

# **Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update May 9, 2024 (Iyyar 1, 5784)**

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## ***Israel-Hamas War, Day 216***

### ***'It Looks Like a Dead End': Israel-Hamas Cease-fire Talks End Without Deal***

- *Cairo talks end without agreement, CIA chief leaves Egyptian capital*
  - *Three Israeli soldiers wounded in explosion near Rafah*
- *White House: U.S. not abandoning Israel, 'smashing into Rafah' won't help defeat Hamas*
  - *Slovenia set to recognize Palestinian state*
  - *Thousands protest against Israel at Eurovision contest*
  - *Report: Pause in arms transfer to Israel not meant to go public*
  - *Pentagon chief says U.S. reviewing near-term security aid to Israel*
- *amid events in Rafah Israel reopens Kerem Shalom crossing for aid into Gaza*
  - *Israeli special forces officer dies from wounds sustained in West Bank raid*
  - *Netanyahu meets CIA chief in Israel amid U.S. efforts to salvage Gaza talks*
    - *Israeli defense minister at northern border: 'It might be a hot summer'*
  - *Missiles hit northern Israel, IDF strikes 20 Hezbollah targets in Lebanon*

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***Four Soldiers Killed in Hamas Rocket Barrage Toward Kerem Shalom, Aid Crossing Closed;***

Four IDF soldiers were killed and at least three others were seriously wounded after Hamas fired ten rockets toward the Kerem Shalom area along the Israel-Gaza border on Sunday afternoon, May 5. The rockets were fired from only a couple hundred meters from the Rafah humanitarian crossing. The four slain soldiers were identified as St.-Sgt. Ruben Marc Mordechai Assouline, 19, from Ra'anana; St.-Sgt. Ido Testa, 19, from Jerusalem; St.-Sgt. Tal Shavit, 21, from Kfar Giladi; and Sgt. Michael Ruzal, 18, from Rishon Lezion. Assouline and Testa served in the Shaked Battalion in the Givati Brigade. Shavit and Ruzal served in the 931st Battalion in the Nahal Brigade. Soroka Medical Center stated that it received 10 people wounded in the attack, including three in serious condition, two in moderate condition, and five in light condition. Shortly after the attack, the IDF closed the Kerem Shalom crossing located in the area, halting the entry of humanitarian aid trucks through the crossing which serves as the main entry point for aid. The Eshkol Regional Council announced that one of the people wounded was a resident of the Eshkol Regional Council. Additionally, a home in Kibbutz Kerem Shalom was hit and damaged, according to the Eshkol Regional Council. No injuries were reported in the impact in Kibbutz Kerem Shalom. Hamas took responsibility for the rocket fire, saying their Al-Qassam Brigades targeted the Kerem Shalom area with 114 mm short-range "Rajoum" rockets. (JPost / VFI News)

***40 Rockets Fired from Lebanon at Northern Israel;*** A barrage of some 40 rockets were fired from Lebanon at the Galilee Panhandle on Sunday, May 5, the IDF says. Some of the rockets were intercepted, according to the military. There are no reports of injuries in the attack. Initially, the IDF said some 65 rockets were launched, but it later lowered the number to 40. Hezbollah claimed responsibility for the attack. Earlier yesterday, 20 rockets were fired by Hezbollah at Kiryat Shmona. (TOI / VFI News)

***IDF Strikes Hamas Command and Control Center in UNRWA Complex;*** Following precise IDF and ISA intelligence, IAF fighter jets struck a Hamas command and control center in the central Gaza Strip which served as central terrorist infrastructure. The strike was carefully planned and carried out using precise munition to minimize harm to uninvolved civilians. The command and control center was used as a staging ground for multiple attacks on IDF troops located in Gaza's central corridor in recent weeks. Furthermore, the forward operations base was used to carry out attacks on humanitarian efforts, which aimed to increase the distribution of humanitarian aid to Gazan civilians. In addition, Hamas oversaw the supply of weapons to dozens of Hamas terrorists from inside the command and control center, including those located and operating inside underground terror tunnels. According to the IDF, Hamas intentionally positioned the command and control position within the vicinity of an active UNRWA location,

jeopardizing the Gazan civilians taking refuge there. “The Hamas terrorist organization systematically exploits the civilian population and institutions as human shields for their terrorist activities against the State of Israel,” the IDF stated. As a result of the strike, the Hamas command and control center located in the UNRWA complex is no longer operational. (INN / VFI News)

***Operation Imminent? Israel Briefs US on Plan to Move Gazans from Rafah;*** The IDF has informed aid groups and the Biden administration of a plan to begin removing Gazans from Rafah ahead of an invasion, a US official and two other people familiar with the situation told American media on Friday, May 3. The IDF recently told the US government and aid groups operating on the ground that they had developed a plan to move people out of Rafah to al-Mawasi, a small strip of land on the southern Gaza coast. The IDF sent a map of the area to aid workers last week. The IDF also told the aid groups that the Rafah invasion would move ahead “soon” but did not give a specific date, the two people familiar said. The US official cautioned that this is not the “final” plan from the IDF, but rather “some of their latest thinking.” A second US official told the American outlet that the Biden administration is not aware of any imminent invasion and that it is still waiting on more details from Israel on exactly how it would move people out of Rafah. Earlier on Friday, another American news agency reported that Israel has told Hamas that it has a week to agree to a hostage deal, or else it will begin its military operation in Rafah. (INN / VFI News)

