

ISRAEL WEEKLY WAR SUMMARY

Week #135 May 3 - May 9, 2026

This is a product of the IDSF Habithonistim Research Department, distributed by the David Institute for Security Policy in coordination with IDSF USA



Account of the main events in the Israel-Hamas war and hostilities by the Iranian Axis



U.S. BLOCKADE OF IRANIAN PORTS

OVERVIEW

- ✓ Blockade remains fully in effect
- 🚫 No ships allowed in or out of Iranian ports
- 🌐 Enforcement across the Middle East and beyond

EXECUTING THE MISSION

- 15,000+ troops
- 200+ aircraft
- 20+ warships

CURRENTLY

- 📶 **50+ vessels** redirected to ensure compliance
- 🚫 **73 tankers** unable to transport **166 million** barrels of Iranian oil
- 💰 **\$13+ billion** not benefitting Iran's leadership



TYPES OF ASSETS

- Aircraft Carriers
- Amphibious Assault Ship
- Amphibious Transport Dock Ship
- Dock Landing Ship
- Guided-Missile Destroyers
- Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Aircraft
- Littoral Combat Ship
- Land- and Sea-Based Fighter Aircraft
- Unmanned Aircraft
- Refueling Aircraft
- Rotary Wing Aircraft



CENTCOM released infographic of the US blockade.

Source: CENTCOM on X

According to a Bloomberg report from May 2, Iran began reducing oil production from its wells because its storage capacity is shrinking. Iran prefers to reduce pumping rather than stop it completely, because stopping oil extraction could cause wells to become blocked or could alter their chemical composition, creating expensive damage that would take a long time to repair. At the same time, there is extensive online evidence of oil smuggling from Iran into neighboring Pakistan.



SECURITY BRIEFING WEEK 135

הביטחוניסטים IDSF
Israel's Defense & Security Forum

70

Hezbollah Drone
Attacks in the past
week

200

Terrorists Killed
by the IDF this
week

500

IAF airstrikes against
Hezbollah this week



+44,000

COGAT reported that 44,000 Gazans have utilized a new exit mechanism to leave the territory, including 2,000 patients and escorts departing through the Rafah Crossing.



59%

The IDF currently controls 59% of the Gaza Strip and is systematically fortifying the Yellow Line with trenches while destroying infrastructure to deter future threats.



350 billion shekels

U.S. Central Command deployed 15,000 military personnel and over 100 aircraft to support Operation Project Freedom, aiming to restore maritime traffic through the Hormuz Strait.



166 million barrels of oil

CENTCOM disabled Iranian-flagged tankers capable of carrying 166 million barrels of oil, worth \$13 billion, after they attempted to bypass the American naval blockade recently.

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- On May 2, the IRGC-affiliated newspaper Defa Press published an article stating that Iran is transitioning to a phase of military and economic attrition against the United States until Washington removes its naval blockade. At the same time, senior Iranian officials told AFP that a resumption of fighting against the United States and Israel is highly likely.
- Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said that Iran is not currently conducting nuclear negotiations with “the enemy” and is prepared for every scenario. He also emphasized the importance of the ceasefire in Lebanon.
- Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi rejected various American media reports about intelligence assessments, saying that Iran’s current stockpile of missiles and launchers is not 75% of what it had on February 28, but rather 120% compared to that date. He added that Iran’s readiness to defend its people stands at “1000%.
- Secretary Hegseth declared that the American embargo remains fully in force, and that Iran will face massive firepower if it attacks commercial shipping.
- The Wall Street Journal reported that the United States is considering renewing “Operation Project Freedom” to free ships trapped because of the Iranian blockade of Hormuz, after Saudi Arabia and Kuwait removed restrictions on American access to bases on their territory and to their airspace, an unprecedented regional development, demonstrating the irreparable damage that Iran has caused to its standing with regional actors.

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- Al Jazeera published the text of the latest Iranian proposal, divided into three stages. The first stage would last 30 days and include a permanent ceasefire, the creation of an international mechanism to prevent renewed fighting, the lifting of the blockade on Iran, the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz with the removal of naval mines, discussions on compensation, and the withdrawal of the American force from Iran's maritime space.
- The second stage of the Iranian proposal would include freezing uranium enrichment for 15 years, followed by enrichment at 3.6% without stockpiling, which Al Jazeera suggested would see the uranium being used for electricity production. Iran would not dismantle its nuclear facilities or infrastructure, its existing enriched uranium would be diluted or transferred abroad, sanctions would be gradually lifted, and frozen funds and assets would be released.
- The third stage of the Iranian proposal would include dialogue on creating a regional security mechanism in which Iran would participate. The most important part for Iran is the first stage, because it would allow Iran to resume oil exports and then prolong negotiations in order to preserve its nuclear capabilities.
- Iran launched additional missiles and UAVs toward the United Arab Emirates, though the number was not published. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reportedly spoke with UAE Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed to express solidarity. Another report said Israel's ambassador in the UAE is working with Emirati leadership to pressure Washington to launch a major attack against Iran, suggesting that Jerusalem-Abu Dhabi relations have reached a new peak on the way to an official strategic partnership.

