

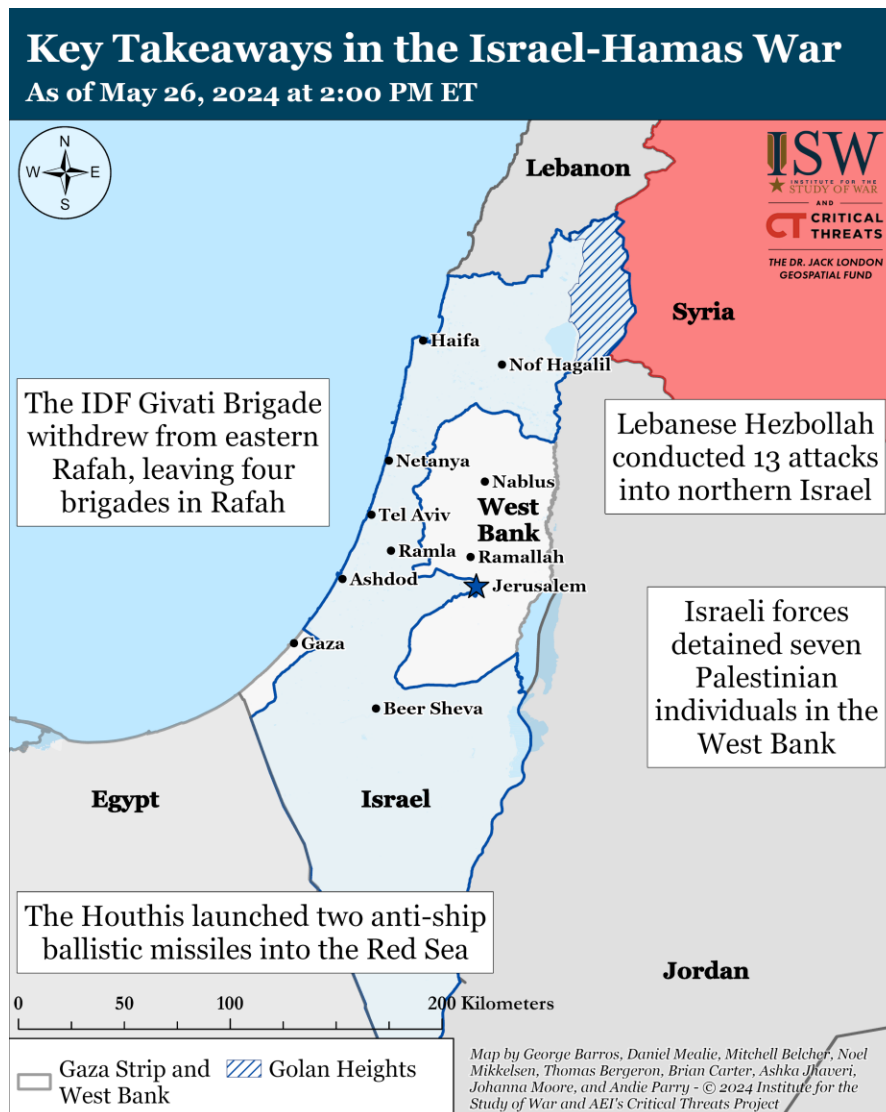
# Iran Update

Andie Parry, Kelly Campa, Annika Ganzeveld, and Nicholas Carl

May 26, 2024, 2:00 pm ET

## Key Takeaways:

- **Gaza Strip:** The IDF withdrew its Givati Brigade from Rafah, leaving four IDF brigades in Rafah.
- **West Bank:** Israeli forces engaged Palestinian fighters in three locations in the West Bank.
- **Southern Lebanon and Golan Heights:** Lebanese Hezbollah conducted 13 attacks into northern Israel.
- **Yemen:** The Houthis fired two anti-ship ballistic missiles into the Red Sea.



*The Iran Update provides insights into Iranian and Iranian-sponsored activities abroad that undermine regional stability and threaten US forces and interests. It also covers events and trends that affect the stability and decision-making of the Iranian regime. The Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute and the Institute for the Study of War (ISW) provides these updates regularly based on regional events. Click [here](#) to see CTP and ISW's interactive map of Israeli ground operations. This map is updated daily alongside the static maps present in this report.*

*CTP-ISW defines the “Axis of Resistance” as the unconventional alliance that Iran has cultivated in the Middle East since the Islamic Republic came to power in 1979. This transnational coalition is comprised of state, semi-state, and non-state actors that cooperate to secure their collective interests. Tehran considers itself to be both part of the alliance and its leader. Iran furnishes these groups with varying levels of financial, military, and political support in exchange for some degree of influence or control over their actions. Some are traditional proxies that are highly responsive to Iranian direction, while others are partners over which Iran exerts more limited influence. Members of the Axis of Resistance are united by their grand strategic objectives, which include eroding and eventually expelling American influence from the Middle East, destroying the Israeli state, or both. Pursuing these objectives and supporting the Axis of Resistance to those ends have become cornerstones of Iranian regional strategy.*

