

# OPERATIONAL UPDATE:

## ISRAEL – HAMAS WAR

DAY 166 OF THE WAR

LAST UPDATE 19/03/2024, 07:00 PM ISRAEL TIME

IDF TROOPS OPERATING AGAINST REMAINING TERRORISTS IN SHIFA HOSPITAL



IDF troops are currently conducting a precise operation in the area of the Shifa hospital. The operation is based on intelligence information indicating the use of the hospital by senior Hamas terrorists to conduct and promote terrorist activity.

Prior to the operation, IDF troops were instructed on the importance of operating cautiously, as well as on the measures to be taken to avoid harm to the patients, civilians, medical staff, and medical equipment. In addition, Arabic speakers have been brought to the area in order to facilitate dialogue with the patients remaining in the hospital. There is no obligation for the patients and medical staff to evacuate.

Furthermore, IDF troops will continue the humanitarian efforts in the area, both throughout and following the conclusion of the operation, providing food, water, and medical supplies to the patients and civilians in the hospital's compound.

The IDF will continue to act in accordance with international law and against the Hamas terrorist organization - which operates from hospitals and civilian infrastructure in a systematic and cynical way, without the distinction between the civilian population and the organization's terrorists.

Shifa Hospital is home to Hamas' main command and control center. The military headquarters, munitions and arms at the hospital complex are guarded by armed Hamas terrorists who fire at IDF forces operating in the vicinity.

Based on IDF and ISA intelligence, IDF troops exposed a 55-meter-long terror tunnel 10 meters deep underneath the Shifa Hospital complex. The tunnel shaft was uncovered in the area of the hospital underneath a shed alongside a vehicle containing numerous weapons including RPGs, explosives, and Kalashnikov rifles.

Additionally, the IDF and ISA exposed CCTV footage from Shifa Hospital that proves the hospital was used as terrorist infrastructure in which the Hamas terrorists took hostages on Saturday, October 7.

The IDF and ISA, led by the 162nd Division, the 401st Brigade, and Shayetet 13 special forces are continuing precise operations in the Shifa hospital to thwart terrorism. The troops eliminated terrorists in close-quarters combat and located weapons in the area while avoiding harm to civilians, medical staff, and medical equipment. Thus far, the troops killed over 50 terrorists and apprehended approximately 180 suspects.

During IDF activity in the area of Al-Qarara in Khan Yunis, the troops and the IAF killed terrorists and destroyed terrorist infrastructure in the area, including one from which anti-tank missiles were launched at the troops two days ago.

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### Statistics

- 1,200+ Israelis killed since the morning of October 7th.
- **594 fallen soldiers.**
- **251 IDF soldiers have been killed in action in the ground operation.**
- 11 IDF soldiers killed by Hezbollah terrorism.
- 5,400+ Israelis wounded since the morning of October 7th.
- 134 confirmed hostages.
- **12,000+ Rockets launched into Israel.**
- **2,000+ Rockets launched into Israel from Lebanon.**
- 121 Israeli hostages released.
- 24 foreign national hostages released.
- 1500+ tunnel shafts and underground passages uncovered since the beginning of the war (finding more every day).

