

## **Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update January 18, 2024 (Sh'vat 8, 5784)**



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### ***Israel-Hamas War, Day 104***

#### ***Herzog: Israel Must Talk With 'Potential' Palestinian Partner; Hezbollah Rejects U.S. Overtures***

- *UN chief meets with released hostages; calls for investigation into Hamas sexual assault crimes*
  - *Palestinians report 27-year-old killed by Israeli fire in West Bank*
  - *Hezbollah rejected U.S. overtures, will fire on Israel until full Gaza cease-fire*
  - *U.S. coalition strikes against Houthis in Yemen; takes out 14 missiles, U.S. says*
    - *Medicine for hostages enters Gaza after Israeli inspection*

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***Trial at Hague: ' Hamas Tortured Children, Burned Babies ';*** The trial of Israel at the International Court of Justice at the Hague entered its second day on Friday morning, January 12. At the hearing, Israel is expected to explain that the war in Gaza began only as a result of the October 7 massacre in Israel, which was perpetrated by the Hamas terror group, along with some of Gaza's civilians. Attorney Tal Becker, the Foreign Ministry's legal adviser, noted that given the Jewish nation's history, it is not surprising that Israel was one of the first nations in the world to adopt the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. "This is a war against Hamas and Islamic Jihad and other terror organizations whose brutality knows no bounds. Hamas is trying to maximize the suffering of civilians in Gaza, while Israel is trying to minimize it," he also said. Describing the horrors of October 7, he said, "On October 7, during a Jewish holiday, thousands of Hamas terrorists and others infiltrated Israel from the sea, ground, and air. Under fire of thousands of rockets, a massacre was carried out, with mutilation and rape. They tortured children in front of their parents and parents in front of their children, burned babies alive, and systematically raped women, men, and children. 1,200 were murdered, 240 were taken hostage, including infants, elderly, Holocaust survivors, and people with disabilities." Professor Malcolm Shaw, a British attorney who is representing Israel, emphasized that "If there is any genocidal intent, it is the events of October 7." Dr. Galit Ragan noted that South Africa completely ignored Hamas' military strategy, which includes using civilian structures for military purposes. Ragan presented photos of rockets and missiles hidden in a children's room, rockets launched from the roof of a United Nations building, tunnels dug beneath Shifa Hospital, and more. Following the hearing, the court declared that the verdict would be read publicly at a date still to be determined. (INN / VFI News)

***Israeli Mother and Son Killed by Lebanese Missile Fire, IDF Strikes Hezbollah;*** The Israeli citizens killed on Sunday, January 14, by an anti-tank missile from Lebanon were named as 45-year-old Barak Ayalon and his 70-year-old mother Mira, Israeli media reported on Sunday. Ayalon was part of Kfar Yuval's emergency response squad, where he was killed. His father was also seriously injured in the missile fire. The IDF announced later on Sunday that it was counting Ayalon as a soldier fallen in battle. The IDF responded by targeting an operational command post as well as one other military target belonging to the Lebanon-based Iranian terror proxy, Hezbollah, on Sunday, the IDF stated. The IDF strikes continued until late Sunday evening. In the IDF announcement, the military said that several rocket launches from Lebanon had been identified throughout the day. Additionally, according to the IDF, the Israeli communities of Misgav Am, Avivim, and Yiron had been targeted. The rockets reportedly struck open areas. More anti-tank-guided missiles were also launched toward the northern Israel communities of Zar'it, Shomera, and Kfar Yuval. The IDF added that it has been operating in Lebanon throughout the day. (JPost / VFI News)

***U.S. Hits 60+ Targets at Numerous Iranian-Backed Houthi Facilities throughout Yemen: U.S. Officials;*** U.S. officials said late Thursday night, January 11, that dozens of Iranian-backed Houthi targets were struck inside Yemen in response to the terrorist group's months-long attacks on merchant ships in the Red Sea. The strikes were launched in coordination with the United Kingdom, and with support from Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, and Bahrain, U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) said in a statement. "This multinational action targeted radar systems, air defense systems and storage and launch sites for one-way attack unmanned aerial systems, cruise missiles, and ballistic missiles," the statement said. General Michael Erik Kurilla, CENTCOM Commander, said that the U.S. military would "hold the Houthi militants and their destabilizing Iranian sponsors responsible for the illegal, indiscriminate, and reckless attacks on international shipping that have impacted 55 nations so far, including endangering the lives of hundreds of mariners, including the United States. Their illegal and dangerous actions will not be tolerated, and they will be held accountable," he emphasized. A renowned American newspaper, citing two U.S. officials, has said that 20-30% of the Houthis offensive capabilities were destroyed or damaged in the attacks, but that many of their weapon platforms are mobile and can be moved around. U.S. Air Force Lt. Gen. Alex Grynkewich said that U.S. forces executed deliberate strikes on over 60 targets at 16 Iranian-backed Houthi militant locations, that more than 100 precision-guided munitions of various types were used in the strikes, and that missiles were fired from submarines. (DW / VFI News)

