

# THE JERUSALEM POST

Volume XCII, Number 27971

FOUNDED IN 1932

NIS 22.00 (EILAT NIS 18.80)

FRIDAY, JULY 5, 2024 ■ 29 SIVAN, 5784

## Bring them home



Eli Sharabi, age 51, kidnapped from Kibbutz Be'eri



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The IDF's secret weapon **MAGAZINE**



A FIRE truck arrives at the scene of a blaze after rockets fired from southern Lebanon hit an area in the Upper Galilee yesterday. (Jack Guez/AFP via Getty Images)

## Hezbollah launches 200 rockets, drones at North

Major killed in North; captain in South

By YONAH JEREMY BOB

Hezbollah fired over 200 rockets and 20 drones on Israel's North, both in the Galilee and the Golan on Thursday.

In one of the most intense attacks by the Lebanese terror group of the war, it also fired on cities like Acre and Nahariya, which have generally been left off of its target list, beyond cities like Kiryat Shmona that have been attacked almost nonstop.

Fires erupted from Hezbollah's attacks in a number of areas and there are reports of a number of injuries on the Israeli side, though some information must clear first Israel's military censor.

The IDF did confirm that Maj. (Res.) Itay Galea, 38, from Ramat Gan, and a Deputy Company Commander in the 8679th Unit of the 679th Brigade, was killed in northern Israel.

At press time, portions of the fires were under control,



MAJOR (RES.) ITAY GALEA (IDF)



CAPT. ROY MILLER (IDF)

but dozens of firefighters and teams were still out in force to bring fires in other areas under control, especially in the Golan.

He was killed by one of the Hezbollah rockets.

The attacks come in response to Israel's assassination on Wednesday of the commander of the Aziz unit on the southern front of Hezbollah, Muhammad Neamah



ST-SGT. EYAL MIMRAN (IDF)

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## PM, Biden speak as Hamas softens stance on end to war

Officials call pending negotiations closest Israel has come since November to achieving deal

By YONAH JEREMY BOB and TOVAH LAZAROFF

Hamas has dropped its demand for an upfront pledge that Israel ends the war, a move that prompted Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to send a team led by Mossad Director David Barnea to participate in further negotiations in Doha for a deal, *The Jerusalem Post* has learned.

Netanyahu spoke with US President Joe Biden and informed him that Israel would participate in talks based on the latest draft of the three-phase deal which Israel received on Wednesday. It's a proposal that deals with the release of the remaining 120 hostages and the issue of a Gaza ceasefire.

The terror group is still expected to demand a commitment to a permanent ceasefire, possibly even before the completion of phase one, but would allow that first phase to get underway without such a pledge.

It's a key shift in the group's position that has sparked cau-



PROTESTERS IN Jerusalem against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government demand a deal for the release of Hamas-held hostages yesterday. (Marc Israel Sellem/The Jerusalem Post)

tious hope that the deadlock that greeted the proposal Biden unveiled on May 31, may now finally have been broken, allowing for closure of the deal.

Multiple top defense officials call the new pending negotiations the closest Israel has been to achieving a hostage deal with Hamas, since the November agreement which saw the release of 105 of the 251 hostages seized

during the Hamas-led invasion of Israel on October 7.

A US official told reporters that "we've had a breakthrough on what has been a critical impasse in the deal. The framework of the deal is now fully consistent with the president's speech and the UN Security Council resolution" approved last month that backed the deal.

What needs to be worked out now, the official said,

### ISRAEL AT WAR



Four days of protests calling for elections, hostages begin, Page 4

is "the implementation sequencing."

Hamas's response, the official said, "moves the process forward and may provide the basis for closing a deal."

"This does not mean this deal is going to be closed in a period of days. There's significant work to be done on," the official explained, but added that what is significant is that there is an agreement on the larger framework.

"What we got back Hamas was a pretty significant adjustment to what had been their position. And think that is encouraging," the official

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## UK's Labour looks set for big election win

By KATE HOLTON

LONDON (Reuters) - Britons voted on Thursday in a parliamentary election that is expected to bring Keir Starmer's Labour Party to power, sweeping away Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's Conservatives after 14 often turbulent years.

For updates, see JPost.com

Polls put Labour on course for a landslide victory but they also suggest many voters simply want change after a period of infighting and turmoil under the Conservatives that led to five prime ministers in eight years.

