

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update March 11, 2024 (Adar Bet 1, 5784)



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Israel-Hamas War, Day 157

Israel Verifies if a Top Hamas Military Commander Was Killed in an IDF Strike in Gaza

- *Israel is checking if Maruan Issa, second-in-command of Hamas' militant wing, has been killed in a strike*
 - *U.S. believes Israel will not operate in Rafah in near future, CNN reports*
 - *Ramadan begins with minor police clash in Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa compound*
 - *Officials in Gaza warn only Hamas has ability to supervise aid distribution*
 - *U.S. promotes two to four day pause in fighting to renew deal talks*
- *U.S. President Biden warns there can't be '30,000 more Palestinians dead' in MSNBC interview*
 - *U.S. army sends ship to Gaza with materials for temporary aid port*
 - *Strike attributed to Israel reportedly kills five and wounds nine in Lebanon*

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Cost of War: 1,468 Dead, Tens of Thousands of Victims of Terrorist Acts; The Iron Swords War, ignited by Hamas’s brutal massacre on October 7, has claimed the lives of 1,468 people in Israel to date, the majority on the day it erupted. These war figures underscore the profound impact on Israel in the 150 days since its onset. According to data from Israeli media, the war has so far claimed the lives of 839 civilians, including 36 children under 18 years old—among them a ten-month-old infant, seven aged between two to nine years, and 29 teenagers between 10 to 17 years old. Additionally, 629 security and rescue personnel have perished in the war, 586 of them IDF soldiers. The National Insurance Institute reports that 61,942 individuals have been victims of terrorist acts. The age breakdown of these victims includes 3,557 aged 0-3 years, 3,726 aged 3-6 years, 8,659 aged 6-14 years, 3,586 aged 14-18 years, and 42,414 aged 18 years and older. These individuals have suffered physical and/or psychological injuries and are recognized as victims of hostility and terror. Notably, around 20,000 victims of these hostile acts are under the age of 20. Meanwhile, in an interview posted on Monday, March 4, a Hamas political official, Basim Naim, told British media that the organization cannot give Israel a list of the living hostages because it does not know who is alive and where all the hostages are. He added that the hostages “are in different areas with different groups and therefore we have called for a ceasefire to be able to collect the data.” (YNet / VFI News)

UN Sexual Violence Envoy: Israelis Were Raped, Sexually Tortured on October 7; A mission team led on a trip through Israel by the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Pramila Patten, found that there was substantial evidence to conclude that victims, as well as hostages and survivors of October 7, were sexually abused and raped by Hamas terrorists. This is the first instance where an international organization has confirmed what Israel has alleged since October 7. Patten, therefore, called on Hamas to “immediately and unconditionally release all individuals held in captivity and to ensure their protection, including from sexual violence.” The team found “clear and convincing information that sexual violence, including rape, sexualized torture, cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment has been committed against hostages.” They have “reasonable grounds to believe that such violence may be ongoing against those still held in captivity.” Patten’s team, which visited throughout the first two weeks of February, was comprised of “nine experts drawn from the United Nations, including... specialists trained in safe and ethical interviewing of survivors/victims and witnesses of sexual violence crimes; a forensic pathologist; and a digital and open-source information analyst.” The team also found “that there are reasonable grounds to believe that conflict-related sexual violence occurred in multiple locations during the 7 October attacks, including rape and gang-rape in at least three locations, namely: the Nova music festival site and its surroundings, Road 232, and Kibbutz Re’im.” Israeli President Isaac Herzog quickly responded to the UN report: “Hamas and its allies are trying to discredit the report, to

escape from this horrific shame. They will not succeed as the testimonies are shocking indeed. Therefore, now the world must react strongly by condemning and punishing Hamas,” he wrote on X. (JPost / VFI News)

85% of Strategic Hamas Tunnels in Khan Yunis Destroyed; The IDF announced on Monday, March 4, that it has destroyed 85% of the strategic tunnels in Khan Yunis. The announcement came shortly after a parallel update that the air force had eliminated a terrorist squad less than 30 minutes after the squad fired rockets toward Haterim and Be’eri on Saturday. All of this came as on Sunday the IDF launched its first full division-level attacks in Khan Yunis in multiple weeks, having achieved general control in early February, and reduced military activities there to smaller-scale attacks in recent weeks. During the large operation in recent days, somewhere between 80 to a couple of hundred Hamas terrorists were arrested, around 35-40 were killed, and several thousand civilians were evacuated. Further, on Tuesday, the military announced that the IDF destroyed the largest terror tunnel that was uncovered in northern Gaza since the beginning of the Israel-Hamas war. The tunnel extends about four kilometers long and ends near the Erez crossing but does not cross into Israeli territory. The tunnel route has several branches, forming a wide and branched network of tunnels. Along the route, there are sewerage, electricity, and communication infrastructures, as well as the top doors, which were designed to prevent the entry of IDF forces. The tunnel allows the movement of vehicles inside it, and many weapons of Hamas were found in it. (JPost / VFI News)

