



# Tens of Thousands of Israeli Settlers Rally Urging Netanyahu's Ouster

TEL AVIV (Dispatches) – Tens of thousands of Israeli settlers took to the streets across the occupied Palestinian territories, demanding the resignation of prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu and an end to his regime's military aggressions, as his far-right coalition faces unprecedented domestic and international isolation.

The main rally in Tel Aviv's Habima Square drew approximately 1,000 demonstrators, with hundreds more gathering in Al-Quds, Haifa, Beersheba, and several northern towns including Karkur, Afula, Rosh Pina, and Nahariya.

Protesters waved flags and held signs reading "End the War," "Resist Ethnic Cleansing," and "Palestinian Lives Matter". In Al-Quds, police temporarily confiscated sound equipment from protesters at Paris Square near Netanyahu's residence, citing noise prevention. Carmit Palty Katzir, whose father



was killed on Oct. 7, 2023, and whose mother and brother were taken captive to Gaza, delivered a scathing indictment of the prime minister during the Tel Aviv rally. She accused Netanyahu of prolonging the war without a political horizon, arguing that his primary objective is "political survival".

Eran Etzion, former deputy head of Israel's so-called security coun-

cil, warned demonstrators in Haifa against calls for "unity" before elections, saying such rhetoric is used to numb the public and blur "political differences".

The protests come as Netanyahu openly defies a U.S.-Iran agreement that calls for an immediate and permanent cessation of military aggressions on all fronts, including Lebanon. Despite Wash-

ington's insistence, Netanyahu has declared that Israeli forces will not withdraw from occupied territory in southern Lebanon.

The latest terrorist invasion has killed nearly 4,000 Lebanese and displaced over one million, according to official figures.

As trust between Washington and Tel Aviv erodes, Channel 12 reported that elements within the Trump regime have begun informal contacts with opposition figures, including former prime minister Naftali Bennett and former army chief Gadi Eisenkot.

According to the report, even figures once close to Netanyahu are now "testing the waters" with potential successor. The International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants for Netanyahu and his former war minister in November 2024 for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Gaza, and Israel faces a genocide case at the International Court of Justice.

## Villages Erased, 4,000 Dead: Israel Vows to Stay in Lebanon

BEIRUT (Dispatches) – Israel's war minister declared on Sunday that its forces will remain indefinitely in a "security zone" carved into southern Lebanon, as the military pressed on with a terrorist campaign that has killed nearly 4,000 people and systematically destroyed entire villages across the border region.

"There has never been, and there is currently no restriction on IDF soldiers in Lebanon from acting to eliminate threats," Israel Katz said in a statement, confirming that troops would not withdraw from the roughly 10-kilometer-deep occupied area.

His remarks came despite a U.S.-Iran interim agreement that calls for an end to hostilities on all fronts, including Lebanon.

The announcement followed one of the war's deadliest weekends. According to Lebanon's Health Ministry, Israeli strikes on Friday and Saturday killed 105 people and wounded more than 150 others as the military launched over 200 attacks across southern and eastern Lebanon.

Many of the bombs struck homes and civilian infrastructure, Anadolu correspondents reported. On Sunday, despite a brief lull, strikes continued, killing at least two people on the Zibidine-Nabatieh road.

The cumulative toll since March 2 now stands at 4,057 killed and 12,121 wounded, Lebanese offi-

cial said. Over one million people have been displaced.

On the ground, the extent of the destruction is becoming clear. The BBC, granted rare access to the occupied zone, reported that Shia villages have been "completely destroyed by Israeli airstrikes or demolitions". Human rights groups have warned that the deliberate destruction of civilian infrastructure may amount to a war crime.

Israel has published detailed maps of its expanded control zone, which now extends deeper into Lebanese territory, including areas near Nabatieh north of the Litani River. This "security buffer" also includes a naval zone extending into Lebanese Mediterranean waters.

