

MIDDLE EAST

CEASEFIRE HOLDING,
BUT AID DECREASING



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Jewish revelers dance and hold up a Torah scroll Tuesday as they celebrate the holiday of Simchat Torah in Tel Aviv, Israel.

Israel cites slow return of hostages’ remains as reason

SAM MEDNICK AND GIOVANNA DELL’ORTO
Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel — The fragile ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas war was tested Tuesday as the slower-than-hoped return of deceased hostages from Gaza prompted an Israeli military agency to declare a “violation” of the truce agreement that it would respond to by halving the number of trucks allowed to bring humanitarian aid into the devastated territory.

The United Nations’ humanitarian office in famine-stricken Gaza received word of the cuts from the Israeli military agency in charge of transferring aid to the territory, according to spokesperson Olga Cherevko. In its notification, the agency known as COGAT said it would allow 300 trucks a day instead of the 600 called for under the deal.

U.S. officials and international aid groups were also notified, according to three AP sources who spoke on the condition of anonymity. The Israeli government did not immediately comment.

A day earlier, Israelis celebrated the return of the last 20 living hostages in Gaza and Palestinians rejoiced at Israel’s release

of about 2,000 prisoners and detainees as part of the ceasefire’s first phase.

Now attention in Israel turned to when Hamas will return all the bodies of hostages who died in captivity. While Israeli officials understood there could be some delay in the recovery effort, the families of hostages and their supporters expressed dismay that only four of the 28 bodies were returned on Monday.

The Hostages Family Forum, a grassroots organization representing many of the hostage families, called it a “blatant violation of the agreement by Hamas.” The top official in Israel coordinating the return of hostages and the missing, Gal Hirsch, told the families in a note that pressure was being applied on Hamas through international mediators to expedite the process.

Cherevko said the U.N. continues to encourage all sides “to adhere to the agreements that have been set out in the ceasefire parameters.”

“We certainly very much hope that the bodies of the hostages are handed over and that the ceasefire continues to be implemented,” Cherevko said during a virtual news briefing.

U.S. President Donald Trump expressed concern in a social media post that too few of the dead hostages have been returned to Israel. He made no mention in his post of Israel halving the flow of aid into the territory. Trump said he wants back dead hostages held in Gaza and warned Hamas if “they don’t disarm, we will disarm them.”

In Gaza, the Health Ministry said Tuesday that the bodies of three people killed by the Israeli military in the northern part of the territory were taken to Al Ahli hospital.

The Israeli military claimed troops there “opened fire to remove the threat” of several people approaching them and not complying with orders to stop. It didn’t immediately comment on any casualties.

Under the ceasefire deal, Israeli forces pulled back to where they were in August, before launching their latest offensive on the Gaza City. The pullback leaves a number of hard-hit Palestinian neighborhoods under Israeli control, and Israel has warned residents not to try to return to homes there.

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Some UW faculty could get raises under new system policy

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Universities of Wisconsin faculty in high-demand fields of study could get salary bumps under a new policy that’s part of the recent state budget deal.

Last week, the UW Board of Regents approved a proposal detailing how the UW system will dole out \$27 million annually for market pay adjustments to attract and keep faculty in growing fields, fulfilling a legislative reform set in the budget agreement.

Of that, \$2 million is earmarked for UW-Madison to use for faculty who work in “areas that advance diversity of thought and the foundation of free markets.”

As of May, 68% of the more than 5,000 faculty across the UW system are paid below their peer American Association of University Professors median salary, according to the Regents.

At UW-Madison, 14.8% of faculty are paid below their peers’ median salary.

The UW system split up the millions in state aid across the 13 campuses using the most recent data of undergraduate student credit hours, said Julie Gordon, interim vice president of Finance and Administration during the Regents meeting Thursday.

The market adjusted salary plan is now being submitted for review to the Legislature’s employment relations committee

in order to receive the money.

Defining jobs of high demand

The UW system is defining what constitutes high-demand fields based on Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development data, including the top “hot” jobs requiring a bachelor’s degree.

The DWD says in-demand fields are projected to grow, have a median salary above the state median and the most open positions annually.

Base salary increases for newly hired or existing faculty under the plan won’t be more than 20% and raises aren’t going to be awarded across the board.

Universities will decide which faculty

members in high-demand fields will get a raise and how much it will be, but 85% of their allocation must be used within a set list of fields set by the UW system.

With approval, however, universities will be able to allocate up to 15% of their money to other fields — such as health care-related jobs — including for roles universities have been unable to fill because the salary they have offered hasn’t been competitive.

Here is a partial list of “high demand” fields the UW system is using:

- Agricultural/animal/plant/veterinary science and related fields
- Biological and biomedical sciences

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