*We do not report in detail on war crimes because these activities are well-covered in Western media and do not directly affect the military operations we are assessing and forecasting. We utterly condemn violations of the laws of armed conflict and the Geneva Conventions and crimes against humanity even though we do not describe them in these reports.*

*CTP-ISW will publish abbreviated updates on May 25 and 26, 2024. Detailed coverage will resume on Monday, May 27, 2024.*

## **Gaza Strip**

### **Axis of Resistance objectives:**

- Erode the will of the Israeli political establishment and public to sustain clearing operations in the Gaza Strip
- Reestablish Hamas as the governing authority in the Gaza Strip

**Israel Defense Forces (IDF) 98th Division continued clearing operations in “the heart of Jabalia” on May 26.**[1] The IDF 460th Brigade located a weapons warehouse containing dozens of rocket components in a school complex.[2] Israeli forces raided the Hamas general security headquarters and a Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) Northern Brigade headquarters in Jabalia refugee camp.[3] The forces seized weapons and documents from both headquarters.

Palestinian militias continued to claim attacks around Beit Lahia, north of Jabalia, on May 26 indicating that the IDF is operating in some areas north of Jabalia refugee camp.[4] Hamas detonated at least two explosively formed penetrators (EFPs) targeting Israel armor near Jabalia refugee camp.[5] Several Palestinian militias targeted Israeli forces in Qasib neighborhood of Jabalia refugee camp with small arms and mortars.[6]

**Hamas falsely claimed to have captured IDF soldiers in Jabalia refugee camp on May 25.** The IDF denied the Hamas claim.[7] Hamas military spokesperson Abu Obeida said that Hamas

fighters lured an IDF unit into an ambush in a tunnel in Jabalia refugee camp.[8] Obeida claimed that Hamas fighters killed, wounded, and captured every member of the IDF unit but did not offer substantial evidence.[9]

**The IDF 99th Division continued operations along the Netzarim corridor in southern Gaza City on May 26.** The IDF 679th Brigade engaged several Palestinian fighters in the central Gaza Strip.[10] Hamas targeted Israeli forces along the Netzarim axis with rocket fire on May 26.[11]

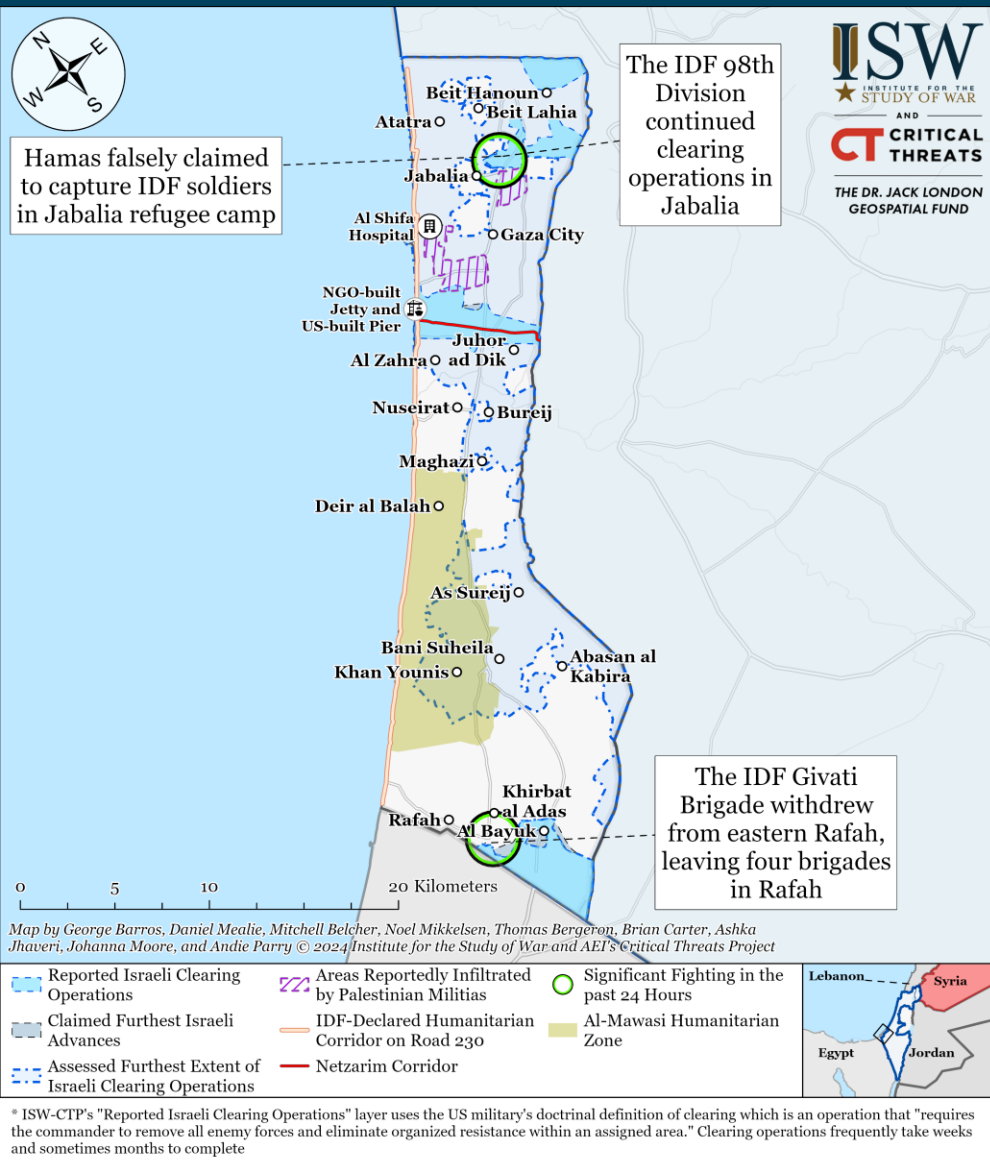
**The IDF Givati Brigade withdrew from eastern Rafah on May 26, according to Israeli media.**[12] The IDF now has four brigades in Rafah. The Givati Brigade operated in Rafah for three weeks after several deployments to Khan Younis and Gaza City throughout the war.[13] Israeli media reported that Israeli forces had “thinned out” east of Rafah.[14] Israeli sources linked the IDF’s changing disposition in Rafah to the imminent ceasefire negotiations and the International Court of Justice (ICJ) order to halt clearing operations into Rafah.[15] The IDF will reportedly continue to operate in Rafah in a “restrained fashion.”[16] The IDF is moving “more deliberately” in Rafah, according to Israeli officers who recently left Rafah and spoke to the *New York Times* on May 25.[17]

