

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update October 23, 2025 (Cheshvan 1, 5786)



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Israel-Hamas Cease-fire

Knesset Advances West Bank Annexation Bill as U.S. Vice President Vance Visits Israel

- *Bodies of slain Israeli hostages returned from Gaza identified; U.S. Vice President JD Vance meets with Netanyahu in Jerusalem*
- *Knesset passes in preliminary vote a proposal to apply sovereignty over West Bank, amid U.S. Vice President JD Vance's visit to Israel*
- *Hamas said it will stop public executions of rival gang members after Trump's warnings*
 - *Iran says it won't return to talks as long as U.S. makes 'unreasonable demands'*
- *Kushner says reconstruction in areas of Gaza currently under Israeli control being considered*

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Cabinet to Vote on Renaming the Gaza Conflict ‘War of Revival’; Israel’s government moved over the weekend toward officially changing the name of the Gaza conflict from “Swords of Iron” to “The War of Revival,” a label advanced by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Israel Katz. The vote—set for Sunday, October 19, 2025—followed months of public use of the phrase by Netanyahu, who has framed the two-year war as a fight for national renewal after the October 7, 2023 massacre. The new designation would replace the operational title announced by the IDF on the day hostilities began and would appear on decorations and citations associated with the campaign. Supporters argue the term reflects the country’s resilience following unprecedented trauma. Critics counter that the rebranding risks obscuring accountability for early failures. Opposition leader Yair Lapid dismissed the change as an effort to rewrite the narrative of October 7, while some bereaved families warned the timing felt premature, noting that hostages’ bodies are still being returned and broader strategic questions remain unresolved. A handful of coalition partners hesitated as well, with some ministers urging that an official name be decided only once objectives are conclusively met and the fate of Hamas’s military structure is clarified. The push comes as the government signals a transition from intense combat to consolidation of gains under the truce framework, with talk of ceremonies to honor soldiers and formalize the war’s historical record. Even so, the new name would not erase the widespread colloquial usage of “the October 7 war,” which continues to frame much of the public discourse. The move underscores the political stakes of how this period will be remembered and the ongoing debate over lessons learned since the initial attack. *(TOI/VFI News)*

Calls Mount to Resume Fighting in Gaza as Fragile Truce Wobbles; With the ceasefire strained by renewed violence, senior Israeli figures pressed on Sunday, October 19, 2025, for a return to full-scale operations against Hamas. Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich—who opposed the truce when it was approved—posted a terse call for “war” after reports that terror operatives fired on IDF troops, an incident the military labeled a serious breach. Opposition figure Avigdor Liberman likewise urged a firm show of strength, arguing that only unmistakable resolve would compel disarmament and ensure the return of all remaining hostages’ bodies. The newly formed Reservists Party echoed that sentiment, stating that Israel must make clear it will dismantle Hamas if the group refuses to disarm and continues to violate the agreement’s terms. The party added that if fallen hostages’ bodies are not returned promptly, Israel should act unilaterally to retrieve them. These statements came as the security establishment weighed options to contain flare-ups without collapsing the broader framework for de-escalation. While the ceasefire brought a measurable drop in fighting, isolated attacks, unanswered questions about disarmament, and the piecemeal return of hostages’ remains have fueled criticism from across the political spectrum. Whether the truce endures will depend on strict enforcement, meaningful progress on disarmament, and sustained pressure on Hamas to fulfill its commitments. *(TOI/VFI News)*

Hamas Defends Public Executions, Signals It Will Not Disarm; Days into the ceasefire, Hamas presented a hardened stance that complicates any durable settlement. The group publicly defended recent executions of Palestinians in Gaza as “exceptional measures,” even as rights advocates and regional leaders decried the killings. At the same time, a senior Hamas official said the organization cannot commit

to disarmament—an explicit requirement embedded in the truce architecture—though he floated the possibility of a multi-year pause in fighting if broader political demands are addressed. The posture underscores a bid to reassert internal control in the Strip while testing the limits of the agreement. Israeli officials said Hamas’s refusal to disarm undermines the very core of the truce, which was predicated on ending the group’s military capacity and ensuring that Gaza would no longer be used as a base for attacks. The continuing handover of some hostages’ bodies has not softened Israeli assessments, particularly as sporadic attacks on IDF troops have persisted and the group’s armed cadres remain visible on the streets. International mediators warned that the killings of alleged collaborators risk fueling cycles of vengeance and destabilizing aid distribution. For now, the ceasefire’s future hinges on whether Hamas restrains its fighters, returns all remaining bodies, and moves decisively toward demilitarization—conditions that the group’s leaders publicly resist. The contrast between calls for reconstruction and the bloody enforcement methods on display has heightened pressure on outside actors to enforce consequences for violations and to keep all parties at the table. (NYP/VFI News)

Justice Minister Advances Tribunal That Could Impose Death Penalty for October 7 Atrocities; Justice Minister Yariv Levin announced plans on Thursday, October 16, 2025, to establish a special tribunal to try Gazan suspects accused of participating in the October 7, 2023 massacres. Drafted jointly with MKs Simcha Rothman and Yulia Malinovsky, the bill would allow prosecutors to bring cases under Israel’s 1950 Law for the Prevention of Genocide—legislation rooted in the 1948 Genocide Convention—which can carry a death sentence in extreme cases. Levin said extensive investigations by police, the Shin Bet, and the State Attorney’s Office have yielded “unprecedented” volumes of evidence, including body-camera footage and thousands of hours of testimony. Under the proposal, fifteen judges—Israeli or qualified international jurists—would staff the tribunal. Individual cases would be heard by three-judge panels, with proceedings involving multiple defendants handled by five-judge panels; appeals would go to the full bench. The Justice Ministry emphasized that any decision to seek capital punishment would require the prime minister’s approval in consultation with senior security officials. Officials argue the framework is necessary to process dozens of complex cases efficiently and transparently after living hostages were returned under the truce. The measure has stirred legal and ethical debate, but supporters say it reflects the gravity of the crimes and the need to deter future atrocities. Preparations for indictments—covering genocide, crimes against humanity, murder, rape, and hostage-taking—are said to be underway, with lawmakers signaling an intent to move the bill quickly to a first reading. (TOI/VFI News)

