal communications seen by The Associated Press.

The messages, shared by a Middle East official familiar with the ongoing negotiations, described the heavy losses Hamas has suffered on the battlefield and the dire conditions in the war-ravaged territory. The official spoke on condition of anonymity to share the contents of internal Hamas communications.

The official shared two internal Hamas communications, both written by senior officials inside Gaza to the group's leadership in Qatar, where Hamas's political leader Ismail Haniyeh is based.

The communications, from May and June, suggested that the war had taken a toll on Hamas fighters, with the senior figures urging the group's political wing abroad to accept the deal despite the reluctance of Yahya Sinwar, the group's leader in Gaza.

The messages suggest that Sinwar, who has been in hiding since the war erupted and is believed to be holed up in a tunnel deep underground, either isn't fully aware of the toll of the fighting or isn't fully communicating it to those negotiating outside of the territory.

It is **not known whether Haniyeh or any other top officials in Qatar responded to the messages.** Hamas over the weekend **appeared to drop** its longstanding demand that Israel promise to end the war in Gaza as part of any deal, though it indicated it was still demanding guarantees to that effect from mediators. Prime **Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Sunday that military pressure — including Israel's ongoing two-month offensive in the southern Gaza city of Rafah — "is what has led Hamas to enter negotiations."**

Israeli representatives have been negotiating with Hamas through intermediaries almost since October 7, when thousands of terrorists invaded Israel from the Gaza Strip, killing some 1,200 people and taking 251 hostages, and sparking the ongoing war.

In **November, Hamas released 105 civilian hostages in exchange for a one-week ceasefire and the release of hundreds of Palestinian prisoners, but efforts to reach a second agreement have so far been fruitless.**

US officials declined to comment on the communications seen by AP. But a person familiar with Western intelligence, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the group's leadership understands its forces have suffered heavy losses, which has helped Hamas move closer to a ceasefire deal.

Two **US officials, also speaking on condition of anonymity, said the Americans are aware of internal divisions within Hamas, and said that those divisions,** the destruction in Gaza, or pressure from mediators Egypt and Qatar could have been factors in the terror group softening its demands.

Hamas spokesperson Jihad Taha dismissed any suggestions of divisions within the group.

"The movement's position is unified and is crystallized through the organizational framework of the leadership," he said.

Israeli officials also declined to comment on the communications, as did Egypt and Qatar.

Egypt and Qatar have been working with the United States to broker a hostage deal to end the ongoing war. After months of fits and starts, talks resumed last week and are scheduled to continue in the coming days.

Hamas and Egyptian officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said a phased deal would start with a six-week ceasefire during which older, sick and female hostages would be released by Hamas in exchange for hundreds of Palestinian prisoners.

Talks on a broader deal, including an end to the war, would only begin during this phase, they said.

Several US officials said they are cautiously optimistic about the prospects for a ceasefire based on the latest developments, but stressed that numerous previous efforts had looked promising only to fall through.

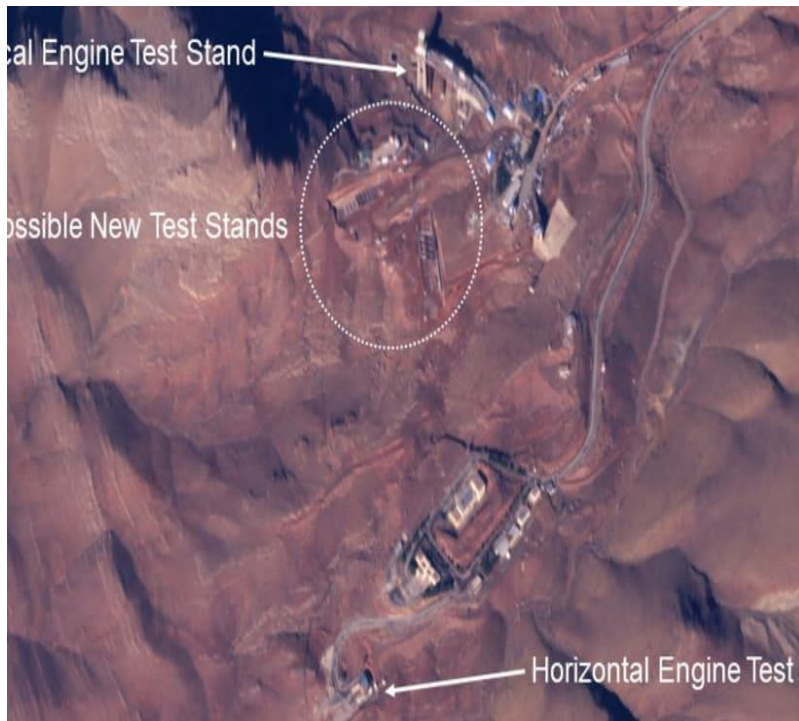
It is believed that 116 hostages abducted by Hamas on October 7 remain in Gaza, though many of them are believed to be dead. The IDF has confirmed the deaths of 42 of those still held by Hamas, citing intelligence and findings obtained by troops operating in Gaza. One more person is listed as missing since October 7, and their fate is still unknown.

Hamas is also holding two Israeli civilians who entered the Strip in 2014 and 2015, as well as the bodies of two IDF soldiers who were killed in 2014.

The Hamas-run Gaza health ministry says more than 38,000 people in the Strip have been killed or are presumed dead in the fighting so far, though the toll cannot be verified and does not differentiate between civilians and fighters.

Israel says it has killed some 15,000 combatants in battle and some 1,000 terrorists inside Israel during the October 7 attack. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/citing-losses-and-destruction-hamas-figures-in-gaza-urge-leaders-to-strike-deal/>

Satellite photos show Iran expanding missile production, sources say - report
The images show many of the structures surrounded by large dirt berms. The buildings are located in Tehran.
By REUTERS JULY 8, 2024 18:36 **Updated:** JULY 8, 2024 18:46



A satellite photo shows suspected tunnel expansion (in the upper-right quadrant of the picture) at Shahid Modarres Garrison, near Tehran, Iran, in this handout image obtained by Reuters on July 5, 2024. (photo credit: Planet Labs PBC/Handout via REUTERS)

Recent satellite imagery shows major expansions at two key Iranian ballistic missile facilities that two American researchers assessed are for boosting missile production, a conclusion confirmed by three senior Iranian officials.

