

THURSDAY, JULY 4, 2024 ■ 28 SIVAN, 5784



## Bring them home

Elkana Bohbot, age 34, kidnapped from the Nova music festival

## Silent boycott

The Iranian people's quest to overthrow the mullahs

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## Fresh as art

Freshpaint art and design fair drives market

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# A July 4th message: Freedom is the most precious gift humanity will ever know

## EXCLUSIVE

• By BENJAMIN NETANYAHU

On this July 4, I want to thank the American people for being true to their birthright, the Spirit of 1776. And I wish them a happy and bless-

ed Independence Day.

Through thick and thin, for the past nine months, Israel has deeply appreciated vital American support.

In these times of national crisis, as the people of Israel fight a seven-front war for

our national survival against Iran and its terror proxies, it is heartening to know that far from standing alone, we have the support of the greatest democracy the world has ever known.

Character is revealed in

times of crisis. In the face of Hamas's savagery on October 7, the people of Israel connected to the deepest foundations of our national being. As one, we rose to fight our enemies with the heroism, determination, and resilience

that characterized our heroes from the days of Joshua and the Maccabees, passed down across time to the warriors of the modern State of Israel.

America stands with Israel because Americans are similarly moved by the legacy of their

forefathers. At their base, Israel and America are guided by the same twin insights. Freedom is the most precious gift humanity will ever know. And freedom isn't free. You have to be willing to fight for it.

Israelis saw on October 7

what it would mean if we ever lost our freedom. We understood that this is not a war of choice, but a war for survival.

Americans saw the atrocities of October 7 and they

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## Israel examining Hamas's response to hostage proposal

*Soldier killed in northern Gaza Strip*

• By TOVAH LAZAROFF

Israel is studying the latest Hamas response to a three-phase proposal to secure the release of the remaining 120 hostages in Gaza, the Mossad said in an unusual statement on Wednesday night.

"The hostage deal mediators have conveyed to the negotiating team Hamas's remarks on the outline of the hostage deal. Israel is evaluating the remarks and will relay its reply to the mediators," it said.

A Hamas source said on Wednesday that the group exchanged "some ideas" with mediators on how to end the war in Gaza.

The hostage deal has been mediated by Qatar and Egypt, aided by the United States. US President Joe Biden, however, has personally taken the diplomatic lead on the hostage deal, unveiling the latest proposal from the White House on May 31. The United States also secured the support of the United Nations Security Council for the deal.

The United States has said in the past that Hamas had rejected the proposal that Biden laid out but that the US has pressed the terror group to reconsider. American officials have said that the US, with the help of Egypt and Qatar, is looking to close the gaps.



CAPT. ELAY ELISHA LUGASI (IDF)

An Israeli security source said that "Hamas continues to insist on a principal clause in the outline that would prevent Israel from returning to fight after phase one of the proposal, something that is unacceptable to Israel."

"There are other gaps that have not yet been closed," the source added.

"Israel will keep at the negotiations while continuing the military and diplomatic pressure to bring about the release of all 120 of our hostages, both living and dead," the source stated.

Earlier in the day, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad claimed that some of the hostages had tried to kill themselves out of desperation.

"Some enemy prisoners have attempted suicide as a

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## Terrorist stabs soldier to death in attack at Karmiel shopping mall

*Sgt. Aleksandr Iakiminskyi shot terrorist before he died from knife wounds*

• By Yael Halfon and Jerusalem Post Staff



PEOPLE EMBRACE outside the scene of a stabbing attack in Karmiel yesterday. (David Cohen/Flash90)



SGT. ALEKSANDR IAKIMINSKYI (IDF)

One person was killed in a terror attack that occurred at a shopping center in the city of Karmiel in Israel's North on Wednesday.

Sgt. Aleksandr Iakiminskyi, 19, from Nahariya, a driver in the 71st Battalion, 188th Brigade, was killed in the stabbing attack in Karmiel, the IDF announced. The other individual who was severely wounded was a soldier from the same battalion and brigade. He was transferred Galilee Medical Center in Nahariya.

Eyewitnesses said that the terrorist stabbed one of the young men, severely wounding him. His friend, who was the one who died, was armed and had time to disarm the assailant and shoot him. In the process, however, he was also stabbed, according to Walla.

Police named the accused assailant, who was killed in the attack, as Joud Rabia from Nahf, a town where members of Israel's Arab minority live.

There was no claim of responsibility from any group, though terrorist group Palestinian Islamic Jihad in



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**Khan Yunis rocket fire is a wake-up call for Israel, Page 3**

a post on the Telegram site described the attack as a "heroic operation."

