



## IDF strikes Gaza hospital twice, hitting rescue crews, journalists; at least 20 dead

**Rawan Suleiman, Yaniv Kubovich and Jack Khoury**

The Israel Defense Forces conducted two strikes on Monday on a hospital in southern Gaza that killed at least 20 people, including five journalists and photojournalists, according to the Hamas-controlled Health Ministry.

The ministry said the IDF's first strike targeted the fourth floor of Nasser Hospital in Khan Yunis, while the second one struck medical aid teams who came to treat the wounded.

### A war crime broadcast live

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The IDF Spokesperson's Unit issued a statement confirming the Israeli strike in the area of Nasser Hospital.

In the statement, the military said it "regrets any harm to uninvolved individuals and does not target journalists as such," and added that it acts to "mitigate harm to uninvolved individuals as much as possible while maintaining the safety of IDF troops."

According to the statement, the Chief of General Staff has ordered to conduct an initial inquiry "as soon as possible."

IDF Spokesperson Effie

Defrin said that the IDF is "operating in an extremely complex reality," adding that "Hamas terrorists deliberately use civilian infrastructure, including hospitals, as shields. 'They have even operated from the Nasser hospital itself.'"

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said in a statement that "Israel deeply regrets the tragic mishap that occurred today at the Nasser Hospital in Gaza."

Ground forces in the army said on Monday that they fired a tank shell at the hospital because they thought a camera on site was a Hamas camera that was being used to observe Israeli forces. According to the IDF, the tank fired another shell to ensure the camera was hit, which it estimates hit the medical personnel who tried to treat those wounded from the first shelling. However, senior military officials dispute this version of events provided by the ground forces. They say that the area is full of cameras, and that it is unclear why the force decided to attack this specific camera.

It is also not yet clear who authorized firing shells at a hospital, which the army considers a sensitive facility whose targeting requires approval from a senior officer.

"It's unclear who gave the order to fire at a hospital over a camera," a military source told Haaretz. "This could

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People working to recover the body of cameraman Hussam al-Masri, after he was killed in the Israeli strikes on Nasser hospital, Monday.

*Hatem Khaled/Reuters*

## Security cabinet to mull hostage talks amid protests

**Bar Peleg, Jonathan Lis and Ben Samuels**

The security cabinet is due to meet on Tuesday to discuss the Gaza military operation as well as the possibility of renewing talks in the coming days on a hostage deal.

The hostage families and other protesters will demonstrate across the country on Tuesday to push for accepting the deal. The day will start with unfurling huge flags outside the U.S. Embassy branch in Tel Aviv at 6:29 A.M. and culminate with a march at 7 P.M. from the Savidor Central train station to Hostage Square in Tel Aviv.

The cabinet meeting will be the first one since Hamas responded positively to the mediators' proposal for a partial deal. Sources familiar with the situation said on Monday that the security cabinet meeting is meant to reach a decision regarding the continuation of negotiations over a deal. In the backdrop is Israel's demand for a full deal. The security cabinet will also discuss what demands Israel has now that make its position different from when it supported a partial deal just a few weeks ago.

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Monday that the Gaza war will end within two to three weeks. "I think in the next two to three weeks, you're gonna have a pretty conclusive ending," he said while speaking to the press in the Oval Office. "It's a hard thing to say because they've been fighting for thousands of years." Trump continued, "Right now they're talking about Gaza City. There's always talking about something. At some point, it's going to get settled."

Netanyahu has presented three red lines in any deal: Israel will not release Nukhba terrorists who took part in the October 7 attack; it will not withdraw entirely from the Philadelphi route; and it will oppose major international guarantees that would prevent continued military operations in Gaza if no deal is reached to end the war.

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## Family of hostage Nimrod Cohen shares video of his abduction

**Bar Peleg**

The family of kidnapped soldier Nimrod Cohen released a video and photos on Monday showing the moment he was abducted during the October 7 Hamas attack.

In the half-minute footage, Cohen is seen being led by Hamas militants into the Gaza Strip. The video was recently obtained by the Israel Defense Forces.

Cohen, the son of Vicki and Yehuda Cohen, was taken on October 7 from his malfunctioning tank during fighting along the Gaza border. Militants exploited the mechanical failure and attached an explosive device to the tank's side. While all other crew members were killed, Cohen and one other

soldier survived.

In February, his family reported that Cohen had communicated with them through one of the freed hostages returned to Israel in the latest exchange. According to the family, his message was: "I'm okay, don't worry. Love you."

"What you will see in the

video is every Israeli mother's biggest nightmare," said Vicki Cohen, adding that watching the video brings back memories from October 7. "My child is helpless, taken and brutally dragged to hell, and as a mother, there is nothing I can do."

"Up until then, I was a completely normal mother,

and a moment later, once I saw the video Hamas uploaded on social media, I became a different person. A black shroud descended on me and my family. "This time too, when I watch the new video, the blood drains from my body, my breathing becomes heavy, and anxiety takes over."

Nimrod "had to fight for his life underground, feeling abandoned," she said in a statement. "The Israeli government, prime minister, cabinet – put yourselves in the shoes of a mother who has been holding her breath for 689 days and nights."

She continued, saying Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his government "have no right to block the deal that's on the table.

You have no right to prevent my child from returning."