**The IDF 162nd Division continued clearing operations in Rafah.** Israeli forces located tunnel shafts and seized small arms, rocket-propelled grenades, grenades, and explosive charges in Rafah on May 26.[18] The IDF Sabar Battalion (Givati Brigade) raided a Hamas Rafah Brigade meeting point and engaged Palestinian fighters last week before withdrawing on May 26.[19] The Sabar Battalion located an underground weapons warehouse at the gathering point.[20] PIJ fighters targeted Israeli armor with a rocket-propelled grenade east of Salah ad Din border crossing in Rafah. [21]

The IDF Air Force struck over 50 targets in the Gaza Strip over the past day, including military buildings, and warehouses, rocket launchers, observation posts, and Palestinian fighter cells.[22]

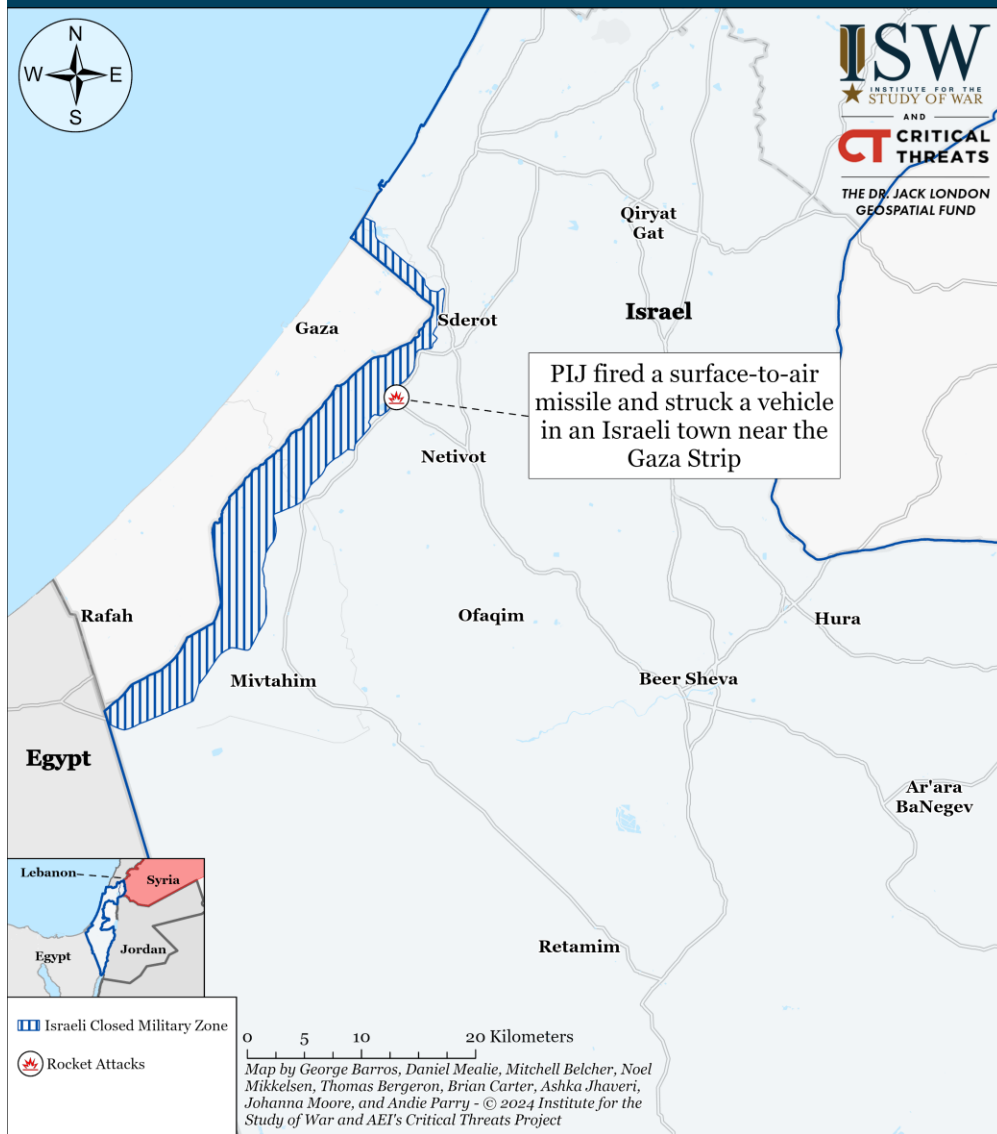
# Reported Israeli Ground Operations in the Gaza Strip

