



After Sinwar death, drone targeting PM's house, no side is backing off

Amos Harel

This will apparently be a stormier week than usual in the Middle East, even by the standard of recent events. Hezbollah, possibly with Iranian assistance, launched a drone from Lebanon on Saturday morning which exploded and caused damage near the private residence of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Caesarea. This may lead to an Israeli response against Hezbollah or Iran. Israel is anyway preparing for its counterstrike in Iran, following that country's ballistic missile attack against Israel on October 1. There are leaked reports from the U.S. indicating the extent of Israel's preparations for this attack.

The killing of Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar has been pushed out of the news headlines. For now, it seems unlikely that Sinwar's death will be used for an attempt to put fresh winds in the sails of the negotiations over a hostage deal, even as the condition of the 101 civilians and soldiers held in the Gaza Strip grows more desperate.

Three explosive drones were launched from Lebanon, at Caesarea and the Gilit army base. Two of them were intercepted by the air force. The third landed close to Netanyahu's house, causing it some damage. (Censors in Israel delayed the release of this information for over an hour until this was published on media outlets in Qatar and Saudi Arabia; their judgment is becoming increasingly bizarre.) The prime minister and his



A protest at Hostages Square in Tel Aviv calling for a hostage deal, on Saturday.

Hadas Parush

family were not in the house when the drone exploded. Beyond the obvious jokes about the Netanyahu's fondness for receiving exorbitant compensation from state coffers, one should not ignore the attendant sig-

nificance of this incident. Hezbollah, and perhaps the entire Iranian axis, possesses precise weapons and is willing to risk harming senior Israeli figures. The hit also attests to a precise, well-thought-out ability to

collect intelligence. Following the string of assassinations attributed to Israel in Tehran, Beirut and the Gaza Strip, settling scores seems to be the highest priority for the axis. The guarding of senior officials in Israel

and overseas will need to adapt accordingly, including a limitation on public appearances during wartime. The attack in Caesarea, like the recent drone attack in which four Golani Brigade soldiers were killed at the

Regavim base, has exposed the difficulty of Israel's air defense systems in contending with these drones. Saturday's drone attack was followed by massive rocket

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IDF believes Sinwar's death creates best chance yet for a deal

Bar Peleg

The Israeli army believes that Wednesday's assassination of Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar has created the best conditions since the start of the war for a hostage deal, and for restoring calm to northern Israel. Army sources see Sinwar's death as a jolt to negotiations – which recently ground to a halt – and believe Israel's government must seize this opportunity.

The army also estimated that Hamas has changed its instructions to hostage-takers, ordering them to murder the hostages if there is a chance the IDF may rescue them. This decision, they say, was prompted by June's

military operation to rescue hostages, as well as the murder in August of six hostages. For this reason, the army has decided not to carry out rescue operations that carry significant risk.

Several weeks ago, the IDF collected DNA samples from an underground bunker belonging to Sinwar, only several hundred meters from where the six hostages were murdered in August, indicating that Sinwar was in the Tel al-Sultan neighborhood in southern Gaza.

The neighborhood had been surrounded by the IDF's 162nd Division since May, and searches had

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Two soldiers killed in Gaza, third dies of wounds in Lebanon

Bar Peleg, Hagar Shezaf, Fadi Amun, Haaretz and Reuters

Two Israeli soldiers were killed in Gaza on Saturday. They were identified by the military as 20-year-old Staff Sgt. Ofir Berkovich and 19-year-old Sgt. Elishai Young. They were killed by an antitank missile in the Jabalya refugee camp north of Gaza City. An officer was seriously wounded in the same incident.

Sgt.-Maj. Netanel Greenbaum, 38, from Lod, died from wounds he suffered in southern Lebanon on October 9.

An officer was also seriously wounded in fighting in Lebanon.

On Saturday evening, protests demanding the release

of hostages held in Gaza, along with demonstrations against the Netanyahu government, took place in numerous locations across Israel.

Three combat soldiers and eight were lightly wounded on Thursday by a tank shell in southern Lebanon. A preliminary investigation found that an armored unit intended to fire at a specific building but mistakenly struck a different building in which the soldiers were located. The military said the shell was accidentally fired at the building and that the incident was not due to the soldiers being misidentified as enemy fighters.

The Hamas-controlled Gaza Health Ministry announced that 19 people were

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Leak allegedly reveals Israel's plans for Iran attack

Oded Yaron and Jonathan Lis

American documents detailing Israel's preparations for an attack on Iran were leaked online on Friday. The documents, allegedly leaked from the U.S. Department of Defense's National Incident Management Systems and Advanced Technologies (NIMSAT) institute, outline

findings from ongoing surveillance of Israel's preparations for a response to the October 1 ballistic missile attack.

An Israeli source informed Haaretz that the U.S. has apologized to Israel for the leak.

At this point, the authenticity of the documents remains unclear. If they are genuine, it is uncertain how or why they were leaked.