The enlargement of the sites follows an October 2022 deal in which Iran agreed to provide missiles to Russia, which has been seeking them for its war against Ukraine.

Tehran also supplies missiles to Yemen's Houthi rebels and the Lebanese militia Hezbollah, both members of the Iran-backed Axis of Resistance against Israel, according to U.S. officials.

Images taken by commercial satellite firm Planet Labs of the Modarres military base in March and the Khojir missile production complex in April show more than 30 new buildings at the two sites, both of which are located near Tehran.

The images, reviewed by Reuters, show many of the structures are surrounded by large dirt berms. Such earthworks are associated with missile production and are designed to stop a blast in one building from detonating highly combustible materials in nearby structures, said Jeffrey Lewis of the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey.

The expansions began at Khojir in August last year and at Modarres in October, Lewis said, based on images of the sites.



A satellite photo shows suspected tunnel expansion (in the upper-right quadrant of the picture) at Shahid Modarres Garrison, near Tehran, Iran, in this handout image obtained by Reuters on July 5, 2024. (credit: Planet Labs PBC/Handout via REUTERS)

Three Iranian officials, who asked not to be identified because they were not authorized to speak publicly, confirmed that Modarres and Khojir are being expanded to boost production of conventional ballistic missiles.

"Why shouldn't we?" said one official.

A second Iranian official said some of the new buildings would also allow a doubling of drone manufacturing. Drones and missile components would be sold to Russia, drones would be provided to the Houthis and missiles to [Hezbollah](#), the source added.

Reuters was unable independently to confirm the Iranian officials' comments.

Iran's mission to the United Nations did not respond to a Reuters request for comment on the expansion of the complexes. Tehran has previously denied providing drones and missiles to Russia and the Houthis. Hezbollah's media office did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Houthi spokesperson Mohammed Abdulsalam said a boost in Iran's weapons manufacturing would not have any impact in Yemen because the Houthis develop and manufacture aircraft independently of Iran.



Lewis analyzed the Planet Labs imagery with Decker Eveleth, an associate research analyst at CNA, a Washington thinktank, as part of a Middlebury project that monitors Iranian missile infrastructure.

"We know that Russia is on the hunt for low-cost missile capabilities, and it has gone to Iran and North Korea," said Lewis.

Moscow and Pyongyang have denied the transfer of North Korean missiles to Russia. The Russian embassy in Washington and North Korea's mission to the United Nations did not immediately respond to requests for comment for this story.

The two U.S. researchers said in separate interviews that it was not clear from the photos what kinds of missiles would be produced at the new facilities, which still appeared to be under construction.

Any increase in Tehran's missile or drone production would be concerning to the United States, which has said that Iranian drones help sustain Russia's assault on Ukrainian cities, and to Israel as it fends off attacks from Iran-backed groups, including Hezbollah.



A satellite photo shows suspected tunnel expansion (in the upper-right quadrant of the picture) at Shahid Modarres Garrison, near Tehran, Iran, in this handout image obtained by Reuters on July 5, 2024. (credit: Planet Labs PBC/Handout via REUTERS)

The U.S. Office of the Director of National Intelligence declined to comment on the researchers' analysis.

A U.S. National Security Council spokesperson declined to confirm their assessment, adding that the United States has implemented various measures, including sanctions, intended to constrain Iranian missile and drone production and exports.

Reuters in February reported that Iran had sent surface-to-surface ballistic missiles to Russia for use against Ukraine. Iran denied providing the weapons. Washington said it could not confirm the transfers but it assumed Tehran intended to provide missiles to Moscow.

NEW BUILDINGS, DIRT BERMS

Shahid Modarres and Khojir are overseen by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), the elite paramilitary organization that plays a central role in Iran's missile and nuclear programs. It controls large segments of the Iranian economy and answers directly to Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

The complexes have long been associated with the development and production of Iran's short- and medium-range ballistic missiles and rockets for the country's space program.

On Nov. 12, 2011, a massive explosion destroyed a large swath of Shadid Modarres associated with solid fuel missiles, killing 17 IRGC officers. They included Gen. Hassan Moqaddam, regarded by Iran as the "architect" of its ballistic missile program.

Construction at Shahid Modarres, which began again after the 2011 explosion, accelerated last year, the second Iranian official said.

"I think the **Iranians may have chosen not to berm the buildings (before the explosion)** because they didn't want to draw attention to them," said Lewis. "They learned the hard way."

Eveleth and Lewis said the sites' long history with Iran's missile program – Shahid Modarres is considered by some experts as its birthplace - and the numerous dirt berms support their assessment that Tehran is expanding ballistic missile production.

"When we see where you basically have an entire production line that is bermed like that, that's usually missiles," said Eveleth. <https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/iran-news/article-809457>

What went wrong? IDF to present probe into failure to defend Be'eri on October 7 on Thursday

IDF probes will find numerous cases of friendly fire errors leading to tragic deaths and groups of IDF soldiers who were too hesitant to confront Hamas invaders.

By [YONAH JEREMY BOB](#) JULY 8, 2024 17:00 Updated: JULY 8, 2024 17:14



Israeli soldiers seen next to burnt cars at the entrance to Kibbutz Be'eri, near the Israeli-Gaza Border, southern Israel, October 9, 2023. (photo credit: YOSSEI ZAMIR/FLASH90)

The IDF announced on Tuesday that it will present its first probe in a series of October 7 probes – the investigation into the failure to defend Be'eri – on Thursday.

According to the military, the results of the probe will first be presented to the families of those who fell at Be'eri on October 7, including the Be'eri residents as well as the many security forces from the IDF, Shin Bet, and police.

This presentation will take place at a large amphitheater in the Dead Sea area early Thursday

afternoon.

Later Thursday night, the results of the probe, including extensive diagrams and video footage will be posted on the IDF's website.

