



**Schlaglicht Israel Nr. 12/24
Aktuelles aus israelischen Tageszeitungen
16.-30. Juni**

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1. Eskalationsgefahr an der israelisch-libanesischen Grenze

Die Spannungen im israelisch-libanesischen Grenzgebiet nehmen weiter zu. Expert_innen halten eine Eskalation der Kampfhandlungen zwischen Israel und der Hisbollah für immer wahrscheinlicher. Neben massiven Angriffen von beiden Seiten wird auch der Ton schärfer. So drohte die Führung in Teheran, die die schiitische Terrororganisation Hisbollah mit modernen Waffen ausstattet, mit einem „vernichtenden Krieg“, sollte Israel eine groß angelegte Offensive starten. Israels Verteidigungsminister Yoav Gallant erklärte zwar, man wolle keinen Krieg, zugleich warnte er, die israelische Armee sei gegebenenfalls in der Lage, den Libanon "in die Steinzeit zurückzusetzen". Vorerst arbeite man an einer politischen Lösung. Die Hisbollah macht ein Ende des Krieges im Gazastreifen zur Bedingung, um die Angriffe gegen Israel einzustellen. Die Waffenstillstandsvereinbarung nach dem letzten israelisch-libanesischen Krieg 2006 sah den Rückzug der Terrororganisation aus dem Süden des Landes und das Verhindern einer Neubewaffnung vor. Expert_innen gehen davon aus, dass sich der Umfang des Waffenarsenals dessen ungeachtet inzwischen rund verzehnfacht hat. Die Hisbollah verfüge über bis zu 200.000 Raketen. Deutschland und die USA riefen ihre Staatsbürger_innen dazu auf, den Libanon zu verlassen. Es besteht

vermehrte Sorge vor einem regionalen Flächenbrand.

This is how Hezbollah became Israel's greatest threat

(...) The attacks launched by Hezbollah in the north and the Houthis in the south were perceived as secondary incidents, intended to aid Hamas in its war and force Israel to split IDF forces across three fronts (including the West Bank). To that end, Israel's strategic perception saw fit to first defeat Hamas in Gaza, believing Hezbollah would be deterred and agree to a political arrangement that would push its elite Radwan Force and its anti-tank missiles northward, to approximately the Litani River, about 10 kilometers away from the Israeli border once this happened. (...) the situation has shifted. The war transformed from a very violent and even fateful Israeli-Palestinian incident into a full-fledged regional war with strategic security implications and even existential risks for Israel and its citizens. (...) Hezbollah, as the vanguard of Iran's proxy network, has become the primary threat that Israel must urgently remove. (...) If Israel doesn't end the northern conflict with a decisive victory that restores its deterrence, not only toward Hezbollah but also toward Iran, we could face repeated attacks in the coming years intended to wear Israel down militarily, and especially mentally, leading to its internal collapse. (...) Israel must change its war goals. Defeating

Hamas and freeing the hostages will no longer suffice. The north is now the focus; restoring peace and hoping Hezbollah's missiles and drones will rust over time isn't enough. (...) A strategic victory in the multi-front war we're currently engaged in is needed here. (...) It's inadvisable for Israel to enter a full-scale war in the north without guaranteed American support of all kinds. This includes not only diplomatic and logistical aid but also help in intercepting the barrages of missiles and drones launched at us from Iran and Lebanon. (...)

Ron Ben-Yishai, YED, 18.06.24

No, the Israeli Army Isn't 'Ready for Any Scenario' in Gaza or Lebanon

(...) the occupation of the Gaza Strip won't end even if Hamas is completely destroyed, because someone has to make sure Hamas doesn't resurrect itself there. A new security zone in Lebanon would mean a permanent troop presence and perpetual clashes in a territory outside the state's borders. And nobody is even dreaming of giving up the West Bank, where dozens of battalions have been deployed for 57 years already. Israel's untapped reserves of manpower lie in ultra-Orthodox towns and neighborhoods like Bnei Brak, Beit Shemesh, Mea She'arim and Emmanuel. But even if ultra-Orthodox rabbis decide to let their yeshiva students die for their country instead of only in the tents of Torah, there won't be enough soldiers to realize all of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's dreams. (...) The state has been handed proof that it can't fight all the wars it might want to fight, or even those that have ostensibly been forced on it. (...) the bluff that "we are ready for any scenario" popped like a soap bubble (...) the people who didn't believe the scenario of a Hamas attack also couldn't prepare for a war that has so far lasted eight months, and might well continue for many more months, if not years. (...) The deep deficit in Israel's human capital budget requires it to rethink the number of wars it is capable of handling – while such a choice still exists. (...) the option of perpetual wars isn't the default option, especially when "total victory" has turned out to be a mirage. (...)