IAEA Chief: We Have Lost Track of Iran Nuke Progress; IAEA Chief Rafael Grossi on Monday, March 4, told the IAEA Board of Governors, concerning Iran’s nuclear advancement, that “the agency has lost continuity of knowledge about the production and inventory of centrifuges, rotors and bellows, heavy water and uranium ore concentrate.” “It is three years since Iran stopped provisionally applying its additional protocol and therefore it is also three years since the agency was able to conduct complementary access in Iran,” Grossi said. He added, “Public statements made in Iran regarding its technical capabilities to produce nuclear weapons only increase my concerns about the correctness and completeness of Iran’s safeguard declarations.” Further, the IAEA chief stated that “Iran has not provided the agency with technically credible explanations for the presence of uranium particles of anthropogenic origin at Varamin and Turqzabad or informed the agency of the current location(s) of the nuclear material and/or of contaminated equipment.” After the report was publicized, the US called on Iran to dilute all of the uranium it has enriched to up to 60% purity, close to the weapons-grade level of roughly 90%, according to British media. “Iran should downblend all, not just some, of its 60% stockpile, and stop all production of uranium enriched to 60% entirely ... No other country today is producing uranium enriched to 60% for the purpose Iran claims and Iran’s actions are counter to the behavior of all other non-nuclear weapons states party to the NPT (Non-Proliferation Treaty),” the statement said. (JPost / VFI News)

‘A Critical Point: Gallant Warns Israel Edging Closer to War with Hezbollah; Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said on Tuesday, March 5, that the continuing tension with Hezbollah terrorists at the border with Lebanon was moving the situation nearer to a military escalation. “We are committed to the diplomatic process, however, Hezbollah’s aggression is bringing us closer to a critical point in the decision-making regarding our military activities in Lebanon,” he said in a statement following a meeting with US Special Envoy Amos Hochstein. The IDF also announced on Tuesday that IDF fighter jets struck a Hezbollah military site in the area of Ayta ash Shab, from which two anti-tank missiles were launched toward the area of Biranit, also on Tuesday. No injuries were reported. According to a later Tuesday announcement, the IDF struck a Hezbollah operational command center in the area of Jabal al-Batam, launch posts in the area of Matmoura, and military compounds in the areas of Majdal Zoun, Houla, and Kafra. Earlier on Tuesday, an unmanned aerial vehicle that infiltrated the Golan Heights from Syria was intercepted by an Israeli fighter jet, the IDF confirmed, as rockets continued to be fired onto Israel’s northern border towns from Lebanon. Meanwhile, according to a Lebanese newspaper that is affiliated

with Hezbollah, Israel has set a deadline for a diplomatic agreement to calm the tensions. According to the report, Israel informed Western countries that it would wait until March 15 to achieve a diplomatic agreement with Lebanon. If such an agreement is not achieved by March 15, Israel is preparing to expand the IDF's operations in Lebanon to a wide scale war. (JPost / VFI News)

Report: Haniyeh Accepted Ceasefire Deal, Sinwar Rejected It; The leader of the Hamas terrorist organization, Ismail Haniyeh, accepted the proposed deal for a ceasefire in exchange for the release of Israeli hostages, but the organization's leader in Gaza, Yahya Sinwar, rejected it, renowned American media reported. According to the report, Hamas has walked away from the ceasefire talks in Egypt and demanded greater concessions from Israel. Haniyeh, who is based in Qatar, has reportedly been willing to accept a six-week pause in the fighting to secure greater humanitarian aid and possibly use that time to secure a permanent ceasefire that would leave Hamas in power in Gaza. Sinwar however, who has been hiding in Gaza for months, believes that more concessions can be wrung out of Israel due to political divisions within the country. Both Arab and Israeli officials fear that he is deliberately undermining the negotiations. The US has pushed strongly for a six-week ceasefire to allow more humanitarian aid into Gaza and forestall an Israeli operation in Rafah, the last Hamas stronghold in Gaza, where the majority of the hostages are believed to be held. (INN / VFI News)

Parents of Supernova Festival Victims Sue AP and Reuters for NIS 25 Million in Damages; The parents of five victims of the Supernova Festival massacre on October 7 have filed a civil suit for damages against The Associated Press and Reuters news agencies due to what they allege was the involvement of photojournalists employed or utilized by those agencies in the Hamas atrocities of that day. The parents of May Naim, Lotan Abir, Guy Gabriel, Shalev Madmoni, and Shani Louk filed the lawsuit in the Jerusalem District Court, seeking some NIS 25 million (\$6.5 million) in damages for their pain and suffering and other losses resulting from the murder of their children. The lawsuit filed by the victims' parents last week alleges that five photojournalists, Hassan Abdel Fattah Esiaiah, Hatem Ali, Mohammed Fayq Abu Mostafa, Ashraf Amra, and Ali Mahmoud, who filed photographs in real time of the atrocities being perpetrated by Hamas terrorists, were in fact a component of the attacks themselves, and were not conducting legitimate journalistic work. The journalists were either aware ahead of time that a mass invasion and terror attack was about to be staged by Hamas or, being present from the very outset of the attacks, were culpable for doing nothing to stop the assault, including failing to warn the Israeli authorities, the suit asserts. Since AP and Reuters posted the photos they received from these journalists as the attacks unfolded, in some cases giving only the agency's name as a photo credit, and continuing to make the pictures available for sale on their websites, they have culpability in the death of the plaintiffs' children, the suit maintains. (TOI / VFI News)

George Galloway is Sworn in to Parliament - Before Immediately Comparing Israel to the Nazis; George Galloway likened Israel to Nazi Germany, suggesting the country was committing a 'holocaust' in Gaza after taking his seat as Rochdale MP. In a highly inflammatory Westminster press conference conducted after taking his seat, Mr. Galloway said that the Palestinians were the victims of a 'genocide' at the hands of the Israeli military. He also refused to condemn Hamas, saying they had been chosen by the people of Gaza in an election. After winning his seat by running on a pro-Palestinian platform he said "The next election will be about Muslims." He defended his views by telling reporters: "If the by-election had been in February of 1940 or '41, would anyone seriously have condemned me for putting the crimes of the Holocaust at the center of my election campaign?" And in the wide-ranging session Mr. Galloway, a former presenter on now-banned Russian media, refused to back Britain's support for Ukraine against Russia. (DM / VFI News)

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