Israel Shells Hamas Posts After Rockets Fired for Second Day in a Row

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<https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/israeli-tank-shells-hamas-positions-in-gaza-after-rockets-launched-at-south-1.7832420>

An Israeli army tank hit two Hamas military positions in the northern Gaza Strip on Wednesday afternoon in retaliation for three rockets that were fired at Israel minutes earlier, the Israeli military said in a statement.

The Hof Ashkelon Regional Council announced that one of the rockets landed in a greenhouse in one of the communities within its jurisdiction, causing no damage nor injuries. A second rocket landed in another community within the regional council, with one home damaged lightly by shrapnel, the council's spokesman said.

Later on Wednesday, alarms sounded in the same area, but the Israeli military said they were flase alarms.

According to an IDF statement, Israeli soldiers also saw several people crossing into Israeli territory from the southern Gaza Strip on Wednesday afternoon, grab a crate and return immediately into Gaza. The crate was empty, according to the statement.

A few hours later, the IDF said it arrested two Palestinians who crossed the Gaza border fence into Israel. They were carrying knives and were transferred to investigation, according to the statement.

This is the second such exchange in two days. On Tuesday night, [rockets were launched](https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-israel-strikes-15-hamas-targets-in-response-to-gaza-rocket-attack-army-says-1.7831854) from the Gaza Strip towards the Israeli cities of Ashkelon and Ashdod while Prime Minister [Benjamin Netanyahu](https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-hamas-netanyahu-rushed-election-rally-during-gaza-rockets-1.7830441) was addressing crowds at a campaign rally in the latter city, and had to be [taken off the stage mid-speech](https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-hamas-netanyahu-rushed-election-rally-during-gaza-rockets-1.7830441). Two of the rockets were intercepted by the Iron Dome missile defense system.

In response, the Israel Defense Forces struck some 15 Hamas targets in the northern and central Gaza Strip overnight Tuesday, the army said. The targets included Hamas military infrastructure used for weapons manufacturing, several targets in a military compound of Hamas' naval force and a an attack tunnel intended to be used for terror attacks, the Israeli army said in a statement.

This is the latest escalation in developing tensions on Israel's border with both Gaza and Lebanon, as the country enters the final week of its redux election campaign.

Palestinian sources said Tuesday night that Israel had carried out several airstrikes near the city of Deir al Balah in central Gaza, in addition to striking in the northern Strip.

Hamas' military wing reported that an [Israeli drone had been downed](https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-israeli-army-drone-falls-in-gaza-strip-overnight-idf-says-1.7825068) in the night between Monday and Tuesday in the coastal enclave. The movement had managed to access information regarding the unmanned aircraft mission, Hamas said. The IDF later confirmed the drone had fallen in Gaza.

On Sunday, a [projectile was fired from Gaza](https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/rocket-sirens-sound-in-southern-israel-1.7811246) but failed to reach Israel, landing inside the Strip. This came one day after the IDF said it carried out several airstrikes in Gaza, including on a Hamas naval base and two complexes of the organization's aerial command.

According to the IDF, the strikes were in response to a drone attack earlier on Saturday, in which a Gaza drone entered Israeli airspace and dropped explosives on a military vehicle by the border fence.

A few hours earlier on Saturday, an Israeli military aircraft fired at what it [identified as the Gaza cell](https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/israeli-army-fires-at-gaza-cell-that-launched-drone-into-israel-1.7807418) that launched the drone attack.

On Friday night, Israel struck [several Hamas targets](https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/palestinians/gazan-killed-by-live-israeli-gunfire-in-border-protest-palestinians-say-1.7805900) in Gaza after five rockets were launched from the Strip overnight Friday, targeting Hamas military positions near the Israeli border with aircraft and tank fire. The fire was an apparent response to the death of two Palestinian teenagers killed by Israeli fire during weekly March of Return border protests.

There have also been continuing tensions [between Hezbollah and Israel](https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/hezbollah-israel-drone-iran-conflict-1.7812856) along the Israel-Lebanon border, after an Israeli drone attack on a Hezbollah site in a Beirut suburb - although both sides have until now managed to prevent an escalation.