Zvi Bar'el, HAA, 19.06.24

Lebanon 3; Is the IDF Ready?

(...) it seems a new Lebanon war is imminent. (...) The nature of both combatants has changed significantly since 2006. Hezbollah, tested and strengthened in the Syrian Civil War, faces a more technologically advanced and experienced Israel. (...)

Hezbollah has amassed an armory of somewhere between 120,000-200,000 rockets, the vast majority are estimated to be unguided short-range munitions. The threat is largely from long-range guided munitions capable of causing tremendous damage to major Israeli cities. It is estimated that Hezbollah could launch somewhere between 3,000-4,000 rockets per day at the start of a major conflict. Suppressing such barrages would be a significant challenge for the IAF given the sheer amount and speed with which such rockets could be launched. (...) Hezbollah's significant anti-air and anti-armor capabilities believed to include several of Russia and Iran's most modern platforms. (...) However this development is not one-sided, the IDF has greatly improved its intelligence-gathering technology, AI systems like "Gospel" can process and compare massive amounts of observational data to create potential targets. (...) The development and deployment of several new systems including the Iron Beam, Iron Dome, and David's Sling will likely mitigate the destruction that was caused in the past. (...) A challenge to the Iron Dome defense system has come in the form of unmanned aerial vehicles (...). This was a weakness that was exploited by Hamas at the southern border who used drones to cripple the automatic detection systems. (...) the IDF has been training for a confrontation with Hezbollah, and the increased focus on the organization is part of the reason for the lack of attention on Gaza before October 7th. (...) Ultimately some kind of Israel Hezbollah showdown is inevitable, as the status quo is unsustainable. (...)

Ari Tatarka, TOI, 19.06.24

When diplomacy fails: It's time for Israel to bomb and invade Lebanon

(...) The time has come for a much more aggressive approach in both Gaza and in Lebanon. Israel should immediately bomb deep into Lebanon and invade its northern neighbor. (...) Too many Israelis have been displaced for too long; there is no way to win the war without smashing our enemies (...). The government owes its northern residents to fight in a way that will be more effective. Wars are not won defensively or with a sanitized approach on offense. (...) rules are meant to be broken when it comes to minimizing IDF casualties and saving the lives of our boys and girls in a war against evil. The time has come for Israel to use full force and to stop worrying about how America will respond. There is a need to destroy and kill: That is what war is about. (...)

Martin Oliner, JPO, 23.06.24

Countdown to war between Israel and Hezbollah has begun

In the last couple of weeks, it has become clear that a war with Hezbollah is inevitable. (...) Hezbollah's message is clear: they are trying to scare Israelis by showing that they are already familiar with the areas of Israel that they would target, a pure example of psychological warfare. (...) Israel has been put in a position where it now has to decide if it wants to change the status quo. (...) Hezbollah had declared war on Israel the moment it decided to defend Hamas in the Gaza Strip by firing into Israel and acting as a deterrent to Israel's military campaign. While Israel was not prepared for an attack like October 7 by Hamas in the South, it has always known that Hezbollah was ready and planning to commit the same level of atrocities, including kidnapping hostages and occupying Israeli towns and villages. The terror group can hit areas outside of Israel's evacuated areas and well past the northern borders into central major cities. Hezbollah has an Iranian Shi'ite fundamentalist agenda that aims to destroy Israel, and this is not something that Israel can sit idly by and wait for. (...) In no way do Israelis want a war with Hezbollah. The consequences of it would be utterly devastating for our tiny Jewish nation. (...) War with Hezbollah means we would be forced to stay in bunkers, potentially cut off from the rest of the world, to avoid the chaos and destruction that can come about from Hezbollah's attacks. Israel will do what it needs to do, with or without international support. (...)

Zina Rakhamilova, JPO, 24.06.24

An All-out War in Lebanon Could Only Spell One Thing for Israel – Total Defeat

(...) Our humiliation by Hezbollah has become too much. Life in the north has been disrupted, drones have been penetrating our skies, Israel's vulnerability has been exposed and Netanyahu is having trouble swallowing it all. (...) The situation is difficult and humiliating, but a ground operation might well make it even worse. (...) The IDF Spokesperson's Unit would talk about the soldiers' (...) courage, terrorists being assassinated and bunkers being blown up, but at the end of the operation, the Israel Defense Forces wouldn't remain in Lebanon. No one will repeat the mistake of the security zone Israel maintained in southern Lebanon from 1982 to 2000. And once the army leaves, it won't be possible to honestly say that the threat of a ground attack has been completely removed. In any case, the parties will have to return to the agreement that has already