This means Starmer, a 61-year-old former human rights lawyer, could take office with one of the biggest to-do lists in British history but without a groundswell of support or the financial resources to tackle it.

"Today, Britain can begin a new chapter," Starmer told voters in a statement on Thursday. "We cannot afford five more years under the Conservatives. But change will only happen if

you vote Labour."

Sunak, 44, voted early in one of the 40,000 polling stations, with his wife, Akshata Murty, in the electoral district of Richmond in northern England that he represents in parliament. Starmer cast his ballot a little later with his wife in his north London constituency.

Having called the election months earlier than expected, Sunak has in recent weeks abandoned his call for a fifth consecutive Conservative victory, switching instead to warning of the dangers of an unchallenged Labour Party in parliament.

Sunak issued a fresh rallying cry to voters for election day, saying a Labour government would hike taxes, hamper economic recovery and leave Britain more vulnerable at a time of geopolitical tension, charges Labour deny.

"They will do lasting damage to our country and our economy," Sunak said.

Voting was to end at 10 p.m. local time when an exit poll will give the first indication of the outcome. Detailed official results are expected in the early hours of Friday.



A PUB FESTOONED with England's flag on election day in Clacton-on-Sea, Essex, yesterday. (Clodagh Kilcoyne/Reuters)

## Loves Labour's won Sunak waits for removal van at No. 10

COMMENT By ORI LEWIS

If the polls are to be believed, and there is little reason to suspect that they have been wildly inaccurate, there will be a new prime minister in No. 10 Downing Street at around lunch time today.

For months, the British opinion polls have predicted a huge win for the Labour Party over the ruling Conservatives

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## After Raisi, what will new Iran president do in the region?

ANALYSIS

By YONAH JEREMY BOB

Former Iranian president and hard-liner Ebrahim Raisi died on May 19 when his helicopter crashed into a forest.

When Iran holds its run-

off election tomorrow (its non-decisive first round of elections was held on June 28), will a reformist win and chart a new course with the West and nuclear deal negotiations?

Or will another hard-liner win who will continue Raisi's anti-Western stance and full-on embrace of an Eastern axis with Russia and China, including violating nuclear limits regardless of the economic price to his country? (No women were allowed to run in the elections).

The reformist, physician

and parliamentarian Masoud Pezeshkian, garnered the highest number of votes in the first round of voting with 10.4 million.

And yet he is a long-shot to win the runoff due to four main factors.

His closest competitor, Saeed Jalili, a current member of the high-level Expediency Council that advises Khamenei and a former head of the national security council, came in second with 9.4 million votes.

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## Druze reservist association tackles community's unique challenges

By OHAD MERLIN

"My name is Adiv Abo Asi. I am 40 years old, self-employed, married, and a father to a two-year-old girl," he introduced himself. Since the very beginning of the war, Abo Asi has been serving in the IDF's reserves. "I'm actually talking to you in my uniform," he said with a smile. Abo Asi, who serves at the headquarters of one of the IDF's units, is a captain in rank.

"I lived abroad, but from the

9th grade on, I studied in Jewish schools. So much of what I did in the past was closer to the Jewish sector and less like how things were back in our village," he said, referring to his hometown of Daliat al-Carmel.

"In my studies in high school and university and in my work as a senior manager at Fattal hotels in Eilat, 99% of the time, I was surrounded by my Jewish colleagues," Abo Asi recounted.

"October 7 was a slap in the face that shook all of us," he recalled. "The entire country

got up on its feet and was ready to go and fight for the sake of everyone, including for us - the Druze sector."

But then, when it became clear that the war would go on for a long time, Abo Asi started to feel what he described as a gap between the conduct of the Druze reservists and their Jewish counterparts.

"Some of my Druze reservist friends and I started a WhatsApp group that was meant for helping each other with military equipment - from sending hel-

pets to finding connections in the army. As for myself, I was part of another reservist group, one that was mixed but with a Jewish majority, and I became aware of an intriguing difference between the attitudes in the two groups," he explained.

"We, as Druze, are overly eager when it comes to fighting, even if it means sacrificing many things along the way. The percentage of recruitment of Druze reservists is among the



AN IDF DRUZE reservist smiles as he proudly waves a Druze flag on Gazan soil. (Courtesy)

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Haifa	7:21 p.m.	8:34 p.m.
Beersheba	7:28 p.m.	8:30 p.m.
Eilat	7:14 p.m.	8:24 p.m.

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