

# **Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update April 15, 2024 (Nisan 7, 5784)**



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## ***Israel-Hamas War, Day 192***

### ***IDF Chief Visits Base Targeted by Iran, Says Israel Will Respond to Missiles Fired at Israeli Territory***

- *Lt. Gen. Halevi visited Nevatim Airbase, saying that missile fire from Iran would be met with a response*
- *War cabinet meets for several hours, discusses options for response to Iran's attack*
  - *Iran's FM says Tehran will respond stronger than before if Israel retaliates*
  - *White House: Humanitarian aid to Gaza has greatly increased in last days*
- *Biden: U.S. is committed to Israeli security and to cease-fire deal that will bring hostages home*
- *U.S. military destroyed 80 drones, 6 missiles launched from Iran, Yemen, U.S. Centcom says*
  - *Biden urges House of Representatives to pass aid bill 'as soon as possible'*
  - *U.S. To explore measures to hold Iran accountable at the UN*
- *Home Front Command: Educational activities will take place as usual on Monday*

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***Netanyahu Declares ‘There Is A Date’ for Rafah Invasion As Hamas Claims ‘No Ability’ to Free 40 Hostages;*** Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu affirmed Monday, April 8, that he plans to forge ahead with a long-anticipated and controversial military operation in the Gaza Strip city of Rafah — as Hamas reportedly claimed there are fewer than 40 women, elderly and ailing hostages for whom it can account. In a video message posted to X, Netanyahu - who has come under increasing domestic criticism over his handling of the six-month-old war against the terror group - told Israelis that “complete victory” over the jihadists “requires entry into Rafah and the elimination of the terrorist battalions there.” “It will happen, there is a date,” the 74-year-old added without giving further specifics. Meanwhile, truce talks involving Israeli and Hamas officials in Cairo were ongoing after CIA Director Bill Burns proposed over the weekend that Hamas submit a list of 40 Israeli hostages who are alive and can be released on humanitarian grounds - meaning women, female IDF soldiers, men over 50, and those with serious medical conditions - in exchange for a six-week cease-fire. On Monday, however, Israeli media reported that Hamas was trying to negotiate the release of fewer hostages on the grounds it had “no ability to release 40” abductees who fit the initial request by Israeli negotiators. As of late March, 129 October 7 hostages were still believed to be in Gaza, American media reported, citing Israeli officials. Of that number, at least 34 and as many as 50 are believed to have died in captivity. The captivity figure includes 19 women, 10 people over the age of 75, and two children. Hamas is also believed to be holding two Israelis captured before the October 7 attack, as well as the remains of two IDF soldiers killed during the Gaza fighting in 2014, bringing the grand total of Israelis held dead or alive to 133. (NYP / VFI News)

***Former Hostage Says She Was Kidnapped by Palestinian Civilians Who Sold Her to Hamas;*** An Israeli nurse who was abducted on October 7 has said she was kidnapped by Palestinian civilians who joined the terror attack, before selling her to Hamas. Nili Margalit, 42, was taken from kibbutz Nir Oz during Hamas’s onslaught six months ago and was repatriated in a November truce between Israel and Hamas. She is one of the roughly 90 hostages who have since been freed. Speaking to French media, she recalled her terrifying experience, in which she saw her home raided before she was kidnapped. “They exploded plates, turned the house upside down, and started a fire,” she told the magazine. Two minutes later, the terrorists appeared in the bomb shelter built in her house. She hadn’t closed the door. “Those who barricaded themselves in the mamads [safety rooms] died because the terrorists shot through the doors and set them on fire,” she added. She said she was covered in a sheet and driven in a golf cart to the border between Israel and Gaza before being transferred to a car, which took her to Khan Younis. Margalit said she noticed that those who had kidnapped her were jubilant as she was driven to Gaza and there were cheers in Khan Younis from crowds there. “I saw elderly people, children taken hostage,” Margalit told the magazine. “The terrorists who captured me were civilians. They negotiated with Hamas to sell me. When they were paid, I was taken straight into a tunnel.” Once inside ‘lower Gaza’ - as she explained it was

called to her by those holding her hostage - she was first taken to a room that had 30 residents from her kibbutz. (DM / VFI News)

***Three Sons of Hamas Leader Haniyeh Killed in Israeli Airstrike;*** Three sons of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh were killed in an IAF airstrike in Gaza on Wednesday, April 10, an anonymous senior Israeli diplomatic official said. All three sons were part of Hamas's so-called military wing, Izzadin al-Qassam Brigades and Israel is ready to go after any member of Hamas involved in violence, the official said. The airstrike was initially reported by a Hamas-affiliated news agency, with Israeli media also receiving indirect confirmation, before the senior diplomatic official confirmed the report. Further, a Beirut-based news channel aligned with Iran quoted Palestinian sources as saying that the strike had also killed several of Haniyeh's grandchildren who were in a vehicle in Gaza City's Al-Shati refugee camp. Haniyeh later confirmed that three of his sons and three of his grandchildren had been killed in the airstrike. "All of Gaza's citizens paid a price with the blood of their children, including me," he was quoted as saying. He also said that he "thanks God for bestowing upon us the honor of their martyrdom." In a phone interview broadcast on Qatari media, the terror leader vows that the group will not surrender and that such actions will not make it change its goals and demands. "Their pure blood is for the liberation of Jerusalem and Al Aqsa, and we will continue to march on our road, and will not hesitate and will not falter," Haniyeh said. "With their blood, we bring about hopes, a future, and freedom for our people and our cause." (JPost / VFI News)