been put on the table. (...) Hezbollah's attacks on the Israeli home front are likely (...) to turn the "little" war into a total war. Israel won't be able to avoid responding more forcefully to power outages and strikes on strategic facilities. Yet such a response now faces an almost impossible challenge. (...) Lebanon is Hezbollah and Hezbollah is Lebanon. (...) could Israel actually bomb infrastructure in this bankrupt country, which the Western world is trying to keep alive by the skin of its teeth? (...) There are no good options, but here is the least bad one: Israel should withdraw unilaterally from Gaza while declaring that the war against Hamas will continue and we're reserving the right to go back in whenever we see fit. We should then reach an agreement in the north, while substantially beefing up our defenses of the border and border communities in both the south and the north. That is far from "total victory." But at least it isn't "total defeat," which is where we are currently heading.

Raviv Drucker, HAA, 24.06.24

Like Sheep to the Slaughter, the Israeli Public Marches Towards an Unnecessary War

(...) The public needs to understand. This time there will be many civilian deaths. (...) We have never had a war of this kind. Hezbollah is not Hamas; it's hundreds of times, thousands of times more powerful. Lebanon is not the Gaza Strip. (...) And maybe Iran will attack again, as well. (...) There will be massive destruction to Greater Tel Aviv. Cities in ruin, many buildings flattened. (...) And all this for what? After the Third Lebanon War, an agreement will be signed that is very similar to the one that could be signed with Hezbollah now. Israel is incapable of destroying Hamas, much less Hezbollah (...). After all the destruction, all the death in Israel and in Lebanon, the parties will return to approximately the same point. (...) Like sheep to the slaughter, the Israeli public marches toward the most unnecessary of wars. (...) Benjamin Netanyahu has no choice. The fighting in Rafah will soon be over. Only a war with Hezbollah will keep his coalition from fracturing around the conscription law. (...) Hezbollah is humiliating Israel, and Israel, in order to preserve its dignity, is willing to destroy Lebanon and to destroy itself. (...) The Israeli public marches like sheep to the slaughter into the most unnecessary and destructive of Israel's wars. Marches intentionally. Head held high. It sacrifices itself. With open eyes.

Rogel Alpher, HAA, 25.06.24

The Lebanese PM attacks Israel, but the real problem is Hezbollah and he knows

(...) The Iranian proxy, Hezbollah, is trying to drag Lebanon into a war with Israel through continuous and systematic attacks against Israeli urban areas in the north but, evidently, the Lebanese PM sees things differently. (...) It is interesting how Mikati is calling for peace while at the same time praising what he defines as "resistance doing its duty". This "resistance is indeed Hezbollah. The people of Lebanon should be protected from Hezbollah, and the duty of the Lebanese government should be to eradicate foreign proxies, such as Hezbollah, from its territory. (...) According to the Lebanese PM, Israel should cease all counter-terror operations in Gaza to wipe out Hamas and it should stop defending itself and its citizens against Hezbollah's systematic attacks. (...) Mikati should worry more about the Iranian interference in Lebanon through its proxy, Hezbollah, because that is the real threat to the Lebanese people and peace. Indeed, the Lebanese PM is well aware of it and still, he refers to Hezbollah as "resistance.

Giovanni Giacalone, TOI, 29.06.24

2. Oberstes Gericht verfügt Wehrpflicht für Ultraorthodoxe

Einstimmig entschieden die neun Richter_innen von Israels Oberstem Gerichtshof, dass ultraorthodoxe Männer zum Wehrdienst in der Armee verpflichtet werden müssen. Auch mit Blick auf den seit Anfang Oktober andauernden Krieg im Gazastreifen und im Norden Israels hielt das Gericht eine Lösung für notwendig, um die „ungleiche Verteilung der Bürde“ zu beenden. Für eine Befreiung von der Wehrpflicht gebe es keine juristische Grundlage. Die Entscheidung ist ein herber Rückschlag für die Regierungskoalition unter Benjamin Netanyahu, der die ultraorthodoxen Parteien angehören und die bereits drohten, die Regierung zu verlassen. Die Armee ist angesichts des Krieges im Gazastreifen und im Norden Israels sowie der gefährlichen Lage im Westjordanland dringend auf eine Aufstockung der Truppen angewiesen. Der Oberste Gerichtshof geht von 63.000 ultraorthodoxen Männern aus, die schrittweise zum Dienst an der Waffe eingezogen werden könnten. Bei Verweigerung droht die Streichung staatlicher Subventionen. Ultraorthodoxe Frauen sind von dem Urteil nicht betroffen. Die ungerechte Verteilung von Rechten und Pflichten ist seit Jahrzehnten Streitthema in Politik und Gesellschaft.

