

‘Covering Up Reserves’ Reluctance to Serve’

# Ex-War Minister: 15,000 Zionist Troops Killed, Wounded in Gaza

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – Former Zionist war minister Moshe Ya’alon has said that as many as 15,000 troops have been killed or wounded in the genocidal war on the besieged Gaza Strip since October 7, 2023.

Ya’alon told Yedioth Ahronoth newspaper that the war in Gaza Strip resulted in hundreds of deaths and thousands of injuries among soldiers of the Zionist regime’s forces (IDF). He stressed the need to pass a law that ends exemptions given to ultra-Orthodox Zionists from compulsory service in order to compensate for the severe shortage of manpower in the IDF.

Moreover, Ya’alon said that the Americans’ involvement in the Gaza ceasefire and captives negotiations in Qatar came as a result of Israel’s failure to fulfill its commitments under the deal for political reasons. He explained that the occupying regime’s prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been trying to buy time, and replaced the professional negotiating team with another one that is more politically



Haaretz daily says figure of injured Israeli troops includes over 202 cases in critical condition.

subservient to him.

Regarding the appointment of the new IDF Chief of Staff, General Eyal Zamir, and the high hopes that Netanyahu and his cabinet have for victory in Gaza, Ya’alon said that both Netanyahu and finance minister Bezalel Smotrich have pinned the military’s failure in Gaza on the outgoing chief of staff and now they have high hopes on Zamir, even though the military is meant

to implement the will of the political leadership, and winning a war does not rely solely on the chief of staff.

Haaretz newspaper reported that the Israeli occupation army is covering up the surge in the number of reserve soldiers refusing to serve.

“The reserve soldiers’ reluctance to serve has become a reality,” the paper said, noting that only half of the reserve soldiers have shown up

for “duty”, while the Israeli occupation army is trying to cover this fact up.

The paper added that the army predicts an increase in the burden on regular forces due to the Gaza war and the strengthening of security.

On Sunday, Israel Hayom newspaper published new data from the Zionist regime’s military revealing significant difficulties in recruiting members of the ultra-Orthodox community.

“Only 177 individuals have been drafted out of 10,000 draft orders issued to them since July 2024, representing a mere 1.77%” the paper said citing data shared during a meeting of the Knesset’s Foreign Affairs and War Committee.

Lieutenant Colonel Avigdor Dickstein, who is responsible for promoting ultra-Orthodox recruitment into the Israeli occupation military, said the military sent 2,231 second draft orders to those who failed to comply with the first order, and issued more than 1,000 arrest warrants for draft evaders.

## War Minister: Zionist Troops to Stay in Syria Indefinitely

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) – The Zionist regime’s war minister says the regime’s troops, who seized a “buffer zone” inside the strategic occupied Golan Heights after the fall of Bashar al-Assad, will stay there indefinitely.

The occupying regime continues to occupy Syrian territories beyond the Golan Heights, notably the Syrian side of Mount Hermon just 20 kilometers from Damascus, which it captured days after the dramatic fall of the capital to the former leader of al-Qaeda in Syria, Abu Mohammed al-Julani.

“Every morning when al-Julani opens his eyes at the presidential palace in Damascus, he will see the Israeli forces watching him from the peak of the Hermon, and remember that we are here and in the entire security area of southern Syria, to protect the Golan and Galilee residents

against any of his threats and those of his ... friends,” Israel Katz said during a visit to a new Israeli military outpost on the mountain on Tuesday.

Mount Hermon, known as Jabal al-Shaykh in Arabic, is a huge cluster of snowcapped mountain peaks towering above the Syria-Lebanon border.

It overlooks the Damascus countryside as well as the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, which Israel captured from Syria during the 1967 Six-Day War.

Katz also said the Israeli military “is prepared to stay in Syria for an unlimited amount of time.”

“We will hold the security area in Hermon and make sure that all the security zone in southern Syria is demilitarized and clear of weapons and threats,” he said.

