

GNITN Special Edition

Israel At War Day 545

Only One Choice

Israel Keeps Expanding In Gaza

According to a [report](#) from *The Times Of Israel* the Israel Defense Force (IDF) keeps taking back more and more territory in the Gaza Strip:

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Wednesday that advancing IDF forces were carving out a new security corridor across southern Gaza that would likely cut off the city of Rafah from the rest of the Strip as Israel seeks to pile pressure on Hamas to free the hostages.

The IDF is splitting up Gaza differently for military reasons:

Israel is “shifting gears” in Gaza and creating a “second Philadelphi” route, Netanyahu said in a video message, referring to the corridor on the Gaza-Egypt border.

IDF forces are seizing the “Morag Corridor,” said Netanyahu. The route, which separates Rafah from Khan Younis to its north, is located where the Israeli settlement of the same name once stood, before it was evacuated during Israel’s 2005 withdrawal from Gaza.

The report is hard on Israel for not giving up control of areas, though:

Netanyahu has made continued Israeli control of the Philadelphi Corridor a top priority in the ongoing ceasefire negotiations, insisting that an IDF withdrawal from the route would allow for the smuggling of weapons into the Strip. Nonetheless, he agreed as part of the January hostage deal to fully withdraw Israeli troops from the Philadelphi Corridor by the 50th day of the deal — a clause Israel has gone on to violate. Israeli troops remain in the corridor and have expanded their presence there as well.

Israel is also taking back control of another area, again for military reasons and with the hopes that Hamas will finally agree to release the remaining hostages:

Israel has also reasserted control over the Netzarim Corridor — also named for a former settlement — which cuts off the northern third of Gaza, including Gaza City, from the rest of the narrow coastal strip. Both of the existing corridors run from the Israeli border to the Mediterranean Sea.

The move is part of an escalating IDF military campaign to press Hamas into accepting Israeli terms for a ceasefire and hostage release deal, Netanyahu said.

As always, the IDF is moving citizens around to avoid harming them:

Israel is pushing forward from the north and south, evacuating civilians toward central Gaza.

The PM stated clearly why they are doing all of these offensives as they increase pressure on Hamas to actually start letting hostages go, something I doubt they will do:

“We are now cutting off the Strip and we are increasing the pressure step by step... so they will give us our hostages. The longer they refuse to give them up, the more the pressure will increase until they do,” Netanyahu said.

Netanyahu’s comments came as the IDF significantly stepped up its renewed offensive, deploying another division to the southern Gaza Strip early in the day and carrying out heavy airstrikes ahead of the major ground push into area. The reinforcements brought the number of divisions operating in Gaza to three.

The Fighting Continues

The IDF is doing exactly what Netanyahu is saying they will do:

The IDF said it hit over 50 sites belonging to Hamas and other terror groups overnight. During the day, dozens more strikes were carried out across Gaza.

As usual, Hamas asserts that Israel is killing innocent people but there accounts can't be confirmed while the IDF states they are only targeting terrorists:

Palestinian reports said more than 40 people had been killed in the strikes, including 19 people in a UN clinic in Jabalia. The figures could not be verified. The IDF said it attacked a Hamas command center set up in the medical facility and had taken measures to limit civilian casualties.

Hamas is firing rockets inside Gaza but they didn't cause any harm. And evacuation warnings are given for more IDF offensives:

Meanwhile, two rockets were fired Wednesday evening from the northern Gaza, triggering sirens in the Israeli city of Sderot, the IDF said. The projectiles were intercepted by air defenses, with no reports of injuries or damage in the attack. Following the fire, the IDF issues an evacuation warning for Palestinians in the Beit Hanoun and Jabalia area. In a post on X, the IDF's Arabic-language spokesman, Col. Avichay Adraee, publishes a map of the area that is to be evacuated, saying that it is a "final warning" before the IDF carries out strikes there.

More expansions are expected:

The area between Rafah and Khan Younis is one of the few locations in Gaza where ground troops have not yet operated. The IDF issued evacuation warnings for Palestinians in the area ahead of the offensive. Meanwhile, in the Strip's north, the IDF said it was also operating to expand its buffer zone along the border.

IDF leaders said they could be stopped by only one thing:

Later Wednesday, IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir and Shin Bet chief Ronen Bar visited troops in the Tel Sultan neighborhood of Rafah.

During the visit, Zamir vowed that "the only thing that can stop us from advancing is the release of our hostages."

Bar, who is in the process of being fired by Netanyahu, repeated the message, saying that "Hamas will continue to pay the price as long as the 59 hostages are not returned."

The military reiterated that the ultimate goal of the new ground offensive in Rafah is to pressure Hamas to release the hostages.

Controlling Gaza Again

Although they keep avoiding the "occupy" word, the IDF is clearly taking back areas that Hamas took back during the last ceasefire:

Earlier Wednesday, Defense Minister Israel Katz said the offensive was aimed at seizing "extensive territory" in Gaza.

Troops will move to clear areas "of terrorists and infrastructure, and capture extensive territory that will be added to the State of Israel's security areas," Katz said in a statement.

As is their custom, the IDF continues to allow Gazans to move to safety before they expand operations:

The expanded ground operation came a couple of days after the IDF issued an evacuation warning for the entire Rafah area and a large swath of land between Rafah and Khan Younis

It was the most significant evacuation order issued by the IDF since the offensive against Hamas resumed earlier this month, ending a two-month ceasefire. The orders came during Eid al-Fitr, a normally festive Muslim holiday marking the end of the fasting month of Ramadan.

While Hamas knows all these military operations will stop if hostages are released Israel is encouraging citizens to fight back on Hamas:

In his Wednesday statement, Katz also called on Gazans “to act now to overthrow Hamas and return all the hostages.”

As if we need to know the situation, the article reminds us of how we got to this point:

Terror groups in the Gaza Strip are still holding 59 hostages, including 58 of the 251 abducted by Hamas-led terrorists on October 7, 2023. Among them are the bodies of at least 35 hostages who have been confirmed dead by the IDF.

Israel restarted intense bombing of Gaza on March 18 and then launched a new ground offensive, ending a nearly two-month ceasefire in the war with Hamas.

According to the terms of the January 19 ceasefire deal, the sides were to launch negotiations over the second phase a few weeks into the first, but Netanyahu refused to do so, insisting that the war would not end until Hamas’s governing and military capabilities had been demolished. Meanwhile, Hamas rejected a series of offers to extend the first phase while continuing to gradually free hostages.

And I will remind you that the blame for all of this falls squarely on the shoulders of Hamas and other terrorists in the area who to this day vow to annihilate all Jews and destroy the nation of Israel. When someone tries to tell you Israel is the culprit, remind them Hamas killed 1,200 innocent Israelis on October 7th of 2023 and that they also took 250 hostages at the same time. Gazans were given the land back in 2005 and all Israelis left for them to govern themselves. Israel wasn’t occupying them. And they chose to use the foreign aid to buy weapons and build tunnels. I pray that Hamas will see the light and start releasing hostages, but their actions for the last 545 days shows me they have no intention of doing that giving Israel no choice but to continue to ratchet up the pressure.