The Be'eri probe is the first of a series of IDF probes, which will come out on a rolling basis through July and August, into the October 7 failure to prevent Hamas's invasion.



Photos of the destruction in Kibbutz Be'eri taken in the beginning of November 2023. (credit: MAAYAN JAFFE-HOFFMAN)

According to the previous media leaks, the IDF probes will find numerous cases of: friendly fire errors leading to tragic deaths, of groups of IDF soldiers who were too hesitant to confront Hamas invaders (even as some groups rushed to fight who had not yet been summoned), of higher up commanders ordering some groups of soldiers to remain in a reserve second line capacity when they should have headed into the front, and specifically of not knowing how to handle complex battlefield questions involving hostages in Be'eri.

Consequences of the findings

One of the consequences of the findings to date, some of which are final, but some of which are interim, could be freezing the promotion of Brig. Gen. Barak Hiram to ascend to the post of commander of the Gaza Division.

Hiram has been one of the most controversial commanders of the war.

On one hand, he allegedly gave controversial orders to fire on residential units which included both Hamas terrorists and hostages, potentially killing the hostages.

Even this narrative is debated, as his attack order may have been focused on saving his soldiers who were under fire, and it is also debated as to whether there was any way to secure the hostages release without attacking the Hamas guards who held them.

In any event, the other side of the coin has been that after October 7, Hiram was highly successful in a number of battles.

Further, his command skills were viewed as significantly responsible for ousting Hamas from Be'eri at a time when other nearby commanders had been killed or had fled.

This means that some hostage families would raise an outcry if he were given that Gaza Division command, while many in the military would object if he is not given the command, viewing him as one of the most successful and battle tested commanders.

Aspects of a major probe

Aspects of a major probe on the IDF and defense establishment's general national security and defense concept related to Gaza and Hamas over the years will be presented by key officers to IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Herzl Halevi already in early July, but will only be publicized to the public later in the summer after they are integrated with other issues.

This probe will look all the way back to 2018, but not earlier.

The IDF said that it expected that as part of an eventual state inquiry and eventual State Comptroller report, such probes might look further back in time, but that if the IDF had gone back further than 2018, it would have also meant delaying publicizing the results to the public.

IDF Maj. Gen. Mickey Edelstein led the probe on Be'eri.

Besides Be'eri, there are around 40 probes of other individual battles which occurred in the South relating to October 7 which will be publicized on a rolling basis from mid-July and through August.

A probe specifically on the events of October 6 leading up to the Hamas invasion, and specific warnings and operational moves made or not made during that period, will likely be publicized in early August.

The IDF started the process for the probe in March.

Despite the IDF probe, most defense officials are calling for a state inquiry which would also probe the decisions and actions of the government.

However, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had opposed any state inquiry, fearing its political consequences for his coalition. <https://www.jpost.com/israel-hamas-war/article-809444>

Haredi draft drama: IDF chief Baram leaks military can absorb 3,000 additional haredi recruits

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is hoping to postpone the issue to September, concerned that the Haredim could bring the government down over their funds being frozen.

By YONAH JEREMY BOB JULY 8, 2024 17:23 Updated: JULY 8, 2024 18:05



Incoming IDF Deputy Chief of Staff Amir Baram gives remarks at his inauguration ceremony, October 31, 2022. (photo credit: IDF SPOKESMAN'S OFFICE)

A controversy erupted over what IDF Deputy Chief of Staff Maj. Gen. Amir Baram told a classified meeting of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee about how the military decided that the number of Haredim it can immediately integrate is 3,000 in addition to the around 1,800 it already has.

The 3,000 is out of a class of around 10,000-12,000 per academic year, with over 60,000 Haredim potentially in play from several academic years following the High

Court of Justice's June 25 blockbuster order for a universal draft and the freezing of funds to [Haredi institutions](#) which do not comply.

That order, with momentum from the fact that so many IDF soldiers have died in the current war, broke open the issue of potentially drafting more Haredim after UTJ and Shas had kept the issue out of the public eye for years.

Yet, part of the idea is that since Haredim require special arrangements, including often service environments with special religious provisions and with fewer interactions with female soldiers.

Meanwhile, the Haredi political parties are under pressure to regain their institutions' funding, but have not shown clear signs of being willing to strike a compromise and push for even a larger partial draft.



Shas leader Arye Deri (right) and UTJ leader Ya'acov Litzman (far left) attend a meeting in Jerusalem. (credit: REUTERS)

According to a KAN report, Baram was asked how the IDF arrived at the 3,000 number and he responded saying, "we want to convince them to come. The IDF only drafts out of love, mostly for battle."

The KAN report said that some of the FADC members giggled at this, making it clear that the member who leaked to KAN was either a Haredi MK or part of the coalition and seeking to discredit the IDF on the issue.

Report not entirely accurate

An IDF spokesman said that the report was not entirely accurate and that a fuller explanation would eventually be publicized, but did not provide timing on when that would be.

Further, some members of the FADC were angry with the IDF that Baram came without IDF Human Resources Chief Maj. Gen. Yaniv Asur, who had been summoned for the last two days.

A later statement indicated that Asur might appear on Tuesday, and disputed any account that the schedule had ever intended anything different.

The Knesset is in session until July 24, after which a recess will go into effect until September. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is hoping to postpone the issue to September, concerned that the Haredim could bring the government down over their funds being frozen, but hoping that fear of a worse solution under a different government will hold them in line. <https://www.jpost.com/israel-hamas-war/article-809451>

Another poll confirms: Naftali Bennett would lead right-wing to election victory

According to the poll, the National Unity led by Benny Gantz would garner 25 mandates, while the Likud led by Benjamin Netanyahu would yield 21 mandates.

By WALLA!, [JERUSALEM POST STAFF](#) JULY 8, 2024 08:40 **Updated:** JULY 8, 2024 13:37

A right-wing party led by Naftali Bennett, former Mossad chief Yossi Cohen, Avigdor Liberman and Gideon Sa'ar would receive 32 mandates, if elections were held today, a survey conducted by Channel 13 revealed on Sunday.