As of May 26, 2024, 2:00 PM ET



# Attacks into Israel from Gaza

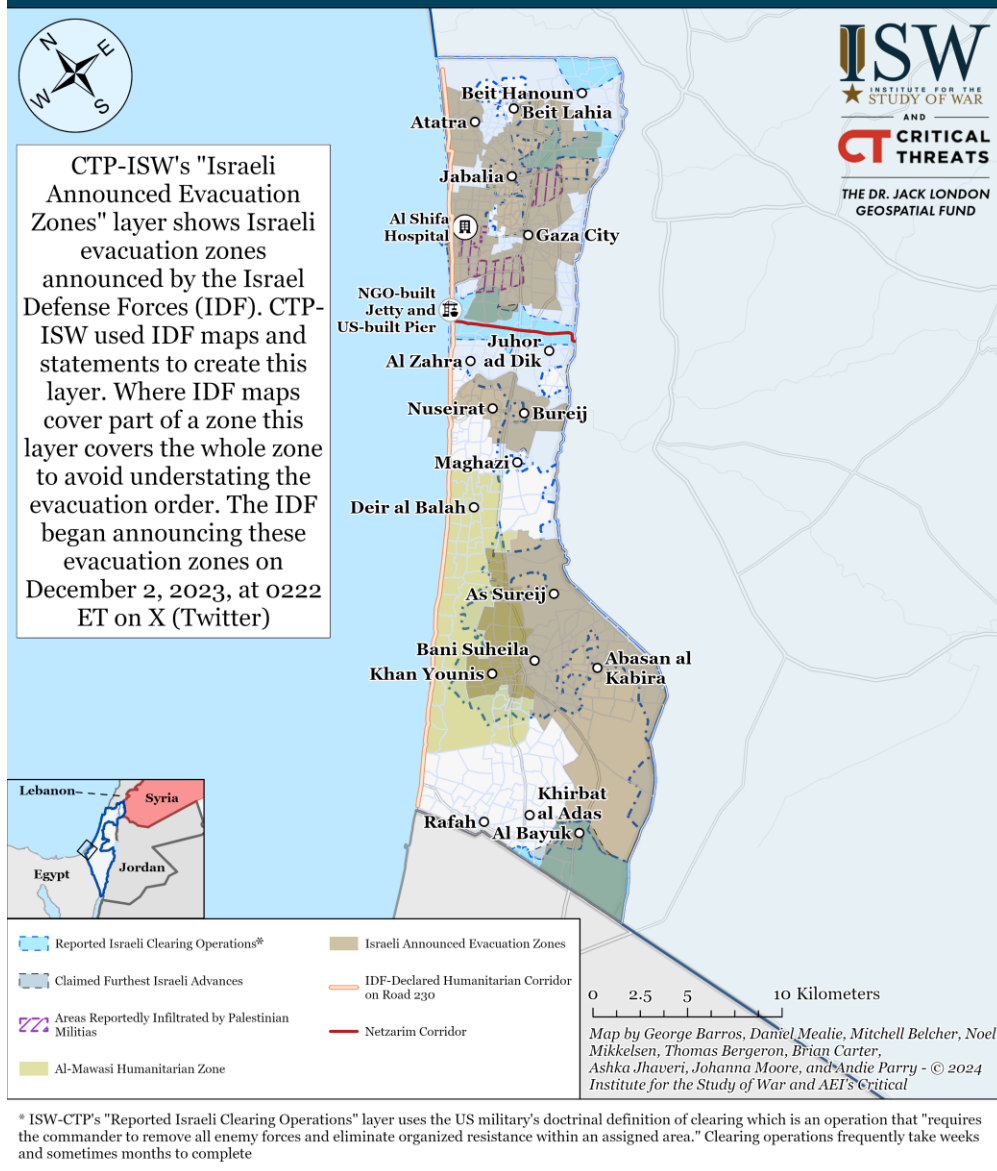
As of May 26, 2024, 2:00 PM ET



*Recorded reports of attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.*

**Ceasefire negotiations between Israel and Hamas are scheduled to resume on May 28 in Cairo, according to an Egyptian official speaking to CNN.[23]** An Israeli official similarly confirmed talks are set to resume next week but did not specify the location.[24] Israeli Mossad Chief David Barnea reportedly presented Israel's latest ceasefire and hostage release proposal to US and Qatari mediators in Paris on May 25.[25] Hamas officials denied receiving Israel's new proposal.[26] The Israeli War Cabinet is expected to convene to discuss the negotiations and clearing operations in Rafah on May 26.[27]

## Israeli-Announced Evacuation Zones in the Gaza Strip As of May 26, 2024 at 2:00 PM ET



**Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant visited Israeli forces in Rafah on May 26.** Gallant said that Israel is pursuing hostage release through “tremendous efforts” in Rafah and by “reaching deals,” referring to restarting ceasefire negotiations with international mediators and Hamas. [28] Gallant said that Israel’s “goal[s] in the Gaza Strip have become much clearer here in Rafah—to eliminate Hamas, bring back the hostages, and maintain freedom of action.”[29]

**Hamas fired a rocket barrage at central Israel from Rafah on May 26.**[30] The IDF said that Hamas fired eight rockets from Rafah.[31] Hamas last targeted central Israel in late January 2024.[32] Israeli air defenses intercepted several on the rockets.[33] Several rockets struck uninhabited areas in central Israel, north of Tel Aviv.[34] Israeli War Cabinet member Benny Gantz said that the Hamas rocket barrage on central Israel fired from Rafah demonstrates why Israel needs



to continue its clearing operation there.[35] The IDF Air Force struck two rocket launchers in Rafah aimed at Kerem Shalom prior to the Hamas rocket attack.[36] PIJ also fired a "surface-to-air missile" at an Israeli town near the Gaza Strip on May 26.[37] The attack damaged a vehicle.[38]



