



IDF renews cease-fire after dozens of Gazans, soldier killed in flare-up

Reservist killed in ambush in Rafah; air force responds with strikes on targets that leave over 100 Gazans dead; return of hostages' bodies expected to resume



Yona Efraim Feldbaum IDF

Yaniv Kubovich, Nir Hasson and Jonathan Lis

The Israel Defense Forces announced that it was resuming the cease-fire with Hamas at 10 A.M. on Wednesday, in accordance with directives from senior military officials, following air force strikes on Tuesday night and early Wednesday against targets in the Strip. The strikes were launched in the wake of an attack on IDF troops in Rafah Tuesday night that killed one soldier.

The reservist who was killed was Master Sgt. (res.) Yona Efraim Feldbaum, 37, of the Combat Engineering Corps in the Gaza Division, from the settlement of Neria.

Military officials said Feldbaum was part of an IDF engineering team operating in Rafah in southern Gaza when terrorists ambushed

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Mourners burying Master Sgt. (res.) Yona Efraim Feldbaum on Mount Herzl in Jerusalem, on Wednesday.

Leo Correa/AP

Doing job could cost IDF lawyer her career

Major developments in the Sde Teiman affair – suspected leaks of investigative material by the office of the military advocate general and the hasty suspension of the military advocate general herself – are akin to finding the Holy Grail for Israel's right, especially its more militant wing. So it's no wonder that a particularly festive air prevailed Wednesday afternoon on programs of the right-wing propaganda channels that have already devoted dozens of hours to the affair.

The announcement of the renewed investigation achieves several goals for the right. It creates an imaginary equivalence to the probe into the leak of classified materials by staff in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office; purports to serve as a counterweight to allegations that Hamas captors tortured hostages

in response to the remarks and policies of National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir and provides ammunition for the war against the "deep state" that supposedly controls the country.

The cause for celebration on the right doesn't end

Not a split job, but a hit job
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there. The apparent involvement of the Military Advocate General's Office and perhaps of Military Advocate General Maj. Gen. Yifat Tomer-Yerushalmi herself, will likely end the investigation into allegations of severe abuse by reservists of a Palestinian detainee. The

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Criminal probe launched into leak of Sde Teiman video

Yaniv Kubovich, Josh Breiner and Chen Maanit

The Israel Defense Forces said on Wednesday that it has launched a criminal probe into last year's leak of a video showing the alleged abuse of a Gazan detainee at a military facility, which led to the arrest of five soldiers. The IDF added that Military Advocate General Yifat Tomer-Yerushalmi has been placed on leave "pending further clarification of details in the matter."

Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara said that the decision to open a criminal investigation into offenses related to the publication of the video was made "following information recently received" and with the approval of the state prosecutor and the head of the police investigations and intelligence division.

"In the past 24 hours, various investigative actions have been carried

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Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara.

Naama Grynbaum

Knesset advances bill to gut role of attorney general

Noa Shpigel

The Knesset advanced a bill to dramatically weaken Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara's powers by redefining her role and responsibilities, in a preliminary vote on Wednesday.

If the bill passes into law, it will cripple Baharav-Miara's ability to influence the criminal proceedings

against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, charged with bribery, fraud, and breach of trust.

Sixty-one lawmakers voted in favor of the proposal and 46 against it. Several private members' bills seeking to divide the role of the attorney general have already been submitted to the Knesset, and the bills will likely be consolidated

as they move forward.

The bill comes after the government's move to oust Baharav Miara suffered a setback on Monday, when the chairman of the panel reviewing the request concluded his term. Appointing a new chairman for the committee would require an agreement between Justice Minister Yariv Levin and the current Supreme Court

president, Isaac Amit, but Levin has been boycotting Amit and refuses to recognize him as the court president.

The first proposal voted on by lawmakers was submitted by MK Michel Buskila of the New Hope party, whose party chairman and current foreign minister, Gideon Sa'ar, has long supported splitting the attorney

general's role.

Under the proposal, the State Prosecutor's Office, rather than the attorney general, would approve investigations or charges against a prime minister, ministers or Knesset members.

This transfer of power would be subject to approval by a three-member committee: a Supreme Court justice emeritus appointed by the

Supreme Court president, a former attorney general appointed by the justice minister and a private defense counsel appointed by the Public Defender's Office.