According to the poll, National Unity, led by Benny Gantz would garner 25 mandates, while the Likud led by Benjamin Netanyahu would yield 21 mandates. Yair Lapid's Yesh Atid would receive 13 mandates.

Former Prime Minister Naftali Bennet gives a statement to the press. June 29, 2024. (photo credit: Amir Levy/Getty Images)

The Democrats - the union between Labor and Meretz led by Yair Golan will receive 9 mandates according to the survey.

In addition, according to the poll, Sa'ar's party would not pass the electoral threshold if it would contend on its own.

According to the survey, a bloc of Netanyahu's opponents would receive 63 mandates, without the Hadash-Ta'al votes.

The Netanyahu supporters bloc would be allocated 53 mandates. A union between National Unity and Yesh Atid would not add mandates to any of the parties, which together would receive 21 seats, assuming that a right-wing party led by Bennett would indeed be running. However, in such a case, [the Likud](#) would drop to 18 seats only.

The poll also attempted to determine the measure of public support for the hostage deal. According to the results, the proposed transaction is supported by a majority of 58% of the public. 23% of the respondents opposed the deal in the existing outline, while 19% answered that they did not know.

Distribution of mandates according to the Channel 13 poll

National Unity - 25

Likud - 21

Yesh Atid - 13

Yisrael Beytenu - 12

Otzma Yehudit - 10

Shas - 10

The Democrats - 9

United Torah Judaism (UTJ) - 8

Religious Zionist Party (RZP) - 4

Hadash-Ta'al - 4

Ra'am - 4

Balad - 0

United Right - 0

Maariv survey illustrates similar results

A Maariv poll conducted last week showed similar results, allocating 29 seats to a right-wing party led by Liberman, Bennett, Cohen, Sa'ar and Ayelet Shaked.

The party would position itself at the head of the political map, with the Likud following suit with 19 mandates.

The National Unity party would receive, according to the survey, 16 seats, dropping by seven mandates if such a right-wing party would indeed run.

The poll also showed that in such a scenario the opposition bloc without the Arab parties would receive 66 mandates, allowing it to form a coalition. <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-809349>

No Time: Liberman calls on French Jews to flee to Israel after far-left victory in France

French Jews were plagued on both sides of the political spectrum by extreme candidates, some with a long history of antisemitism and some with a very recent history.

By YUVAL BARNEA JULY 8, 2024 15:32 Updated: JULY 8, 2024 16:38



Avigdor Liberman speaking at an Yisrael Beytenu party meeting, July 8, 2024. (photo credit: YISRAEL BEYTENU)

Following Sunday's French elections result, Avigdor Liberman, head of Yisrael Beytenu, called on French Jews to make aliyah before it is too late in statements at a party meeting on Monday.

Liberman called for French Jews to leave after the broad-left New Popular Front election bloc received the most votes.

"I call on the French Jews to leave France and immigrate to the State of Israel. No time," Liberman said.

The bloc is headed by the far-left strong anti-Israel figure Jean-Luc Melenchon, who

Liberman, along with various other figures, including the president of the Representative Council of Jewish Institutions of France (CRIF) have [accused of antisemitism](#).

"His party represents pure antisemitism and expresses a significant increase in hatred of Israel and antisemitism," Liberman said at the party meeting.

Jean-Luc Melenchon, leader of French far-left opposition party La France Insoumise (LFI) surrounded by Manuel Bompard and Rima Hassan, all members of the alliance of left-wing parties, called the "Nouveau Front Populaire" (NFP), delivers a speech. Paris, June 30, 2024. (credit: REUTERS/Abdul Saboor)



Under fire from all sides

French Jews were plagued on both sides of the political spectrum by extreme candidates, some with a long history of antisemitism and some with a very recent history.

The **elections led to no overall winner but saw the NPF come out with the largest vote share and**, thus, the greatest chance to form a coalition.

However, **the NPF comprises five major parties and many smaller ones ranging from center-left to far-left, leaving the total number of member parties in the dozens.**

Melenchon's France Unbowed (La France Insoumise) champions the far-left faction, The Ecologists champion the greens, and the Socialist Party champions the center-left.

In addition, there are further parties and factions in the broad bloc, including the French Communist Party and several separatist and regionalist groups.

The bloc also receives support from several major trade unions and left-wing NGOs.

In **contrast, the right formed a much smaller bloc composed of the traditional conservative party of France Les Republicans and the far-right National Rally , which is the ideological descendant of the Nazi collaborators** and the extreme right. Although it has moderated in recent years under Marine Le Pen it has not been able to shake this heritage.

In **the center lies the ailing Ensemble party of Presiden Macron, which took heavy losses** to both the left and the right, losing 77 seats in the election.

French Jews were effectively disenfranchised by the current political climate, which saw them unwilling to vote for Macron's party due to the rising antisemitic violence experienced by French Jews, unable to vote for the left due to their alliance with far-left antisemites and strong anti-Israel stances, with some even justifying October 7, and regretting being forced to look to the far-right as ironically the only party willing to tackle antisemitism in France.

Lieberman's call for a mass French Aliyah is not the first call for such a move, with the [Rabbi of Paris Grand Synagogue Moshe Sebbag telling The 'Post'](https://www.jpost.com/breaking-news/article-809429) "There is no future for Jews in France."
<https://www.jpost.com/breaking-news/article-809429>

Russia takes out three US-made Ukrainian missile systems – MOD

Up to ten foreign specialists operating HIMARS were also eliminated, the Defense Ministry has said

8 Jul, 2024 14:22



FILE PHOTO: Servicemen of the Russian Southern Military District participate in military drills. © Sputnik / Russian Defense Ministry

The Russian military has destroyed three US-supplied Ukrainian High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems (HIMARS) along with some of the foreign military personnel helping Kiev operate the missile arrays, Moscow has said.

On Monday, the Defense Ministry stated that the systems were eliminated through the combined actions of Russian warplanes, drones, artillery and missile forces. It

added that the strike also killed “up to 10 foreign specialists servicing those systems.”