*Recorded reports of attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.*

## **West Bank**

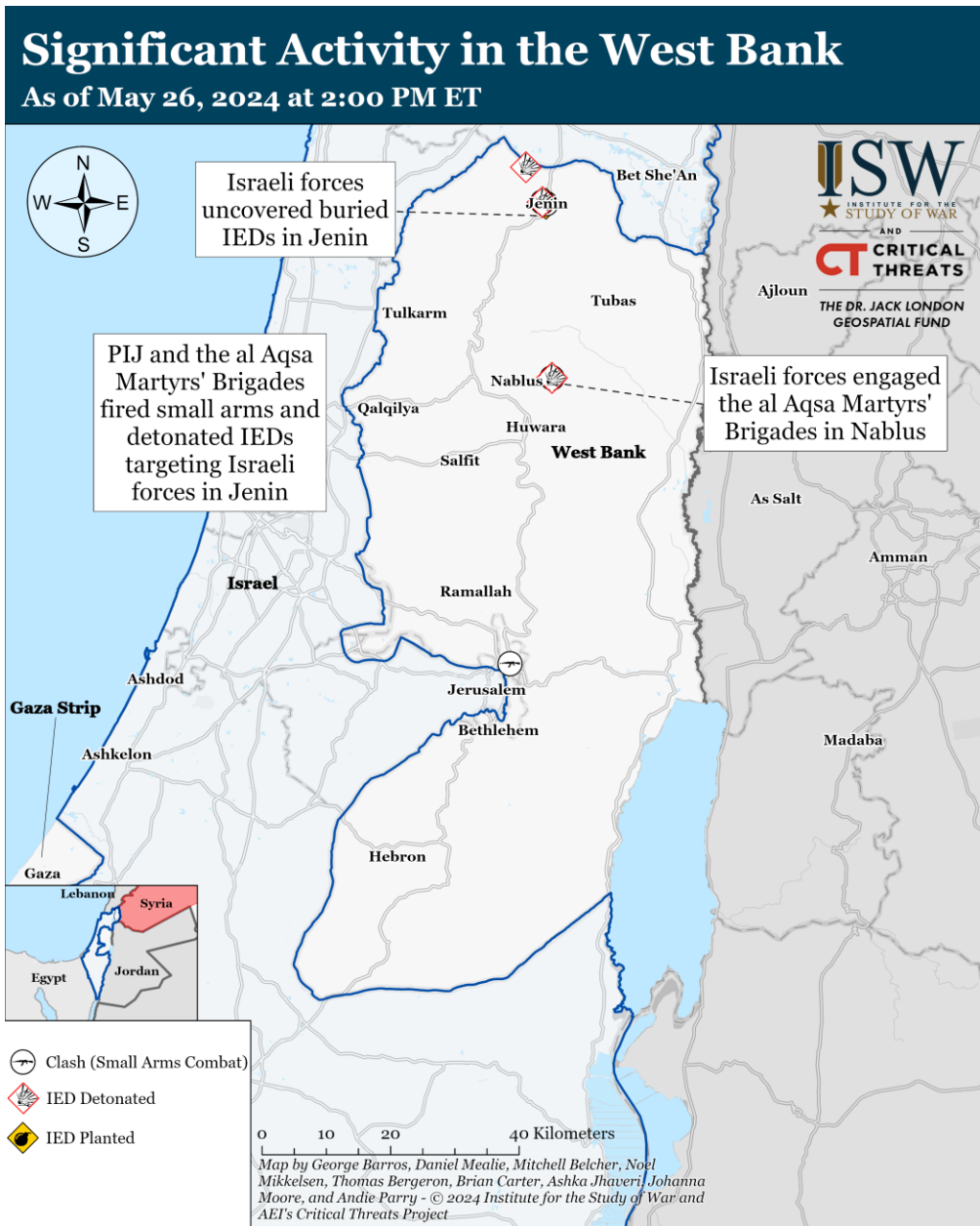
### **Axis of Resistance objectives:**

- Establish the West Bank as a viable front against Israel

**Israeli forces engaged Palestinian fighters in at least three locations in the West Bank on May 26.[39]** A Palestinian journalist reported that over 30 IDF vehicles entered Jenin and isolated Jenin refugee camp from Jenin City.[40] Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades and PIJ fighters clashed with Israeli forces using small arms and detonated IEDs in Jenin.