As Haredim get a free pass, burden on reservists set to increase

Amid the heartbreaking toll of casualties in Gaza, a growing concern looms within the IDF over a critical shortage of combat soldiers and the immense strain on regular, career and reserve forces. (...) the military is issuing extraordinary call-up orders for six infantry brigades to undertake 40 days of operational deployment, following a continuous 110-day deployment plus a brief 40-day respite. (...) While the political system spins in circles, the General Staff is formulating a multi-departmental plan to expand the military structure. (...) the number of battalions in the Gaza Division will need to double from four (...) to eight. (...) In the Galilee Division, it is estimated that the five battalions will need to expand to 10, or even 12, to hold the line against Hezbollah. The number of mixed-gender battalions, in borders considered "quiet," will also double from five to 10. During the war, the air defense array was expanded both in manpower and in building additional Iron Dome batteries. (...) There are seven steps the state has no choice but to implement as a strategic national plan: extending mandatory service to 36 months, reducing the number of soldiers discharged after already enlisting, tightening the criteria for psychological exemptions, addressing the issue of women receiving religious exemptions, recruiting women into military service instead of national service, increasing combat recruitment rates in cities with weak statistics and, of course, a historical shift in the status of ultra-Orthodox men. Some may think this is merely another political struggle on social media, where debates rage over caricatures as if the future of the nation is at stake. But the reality is that the situation is on the brink of boiling over and even collapsing: the reserve burden on a population already struggling with the cost of living, endless tasks in three hot zones (...), the erosion of regular brigades for eight consecutive months, and equipment urgently needing maintenance to avoid endangering our forces. (...) If we don't act now to address these issues, we will face even more brutal wars with a crippled army and a fragmented society. For those who haven't yet understood: This constitutes a genuine emergency.

Yossi Yehoshua, YED, 16.06.24

The haredi draft crisis that will not disappear: A look at Israel's 'Amendment No. 26'

It was no secret that the bill was brought to the Knesset as a deceptive ploy by the current govern-

ment to prevent the High Court of Justice from forcing the IDF to immediately start enlisting haredim for military service on the basis of the existing, unamended Defense Service Law, and from forcing the Finance Ministry from cutting payments to yeshivas where students are shirking military service. The ploy was designed to prove to the High Court of Justice that the government is actually working on a law designed to fill the legislative lacuna on the issue, without really doing so. The vote (...) was about allowing for a continuation of the legislative process of the bill, which was introduced in the previous Knesset. (...) Most of the haredi MKs are opposed to the bill on principle. (...) Despite the result of the vote, the chances of Amendment No. 26, as currently worded, actually being enacted are close to nil (...). Netanyahu's purpose is simply to waste time until next autumn, so that in the interim the haredi parties will not threaten his coalition, and the High Court of Justice will stay off his government's back on this issue. He considers his political survival as paramount – and not what is best for the state and the IDF. (...) However, the problem of getting the haredim to share the defense burden will not disappear. This comes at a time when the IDF is short of manpower. There are (...) 12,000 haredim who are eligible to be enlisted every year, although very few actually enlist. (...)

Susan Hattis Rolef, JPO, 17.06.24

In a Show of Weakness, Netanyahu Loyalists Refuse to Fall in Line Over Haredi Draft Law

(...) The conscription law is an example of the extremely rare instance in which positions on a public topic do not fall neatly into "Bibi, yes" and "Bibi, no." (...) The Zionist right (...) will not calmly accept the direct insult and the political gymnastics being performed to perpetuate the Haredi draft evasion. (...) If Benjamin Netanyahu's loyalists succeeded in besmirching the prime minister's critics in the past, the task is much harder now. Criticism of Netanyahu is fierce and widespread. It comes from within the Zionist yeshivas and from die-hard Likud voters. (...) the Bibi-ists are increasingly less representative of Likud's supporters. (...) Likud Knesset members are now forced to explain their silence in the face of the anti-Zionist move of Netanyahu and United Torah Judaism MK Moshe Gafni. We can assume they have never before faced such disappointment from their surroundings. In addition to Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, three other Likudniks (...) have already announced that they will demand sweeping changes to the conscription exemption bill. They are not sea-

soned politicians, they simply know their constituents. They will struggle to take down the flag of rebellion. It's likely that additional MKs and cabinet ministers from Likud (...) will join them. (...)