Officials, however, would not say where the HIMARS – which have a range of fire of about 80km – were destroyed, nor would they provide details regarding the nationality of the foreign personnel.

However, several Russian Telegram channels released a video of the purported strike, claiming it had taken in Russia’s Kherson Region at night. The black-and-white clip shows what looks like aerial footage of three HIMARS arrays maneuvering on the road before being hit by a single powerful missile strike, causing fire and smoke to rise into the air.

Last month, the Russian Defense Ministry claimed to have destroyed another HIMARS in Ukraine’s Kharkov Region. The attacks came after the US stated in May that it was allowing Kiev to use American-made weapons to strike targets deep inside Russia, with Ukrainian officials confirming that the missiles were used to bombard Russian logistics hubs and artillery positions across the border.

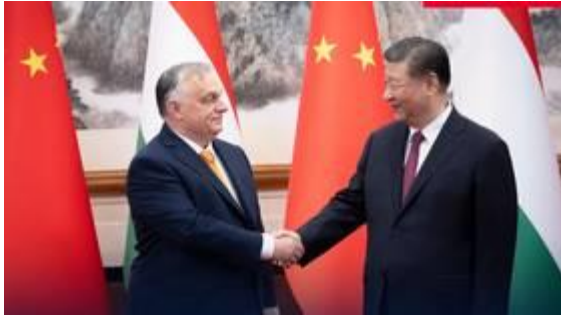
Russian officials have repeatedly accused Ukraine of using Western-made weapons, particularly US-supplied HIMARS and long-range ATAMCS missiles to attack civilians. In this vein, Moscow slammed Washington over weapons deliveries, arguing that in doing so, the US “*is encouraging Kiev terrorists to commit new crimes.*”

Russia has also said it is well aware of the presence of foreign military personnel in Ukraine, noting that they are regarded as “*legitimate targets*” for Moscow’s forces. Russian President Vladimir Putin said in late May that those foreign servicemen were suffering casualties. <https://www.rt.com/russia/600642-russia-himars-strike-kherson/>

Xi Jinping meets Orban

The Chinese leader has welcomed the Hungarian prime minister to Beijing

8 Jul, 2024 03:15



© X / PM_ViktorOrban

Chinese President Xi Jinping has held a meeting with Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, who is in Beijing on what he has dubbed a “peacekeeping mission,” Xinhua reported on Monday morning.

“China is a key power in creating the conditions for peace in the Russia-Ukraine war. This is why I came to meet with President Xi in Beijing, just two months after his official visit to Budapest,” Orban [wrote](#) in a post on X (formerly Twitter).

Details of the meeting have yet to be revealed, but it follows Orban’s trips to Kiev and Moscow last week. The Hungarian prime minister called the Beijing trip a “peace mission 3.0” upon his arrival.

Orban embarked on an unannounced trip to Kiev last Tuesday, where he proposed a “quick ceasefire” to Ukrainian leader Vladimir Zelensky. Orban then traveled to Moscow to discuss the “shortest way out” of the conflict with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Moscow’s and Kiev’s positions remain very “far apart,” according to the Hungarian leader, who noted that Zelensky “*didn’t like*” his proposals. Meanwhile, Putin reiterated Moscow’s readiness to resolve the hostilities through negotiations, but said the Ukrainian leadership appears committed to waging war “*until the end.*”

Orban’s meeting with Putin angered some fellow EU leaders, while Kiev expressed fury that the Hungarian leader had traveled to Russia “*without approval or coordination with Ukraine.*” <https://www.rt.com/news/600602-orban-china-xi-meeting/>

Poland to shoot down Russian missiles – Zelensky

Warsaw says the details of the new security pact with Kiev need to be cleared with NATO partners

8 Jul, 2024 16:17



Vladimir Zelensky and Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk sign an agreement during a meeting in Warsaw, Poland on July 8, 2024. © Sergei GAPON / AFP

A newly signed pact between Warsaw and Kiev contains provisions that would allow Poland to shoot down Russian missiles and drones in Ukrainian airspace, Vladimir Zelensky has said.

Zelensky spoke in Warsaw on Monday, after signing the security deal with Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk. The government in Kiev has been making bilateral pacts with NATO member states over the past several months, in lieu of formally joining the US-led bloc.

The agreement “provides for the development of a mechanism [for Poland] to shoot down Russian missiles and drones fired in the airspace of Ukraine in the direction of Poland,” Zelensky said,

according to Ukrainian media.

He added that Warsaw and Kiev “will work together to work out how we can quickly implement this point” of the deal.

Tusk **confirmed the existence of the provision but said it merely “indicates the need for talks on this matter,” according to Polish media.**

“We need clear cooperation within NATO here, because such actions require joint NATO responsibility,” the Polish PM added, explaining that it would be in the interest of both Poland and Ukraine to get a “stamp” of international solidarity first.

“We will include other NATO allies in this conversation. So we treat the matter seriously as open, but not yet finalized,” Tusk said, according to Poland’s RMF24 Radio.

Zelensky has been asking NATO to shoot down incoming Russian missiles for several months already. He has compared it to what the US and UK did for Israel in mid-April, during an Iranian reprisal bombardment, and argued that it would not directly involve the bloc in the conflict.

“NATO will not become part of the conflict,” the bloc’s secretary-general, Jens Stoltenberg, replied at the time. “There are no plans to send NATO troops to Ukraine or to extend NATO’s air-defense shield to Ukraine,” he added. **They are already there, silly woman. rdb**

While US and EU officials shot down Zelensky’s comparison with Israel, they agreed to other things he asked for, from additional Patriot missile launchers and rockets to permitting Ukraine to use the weapons they supplied to strike deep into Russian territory.

During his visit to Warsaw, Zelensky also announced that Poland would raise, train and equip a ‘Ukrainian Legion’, made up of volunteers. “Every Ukrainian citizen who decides to join the legion will be able to sign a contract with the Ukrainian armed forces,” he added.

Tusk did not comment on the legion business, but said that every word in the security pact meant something and that it’s about “practical mutual commitments, not empty promises.”