### Northern border:

- **Today, an IDF soldier identified a Hezbollah terrorist operating out of an observation post belonging to Hezbollah in the area of Marwahin. Following this, IDF fighter jets struck the post from which the terrorist operated. Earlier today (Tuesday), a Hezbollah military compound in which terrorists were operating was struck in the area of al-Adisa. Yesterday (Monday), a Hezbollah military compound was also struck in the area of Aytash Shab.**
- **As part of the operational response to the situation on the northern border and in accordance with the situational assessment, the "Heharim" (The Mountains) Brigade, a new IDF brigade that will operate on the Syria-Lebanon border, was established. The brigade will operate and defend the Mount Hermon and Mount Dov sectors.**
- Hezbollah's military activity south of the Litani River in Lebanon, including the use and storage of armaments, is a clear violation of UN Security Council Resolution 1701. The IDF will continue to defend Israel's borders from any threat. Meanwhile, the people of Lebanon must prevent Nasrallah from dragging the entire state into war. While the country is under great economic suffering, Hezbollah abuses the people of Lebanon as human shields, especially in areas in southern Lebanon where civilian homes are used as military posts and weapon storage.
- The IDF currently has three operational objectives regarding Hezbollah's threat:
  - Defensive:
    - The IDF has been operating along the northern border to protect the area from enemy fire, such as anti-tank missiles, to prevent the Hezbollah terrorists from entering Israel.
  - Offensive:
    - The IDF has been targeting Hezbollah's forces and weakening its military capabilities by carrying out precise, responsive strikes against Hezbollah infrastructure and terrorist cells.
    - So far, the IDF has struck 150+ terrorist cells and killed 200+ terrorists and commanders.
  - Readiness:
    - Despite the preference for a diplomatic solution to Hezbollah's threat, the IDF has deployed three divisions since Oct. 7 to its northern command and has been conducting a series of training and exercises in preparation for war.

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### Humanitarian Aid:

- 222 humanitarian aid trucks were inspected and transferred to the Gaza Strip (yesterday, March. 18). 150 trucks were transferred via Kerem Shalom and 72 via Nitzana. 158 trucks were distributed within Gaza.
- A convoy of 20 private sector food trucks made its way to northern Gaza last night. Over the last 3 weeks, more than 150 trucks were transferred to the northern Gaza Strip, most by the private sector.
- Yesterday, (Mar. 18) 4 tankers of cooking gas and 3 tankers of fuel designated for the operation of essential infrastructure in Gaza, have entered the Gaza Strip.
- More than 222,580 tons of food have entered the Gaza Strip.
- 27,300+ tons of water have entered the Gaza Strip.
- 19,260+ tons of medical supplies have entered the Gaza Strip.
- 37,120+ tons of temporary shelter supplies have entered the Gaza Strip.
- 22,050+ tons of mixed aid have entered the Gaza Strip.
- For the first time, the IDF prepared for the arrival of humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip by sea. A ship carrying humanitarian aid from the WCK (World Central Kitchen) organization and funded by the United Arab Emirates set sail on Tuesday (12.03) from the port of Larnaca in Cyprus toward the Gaza Strip. This was carried out in coordination with Israeli security and civilian authorities, in accordance with the directive of the government of Israel and at the request of the U.S. government. The delivery of the aid was facilitated after all the equipment on the ship underwent a comprehensive security check and was accompanied by Israeli officials to ensure that humanitarian aid alone reaches the Gaza Strip.



### International:

- The National Security Council has issued travel warnings to 80 global destinations for Israelis around the world.
- Two missiles were fired by the Iranian-backed Houthis at non-Israeli chartered ships. Attacks by the Iranian-backed Houthis on global shipping are a global threat to freedom of navigation at sea.
- The U.S. support of Israel at this time is a sign of our strong partnership and mutual values. The IDF is prepared to take necessary actions to defend Israeli civilians and values the strong relationship and cooperation with the United States Armed Forces.
- According to Israel's Ministry Of Defense, over 200 U.S. military equipment cargo planes have arrived in Israel so far.

### Israeli Homefront :

- This is the worst massacre of Israeli civilians in Israel's history. The last time this many Jewish civilians were murdered in a single day was by the Nazis during the Holocaust.
- This is barbarism the likes of which the world hasn't seen since the worst days of ISIS.
- 250K+ Israeli civilians have been evacuated from their homes in both Southern and Northern Israel due to the areas being declared as closed military zones after the brutal attacks of Hamas and the ongoing provocations occurring on Israel's border with Lebanon. This decision has been made to ensure the safety of Israeli civilians from the ongoing combat activities occurring in both areas.