***Islamic Jihad Spokesman: 'Terror Orgs Use All Hospitals in Gaza';*** During the recent operation carried out by the IDF and the Israel Security Agency (ISA) in the Shifa Hospital, more than 500 terrorist operatives associated with terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip were apprehended. Among the terrorists detained was the spokesperson for the Islamic Jihad terrorist organization's Political Bureau in the Gaza Strip, Tariq Salami Otha Abu Shlouf, whose interrogation provides insight into the propaganda and incitement operations carried out by the terrorist organizations. During the interrogation, Tariq revealed details of the operational method used by the terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip to manipulate the Arabic and international media, with a focus on creating false narratives and lies about what is happening in the Gaza Strip. Moreover, Tariq admitted that the explosion in the Al-Ahli Al-Ma'mdani Hospital at the beginning of the war was caused by an Islamic Jihad rocket and that the organization chose to lie and blame Israel for the event knowingly. He said that the hospital was struck by "a local rocket. We said it was Israeli. To erase this story, the movement (Islamic Jihad) made some moves, it made up a story that the rocket belonged to the occupation (Israel) and that the target was the [hospital] building," he said. When asked which hospitals in Gaza terrorist organizations use for military purposes, Tariq replied that it was "all of the hospitals." According to him, the hospitals are used by terrorist organizations "because there is internet there 24 hours, there is electricity 24 hours." (INN / VFI News)

***Israel Prepared to Strike Iranian Nuclear Facilities If Tehran Launches Attack – Report;*** If Iran attacks Israel directly in response to last week's strike in Damascus, Israel will retaliate by striking targets in Iran, London-based media reports. Citing an unnamed "Western security official," the report alleges that Israel has been conducting air force drills in recent days that include preparing to target Iranian nuclear facilities and other key infrastructure. Both Damascus and Tehran blame Israel for last Monday's raid in which seven members of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps were killed, but Israel has not commented on the matter. (TOI / VFI News)

***Yale Students Threaten Hunger Strike If Anti-Israel Demands Are Not Met;*** Anti-Israel students at Yale University are threatening to go on a hunger strike if the school does not commit to divest from weapons manufacturers "contributing to Israel's assault on Palestine" by Friday morning, they warned in a letter to the university's president. "If these demands are not met by the morning of 4/12/2024, we will go

on a hunger strike,” the students wrote to President Peter Salovey. “We will risk our bodily health and well-being in ways that mirror only a fraction of the absolute devastation that Palestinians are suffering right now until you do. Yale’s complicity in genocide must end.” In the wake of Israel’s war against Hamas for brutally massacring more than 1,000 people on October 7, the letter calls the United States the “empire that is funding the military conquest and colonization of Palestine” and accused the university’s investments of profiting “from this mass ethnic cleansing.” “Our existence in this University and this country are ones defined by necropolitics,” the students continued. “Our lives here exist as they do because of the investment in the deaths of Palestinians by Yale and the US government.” The students claimed they “exhausted every mode possible” of making their voices heard without the university making the changes they requested. The students cite various conferences, talks, meetings, and protests that they say failed to elicit a response from the administrators. (DW / VFI News)

***FBI Arrests Idaho 18-Year-Old for ‘Violent Plot’ to Attack Churches on Behalf of ISIS, Justice Department Says;*** The FBI has arrested an 18-year-old in Idaho after uncovering his “truly horrific” and “violent plot” to attack churches in Coeur d’Alene this past weekend on behalf of ISIS, the Justice Department says. Alexander Mercurio is now facing a federal charge of attempting to provide material support or resources to a designated foreign terrorist organization after the FBI says he devised a plan to “incapacitate his father, restrain him using handcuffs, and steal his firearms to use for maximum casualties” in an attack he had been planning to carry out in the northern Idaho resort city on Sunday, April 7. “The defendant allegedly pledged loyalty to ISIS and sought to attack people attending churches in Idaho, a truly horrific plan which was detected and thwarted by the FBI’s Joint Terrorism Task Force,” FBI Director Christopher Wray said in a statement. “The Justice Department will continue to relentlessly pursue, disrupt, and hold accountable those who would commit acts of terrorism against the people and interests of the United States,” added Attorney General Merrick Garland. In a criminal complaint, the FBI says the investigation began when Mercurio, who is a resident of Coeur d’Alene, “reached out to confidential human sources online and indicated his support for ISIS and terrorist organizations, more generally.” (FN / VFI News)

***Indonesia to Normalize Ties With Israel As Part of Bid to Join OECD;*** Indonesia, the largest Muslim country in the world, will normalize ties with Israel in exchange for Jerusalem’s approval of its request to join the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), following three months of discreet negotiations between the two countries and the organization. “I am pleased to announce the Council has officially agreed to the clear and explicit early conditions according to which Indonesia must establish diplomatic relations with all OECD member countries before any decision is made to admit it to the OECD,” OECD Secretary-General Mathias Cormann wrote in a letter issued two weeks ago to Foreign Minister Israel Katz and approved by Indonesia beforehand. “Furthermore, any future decision to accept Indonesia as a member of the organization will require unanimous agreement among all member countries, including Israel. I am convinced that this provides you with assurance at this crucial point,” the letter added. In a response letter sent by Katz to Cormann, the minister welcomed the breakthrough. “I share your expectation that this process will constitute a change for Indonesia, as I anticipate a positive change in its policy toward Israel, especially abandoning its hostile policy toward it, leading the path to full diplomatic relations between all sides.” (YNet / VFI News)

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