***Israel-Hamas War: 9,000 Hamas Terrorists Killed So Far in Gaza, IDF Says;*** The IDF on Sunday, January 14, published an extensive update on war statistics to date. These include some 9,000 Hamas terrorists killed; two of Hamas's five brigade-level commanders eliminated; and 19 battalion-level commanders killed in 24 battalions. Despite those successes, Hamas's top leadership in Gaza remains at large. Further, according to the IDF, since the beginning of the ground operation, over 700 rocket launchers have been destroyed in airstrikes and ground forces operations. The estimated total number of Hamas forces has varied wildly from 40,000 pre-war to 25,000. The IDF also estimates Hamas wounded to be at least in the several thousand range. Around 170 Hezbollah and Hamas-affiliated terrorists have been killed in the North. The IDF has also arrested 2,300, who have been interrogated by Unit 504. Additionally, there have been a total of 30,000 IDF attacks on Gaza and around 750 on Hezbollah or other terrorists in the North. It is reported that depending on the estimated total and some other factors, the IDF has killed, wounded, or arrested somewhere between one-third to more than 50% of Hamas's forces. (JPost / VFI News)

***Israel Says It Uncovered Hamas Terror Network Planning Attacks in Europe;*** Hamas runs a network of operatives in Europe commanded by terror leaders in Lebanon, Israel said Saturday, January 13, as its intelligence agencies released new details on the Gaza-based organization's attempts to attack Israeli and Jewish targets abroad. Most of the group's Lebanon-based commanders, including Saleh al-Aroui and Khalil Harraz, were killed in recent weeks in airstrikes attributed to Israel. Since then, according to Israeli media, most of Hamas's military leaders based in Beirut have escaped the Lebanese capital due to fears of being targets of assassinations. Further, Hamas cells in Denmark, Germany, and Holland were arrested in December on suspicion of plotting to attack Jewish targets in Europe. According to a statement released Saturday by the Prime Minister's Office, Israel's Mossad and Shin Bet agencies in cooperation with foreign partners have been able to build a "comprehensive and in-depth" picture of Hamas's efforts to carry out attacks in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. The PMO said Israel has uncovered "details on theaters of operation, terror targets, and on those involved in carrying out attacks — from Hamas commanders in Lebanon to the last of the attackers in the operational infrastructure." It did not provide many further details on these findings but said the network had been planning to attack Israel's embassy in Sweden, buy UAVs, and utilize criminal organizations in Europe to support attacks. (TOI / VFI News)

***Gazan Photographers Joined October 7 Lynching, Raiding of Israelis – Report;*** Media watchdog HonestReporting that focuses on anti-Israel media coverage, uncovered that two Gaza-based photojournalists who worked for AP and Reuters had bragged about the footage they acquired while accompanying Hamas terrorists during the October 7 massacre. Ashraf Amra and fellow photojournalist Mohammed Fayq Abu Mostafa recorded a video laughing at the lynching of an IDF soldier pulled from a tank on October 7 - footage they captured on the scene. The two displayed the footage while livestreaming. These two were not alone, according to HonestReporting's data. What some might have seen as social media speculation was proven true after the NGO uncovered that Amra conducted an Instagram Live stream on October 7, laughing with his friends and colleagues about the events of the day and sharing what they had seen and done after infiltrating Israeli territory. The report details the photojournalists' reflections on the day, adding that Abu Mostafa said: "We were there two hours ago, since the beginning." A photo published by Reuters by Abu Mostafa of Hamas terrorists holding the dead body of an Israeli soldier was nominated for one of Reuters and the New York Times' "Top Photos of the Year." (JPost / VFI News)

***Hundreds of Thousands of Anti-Israel Protesters March in London 'Day of Action';*** More than 200,000 pro-Palestinian and anti-Israel protesters marched in central London on Saturday, January 13, as part of a "global day of action" to oppose Israel's offensive in the Gaza Strip. The Metropolitan Police of London said they had arrested three people for handing out leaflets praising the October 7 onslaught during the rally. The flyer voiced "unconditional and wholehearted support and solidarity for the Palestinian struggle, which is once more breaking out into armed resistance, as it was bound to do." "We communists join together with all progressive humanity in congratulating the Palestinian people and their chosen leadership on the audacious, daring, and effective military action they are now taking against the last settler-colonial apartheid state, that monstrous proxy for Anglo-American imperialism, usurper of the Palestinian lands, rights, and nationhood, Zionist Israel," it added. Around 1,700 police were on duty for the march. They said to have dispersed around 80-100 people who tried to form a smaller march at the end of the main protest. Saturday's march held particular significance given the UK's airstrikes in Yemen this week against Houthi bases. Some protesters chanted "Yemen, Yemen, make us proud, turn another ship around," expressing support for the rebel group, whose slogan reads "God Is the Greatest, Death to America, Death to Israel, A Curse Upon the Jews, Victory to Islam." (TOI / VFI News)

***Germany, Hungary Issue Passports to Israeli Hostages in Gaza;*** The governments of Germany and Hungary have approved citizenship and issued passports to Jewish Israeli hostages in Gaza, an Israeli news outlet has reported. Some of the hostages who received German and Hungarian passports were freed in exchange for Israel's release of convicted Palestinian terrorists and criminals. Other Jewish Israeli hostages who have received Hungarian and German citizenship are still being held hostage, the outlet was told in an exclusive interview. The Israelis who received passports have family members who were born in the Central European countries. Dual citizenship could play a role in the complex negotiations to rescue the hostages because of the intervention of foreign states seeking to protect their citizens. It is unclear when the hostages were provided with the German and Hungarian passports. Foreign countries that issue passports to hostages in Gaza could provide a layer of protection to the victims. For example, Sweden in 2018 awarded citizenship to Iranian hostage Ahmadreza Djalali, a medical doctor and lecturer at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm. Djalali was arrested in 2016 in Iran and was later convicted of espionage, in what was widely condemned as a show trial. He has not been executed, and it is unclear if his Swedish citizenship is impeding Tehran's desire to execute him. (JPost / VFI News)

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