War minister Katz has been unequivocal, stating Israel "opposes an IDF withdrawal from Lebanon, despite all the existing pressure". This stance directly contravenes the terms of the June 17 interim agreement, which calls for guaranteeing Lebanon's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

As U.S.-Iran negotiations continue in Switzerland, Israel's stated policy of indefinite occupation and its open-ended license to "eliminate threats" portends a prolonged campaign of destruction, leaving southern Lebanon's communities in ruins and its people in a state of perpetual displacement and fear.

## Daesh Resurges in Syria as Jolani's Sectarian Campaigns Deepen Instability

BEIRUT (Dispatches) – Daesh claimed responsibility for an attack near Manbij in northeastern Syria that killed two regime soldiers, the latest salvo in a militant resurgence that analysts say is exploiting the chaos left by the fragmentation of armed groups once mobilized with foreign backing to topple President Bashar al-Assad.

The attack came as Syria's de facto leader, Abu Muhammad al-Jolani—a former Daesh and Al-Qaeda deputy whose Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) seized Damascus in December 2024—struggles to consolidate control over a country fractured by years of war and foreign intervention.

The de facto Syrian Defense Ministry said two soldiers were killed by unidentified gunmen

near the village of Tahna, west of Manbij. Daesh later claimed the attack in a statement on its Telegram channels, according to monitoring groups.

The assault underscores the deepening fragmentation of Syria's armed landscape. For years, an array of militant groups—including factions backed by Western, Persian Gulf Arab, Turkish, and Israeli interests—mobilized to topple Assad. That coalition has since splintered, leaving Daesh and HTS to compete for dominance in the void left by collapsing alliances and shifting foreign priorities.

Al-Jolani, who once served as a deputy to both Daesh and Al-Qaeda leaders, now governs as head of HTS. Since overtaking Damascus,

his forces have engaged in widespread sectarian violence against Alawite, Shia Muslim, Druze, and Christian minorities. Thousands have been displaced or killed in campaigns that human rights groups have described as systematic communal cleansing.

The March 2025 coastal massacres, which killed an estimated 1,700 Alawites in reprisal killings, were linked by investigators to al-Jolani's security apparatus. A June 2025 report documented the abduction of at least 33 Alawite women and girls, alongside deadly clashes with Druze communities in Jaramana and Sahnaya.

Daesh's resurgence exploits this instability. Between 2,500 and 3,000 Daesh loyalists remain active across Syria, operating in

small cells that carry out night ambushes, IED attacks, and targeted assassinations. The group intensified its operations in February, announcing a "new phase" of attacks against al-Jolani's government.

The attack near Manbij highlights the persistent security vacuum. Jolani's forces have expanded their presence in parts of northern and eastern Syria, even as U.S. forces withdraw from positions in the northeast.

But analysts warn that as long as al-Jolani's forces continue their sectarian campaigns and foreign powers remain fragmented in their interests, Daesh will continue to exploit every fissure—and Syria will remain a battlefield of competing takfiri visions, each backed by their own patrons.

## Breaking Bad Star Giancarlo Esposito Embraces Islam in Saudi Arabia

RIYADH (Dispatches) – American actor Giancarlo Esposito, best known for his Emmy-nominated role as Gus Fring in the television series *Breaking Bad*, has embraced Islam during his stay in Saudi Arabia, according to the head of the Kingdom's General Entertainment Authority.

Turki al-Sheikh said Esposito recited the Shahada, the Islamic declaration of faith, and joined members of his production team in prayer at a mosque while filming the major production "Seven Dogs" in the Kingdom.

According to al-Sheikh, the actor's decision followed positive experiences and his interactions with Muslims while working on the production. Esposito reportedly expressed appreciation for the community and hospitality he encountered during filming.

A video shared on social media showed Esposito praying alongside members of the production team inside a mosque.