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- U.S. Central Command later confirmed that U.S. forces struck two empty Iranian-flagged oil tankers and disabled a third vessel. CENTCOM said these commercial ships had the capacity to transport more than 166 million barrels of Iranian oil, worth more than \$13 billion.
- U.S. Central Command confirmed that it carried out “self-defense” strikes in Iran in response to “unprovoked Iranian attacks” against U.S. Navy missile destroyers that transited the Strait of Hormuz toward the Gulf of Oman. U.S. Central Command denied Iranian claims that they had struck an American frigate. Iran was unable to demonstrate any proof of their claim.
- The United States will host the third round of ambassador-level talks between representatives from Israel and Lebanon on May 14–15.
- Hezbollah denied the accusations by the Syrian Interior Ministry that it dismantled a Hezbollah cell that planned to carry out security operations inside Syrian territory. Hezbollah said the repeated claims by Syrian security bodies, despite Hezbollah’s repeated statements that it has no presence or activity inside Syria, raise serious questions.
- The IDF Spokesperson said that in a precise strike in the Dahiyeh area of Beirut, the IDF killed Ahmad Ghaleb Ballout, commander of Hezbollah’s Radwan Force, the organization’s elite commando unit. The IDF said Ballout had advanced efforts to restore the capabilities of the Radwan Force, especially the activation of the “Conquer the Galilee” plan, which the unit had developed and trained to carry out for years.

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- There are reportedly many tunnel routes in the western sector, a mountainous area overlooking Nahariya and communities in the Western Galilee. From these routes, cells emerge to launch attacks and then return underground for protection from the Israeli Air Force. Numerous searches are needed across the 594 square kilometers designated for conquest as part of the security zone.
- Since the beginning of the ceasefire, IDF forces have reportedly been attacked 70 times using FPV drones, while more than 200 terrorists have been killed during the ceasefire. There was also an attempted interception of an IDF drone using a small surface-to-air missile, and attacks against IDF forces using rockets, mortar shells, explosive devices, FPV drones, and anti-tank fire.
- Hamas spokesman Hazem Qassem said that Israeli media reports about threats to resume the war in the Gaza Strip constitute a “violation” of the ceasefire agreement and a “clear violation” of U.S. President Trump’s plan. He said these threats contradict the “positive atmosphere” Hamas demonstrated during the recent meetings in Cairo with the mediators.
- Reuters reported that the American base in Kiryat Gat would close and move to the Gaza Strip, but the Board of Peace denied the report. At this stage, the situation regarding the ISF and any reconstruction plan appears stuck. Hamas continues to insist on its right to hold weapons and refuses to hand them over, while it is militarily strengthening and rebuilding capabilities it lost.
- The United Arab Emirates transferred \$100 million to the Board of Peace in recent days to fund a contract for training a new Palestinian police force for Gaza.

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- Nickolay Mladenov warned that Hamas's refusal to disarm could lead to the resumption of the war. In a document, he went further, saying that Israel would not be expected to halt attacks in Gaza or ensure that humanitarian aid enters the Strip if Hamas fails to accept the framework.
- COGAT published that 44,000 Gazans have already left through the new mechanism. Since February, 2,000 patients and their escorts left through the Rafah Crossing, and 120 Gazans crossed into Jordan through the Kerem Shalom and Allenby crossings on the day before the announcement.
- Unofficial Gazan sources reported on May 6 that Azzam Khalil al-Hayya, the son of the new head of Hamas's political bureau Khalil al-Hayya, was killed in an Israeli strike on al-Sahaba Street in Gaza City.
- The trench facing al-Qarara has reportedly been completed, and the trench in the area of Bani Suheila and eastern Khan Yunis is expected to be completed by next month. Slowly and steadily, the entire Yellow Line is becoming trenched and fortified ahead of a likely military occupation with the goal of deterring Hamas from threatening an emerging non-Hamas Gaza leadership.
- Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu recently asked ultra-Orthodox lawmakers to agree to delay coalition legislation exempting ultra-orthodox yeshiva students from military service until after the 2026 elections, according to the ultra-Orthodox outlet Behadrei Haredim, widely viewed as an effort to stabilize the coalition in advance of elections this Fall.
- Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared that over the coming decade, the defense budget will grow by NIS 350 billion. He said Israel is striving for independent weapons production and also spoke about advanced Israeli-made aircraft.

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- Syrian Foreign Minister Asaad al-Shibani met his Egyptian counterpart Badr Abdelatty in Cairo. The two discussed expanding cooperation and strengthening relations between Syria and Egypt.
- German Chancellor Friedrich Merz said the United States is and will remain Germany's most important partner in NATO. He added that Germany and the U.S. share a common goal: Iran must not be allowed to obtain nuclear weapons. During Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar's visit to Germany, German Foreign Minister Dr. Johann David Wadephul said Germany is committed to Israel's security, calling it a firm and unchanging commitment. He said Germany will not allow any threat to the very existence of the State of Israel, and that this is a basic principle of German policy.
- Israel will transfer jet fuel to Germany at Berlin's request following the Hormuz crisis. The Energy Ministry confirmed that Israel has production surpluses available for export. The possibility of assisting Germany with natural gas is under consideration.
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- Egypt deployed fighter jets in the United Arab Emirates. Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi visited the Egyptian fighter jet unit stationed in the UAE to assess its readiness and the efforts made to strengthen its operational capability for "dealing with various challenges." Sisi said: "We will stand by you as soon as required."