Closed circuit television images from inside the mall, in Karmiel in northern Israel, showed two men in Israeli military uniform, with their guns slung at their sides,

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## Israeli airstrike kills senior Hezbollah commander

• By LAILA BASSAM and CHRISTIAN LOWE

BEIRUT (Reuters) – An Israeli airstrike killed one of Hezbollah's top commanders in southern Lebanon on Wednesday, prompting retaliatory rocket fire by the Iran-backed group into Israel.

The IDF said it had struck

and eliminated Mohammed Nasser, calling him commander of a Hezbollah unit responsible for firing from southwestern Lebanon at Israel.

Nasser, who was killed by an airstrike near the city of Tyre in southern Lebanon, was the one of the most senior Hezbollah commanders to die in the con-

flict, two security sources in Lebanon said.

Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said Israeli forces were hitting Hezbollah "very hard every day" and will be ready to take any action necessary against the group, although the preference is to reach a negotiated

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## Biden, Netanyahu likely to meet in Washington amid Gaza war tensions

• By TOVAH LAZAROFF

US President Joe Biden and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu are expected to meet in Washington in July on the sidelines of the Israeli leader's trip to address a joint session of Congress, a White House official said on Tuesday.

Netanyahu saw Biden in October when the president visited Israel and met with him in September in New York when they both attended the opening sessions of the United Nations General Assembly.

The two men have a strong relationship that goes back

four decades, but tensions first over Netanyahu's judicial reform plan and then over Gaza prevented Biden from inviting the Israeli leader to the White House.

Netanyahu had hoped to secure a White House invitation, but the idea appeared to become a reality in the aftermath of Biden's poor performance in the presiden-

tial debate last week, which caused concern over his competence to lead the country due to his age.

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## White House denies report that Biden considers quitting race

• By ISMAIL SHAKIL and KATHARINE JACKSON

WASHINGTON (Reuters) – The White House dismissed as "absolutely false" a *New York Times* report on Wednesday that claimed

that US President Joe Biden had told an ally that he was weighing whether to continue his bid for reelection in November.

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## 1982 blast in Tyre caused by suicide bomber, probe finds

*Commission reverses original finding that gas-leak explosion killed 75 Israelis, raises questions of cover-up*

• By YONAH JEREMY BOB

"The First Tyre Disaster" in 1982 was the result of a Lebanese terrorist suicide bomber, a joint Shin Bet (Israel Security Agency) and IDF commission said Wednesday. The explosion killed nearly 75 Israeli members of the security forces and 15 Lebanese detainees at Israel's headquarters in the city, it said.

The commission, which was led by IDF Maj.-Gen. (res.) Amir Abulafia and Shin Bet division chief "S," found that either Hezbollah or Amal

– which now are a united movement but at the time had some separate aspects – in coordination with Iran had caused the explosion, using a minimum of 50 kilograms of explosives plus some additional gas explosives to collapse the multistory building.

The timing of the commission's announcement could be significant because it blames Hezbollah for a mass terrorist attack that also killed many Lebanese citizens. The terrorist group is currently trying to convince the broader population that its main focus is Leb-

anese interests and not those of Iran.

It is also significant in that it brings into question the integrity of the defense establishment for being fully honest about its shortcomings just as the IDF probe regarding the October 7 failures is close to being released to the public later this month.

The commission's determination reverses the decision of the 1982 Zorea Commission, which had ruled that the November 11, 1982, collapse of

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## Conservatives believe Labour heading for record-breaking UK election win

• By WILLIAM JAMES

LONDON (Reuters) – Britain's Conservative Party all-but conceded election defeat to Keir Starmer's Labour Party

on Wednesday, a day before polling stations even opened and warned that the opposition was on course for a record-breaking victory.

Opinion polls revealed that the center-left Labour Party is set for a big win in Thursday's vote that would end 14 years of the Conservative government and hand Starmer the keys to the prime minister's Number

**Labour victory set to shake things up for UK Jews, Page 6**

10 Downing Street office on Friday morning.

You Gov's final seat projection that was published on Wednesday put Labour on

track to win a majority of 212 seats, the largest of any party in modern history.

Both Starmer and Conservative Prime Minister Rishi Sunak kicked off the last day of campaigning before polls opened, warning voters of dire economic consequences if the other man wins.

But facing predictions of the worst result in the party's his-

tory, the Conservatives turned their focus to damage control, saying that they needed to hang on to enough seats to

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BRITISH PRIME MINISTER Rishi Sunak campaigns at a school in Hampshire yesterday.

(Claudia Greco/Pool/Reuters)



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