Esposito, who has enjoyed a decades-long career in film and television, is also known for his performances in *Better Call Saul*, *The Mandalorian*, and *The Boys*. His portrayal of the stoic, calculating drug lord Gus Fring earned

him international acclaim and multiple award nominations.

The actor joins a growing list of celebrities who have embraced Islam, including Academy Award-winning actor Mahershala Ali, comedian Dave Chappelle, rapper Ice Cube, and music legend Yusuf Islam (formerly Cat Stevens). Esposito's conversion comes amid broader trends of rising interest in Islam in the West, according to recent studies and demographic data.

According to Imam Shamsi Ali, a prominent American Islamic figure, the U.S. Muslim population has reached 10 to 15 million – more than double official government figures, which estimate between 5 and 7 million.

"Currently, approximately 20% to 25% of Muslims in the United States are converts," Shamsi Ali said. He noted that while converts were initially predominantly African-American and Latino, "the wave of conversions has also begun to come from a group previously rarely associated with Islam: white Americans".

Research from the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding confirms that one in five

American Muslims was not raised in the faith.

In the United Kingdom, a study by the London-based Institute for the Impact of Faith in Life found a sharp surge in conversions to Islam following the Gaza war and increased international conflicts.

The study polled 2,774 British citizens who had adopted a new religion or renounced organized faith, with 20% citing the impact of global conflicts as a factor in their conversion. Researchers noted that themes of justice, patience, compassion, and resilience – highlighted during the Gaza war – drew many toward Islam.

Officials at the East London Mosque, one of Europe's largest Islamic centers, confirmed that dozens of non-Muslim visitors come daily seeking information about Islam. "Interest has grown substantially in the last two years," an official said.

"Seven Dogs," in which Esposito is starring, represents one of Saudi Arabia's largest film productions to date as the Kingdom expands its entertainment sector and seeks to attract international talent.

## Systematic Silencing of Journalists: Cameraman Killed in Targeted Israeli Bombing

GAZA (Dispatches) – Al Jazeera on Sunday condemned Israel's "baseless accusations" against cameraman Ahmed Wishah, who was killed in an Israeli airstrike on a house in the Bureij refugee camp in central Gaza.

He is the 12th Al Jazeera media worker to be killed since Israel began its genocide against Gaza in October 2023.

The Israeli military claimed, without providing evidence, that Wishah was a "sniper operative" in Hamas's military wing, killed alongside two other militants in a "precise strike".

Al Jazeera denounced the accusation as a "smear campaign" designed to justify "the deliberate targeting of journalists and cameramen".

"These attempts deceive no one," the network said, calling on the international community to prosecute Israeli officials responsible for these crimes.

Wishah's brother, Muhammad, also an Al Jazeera journalist, was killed in an Israeli strike in April. The brothers had worked as a team, documenting the suffering of Palestinians. After Muhammad's death, Ahmed took care of his late brother's children.

According to the Gaza Government Media Office, Israeli forces have killed at least 262 journalists and media workers since October

2023. Reporters Without Borders confirms that at least 70 were killed in the context of their professional duties.

Israel has detained another 50 journalists, while three remain missing. More than 420 journalists have been injured, many suffering amputations and permanent disabilities.

The killing of Wishah follows a pattern of Israeli attacks on Al Jazeera staff. In August 2025, Anas al-Sharif, one of Gaza's most recognizable correspondents, and four colleagues were killed in an airstrike. His 90-year-old father had been killed in a strike on their family home two years earlier, after Israeli officials had threatened Sharif by phone to stop his coverage.

In 2022, Israeli occupation forces shot and killed Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Akleh in Jenin. Independent investigations concluded she was killed by an Israeli sniper.

"The occupation deliberately kills journalists and anyone covering events on the ground," said Bilal Abu Samak, a freelance journalist in Gaza, speaking of the shock of Wishah's killing.

Al Jazeera has vowed to continue covering Israel's crimes despite attempts to silence its correspondents. "We will not be silenced," the network said.