<https://www.rt.com/news/600648-poland-ukraine-russian-missiles/>

Up to 350,000 extra troops against Russia – NATO: 'We need 35 to 50 new brigades immediately'

Which countries will send additional forces?

Evangelos L. info@warnews247.gr 08.07.2024 | 16:23

NATO will need between 35 and 50 new brigades to fully implement its new plans to defend against a possible attack from Russia, a military source told Reuters.

The source, **who asked not to be named, declined to elaborate on the plans,** which are confidential. A brigade consists of 3,000 to 7,000 soldiers, so creating an additional 35 to 50 such units would be a significant challenge.

In this way, NATO seems to want to collect an additional 150 thousand. – 350 thousand army, against Russia!

In another indication of the scale of the challenge facing NATO as it improves its position to more seriously address the threat of a Russian attack following **the invasion of Ukraine in 2022, a security source said Germany alone would have to quadruple capabilities of its anti-aircraft defenses.**

At last year’s summit in Vilnius, NATO leaders agreed on the alliance’s first major defense plans in more than three decades, and officials have since been working to translate the documents into concrete military demands.

NATO leaders are expected to update the plans this week in Washington at a summit marking the 75th anniversary of the founding of the transatlantic security alliance. When asked for comment, a NATO official said those making the alliance’s military plans had identified “in detail the requirements for troops and weapons for the defense of the alliance.”

The operational needs of the Allies

“Air and missile defense, long-range weapons, logistics as well as large formations for ground maneuvers are among our top priorities,” the official added.

“NATO is likely to set more demanding targets for allied capabilities as we develop forces that can implement our plans and meet the threats we face. We are confident that our deterrence is and remains strong.”

Germany's defense ministry declined to comment on NATO's future plans, as they are classified. He said that all allies are called to coordinate with NATO's requirements and that these efforts will continue in the coming year.

It is unclear where the NATO allies might draw the extra personnel for the 35 to 50 brigades, Reuters noted, adding that troops could be sent from other branches of the armed forces, additional soldiers or NATO members could be recruited. they could choose some mixture of the two approaches.

https://warnews247-gr.translate.google/diethnh/nato/ews-kai-350-000-epipleon-stratiwtes-kata-ths-rwsias-nato-xreiazomaste-amesa-35-ews-kai-50-nees-taksiarxies/?_x_tr_sl=el&_x_tr_tl=en&_x_tr_hl=en

The largest password leak in history exposes nearly 10 billion credentials

In response to the leak, they recommend immediately changing the passwords for any accounts associated with the leaked credentials, ensuring each password is strong and unique and not reused.

By [RIKKI ZAGELBAUM](#) JULY 8, 2024 15:13 Updated: JULY 8, 2024 15:14

The largest collection of stolen passwords ever has been leaked to a notorious crime marketplace, according to cybersecurity researchers at Cybernews.

This leak, dubbed RockYou2024 by its original poster “ObamaCare,” holds a file containing nearly 10 billion unique plaintext passwords.

Allegedly gathered from a series of data breaches and hacks accumulated over several years, the passwords were posted [on July 4th](#) and hailed as the most extensive collection of stolen and leaked credentials ever seen on the forum.

“In its essence, the RockYou2024 leak is a compilation of real-world passwords used by individuals all over the world,” the researchers told Cybernews. “Revealing that many passwords for threat actors substantially heightens the risk of credential stuffing attacks.”

Credential stuffing attacks are among the most common methods criminals, ransomware affiliates, and state-sponsored hackers use to access services and systems.

Threat actors could exploit the RockYou2024 password collection to conduct brute-force attacks against any unprotected system and “gain unauthorized access to various online accounts used by individuals whose passwords are included in the dataset,” the research team said.

This could affect online services, cameras and hardware

This could affect various targets, from online services to internet-facing cameras and industrial hardware.

“Moreover, combined with other leaked databases on hacker forums and marketplaces, which, for example, contain user email addresses and other credentials, RockYou2024 can contribute to a cascade of data breaches, financial frauds, and identity thefts,” the team concluded.

However, despite the seriousness of the data leak, it is important to note that RockYou2024 is primarily a compilation of previous password leaks, estimated to contain entries from a total of 4,000 massive databases of stolen credentials, covering at least two decades.

This new file notably includes an earlier credentials database known as RockYou2021, which featured 8.4 billion passwords. RockYou2024 added approximately 1.5 billion passwords to the collection, spanning from 2021 through 2024, which, though a massive figure, is only a fraction of the reported 9,948,575,739 passwords in the leak.

Thus, users who have changed their passwords since 2021 may not have to panic about a potential breach of their information.

That said, the research team at Cybernews stressed the importance of maintaining data security. In response to the leak, they recommend immediately changing the passwords for any accounts associated with the leaked credentials, ensuring each password is strong and unique and not reused across different platforms.

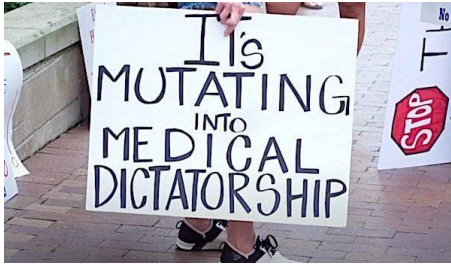
Additionally, they advised enabling multi-factor authentication (MFA), which requires an extra form of verification beyond the password, wherever possible, to strengthen cyber security.

Lastly, tech users should utilize password manager software, which securely generates and stores complex passwords, mitigating the risk of password reuse across multiple accounts. <https://www.jpost.com/business-and-innovation/article-809428>

Doctors muzzled during COVID get green light for revenge on overlords

Coordinated campaigns to 'censor and chill the speech of physicians'

By [Bob Unruh](#) Published July 8, 2024 at 12:34pm



Physicians who were threatened and abused by various tyrannical credentialing boards that sought to suppress anything but the official government story line about COVID-19 have been given the go-ahead by the courts to sue.

The case was brought by the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons Education Foundation against the American Board of Internal Medicine, the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology, the American Board of Family Medicine and the secretary of the Department of Homeland Security over various situations in which those organizations threatened or actually acted against doctors because of what they said about COVID.