A separate bill submitted by MK Simcha Rothman (Religious Zionism) sees the position of attorney general split into three distinct roles:

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Settlers can't hide their brutality against Palestinians in W. Bank

Joshua Leifer

The attacks of October 7 and Israel's subsequent devastation of Gaza also ignited a lethal conflagration of settler violence in the occupied West Bank. Over the same two-year period that Israeli forces killed more than 68,000 Palestinians in Gaza, more than 1,000 Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank. New settler outposts have been constructed with rapid speed, displacing entire Palestinian communities – a process often facilitated by Israel's army.

While the tenuous cease-fire in Gaza has allowed the besieged territory's residents a small measure of relief, the settler attacks in the West Bank have not stopped. Each week brings harrowing testimonies and more images of gruesome brutality. Much like the humanitarian catastrophe that Israel wrought in Gaza, the settler pogroms in the West Bank are widely documented, often recorded on video, and viewed by millions around the world.

In the face of this reality, there appears to be a concerted campaign on the part of the pro-Israel right to deny it. In Tablet Maga-

zine, the neoconservative pundit Gadi Taub published an article titled "The Settler Violence Myth," in which he relies almost entirely on a report by the right-wing settler group Regavim to argue that the narrative of growing settler violence is a foreign NGO-funded conspiracy to force a two-state solution on Israel.

Amit Segal, the Channel 12 right-wing pundit and columnist for the Adelson-owned Israel Hayom, charged during a talk promoting his new book that Haaretz was "the number one threat on [sic] Israel's position in the world," singling out this paper's coverage of human rights abuses in the West Bank. Haaretz, Segal claimed, presented a distorted picture in which "settler violence is more than Palestinian violence in the West Bank," he said, "where the reality is that Palestinian violence is a thousand more times than settlers' violence."

There is no evidence to support Segal's claims. Far more Palestinians have been killed in recent years by Israeli soldiers and settlers than settlers by Palestinians

– the numbers do not come close. The "thousand times" figure that Segal states is, as the U.S. president would say, fake news. The process of displacement by which settlements and outposts take new land, while Palestinians are forced from their homes can be seen, literally, on Google Maps.

Yet denials like those of Taub and Segal disclose the very truth they want to deny: The graphic, ubiquitous documentary evidence of rampant settler violence in the West Bank does, in fact, great harm to Israel's image in the world. The settlers are responsible for incurring the wrath of global public opinion, not Haaretz. Reporters are not the ones setting Palestinians' homes and cars ablaze, but the settlers themselves, whose political representatives often defend such acts in public, as if their Hebrew remarks cannot be translated.

Massive disappointment

There is also something almost quaint in the tacit assumption, shared by both Taub and Segal, that the reporting of conventional journalism outlets is the

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Justice Minister Yariv Levin

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Olivier Fitoussi

haaretz.com

Meet the first Black African delegate to World Zionist Congress

Judy Maltz

Rabbi Gershom Sizomu has visited Israel several times in the past, but never before in a history-making capacity. The chief rabbi of Uganda, he is the first Black African to ever serve as a delegate to the World Zionist Congress, popularly known as the "parliament of the Jewish people."

"My presence here demonstrates that my community is slowly gaining acceptance as a part of world Jewry," he says in an interview at the International Convention Center in Jerusalem, where the Zionist Congress is holding its three-day gathering.

Sizomu is one of over 1,400 delegates and alternates from 43 different countries participating in this once-in-five-years gathering.

Ordained by the Conservative Judaism movement 15 years ago, he is the spiritual leader of the 2,000-strong Abayudaya community, whose members reside in several villages in eastern Uganda, with a tiny number of members in Kenya.

The Abayudaya (Luganda for "People of Judah") first began practicing Judaism about 100 years ago, after being introduced to the Bible by Christian missionaries and



Rabbi Gershom Sizomu at the World Zionist Congress, on Tuesday.

Judy Maltz

finding the Old Testament far more convincing.

It was only in 2003, however, that members of the community, Sizomu and his family included, began undergoing formal conversions.

With the support of leaders of the international Conservative-Masorti movement, the Abayudaya have been embroiled in a longstanding battle with the state of Israel to be recognized as Jewish, with a landmark victory reg-

istered last year when the first member of the community was approved for Israeli citizenship under the Law of Return.

Only countries with Zionist federations that have been certified by the World Zionist Organization are entitled to send delegates to the Zionist Congress. In February, the WZO approved the newly established Zionist Federation of Uganda, opening the way for its representation in

the supreme legislative and decision-making body of the Zionist movement.

Sizomu competed against one other candidate – also a member of the Abayudaya community – for the one seat awarded to Uganda. He won a majority of the 250 votes cast in the election held several months ago, which was the first of its kind to be held in Uganda.

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