[41] The IDF uncovered IEDs buried near Jenin.[42]

**The Israeli forces detained seven Palestinian individuals in the West Bank in overnight raids between May 25 and May 26.[43]** Israeli forces detained three Palestinians wanted for “incit[ing] terrorism” in Madama and Tel.[44] Israeli forces also detained a Palestinian suspected of “terrorist activities” in al Amari, detained a Palestinian in Bitonia for throwing improvised explosive devices (IED), and detained two Palestinians in Hosan on unspecified charges.[45]





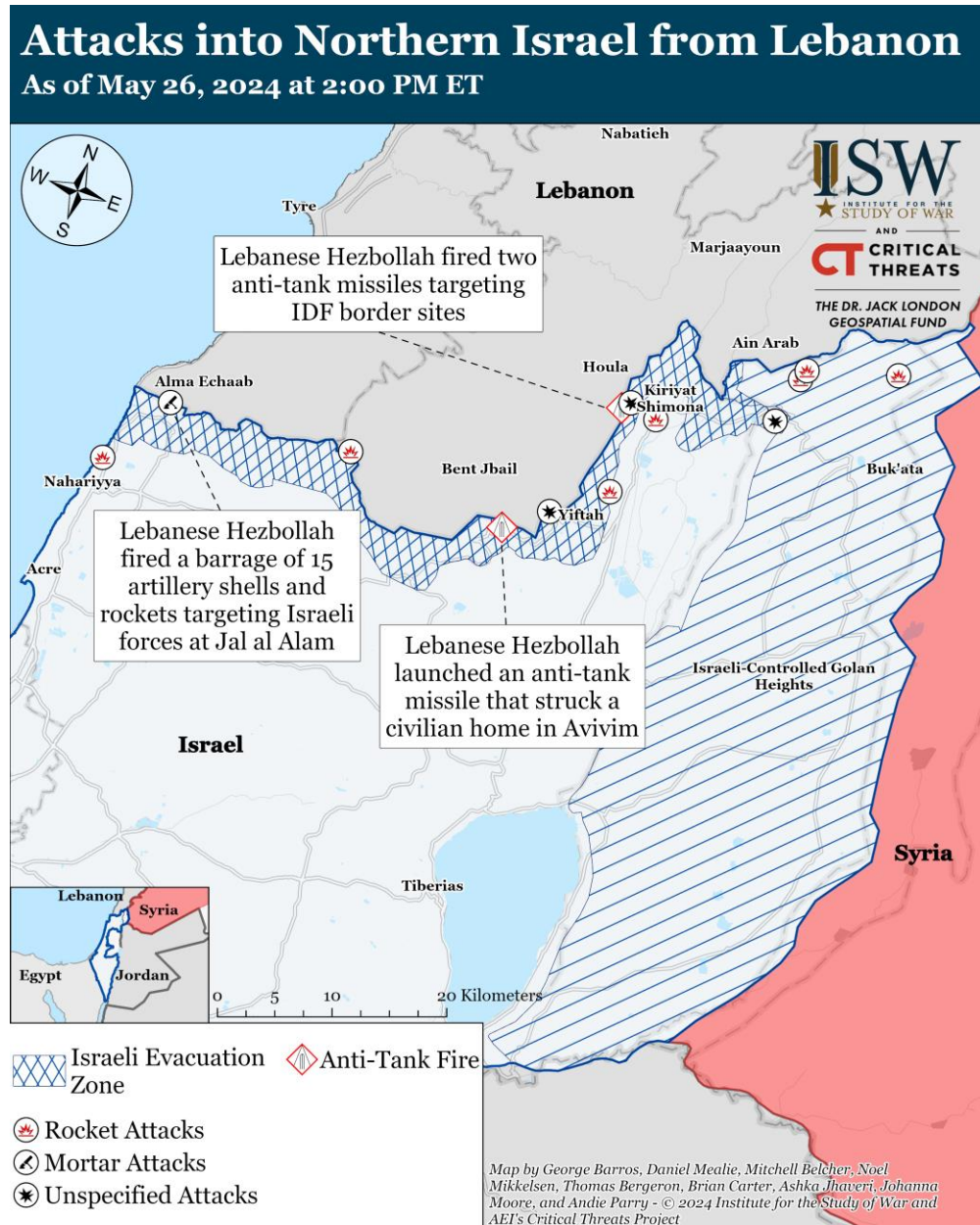
*This map is not an exhaustive depiction of clashes and demonstrations in the West Bank.*