FBI Arrests Louisiana Resident Alleged to Have Joined the October 7 Attack; Federal authorities arrested a Palestinian national in Lafayette, Louisiana, on Friday, October 17, 2025, alleging he participated in the Hamas-led incursion into southern Israel two years ago. According to an unsealed affidavit, investigators tied the suspect to communications, images, and location data that placed him in Israel on the morning of the assault, along with claims that he coordinated with allied militants and later glorified the violence online. Prosecutors also accuse him of lying on immigration forms to conceal militant ties and of offenses related to supporting a designated terrorist organization. The arrest followed a multi-state investigation that traced the man’s movements and associations, including records of his U.S. entry and residency history. Authorities said the case includes social-media messages and intercepted calls, as well as photographs that align with militant insignia and equipment used during the attack. The defendant is expected to make an initial court appearance as proceedings begin in federal court, with potential additional charges linked to alleged fraud and visa misuse. Officials said the case reflects expanded efforts to identify anyone who directly assisted the October 7 atrocities, even if they later entered the United States under false pretenses. The investigation underscores the continuing global dimensions of the war’s aftermath and the U.S. government’s determination to enforce counterterrorism laws. (FOX/VFI News)

Backlash After Israeli Supporters Barred From Aston Villa–Maccabi Tel Aviv Match; A decision by authorities in Birmingham to prohibit Israeli supporters from attending this week’s Europa League match between Aston Villa and Maccabi Tel Aviv sparked widespread criticism across the UK. Police cited security concerns amid heightened tensions, but lawmakers and community leaders questioned whether barring an entire group of visiting fans set a worrying precedent. The controversy drew particular attention because of Aston Villa’s high-profile supporters and the match’s Europe-wide visibility, prompting calls for clarity on how safety advice was formulated and applied. Opponents of the ban warned that excluding Israeli fans risks conflating national identity with public-order considerations and could embolden discriminatory responses in the future. Others argued that if credible threats existed, targeted measures—segregated seating, enhanced screening, or neutral-venue relocation—should have been explored before an outright prohibition. In parallel, advocates urged authorities to ensure that Jewish supporters in the UK can safely attend domestic fixtures without intimidation, even as officials work to prevent provocations or clashes around emotionally charged games. As the debate unfolded, some insisted that transparent risk assessments and independent oversight should accompany decisions of this kind. The episode crystallized tensions between policing imperatives and principles of equal treatment, raising questions about how sporting bodies and local authorities will handle similar events in the months ahead. *(DM/VFI News)*

Israeli Gymnasts Denied Visas for World Championships, Prompting Outcry; In a move that drew rebukes from sports leaders and human-rights advocates, Indonesian authorities declined to issue visas to Israel’s delegation for the World Artistic Gymnastics Championships in Jakarta. The decision prevents elite competitors—including recent world and Olympic medalists—from defending their titles on one of the sport’s biggest stages. International organizers expressed “great concern,” reiterating that athletes should not be penalized for geopolitical disputes and warning that excluding national teams undermines the integrity of global competition. Israel’s gymnastics federation condemned the ban as collective punishment and urged the international federation to safeguard the Olympic Charter’s principles of neutrality and equal access. Observers noted that politicizing visas not only punishes athletes but also risks cascading consequences for future events scheduled in the region. Calls grew for contingency plans that would either relocate competitions or impose consequences on host countries that discriminate against participants based on nationality. Coaches and athletes voiced frustration at years of training jeopardized by late-stage administrative decisions. The episode added to a broader debate about whether global sports bodies can enforce consistent standards when national politics intrude, and whether federations will take meaningful action to deter future exclusions. *(DM/VFI News)*

UK Activist in Jerusalem Declares Solidarity With Israel, Warns of Jihadist Threats; British activist Tommy Robinson visited Israel around the second anniversary of the October 7 attacks, telling Arutz Sheva that he came at the invitation of a government minister and to stand publicly with Israelis. In interviews filmed in Jerusalem, he described touring sites in the south and viewing graphic evidence from the attack, which he said strengthened his resolve to challenge what he regards as widespread disinformation about Israel in Western media and politics. He also criticized European leaders and institutions that, in his view, have downplayed Islamist extremism in pursuit of political advantage. Robinson said his movement has organized large demonstrations in the UK and argued that ordinary Britons broadly support Israel even if political leaders avoid saying so. He added that peace is unlikely so long as jihadist ideologies remain ascendant, framing Israel’s battle as a defense of Western cities as well. The visit drew pushback from critics in the British Jewish community and beyond, who oppose his presence and politics; supporters countered that his advocacy has been unwavering and that silencing controversial voices will not defeat antisemitism or terrorism. As he prepared to address an evening event in Tel Aviv, Robinson urged Israelis not to view European policies as reflecting the true sentiments of the

public, claiming that disillusioned voters increasingly reject leaders who appease radical factions. His comments encapsulate the wider information war surrounding Israel's security, identity, and narrative on the world stage. (INN/VFI News)



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