Their medical opinions essentially contradicted the government's talking points about taking various experimental shots, which evidence now shows have been extremely damaging to thousands of people.

The challenge focused on the coordinated campaigns to "censor and chill the speech of physicians," with special targeting of those who criticized the unfounded positions taken by White House adviser Anthony Fauci, lockdowns, masks and more.

A district judge had claimed that the AAPS "lacked standing," but a decision by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit has reversed that dismissal.

Bottom of Form

It's headed back to the lower courts for discovery, and potentially a full trial.

A [report](#) in the Federalist documented the ruling.

"The AAPS Educational Foundation brought the case because of a series of physicians who were being threatened with loss of their board certification because they had made comments that were either critical of the COVID vaccines or that advocated for early treatment with repurposed drugs," explained AAPS chief Jane Orient.

"Particularly bad were the three defendants of the internal board who were also engaged in threatening physicians who supported the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* or had anything to say about abortion and its side effects."



Dr. Ryan Cole, Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Wisc., and Dr. Peter McCullough at a roundtable in Washington, D.C., on the COVID-19 vaccines and the link to injuries

The case also cited the egregious censorship schemes that were being developed by Homeland Security's Disinformation Governance Board which, Orient explained, "was devoted to seeking out and finding 'disinformation,' 'malinformation,' and, or pressuring people, including those on specialty boards and social media companies, to take action."

Public outrage that the government would assemble such a force prompted that particular coalition to be disbanded, but that doesn't mean that scheme has been abandoned.

When physicians made public comments, press comments, testified in hearings – and their statements did not align with the Biden administration's political agenda – they were threatened with loss of their credentials, which in many cases could mean the loss of their income.

The power structure simply labeled, without evidence, dissenting opinions as "misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation," the case charged.

One facing punishment was Dr. Peter McCullough, a professor of medicine for decades, who was forced into independent practice over his views after those in "academic practice" refused to allow him free speech.

He questioned, during a state legislative hearing, the experimental shots, and the ABIM later adopted a rule about "misinformation" and retroactively applied it to him, the report said.

McCullough confirmed to The Federalist he provided documentation and evidence regarding his opinions on COVID, but the organization refused to accept it.

The power structure lined up against the dissenting doctors including those credentialing agencies as well as insurance companies that would refuse to provide compensation for treatment if the doctor's opinion differed from theirs.

Lawyer Andrew Schlafly, litigating for AAPS, said, "Viewpoint-based censorship of freedom of speech is one of the most important issues today, and essential to the future of both our country and the ability of patients to obtain quality medical care. It is vital that we restore freedom of speech and end improper interference with it. Physicians must be able to speak candidly about issues of public concern without fear of retaliation." <https://www.wnd.com/2024/07/doctors-muzzled-covid-get-green-light-sue-overlords/>

OP ED

Can Israel Afford To Stand Up To America?

By Melanie Phillips/JNS.org July 06, 2024

There's no denying the severe tensions between the Biden administration and the Israeli government over the war being waged against Israel by Iran and its proxies.

Last month, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu publicly accused U.S. President Joe Biden of withholding weapons and ammunition from the embattled Jewish state.

Two weeks later, Rep. Michael McCaul (R-Tex.), chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said the U.S. was withholding from Israel no fewer than seven weapons systems.

Ever since the Oct. 7 Palestinian Arab pogrom in southern Israel, America has been giving to Israel with one hand while chaining it with the other.

The Biden administration has made Israel slow down its attempt to destroy Hamas in Gaza, repeatedly forcing the Israelis into paralyzing ceasefire negotiations that have given Hamas the upper hand and insisting on humanitarian aid supplies, most of which were stolen by Hamas to strengthen itself.

Crucially, the U.S. forced Israel not to take early preemptive action against Hezbollah in Lebanon, where the terror group has embedded among the civilian population around 150,000 rockets and missiles. As a result, there have been hundreds of missile and rocket strikes on northern Israel, with more than 60,000 Israelis displaced from their homes over the past nine months while swathes of the upper Galilee have been burned to the ground.

The Iranian regime has said that if Hezbollah is seriously attacked, Iran will "obliterate" Israel. Hezbollah's foreign relations chief, Khalil Rizk, said on Al-Manar TV last month: "Is this war now with Israel? My answer is that this is not a war with Israel. Israel is merely a tool. The main war, the real war, is with America."

Yet astoundingly, the Biden administration wants an empowered Iran to be a key pillar of the future architecture of the Middle East. It purports to believe this will produce "stability." Accordingly, the U.S. is actually protecting Iran from Israel, the nation that the genocidal Iranian regime has sworn to exterminate.

Even when Iran fired a barrage of rockets and drones at Israel in April and America and others scrambled to help knock them out, the U.S. stopped Israel from responding robustly.

Earlier this week, The New York Times reported that Netanyahu had pushed Biden hard on the need to hit Iran and avoid looking weak. "Let me be crystal clear," Biden was said to have told Netanyahu in a phone call. "If you launch a big attack on Iran, you're on your own. You do this and I'm out."

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken has acknowledged that the evacuation of the north under daily Hezbollah rocket and missile attacks has meant Israel has shrunk. Yet he behaves as if this intolerable development emanates from Israel's actions in Gaza and that a ceasefire there would put Hezbollah back in its box.

Accordingly, the U.S. is solemnly "negotiating" with Hezbollah, just as it "negotiated" with Iran. The Bidenites really believe that genocidal fanatics can be reasoned out of their intention to murder, destroy and conquer. This is beyond grotesque.

Of course, Hezbollah would end its attacks if Israel ended its war in Gaza now with Hamas still unconquered and the hostages still incarcerated, because that would mean Israel had surrendered and was fatally weakened.

Hezbollah could take its time before launching even more deadly Oct. 7-style attacks picking off the border communities of northern Israel. It could continue like that forever. And meanwhile, Iran will get the bomb.