Akiva Novick, HAA, 17.06.24

Attempts to pass the 'Rabbi Law' show how disconnected the government is

While the Israeli public is pretty much in agreement about the need for a haredi draft, from across the civilian board, the attempt to pass the "Rabbi Law" (...) stands as a plain senseless power grab that shows just how disconnected this government is from the actual needs of the Israeli public. (...) all of the opposition MKs on the committee and at least three of the coalition's MKs said they would vote against the law, meaning that if a vote had been held, it would not have passed. A move (...) to swap out two of the MKs who (...) wouldn't vote it through emphasizes the tenacity behind the law. (...) The bill is widely viewed as an attempt by the coalition's haredi parties, especially Shas, to appoint its members to the position, as well as gain influence over issues of religion and state even in secular areas. (...) the law (...) is simply what it appears to be: a power grab for more central government control, a test of influence by Shas chairman Arye Deri, or a ploy to create more jobs when, as Levi pointed out, the money is sorely needed elsewhere. The law is shameful, disconnected, and completely insensitive in these times. The government needs to look well in front of a mirror and see what it is causing the people: more frustration, anger, and resentment during one of the already most intense times in Israel's history. The law needs to be dropped – and fast. This elected body must do better.

Editorial, JPO, 19.06.24

The ultra-Orthodox will not compromise on draft bill at the cost of leaving the coalition

All the evidence suggests that the current Haredi draft bill will not pass in its current form, and any talk about ultra-Orthodox enlistment is merely speculation. The Haredim have come to terms with the fact that it's a lost cause and will try to postpone their exit from the government. (...) The ultra-Orthodox in Israel will be forced to learn to survive without state budgets, just as their peers are doing abroad. (...) Regardless of who will lead the next government, the ultra-Orthodox know the current situation cannot continue. (...) Those who decide whether the ultra-Orthodox youth will enlist in the Israel Defense

Forces are the religious leaders of the ultra-Orthodox parties according to "daat Torah," which gives authority to leading rabbis for deciding matters secular and spiritual alike. No Haredi rabbi will approve the recruitment of young people from Haredi homes, even if they are not really Haredi and even if they are semi-secular. Haredi society recoils at the very idea that thousands of uniformed men will roam through ultra-Orthodox neighborhoods. (...) the exchange of drafts between the ultra-Orthodox and the government (...) are spins (...). The ultra-Orthodox will manage without budgets, just as Satmar Hasidim and other Hasidic groups that do not take a shekel from the state, manage. The ultra-Orthodox society will manage without budgets in the end, just as the ultra-Orthodox Jews abroad manage. (...) There will never be official Haredi approval to draft their young people, including those who are not taking an active part in the yeshiva, even at the cost of staying in the opposition forever, similar to Arab parties.

Yanki Farber, YED, 25.06.24

Netanyahu's ultra-Orthodox policies backfired, creating turmoil in Israel

(...) While it is difficult to define the ultra-Orthodox situation as a nightmare compared to Israel's security issues, from their perspective, it is the most severe threat to their social-community-religious structure, the fastest-growing sector in Israel and the Western world. (...) the community faces a choice between two bad options: giving up government support or enlisting yeshiva students in the IDF, exposing them to "spiritual danger," breaking the community framework, and assimilating into Israeli society. The issue of enlisting yeshiva students seems solvable if the ultra-Orthodox gave up their attachment to Netanyahu and their membership in the "right-wing bloc." They might reach a compromise with the anti-Netanyahu camp. (...) The struggle over ultra-Orthodox conscription proves particularly dramatic due to its potential to cause the disintegration of Netanyahu's dream government, which has turned into a nightmare for him, his political partners, and all Israeli citizens. This is how Netanyahu's ultra-Orthodox policies backfired, creating turmoil in Israel.

Eli Dan, JPO, 26.06.24

Instead of bringing the haredi to the IDF, we should bring the IDF to the haredi

(...) a paradigm shift should be considered: Instead of bringing parts of the haredi community to the IDF,

we should bring the IDF to the haredi community. To strengthen the people's army and foster unity, a new multi-corps unit, tailored specifically to ultra-Orthodox institutions willing to participate should be established. This unit would operate from a network of military or civilian yeshivas, integrating military organization into their daily lives. The students would undergo basic, short, and targeted training within their yeshiva environment. These yeshivas would function as fully-fledged military bases, receiving IDF funding. (...) Tasks would be adapted to the yeshiva's capabilities and size, ranging from logistics roles, such as sorting equipment, packing combat rations, or photocopying documents, to religious duties, including koshering kitchen utensils for Passover and fixing the IDF's Torah scrolls. (...) Some yeshivas might undertake field tasks, such as operating a nearby military checkpoint. (...) Widening the pool of recruits, along with investing in advanced technologies, will strengthen national security, deepen social cohesion, and ensure that the IDF can continue to protect the country – while maximizing the safety of soldiers.

