IDF confirms 32 out of 136 remaining hostages dead

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<https://www.jns.org/idf-confirms-32-out-of-136-remaining-hostages-dead/>

At least 32 of the remaining 136 hostages captured by Hamas during its Oct. 7 terrorist onslaught are confirmed to have died, *The New York Times* reported on Tuesday, citing a confidential intelligence assessment by the Israel Defense Forces.

Their families have been updated, according to four IDF military officials who spoke anonymously to discuss classified information.

Jerusalem was also assessing unconfirmed reports indicating that at least 20 additional captives may no longer be alive, the officials said.

The Hostages and Missing Families Forum, which represents relatives of the captives, on Tuesday evening confirmed the deaths of 31 people held in Gaza.

“According to the official data we have, there are 31 victims,” the forum said in a statement. “Before the article was released, an official message was given to all the families of the abductees by the liaison officers that there is no change in the situation assessment.”

Hamas abducted more than 240 people during its murderous rampage across the northwestern Negev, in which some 1,200 people were murdered and thousands more wounded.

A total of 105 hostages, mostly women and children, were released last year as part of a ceasefire deal, which [Hamas](https://www.jns.org/hamas-said-to-be-ignoring-israeli-hostage-proposal/) broke when it refused to hand over the last group of captives. Four more were released by Hamas before the ceasefire, while one hostage was rescued by Israeli troops.

The figure of 32—or possibly even 52—dead captives is significantly higher than previously thought and would mean that more than one-fifth of the remaining hostages have been killed. Last month, Jerusalem said Hamas was believed to be holding 28 bodies in Gaza.

The terror group has also been holding the bodies of slain IDF soldiers Oron Shaul and Hadar Goldin since 2014, as well as two living Israeli civilians suffering from mental illness, Avera Mengistu, who crossed into Gaza in 2014, and Hisham al-Sayed, who entered the Gaza Strip in 2015.

Asked for comment by the *Times*, the IDF said that it was still “deploying all available resources to locate and retrieve as much information as possible regarding the hostages currently held by Hamas.” Most of the dead are believed to have been murdered on Oct. 7, the army added.

Hamas is expected to turn down an offer for a hostages-for-ceasefire deal with Israel along the lines of the November agreement, the Saudi-owned *Al Arabiya*news channel reported on Sunday night.

The terrorist group is demanding that Israel release more Palestinian security prisoners in exchange for each of the remaining hostages. Hamas is reportedly insisting that Israel free [terrorists](https://www.jns.org/hamas-seeks-release-of-oct-7-terrorists-in-hostage-deal/) arrested on Oct. 7.

Hamas is also seeking guarantees for the complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Gaza Strip and a total end to the [war](https://www.jns.org/hamas-demands-end-to-war-for-release-of-hostages/)—a stance that is incompatible with Israel’s stated goal of destroying the [terrorist group](https://www.jns.org/netanyahu-lays-out-specifics-for-ending-war-against-hamas/).

“The efforts to free the hostages are continuing at all times,” Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told journalists on Sunday. “However, we will not agree to every deal and not at any price.”