The remarks came hours after Israeli warplanes carried out a

series of strikes on former Syrian army barracks and outposts near the capital Damascus and in southern Dara’a province.

“Last night we acted forcefully against military targets. We attacked over 40 targets in southern Syria to implement the policy we announced and warned about — to thwart any threat to Israel,” Katz added.

Syrian security sources said at least six aerial raids hit a military position belonging to the former Syrian army’s Artillery Regiment 89 on the surroundings of Jabab town in the north of Dara’a.

At least another eight struck the 12th Brigade base in the city of Izraa.

There were no immediate reports available on possible casualties or the extent of damage caused.

Israeli military forces captured

the UN-patrolled buffer zone in the Golan Heights hours after armed groups took control of the Syrian capital of Damascus on December 8, 2024.

Since then, the Zionist regime’s military has been launching airstrikes against military installations, facilities, and arsenals belonging to Syria’s now-defunct army.

The occupying regime has been widely and vehemently condemned over termination of the 1974 ceasefire agreement with Syria, and exploiting the chaos in the Arab nation in the wake of Assad’s downfall to make a land grab.

The buffer zone in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights was created by the United Nations after the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. A UN force of about 1,100 troops had patrolled the area since then.

‘90% of Gazans Lack Access to Clean Water’

## Gaza Authorities Warn of Health, Environmental Disasters After Israel Cuts Electricity



A child is seen on a trash pile as Palestinians face the threat of famine due to accumulated garbage and leaked sewage in Deir al Balah, Gaza on May 26, 2024.

GAZA (Dispatches) – Municipal authorities in Gaza warned on Wednesday of health and environmental disasters due to the Zionist regime’s ongoing cut of electricity and water supplies to the enclave. The Union of Gaza Municipalities said that the power cut by the occupying regime has caused the main water desalination plant in the territory to shut down.

“These punitive policies against Palestinians in Gaza are a violation of international law and exacerbate the suffering of the population, who are facing a major humanitarian crisis,” added the union.

The Zionist regime cut off the electricity supply to Gaza on Sunday, in the latest move to tighten a stifling blockade on the Palestinian enclave despite a ceasefire and prisoner exchange agreement being in force. UN Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese denounced the Israeli move as a “genocide alert”, saying that without electricity, there is no clean water.

It followed another Israeli decision to stop humanitarian aid from entering Gaza, prompting warnings from local and human rights groups of a return to widespread hunger for the Palestinian population.

The union appealed to the international community and humanitarian organizations to “intervene immediately to secure essential supplies and guarantee the entry of essential materi-

als... to avoid further health and environmental disasters.”

On Tuesday, Mohammad Thabet, a spokesman of the Gaza Electricity Distribution Company, said that Israel had provided the enclave with only five megawatts of electricity since last November before its decision to cut off power to the enclave.

More than 48,500 people have been killed, mostly women and children, in a brutal Israeli war on Gaza since October 2023. The onslaught was paused under the ceasefire and prisoner swap deal, which took effect in January.

On Tuesday, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) said that the severe water shortage in the Gaza Strip has reached critical levels, noting that nine out of ten people cannot access clean drinking water.

Rosalia Bollen, a UNICEF official in Gaza, said 600,000 people who had regained access to drinking water in November 2024 are once again cut off.

“It’s really vital for thousands of families and children to restore this connection,” she said.

UN agencies estimate that 1.8 million people; over half of them children, urgently need water, sanitation and hygiene assistance.

The UN says the situation has deteriorated further following the Zionist regime’s decision on Sunday to cut power to the enclave, disrupting vital desalination operations.

## Zionist Settlers Stole Hundreds of Sheep, Say West Bank Bedouin

RAMALLAH (Dispatches) – Armed Zionist settlers stole hundreds of sheep from a Bedouin community in the Jordan Valley, local residents say, in one of the largest recent incidents in which the Bedouin in the area have reported being attacked and harassed.