Yonatan Freeman, JPO, 26.06.24

Can the Haredim and IDF peacefully co-exist?

(...) many secular Jews also dodge serving in the army, so why are only the Haredim singled out? (...) Haredi rabbis and leaders constantly preach the belief that Torah learning is the highest and most revered action that can be taken by a Jew. (...) They make claims that someone learning Torah in yeshiva is serving his country to the same level as an IDF soldier on the front lines. (...) if one looks at the full reality, not all of the Haredim who are supposedly "learning Torah in yeshiva" (...) are actually in yeshiva learning. Unfortunately, a sizable number of them are just coasting. (...) If Torah learning is as vital as Haredim profess, then the secular world has a sincere right to question why they are not all taking it seriously. (...) The first step toward a strong, sustainable solution to this issue can only be through building real trust, mutual understanding, and respect for each other. (...) That can only happen if both sides are completely honest with the other and own the reality of the situation – working together in unity to fix it. (...) Both parties must openly agree to never play legal or political games with each other again. (...)

Avigail Knoll, TOI, 26.06.24

Enough is enough

The Haredim, cloaked in their long beards and austere black garments, are the great beneficiaries of Benjamin Netanyahu's far-right government. They live in a self-imposed bubble, shielded from the rest of Israeli society by a government that has sold its soul for political power. (...) There is no room left for privileges masquerading as religious devotion. The decision to draft the Haredim into military service is a cry for equality that has been stifled for decades. But Netanyahu and his far-right cronies will twist and contort the law like serpents to delay the inevitable, hoping to preserve their fragile coalition. (...) Prayer does not replace bravery on the battlefield, and hiding behind religious pretexts is an act of cowardice, not faith. (...) The Supreme Court's decision is unequivocal: without a law that upholds the equality of all citizens, the haredim must be drafted. (...) The Haredim must understand that they cannot hide forever behind their sacred texts. Israel needs all its citizens (...). It is time for everyone to roll up their sleeves and face the dangers and challenges of building and defending this nation. It is time to end privileges and embrace true equality. (...) Netanyahu's (...) coalition partners, the ultra-Orthodox parties, hold the government hostage, demanding more concessions. This is not governance; it is extortion. The rest of Israel pays the price, both financially and in blood, as our children go to war while theirs stay behind. (...) We must demand more from those who have taken so much. The era of unchecked privilege for the Haredim must end, and with it, the stranglehold of Netanyahu's far-right government on our nation's future.

Gil Milder, TOI, 27.06.24

3. Krieg im Gazastreifen

Die schweren Kämpfe gegen die Hamas im Gazastreifen nähern sich nach Angaben von Ministerpräsident Benjamin Netanyahu ihrem Ende. Auch Generalstabschef Herzi Halevi geht davon aus, dass die verbliebenen Militärbrigaden der Terrororganisation im Süden des Gazastreifens zeitnah zerschlagen werden können. Das bedeute indes nicht, dass ein Kriegsende naht. So kam es im Norden des Küstenstreifens erneut zu schweren Gefechten. Nach fast neun Monaten Krieg versammelten sich in Tel Aviv über 150.000 Menschen zu der bislang größten Protestaktion gegen die Regierung mit der Forderung, den Krieg zu beenden und die noch im Gazastreifen festgehaltenen Geiseln zu befreien. Zu Missmut

kam es zwischen Israel und den USA, nachdem die US-Regierung aus Protest gegen Israels militärisches Vorgehen im südlichen Gazastreifen eine Waffenlieferung kurzzeitig verzögerte.

A ceasefire deal won't end Israel's long war

(...) since Oct. 8, Hezbollah, Tehran's most formidable foreign legion, has been firing rockets and drones from southern Lebanon into northern Israel, the Galilee and the Golan. The attacks have sharply escalated over recent days. (...) Hezbollah's attacks have forced more than 60,000 Israelis to abandon their homes, farms, villages and cities. Hezbollah rockets have sparked fires that have consumed thousands of acres of forest. Another full-blown war with Hezbollah would cause many deaths and much destruction in Israel. As for Lebanon, already a failing state thanks largely to Hezbollah, it might never recover. But it's hard to see how the Israelis can long allow a proxy of Tehran to turn regions of their small country into an uninhabitable free-fire zone. (...) For now, the Israelis are continuing to battle Hamas in Gaza while preparing for the eventuality of an all-out war against Hezbollah. And, at some point, they will need to attend to unfinished business with the patron of both terrorist groups, the jihadist and genocidal regime in Tehran.