### IDF Goals and Actions

- The IDF is acting against any threats posed on all fronts and is prepared to intensify operations by air, land, and sea to eliminate the threat to Israeli civilians and to ensure regional stability.
- The dismantling of Hamas' military and administrative capabilities should not only be the goal of the IDF and Israel but of the whole world.
- Returning all the hostages home is a core priority for the IDF.
- The IDF is not only fighting for Israel's right to exist but also ensuring Hamas' inability to expand to the rest of the Western world.

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### Hamas' Goals and Actions

- Hamas is a terrorist organization driven by radical hatred toward the Jewish people. Their ultimate goal is to annihilate Israel and kill Israeli civilians, as stated in the Hamas charter.
- Hamas deliberately conceals its military operations and assets inside civilian areas including homes, mosques, and hospitals in an attempt to avoid being attacked, intentionally using Gazan civilians as human shields.
- Israel has no legal or moral obligation to supply electricity or other resources to a hostile territory that initiated a savage war. Hamas, as the leadership in the Gaza Strip, is responsible for taking care of the needs of Gazan civilians.
- Hamas is desperately trying to restore its image as a “humanitarian” organization by publishing videos of hostages seemingly caring for them. However, Hamas has failed to explain why there are 100+ hostages still being held within the Gaza Strip. This warfare tactic involves using manipulation, propaganda, and intimidation to instill fear, doubt, or helplessness in individuals or groups by controlling or influencing their minds. This is just one example of how Hamas uses psychological terrorism against Israel. These terror tactics are the same the world saw from ISIS.

### Hamas' actions against Gazan civilians

- On November 13th, the IDF exposed Hamas' Exploitation of Rantisi Children's hospital for military purposes which is a core Hamas tactic. Weapons discovered in hospital basement include suicide-bomb vests, grenades, AK-47 assault rifles, explosive devices and RPGs.
- The IDF took operational control of the Gaza harbor, which was controlled by the Hamas terrorist organization and used as a training facility for their naval commando forces for planning and executing naval terror attacks under the guise of a civilian harbor, all the while using civilian and Gaza harbor police vessels.
- The IDF has exposed that Hamas steals fuel from civilian infrastructures such as the fuel supply of the Shifa hospital, located in Gaza City, for their own nefarious terror purposes. Based off of satellite images, proving thousands of liters of fuel is available within in the Gaza Strip, it is now understood that there is no lack of fuel, rather the terrorist organization Hamas prioritizes the use of fuel for terror acts against Israel.
- Since the beginning of the war, Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad have had 1000+ failed rocket launches, which have landed in the Gaza Strip causing severe damage to infrastructure and harming civilians.
- The UN has been made aware of the inhumane actions of Hamas, and the fact that Hamas, the sovereign in Gaza has no interest in providing for or protecting their civilians. Hamas uses humanitarian aid that is supposed to go to civilians in Gaza for its own terrorist purposes. One example is that on Monday the 16th of October, Hamas stole fuel from the UN that was meant for civilians in Gaza. By this, Hamas stole what would be equivalent to 6 days of running water.
- Water issue: approximately 90% of the water inside the Gaza Strip, is provided from within Gaza, and only approximately 10% of the water is provided by Israel. With this knowledge, we can understand that Israel didn't leave Gaza without running water. Rather Hamas fails to supply their 90% of water, leaving all Gazan civilians to depend on Israel's 10%.
- Under international law, if a civilian structure is used for military purposes then it becomes a legitimate military target. Hamas uses their civilians as human shields by embedding themselves within densely populated areas and concealing their military operations and infrastructure within residential buildings, schools, hospitals and mosques.
- Before Hamas' attack, Israel operated humanitarian aid crossings with Gaza where food, supplies, civilians, and international aid passed through daily. Hamas terrorists attacked the humanitarian aid crossings, killed or captured everyone inside, destroyed equipment, and published videos of their actions. Due to these events, the crossings are inadequate for operational use.