## Southern Lebanon and Golan Heights

### Axis of Resistance objectives:

- Deter Israel from conducting a ground operation into Lebanon
- Prepare for an expanded and protracted conflict with Israel in the near term
- Expel the United States from Syria

**Lebanese Hezbollah has conducted at least 13 attacks from southern Lebanon into northern Israel since CTP-ISW's last data cutoff on May 25.[46]** Hezbollah claimed that eight of the attacks were in retaliation for recent Israeli airstrikes into southern Lebanon.[47]



*Recorded reports of attacks; CTP-ISW cannot independently verify impact.*

## Iran and Axis of Resistance

**US Central Command (CENTCOM) reported that the Houthis launched two anti-ship ballistic missiles into the Red Sea on May 25.[48]** The missiles did not cause any injuries or damage.

POWERED BY:



BABELSTREET

[1] <https://www.idf.il/203902>

[2] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1794674464292208914> ;  
<https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1794674469874946551>

[3] <https://www.idf.il/203902>

[4] <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/2307> ; [https://t.me/elaqsa\\_1965/6512](https://t.me/elaqsa_1965/6512)

[5] <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/2309> ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/2312>

[6] <https://t.me/sarayaps/17971> ; <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/2308> ; <https://t.me/AymanGouda/6153> ; [https://t.me/elaqsa\\_1965/6511](https://t.me/elaqsa_1965/6511)

[7] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1794484407090467069> ; <https://www.timesofisrael.com/idf-denies-hamas-claim-terror-group-captured-soldiers-during-gaza-fighting>

[8] <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/2305>

[9] <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/2305>

[10] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1794674478401921517>

[11] <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/2311>

[12] <https://www.ynet.co.il/blogs/gazawar233day> ; <https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/israel-at-war/artc-idf-reduces-troops-in-eastern-rafah-givati-brigade-withdraws>

[13] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1776527765921030433> ; <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1723280289302974696> ; <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1788132187499344321>

[14] <https://www.ynet.co.il/blogs/gazawar233day>

[15] [https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog\\_entry/idf-altering-rafah-operation-in-light-of-hostage-talks-pressure-from-the-hague-source/](https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/idf-altering-rafah-operation-in-light-of-hostage-talks-pressure-from-the-hague-source/) ; <https://www.ynet.co.il/blogs/gazawar233day>

[16] [https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog\\_entry/idf-altering-rafah-operation-in-light-of-hostage-talks-pressure-from-the-hague-source/](https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/idf-altering-rafah-operation-in-light-of-hostage-talks-pressure-from-the-hague-source/)

[17] <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/05/25/world/middleeast/israel-gaza-rafah.html>

[18] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1794674475558162818>

[19] [www dot idf.il/203880](http://www.idf.il/203880) ; [https://www dot i24news.tv/en/news/israel-at-war/artc-idf-reduces-troops-in-eastern-rafah-givati-brigade-withdraws](https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/israel-at-war/artc-idf-reduces-troops-in-eastern-rafah-givati-brigade-withdraws)