Clifford D. May, IHY, 19.06.24

Why is Israel unable to defeat Hamas?

(...) Although Israel put boots on the ground in Gaza and carried out a massive military maneuver, almost unlimited in resources or time, Hamas is still standing on both feet. (...) The surprising answer, which was constantly under our eyes, is the tunnels – moreover, the underground supremacy gained by Hamas. (...) The organization populates the tunnels, maneuvers in them, maintains a chain of command, mobilizes armed forces, and holds hostages underground. At the same time, it uses the tunnels as a citadel and continues to excavate new tunnels while fighting. This is the source of its strength and the reason for its survival. Without the tunnels, the war would probably have ended already in October. (...) The area above the ground is controlled by Israel, and below the ground is occupied by Hamas. (...) in the case of Hamas, it cannot be defeated without an underground invasion – this is the enemy's territory and there one should maneuver, conquer, and defeat. (...) the use that Hamas was able to make of the tunnels is groundbreaking, giving it technological supremacy in the underground battlefield. (...)

Nimrod Koren, JPO, 23.06.24

In Its Campaign of Revenge in Gaza, Israel Is Digging Its Own Grave

(...) when do you know that the time has come to leave? (...) Israel (...) gave itself over completely to its existential fear and embarked on a campaign of vengeance that will soon have lasted for nine months and has taken the lives of tens of thousands of Palestinians, most of whom were innocent of any crime. (...) The campaign of vengeance Israel launched has led it straight into an existential danger, one it created with its own two hands through its own crazy behavior. From day to day, the security situation is getting worse, our international isolation is growing and the threats are multiplying. And that's without even mentioning the thousands of Palestinian orphans Israel has pushed into the cycle of vengeance. Israel is digging a grave for itself, and dragging Diaspora Jewry into it along with it. (...) And because the victory that would calm us down is unachievable (...), Israel isn't leaving itself with any choice except losing – a painful, cruel, crushing defeat. But until then, we'll kill, blow up, shell, assassinate, pulverize, destroy and topple. Who will stop us?

Carolina Landsmann, HAA, 27.06.24

How has Hamas kept its strength for so long without giving in to mediation pressure?

(...) suffering large-scale casualties, and having lost most of its territorial strongholds (...) Hamas remains unwilling to accept proposals that would seem to be relatively generous, considering its current situation. (...) it is possible to suggest several explanations for the inability of the mediators to persuade Sinwar or to force his hand until now. The first explanation is that none of the mediators has sufficiently strong leverage against Hamas. (...) A second explanation relates to the fact that sanctions against uncooperative actors in the international arena are ineffective when those actors' survival is at stake. (...) Thus, any proposal that does not entail an unequivocal promise to end the war will be rejected (...). And finally, the pressure being applied to Israel by the international community, the military pressure being applied by Hezbollah on the northern border, and the pressure from Israeli society to reach a deal for the hostages have led Sinwar to conclude that his goals will be achieved eventually, even if it takes a long time. (...) There are three options: The first is simply to accept Hamas's demands. The advantage of this course of action is that it will bring the end of the war and the release of the hostages, and perhaps allow Israel to focus on the northern theater,

which in any case requires a more robust policy, whether by diplomatic or military means. The disadvantage is that Israel will be seen as not having achieved its military goals of toppling and removing Hamas, and Hamas will receive a boost to its self-image as having defeated Israel by surviving. (...) The second option is to start working seriously on plans for the reconstruction of Gaza under alternative leadership (...). The return of the PA to Gaza, with backing from moderate Arab states, would be a real threat to the remnants of Hamas rule in Gaza. (...) The third option is to continue the war until Hamas surrenders unconditionally, though presumably this goal is unattainable as long as Hamas continues to hold hostages. (...)