Indeed, Iran may not want an all-out war right now. The current situation suits it well as part of its strategy of attrition: to encircle Israel with a stranglehold of terror, subject it to never-ending attacks, cripple its economy, demoralize its people so that increasing numbers flee and eventually destroy it with the aid of a world whose minds and institutions Iran has helped poison against the Jewish people.

Hezbollah has to be neutralized. But it has now stated that if Israel launches an all-out war against it, this will be a war with Iran.

The only way through this nightmare is to strike the head of the snake itself in Tehran. Israel cannot afford to wait until Haifa or Tel Aviv start sustaining massive casualties from Hezbollah's vast arsenal or Iran itself. Faced with such an enemy, a preemptive strike that gains the initiative is essential.

But for that to happen, Israel needs America. And it's far from clear that the Biden administration would come to Israel's aid even in a war limited to Hezbollah but in which Iran would unleash itself along with its proxies in Iraq, Yemen and the disputed territories of Judea and Samaria.

Against this dire backdrop, Netanyahu is going to America in three weeks' time to address Congress. Among the many who loathe and distrust him, there is nervousness and criticism that he may make a bad situation even worse by criticizing Biden so close to the presidential election.

There are fears that he may repeat what such people believe was the harmful result he achieved when he addressed Congress in 2015 in an attempt to head off President Barack Obama's nuclear deal with Iran.

Obama outfoxed him with some fancy Beltway footwork, and the deal was duly done. Netanyahu's critics say that he therefore achieved nothing but bad blood with Obama. The same fears are being expressed over the likely effect on Biden of this month's visit.

But this is to get things back to front. In both instances, Netanyahu decided to address Congress because an already virulently hostile administration posed such a danger to Israel that he could not remain silent.

In 2015, he had a moral duty to lay out for Congress and the American people the dire consequences of Obama's Iran deal. That warning has been amply borne out. In 2024, Netanyahu has a moral duty to explain to Congress and the American people the dire consequences of the Biden administration's appeasement of Iran, why Israel is fighting a war for its survival unlike any other since its foundation and that the seven-front war against it is merely the opening shot in Iran's war against America and the West.

What Netanyahu's critics fail to acknowledge is that he is a supremely cautious politician. He rarely airs his grievances with the U.S. in public. When he does so, it signifies desperation. It's because he feels he has no other option.

That's why he addressed Congress in 2015. It's why he outed the Biden administration for holding up the delivery of weapons essential to the war effort. And it's why he's beating a lonely path back to Congress once again.

His intended audience isn't just U.S. lawmakers. It isn't just the American people. It's also the Arab and Muslim world, which is watching carefully and where the stakes for Israel are very high.

For what inspires aggression and war in the Middle East is above all the perception of weakness. If Israel is seen to be bullied into surrender by the Biden administration, the Arab and Muslim world will smell that weakness. The Arabs may accordingly retreat from their recent historic overtures of friendship or Iran will move in for the kill. It is therefore essential that Israel is seen to be standing up to America.

As the former Israeli diplomat Yoram Ettinger has observed, the State Department has systematically pressured Israel to act against its own security requirements ever since 1948.

And it never learns from experience. The Obama-Biden strategy of appeasement empowered Iran, created the conditions for the Oct. 7 pogrom and is leading the free world to catastrophe.

As Ettinger has said, the question is not how Israel can afford to stand up to America. It's how can Israel afford not to.

Originally published at [JNS.org](https://www.jns.org)

B"SD

From: Lev U'Neshama - Tzfat Israel

To say No" to a mother when she requests what her children needs, is heart-wrenching for us. We want to be able to say, "Yes", so the children can have new sport shoes and/or eyeglasses.

Presently numerous requests for sport shoes and eyeglasses cannot be filled and parents are told that they are on a waiting list.

We are in a quandary concerning the lack of funds to provide necessities and, later, school supplies, therefore I'm writing you and I'm hoping you will say, "Yes".

The local optician who participates with Lev U'Neshama gives a free eye exam using advanced optical equipment. The child selects eyeglass frames from a special section in his display. **You** can sponsor a child for a pair of eyeglasses for \$60.

A local shoe store owner in Tzfat gives a generous discount for the children's shoes to stretch our funds. He often gives as his gift, two pairs of socks to each of the young "customers". **You** can sponsor a child for a pair of sport shoes for \$40. Shoes within a price category are available for the children to make a personal selection.

For many years Lev U'Neshama has provided school supply shopping coupons to each of our Lev U'Neshama families. It is redeemed at our one-and-only office supply store in Tzfat. The family-owned store staff is delighted to participate with us every year and they offer a generous discount. Our families tend to have many children so they come as a group to do the much-anticipated school supply shopping. Often the store owner gives a pack of pencils to each family as his gift. It's a happy time for everyone. **Sponsoring a family for a shopping coupon is \$60.**

Our Education Fund has about ½ the amount needed for school supplies, notwithstanding what is needed for sport shoes and eyeglasses.

Schools are beginning to close for the summer and, G-d willing, the political situation will allow our children to attend school the end of August/beginning of September. We are starting now to reach out for funds so we will be in a position to send out the school supply coupons middle of August as well as get the children ready for the new school year with sport shoes and eyeglass replacement, if necessary.

I am therefore sending this letter to everyone in my email address book in the hopes of garnering funds for this project. (You might receive a duplicate letter.)

(If you are already a supporter of Lev U'Neshama, please know that we appreciate what you are already sending us.)

Donations in any amount would be gratefully accepted, by check or Zelle bank method.

Checks must be made payable to our US volunteer representative, Simcha Smolensky, (my son) and sent to:

Rabbi Simcha Smolensky
6933 N Kedzie Ave Unit 116
Chicago IL 60645

If you choose the Zelle payment method, US to US bank, contact me at: mortsmo@aol.com and I will provide the information for you to complete the transfer. You can go to the Zelle website or through an app on your cellphone if your bank doesn't offer the service. You may use a credit card, as well.

Your help is critically needed and the children and I am eager for your "Yes."

Shalom,

Yaffa Smolensky, Volunteer Program Manager Email: mortsmo@aol.com