[20] [www dot idf.il/203880](http://www.idf.il/203880)

[21] <https://t.me/sarayaps/17972>

[22] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1794674485121224810>

[23] [https://edition.cnn.com/middleeast/live-news/israel-hamas-war-gaza-news-05-26-24/h\\_be67fff0755ea4c2619ceafcaa788a8d](https://edition.cnn.com/middleeast/live-news/israel-hamas-war-gaza-news-05-26-24/h_be67fff0755ea4c2619ceafcaa788a8d)

[24] [https://edition.cnn.com/middleeast/live-news/israel-hamas-war-gaza-news-05-26-24/h\\_be67fff0755ea4c2619ceafcaa788a8d](https://edition.cnn.com/middleeast/live-news/israel-hamas-war-gaza-news-05-26-24/h_be67fff0755ea4c2619ceafcaa788a8d)

[25] [https://www dot timesofisrael.com/liveblog\\_entry/hamas-denies-receiving-new-proposal-from-mediators-repeats-demand-for-permanent-ceasefire/](https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/hamas-denies-receiving-new-proposal-from-mediators-repeats-demand-for-permanent-ceasefire/)

[26] <https://t.me/hamaswestbank/51820>

[27] <https://t.me/moriahdoron/10509>

[28] [https://www dot timesofisrael.com/liveblog\\_entry/gallant-israel-working-to-return-hostages-via-both-military-action-and-negotiations/](https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/gallant-israel-working-to-return-hostages-via-both-military-action-and-negotiations/)

[29] [https://www dot timesofisrael.com/liveblog\\_entry/gallant-israel-working-to-return-hostages-via-both-military-action-and-negotiations/](https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/gallant-israel-working-to-return-hostages-via-both-military-action-and-negotiations/)

[30] <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/2310>

[31] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1794693481878921491>

[32] <https://t.me/qassam1brigades/1494>

[33] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1794693481878921491>

[34] <https://twitter.com/GLZRadio/status/1794688222649602183> ; <https://twitter.com/manniefabian/status/1794696116002562538>

[35] [https://www.timesofisrael dot com/liveblog\\_entry/gantz-rocket-barrage-from-rafah-proves-need-for-israels-military-operation-there/](https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/gantz-rocket-barrage-from-rafah-proves-need-for-israels-military-operation-there/)

[36] <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1794674485121224810>

[37] <https://t.me/sarayaps/17967> ; <https://twitter.com/GLZRadio/status/1794765824525312111>

[38] [www dot timesofisrael.com/liveblog\\_entry/rocket-fired-from-gaza-hit-car-in-kibbutz-saad-close-to-the-border-no-injuries-reported/](http://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/rocket-fired-from-gaza-hit-car-in-kibbutz-saad-close-to-the-border-no-injuries-reported/)

- [39] [https://t.me/elaqsa\\_1965/6509](https://t.me/elaqsa_1965/6509); [https://t.me/elaqsa\\_1965/6510](https://t.me/elaqsa_1965/6510); <https://twitter.com/idfonline/status/1794628926758965408>; <https://t.me/sarayajneen/1301>; <https://t.me/hamza20300/246959>; <https://t.me/jeninqassamm/7788>
- [40] <https://t.me/hamza20300/246981>; <https://t.me/hamza20300/246978>
- [41] [https://t.me/elaqsa\\_1965/6509](https://t.me/elaqsa_1965/6509); <https://t.me/sarayajneen/1301>; <https://t.me/jeninqassamm/7788>
- [42] <https://x.com/idfonline/status/1794628926758965408>
- [43] <https://x.com/idfonline/status/1794628926758965408>
- [44] <https://x.com/idfonline/status/1794628926758965408>
- [45] <https://x.com/idfonline/status/1794628930940621168>
- [46] <https://t.me/mmirleb/4219>; <https://t.me/mmirleb/4221>; <https://t.me/mmirleb/4231>; <https://t.me/mmirleb/4236>; [https://t.me/C\\_Military1/51689](https://t.me/C_Military1/51689); [https://t.me/C\\_Military1/51691](https://t.me/C_Military1/51691); [https://t.me/C\\_Military1/51693](https://t.me/C_Military1/51693); [https://t.me/C\\_Military1/51695](https://t.me/C_Military1/51695); <https://t.me/mmirleb/4247>; <https://t.me/mmirleb/4249>; <https://t.me/mmirleb/4251>; <https://t.me/mmirleb/4253>
- [47] <https://t.me/mmirleb/4221>; <https://t.me/mmirleb/4236>; [https://t.me/C\\_Military1/51689](https://t.me/C_Military1/51689); [https://t.me/C\\_Military1/51691](https://t.me/C_Military1/51691); <https://t.me/mmirleb/4249>; <https://t.me/mmirleb/4251>; <https://t.me/mmirleb/4253>
- [48] <https://x.com/CENTCOM/status/1794440606703382923>