***Government Votes to Shut Down Al Jazeera in Israel;*** Israel’s cabinet on Sunday, May 5, voted unanimously to shut down the Qatari news outlet Al Jazeera’s operations in Israel, nearly six months after first announcing its intentions to do so due to security concerns related to the Israel-Hamas war. The decision, which requires recertification every 45 days, includes shutting down Al Jazeera broadcasts in Arabic and English; shutting down Al Jazeera’s offices in Israel; seizing equipment used for its broadcasts, and limiting access to its websites. Communications Minister Shlomo Karhi signed an executive order soon after the vote passed, and it thus came into effect immediately. Videos on Sunday afternoon showed law enforcement officials arriving at Al Jazeera’s Jerusalem offices in the Ambassador Hotel. HOT, one of Israel’s major television service providers, announced that it had shut down Al Jazeera’s broadcasts. Another provider, YES, ran the following message on the blacked-out channel, “In accordance with the government decision, the Al Jazeera station’s broadcasts have been stopped in Israel.” In a joint statement following the vote, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that “Al Jazeera correspondents have harmed the security of Israel and incited against IDF soldiers. The time has come to eject Hamas’s mouthpiece from our country.” Al Jazeera condemned the decision, calling it a “criminal action.” “Israel’s suppression of free press to cover up its crimes by killing and arresting journalists has not deterred us from performing our duty,” it said. (JPost / VFI News)

***October 7 Victims Sue SJP, AMP for Serving as Hamas Propaganda Arm;*** Nine American and Israeli survivors and victims of October 7 on Wednesday, May 1, filed a lawsuit to the US District Court for the Eastern Division of Virginia, Alexandria Division, against American Muslims for Palestine (AMP) and National Students for Justice in Palestine (NSJP), alleging that they collaborated with Hamas to legitimize the Hamas attacks and provide public relations services for the terrorist organization. “It is time that Hamas and all of its agents, like AMP and NSJP, be held responsible for their horrific actions,” the victims said in a joint statement on Wednesday. “We want to go on record to expose these groups for the terrorists they are and make certain that they are stopped from operating in the United States and other countries they infiltrate.” The plaintiffs sought compensation from AMP and NSJP for what the lawsuit described as a coordinated effort to justify and support Gazan terrorist operations immediately after the October attack, propaganda guides, the April 15 economic blockades, and the April 19 call for campus encampments. A day after the October 7 pogrom, NSJP issued a Day of Resistance Toolkit for anti-Israel activists and began to organize protests. According to the suit, it served as a direct response to a Hamas

call for mass mobilization of international supporters. There were several campus events in the wake of October 7 organized using the toolkit. (JPost / VFI News)

***Jewish Students at the University of Texas Say Escalating Antisemitism Is Spiraling into Pure 'Jew Hatred';*** As students chanted “From the River to the Sea, Palestine will be free,” Jewish students spoke with American media about the antisemitism and extreme anger they experienced on campus during last week’s protests. Hundreds of protesters gathered on campus at the University of Texas at Austin on Wednesday, May 1, to participate in an unruly anti-Israel protest that included “significant participation by outside groups,” according to a statement from the school. Nearly 60 people were arrested, but criminal charges were dropped against 46 of the 57 protesters. UT Austin joined universities like Columbia and Yale, as well as the University of Southern California, where anti-Israel protests have made headlines in recent days. UT Austin said the protest was organized by the Palestine Solidarity Committee, which it said seeks to “paralyze the operations of universities across the country.” Amid the protest, an anti-Israel student could be heard telling a Jewish student, “F--- you Zion Nazi b----,” and multiple students told American media that they had been approached and told to “go back to Germany.” Other chants like “APD, KKK, IDF / they’re all the same,” were also heard, comparing the Austin Police Department and Israeli Defense Forces to the KKK. Levi, a Jewish student who wore a kippah and an Israeli flag tied over his shoulders, told media that the protest was made up of “pro-Hamas” individuals, but expressed his gratitude to law enforcement for making sure everybody remained “relatively peaceful.” (FN / VFI News)

***World Jewish Population Still Lower Than 1939, CBS Reports;*** The number of Jews worldwide stands at approximately 15.7 million, with around 7.1 million, or about 45% of the world’s Jews, living in Israel and approximately 6.3 million, or about 40% of the world’s Jews, residing in the United States. These figures were released by the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) on Thursday, May 2. The current number of Jews across the globe is still lower than the Jewish population in 1939, before the outbreak of World War II. Additionally, data shows that approximately 133,000 Holocaust survivors and victims of antisemitic persecution are living in Israel. Out of the 15.7 million Jews worldwide: 7.1 million Jews reside in Israel (45%), 6.3 million in the United States (40%), 440,000 in France (3%), 398,000 in Canada (2.5%), 312,000 in the UK (2%), 171,000 in Argentina (2%), 132,000 in Russia (1.1%), 125,000 in Germany (0.8%), and 117,000 in Australia (0.7%). Furthermore, according to CBS data, in 1939, on the eve of World War II, the global Jewish population was 16.6 million, including 449,000 in Israel (3%). In 1948, on the eve of the establishment of the state, the global Jewish population stood at 11.5 million, including 650,000 in Israel (6%). By 2019, the global Jewish population had reached 14.8 million, with 6.8 million residing in Israel. If the current growth rate continues, the number of Jews worldwide will surpass the pre-Holocaust figure in a few years. Out of the 133,000 Holocaust survivors living in Israel, 62% are women and 38% are men. Approximately 43% of the survivors were born during the years 1939-1945 and are currently aged 78-84. Another 36% of all survivors are aged 85-89, with the remaining being over 90 years old (approximately 20%). (YNet / VFI News)

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