The documents were first published by a pro-Iranian Telegram channel, Middle East Spectator, which claimed to have received them from a source within an American intelligence agency. Sources in Washington declined to comment but did not deny the authenticity of the documents.

The information, collected on October 15 and 16, includes

the concealment of fortified underground warplane bunkers at the Hatzetim airbase and signs of preparations for arming plane-launched ballistic missiles.

The IDF conducted a large-scale exercise last week for a potential attack, involving three refueling aircraft and a command-and-control G550 plane developed by Israel Aerospace Industries.

The document also notes preparations for arming planes with two types of air launched ballistic missiles. One of them is the ROCKS, developed by Rafael Advanced Defense Systems. The advantage of these missiles is their ability to launch precise munitions from a distance, beyond an enemy's aerial defense systems.

Another missile men-

tioned in the leaked documents is called "Golden Horizon," a name not previously released publicly, making it difficult to identify. It may refer to a missile from the Sparrow series, typically used as a target for aerial defense systems but also capable of offensive use, like the missiles it simulates.

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Israeli fighter jets.

Ofer Berkowitz/IDF Spokesperson Unit

One killed in rocket strike in north amid heavy barrage Page 2 • Two soldiers wounded by gunmen who crossed from Jordan Page 4

Sinwar's death should end Gaza war. Netanyahu won't let it

Alon Pinkas

Should the killing of Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar bring an end to the Gaza war? Yes. Will it? Very doubtful.

Sinwar's killing – and those of fellow senior Hamas leaders Mohammed Deif and Ismail Haniyeh earlier this year – caps a substantial yearlong Israeli degrading of Hamas' military and political capabilities. Supposedly, all attainable military objectives have been achieved.

Unless, of course, Israel intends to hunt down and kill every single Hamas terrorist and member, in which case it either needs to occupy the entire Gaza Strip and govern it – which it hasn't – or engage in a very long search-and-destroy war of attrition with two million desolate, hungry and sick Palestinians moving back and forth from nowhere to nowhere through the enclave.

Ironically, the long overdue killing of Sinwar exposes the absence of any coherent Israeli political

plan and ideas for postwar Gaza. This is why the war will not end anytime soon (unless there is a mass Hamas surrender in the upcoming days and weeks).

There are two urgent, important questions emanating from the killing of Sinwar:

1. Will it end the war? U.S. Vice President and Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris immediately said the killing provides "an opportunity to end the war." She's right. But then there's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, which means the answer is: This will probably not end the war, at least not immediately.

2. How will this affect the hostages – who are now in danger of being executed – and the chances of a hostage deal? That is the only thing Israel should be dealing with at this point. Not Iran, not Hezbollah, but securing the lives of the 101 remaining hostages (about half of whom are believed to still be alive). Will it?

Sinwar could and should have been killed only after a hostage deal. The United States, former Israeli generals and the majority of the public all said: a grand hostage deal first, war second.

Why wasn't he? Because Netanyahu did not want any hostage deal that would have been accompanied by a cease-fire. He invented the term "total victory," then turned a dirt road – the Philadelphia corridor – into Stalingrad and wiggled, deceived and reneged his way out of any hostage deal that Qatar, the United States and Egypt devised.

"There is now the opportunity for a 'day after' in Gaza without Hamas in power, and for a political settlement that provides a better future for Israelis and Palestinians alike. Yahya Sinwar was an insurmountable obstacle to achieving all of those goals," President Joe Biden said on Thursday. His statement was general enough for everyone to endorse it, and specific enough to repel Benjamin Netanyahu, who has no interest in a

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Gazan women describe pregnancy, miscarriage and birth in war zone

Naghma Zbeedat

"My baby was forced to wean," says Reham (not her real name), a 21-year-old mother originally from northern Gaza's Gaza City. Unable to breastfeed her 10-month-old son due to her own malnourishment, she says caring for him under constant threat has felt exhausting.

Reham and her husband were displaced to the south when she was seven months pregnant. "We had to flee right in the middle of the bombing. It was terrifying." The fear even "triggered premature labor symptoms," she recounts, and on December 29 she hurried to the hospital.

She found it "so overcrowded that there wasn't even an available bed in the delivery room for me." After finally securing one, she went into labor with limited medical supervision. "I was in labor for over 14 hours. They wouldn't give me any assistance, expecting me to dilate on my own. But I needed a doctor to supervise my case," she says.



A mother fanning her daughter in a tent in Deir al-Balah last month.

Ramadan Abed/Reuters

For Reham, unhygienic conditions at the hospital compounded the already horrendous circumstances. "A woman would give birth, and then you'd have to lie on that same bed, with her blood and sweat still on it," she recalls. "There were no pads or any way to clean up

after giving birth." Basic hygiene was "nonexistent." But the most difficult part was the isolation. "I had my baby on my own," she says. "My mother was still in Gaza City, my mother-in-law wasn't allowed to stay in the hospital due to the heavy bombardment," and her hus-

band was also not present. "I was there completely alone." When asked when she was discharged from the hospital, Reham laughs. "A few minutes after giving birth. They were way over capacity and desperately needed beds."

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