Elie Podeh, JPO, 29.06.24

4. Weitere Themen

Gewalt im Westjordanland

That Soldier, Who Tied a Palestinian to the Hood of a Car, Is Your Son

(...) Cruelty toward Palestinians is one of the cornerstones upon which Israel was built and on which it still stands. (...) Israel has always known (...) how to be a military dictatorship controlling an entire population with an iron hand and also looking like the only democracy in the Middle East (...). But after October 7, you lost it. Not the cruelty. The cruelty was boosted by a factor of a million as a response to October 7. But you've lost your senses and strategy. You've really lost them. (...) A military vehicle is traveling around the West Bank city of Jenin in the height of the heat while across the hood of the car, a shirtless Palestinian lies tied up. Initially it's not clear from the video if he's alive or dead, but if you look hard, you see he's trying to raise his bleeding head (...). Why? Forget that tying a wounded person to the hood of a car is an immoral, inhumane act (...). Imagine now that you're a Hamas member in an apartment in Gaza with a hostage, and you see soldiers on television who tied up a wounded, blindfolded person and they're driving around on the streets with him. Wouldn't it occur to you to tie the hostage up to a hood and drive around in a neighborhood that the Israeli army is bombing? (...) Maybe the time has come to accept the ugly Israel in all of his hues, iterations and positions, and then find ways to correct the situation.

Tamer Nafar, HAA, 25.06.24

Security officials concerned over eruption of West Bank violence

(...) Until October 7, the West Bank served as the IDF's primary front in the fight against terror. (...) This policy changed completely after the Hamas massacre. (...) Thousands of soldiers were recruited for reserve duty, doubling the defensive force in settlements and strategic corridors. Firearms were distributed as part of the government's initiative, including to farmers and settlers. Finally, the IDF created a buffer zone between the settlements and villages to strengthen defenses and be in a better position for raids and arrests. The IDF and Shin Bet launched aggressive incursions within the camps with operations sometimes lasting two or even three days. They dismantled infrastructure, conducted airstrikes, and arrested senior Hamas figures in the West Bank. Since the beginning of the war, more than 500 terrorists have been killed. More than 300 major terror attacks were thwarted, and about 4,200 Palestinians were arrested. During the operation, the IDF confiscated 800 weapons and approximately 25 million shekels. (...) Smotrich and Ben-Gvir are advancing their plans for the West Bank with Smotrich to take control over the region from the IDF. (...) the security establishment fears that dealing with the West Bank will hinder war efforts in the south and in the north, forcing the IDF to deploy precious forces in the West Bank.
Elisha Ben Kimon, YED, 23.06.24

Bewegung im Oppositionslager

Members of Israel's Peace Camp Need to Wake Up Now

(...) what we're living through now isn't the left wing's policy; it's the clear result of a fully right-wing policy. (...) Yet not one of those geniuses running the country feels even the tiniest bit of remorse. (...) precisely because of the traumatic failure of their policy, color has returned to cabinet ministers' cheeks. This is the best time of their lives. That's because the settlement enterprise is fundamentally a metaphysical one. (...) For this government, there is no north. And no south. (...) We are at a dangerous moment, but the opposition is frighteningly indifferent to what is going on. The right isn't kicking into an unguarded goal, but an abandoned one. (...) Nobody in the opposition dares to utter the words "two states." (...) Yet the self-evident truth remains the same: This country has no future without a diplomatic solution. Without justice for the Palestinians, we won't get justice either. If they don't have securi-

ty, we won't have security either. (...) A huge group of Israelis refuses to keep quiet. It sees what the right has to offer – a destroyed, starving, bleeding Gaza and a burning north – and it's not willing to tolerate it anymore. It sees the hostages still languishing in Gaza and it refuses to abandon them yet again. It has woken up. You should wake up too.
Zahava Galon, HAA, 30.06.26

If the Left wants a fighting chance in the next elections, they must unite

The names of Israel's two leading left-wing political parties are pretty symbolic: Labor – labor, work, struggle; Meretz – vigor, energy, strength. (...) Rumors have begun to flitter around once more, suggesting that the two parties plan to form a united list once more should Israel go to what many in the country believe are unavoidable elections. (...) If the left-wing parties wish to have a fighting chance in the next elections and not be blamed for weakening the Center-Left's hold on a majority government, they must unite. Already, they have a good starting point: A former Meretz MK is now the head of Labor. (...) Former deputy economy minister and IDF deputy chief of staff Yair Golan (...). If there is anything the Israeli Left struggles to do, it is to unite behind a single leader. If they wish to succeed, Golan might be that person. (...) There is no need to convince Meretz. The party knows quite well that if it does not unite with Labor, it may not – indeed, most probably will not – pass the electoral threshold. (...) A unified party could broaden its appeal by incorporating the strengths and popular policies of both Meretz and Labor, attracting a more comprehensive range of voters who support progressive and social-democratic ideals. (...) If they do not do so, they may be digging the grave of the Israeli Left.
Editorial, JPO, 28.06.24

HAA = Haaretz
YED = Yedioth Ahronoth / Ynetnews
JPO = Jerusalem Post
IHY = Israel HaYom
TOI = Times of Israel

Veröffentlicht im: Juli 2024

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