Such attacks in the area have increased since the Gaza war began but witnesses said the scale of the incident near Ein Al-Auja, north of the city of Ariha in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, went far beyond anything witnessed previously.

“This was the biggest one there has been,” said Hani Zayed, a resident of the community, who said he lost 70 sheep in the attack. After years of experience in dealing with local law enforcement, the idea of appealing to the police to help elicited nothing more than a shrug.

“The police don’t do anything; they have never helped us in anything. If you tell them the settler is taking your sheep, they’ll ask ‘Are you sure it’s yours?’”

Local residents said about 1,500 sheep and goats were taken by settlers, who drove the animals from the village under the eyes of police and soldiers or loaded them onto pickup trucks.

An Israeli police statement denied the incident had taken place. Israel’s military did not comment, nor did a group representing settlers in the area.

The Jordan Valley, a relatively sparsely populated area close to the Jordan River, is now under increasing pressure from settlers, local residents and human rights groups say.

For many Bedouin herders, the loss of a flock means the loss of any way of earning a livelihood.

In another development, the Zionist regime agreed on Wednesday to ‘legalize’ a settlement outpost near Al-Khalil city in the occupied West Bank.

According to Israeli Channel 14, the Adorayim outpost will be officially recognized by the end of the year, eight years after it was built.

The regime decided to consider the outpost, where 26 illegal settler families live, as a recognized settlement, the broadcaster said.

The Al-Khalil Mountain Regional Council, an Israeli settlement body in the southern West Bank, was informed about the Israeli decision.

Last June, the Zionist regime approved steps proposed by far-right Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich aimed at “legalizing” settlement outposts in the occupied West Bank, including the Adorayim settlement.

The settlement is built on lands for Palestinians from Dura town; expropriated first by the Israeli army in the 1970s to build a military base. The army dismantled the base in 2010, where illegal settlers later seized the area and built an outpost.

## Rights Group: Bahrain Has Intensified Systematic Arrest, Abuse of Minors

MANAMA (Dispatches) – A human rights group has condemned Bahrain for systematically mistreating and intimidating minors detained over protests or their political views.

The Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB) revealed that Bahraini authorities have intensified their arbitrary detention and abuse of minors in connection with peaceful protests and political expressions.

The alarming trend persists despite a royal pardon issued in April 2024 granting amnesty to 1,584 prisoners—including 40 minors previously detained for charges related to freedom of speech and expression, it said.

Since the amnesty, the ADHRB said, more minors have faced arrest, with over 20 detained between August and December 2024 for participating in protests. Many of the children were coerced into confessing through psychological and physical torture.

The ADHRB’s findings detail severe mistreatment of detained minors, including beatings, threats of sexual violence, and prolonged detention without access to legal representation or family contact.

The report sheds light on the systematic violations occurring at Bahrain’s Dry Dock Detention Center, highlighting issues such as malnutrition, religious suppression, and medical neglect. Conditions have become so dire that some minors have resorted to hunger strike as a form of protest against their treatment.

ADHRB Executive Director Husain Abdulla condemned the ongoing crackdown, asserting that the amnesties have merely created space in the nation’s prisons for a new wave of children facing similar abuses.

His organization has documented the detention of 11 minors who were arrested without warrants and held for extended periods without

fair trials. These minors were subjected to coercive confessions under duress and denied legal representation and family contact.

Inside the Juvenile Detention Center, violations continue, marked by ill-treatment, lack of medical care, and restrictions on education and family visits. Detainees report malnutrition and inadequate bedding, while families have to cover the cost of phone calls to their detained children.

Bahraini authorities have escalated their suppression of civil liberties following the outbreak of the Gaza war in October 2023, as protests against Israeli genocide in Gaza gain momentum.

As the fourth Arab nation to normalize relations with the Zionist regime through the Abraham Accords in September 2020, Bahrain appears to prioritize its ties with the occupying regime over the plight of the oppressed.