Addressing Israelis, Cohen's mother added that "this time we will act differently. We will not accept a deal being blocked. We will take to the streets to make sure no one sabotages these negotiations. You, who took to the streets a week ago, please stand by our side this time,

Trump repeats claim more hostages may have died **News Page 3**

## Umm al-Fahm residents decry 'racist' plan for buffer zone

**Deiaa Haj Yahia**

In the city of Umm Al-Fahm, children are playing between buildings near Moshav Mei Ami. In one yard, a sign begins with the Arab greeting *Ahlan wa sahlan* and continues: "This house will not be torn down."



The buffer zone between Umm al-Fahm and Moshav Mei Ami.

*Amir Levy*

The sign represents a threat to the dreams of many people in this city of 60,000 in Israel, not far from the northwest corner of the West Bank. A construction plan that would cater to thousands has been overhauled.

The plan was the first of its kind between an Arab Israeli city, the Construction and Housing Ministry and the Israel Land Authority.

Thousands of new apartments were to be built in Umm al-Fahm, along with schools, clinics, culture

centers and parks covering around 2,600 dunams (640 acres). The agreement was signed in 2017 and last year was heading for final approval.

But during a meeting of the National Planning and Building Council, the Defense Ministry sud-

dened property owners in the city. They say the buffer zone will mean hundreds fewer apartments in the plan, and the cancellation of planned schools and health facilities.

In addition, dozens of buildings and houses currently in the area envisioned for the buffer zone could be expropriated and demolished. The municipality says there are 25 such buildings, home to dozens of families.

"My property was in the final-approval stage for a permit, and now it's in the plan as open space," local resident Ahmed Jabarin says. "I'm going to have to fight to stay on land I inherited from my grandfather."

### Allegations of land theft

For 18 years, 64-year-old Mohammed Hussein Mahamid has been living in what is now the proposed buffer zone. Early on, he lived in a small house; then, with his own hands, and without a permit, he built a larger house for his family.

"I was one of the first people to build here," he says. "A lot of people wanted to build here, but they were afraid it would be torn down. We tried everything to get construction permits."

Mahamid decided to build only after despairing – he hoped the house would be

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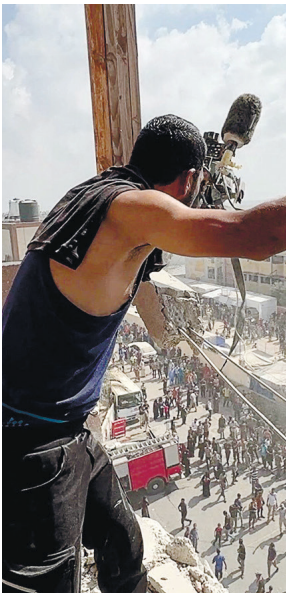
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*Hatem Khaled/Reuters*

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## Biblical kings may have built large J'lem dam to handle climate change

**Ariel David**

In the jumble of superimposed ruins from different periods that lies at the heart of ancient Jerusalem, one structure has been popping up in archaeologists' reports for more than a century. It's a massive wall, identified as a dam that lined the Pool of Siloam, a key element of the city's ancient water system and a site at the center of multiple biblical passages.

Now, archaeologists digging in the heart of the contested neighborhood of Silwan in East Jerusalem have extensively excavated this enigmatic structure and, for the first time, radiocarbon experts have been able to figure out when it was built.

The results are surprising, showing that the dam was older than previously thought and was built in the early days of the Kingdom of Judah, roughly around 800 B.C.E., the experts reported Monday in PNAS. The dam is only the latest in a slew of recent discoveries in Jerusalem that can be linked to this part of the First Temple Period, and attest to a time of early expansion of the city at the turn of the 9th-8th century B.C.E., possibly under the rule of King Jehoash. Specifically, the construction of the dam may have been triggered by a greater need to store and control Jerusalem's key water supply in a time of cli-



The 2,800-year-old dam unearthed at the Pool of Siloam in the City of David.

*Johanna Regev*

mate change that brought longer dry periods, the researchers speculate.

The Siloam Pool is located in the Palestinian neighborhood of Silwan, also dubbed the "City of David" because it hosts the oldest ruins found so far in Jerusalem and is therefore believed to have been a core part of the settlement pretty much since Canaanite times.

The pool, also known as Birket el-Hamra in Arabic (named for red clay), is located at the end of ancient underground rock-cut channels that brought the waters of the Gihon Spring, Jerusalem's

only perennial water source, safely into the walls of the City of David. One such pool and channel are mentioned in the Bible (2 Kings 20:20) as having been built by King Hezekiah around 700 B.C.E. in preparation for an Assyrian siege. Much later, in the Roman period, the Siloam Pool was lined with a monumental stone staircase, and became the setting for the story of Jesus (John 9:1-12) healing a blind man.

The dam that hemmed in the pool's waters has attracted less attention, although it has been partially excavated at different times since the

late 19th century, explains Dr. Nahshon Szanton, an archaeologist with the Israel Antiquities Authority who leads the latest dig at the Siloam Pool.

Between 2023 and 2024 Israeli archaeologists excavated the entirety of the pool site as part of efforts to develop the site for tourism. The dig has not been without controversy, seeing as it was carried out in one of the most volatile neighborhoods of East Jerusalem, on land previously cultivated by Palestinian residents as

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