

## Festivalgoers, children, soldiers: What we know about the people captured by Hamas

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Video shows militants take festival goers hostage

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**(CNN)** — Hamas fighters are holding as many as 150 people hostage in locations across Gaza following their raids on southern Israel Saturday, Israel's ambassador to the United Nations said Monday.

Their presence is complicating Israel's response to the militant group's deadly attack, however Ambassador Gilad Erdan told CNN Monday that the government's priority is destroying Hamas to restore security for all Israeli citizens.

"Of course, we want to see all of our boys, girls, grandmothers, everyone who was abducted we want to see them back home, but right now, our focus is looking at our national strategy is to obliterate Hamas terrorist capabilities," he said.

In a chilling development earlier Monday, Abu Obaida, the spokesperson of Hamas' Al-Qassam Brigades, said Hamas would start executing civilian hostages if Israel targets people in Gaza without warning.

Little evidence has emerged as to the condition of the hostages, some of whom have been identified by their families as they desperately seek answers.

Here's what we know so far about those being held.

## Music festival

Hundreds of attendees at the Nova music festival ran across the plains of the Negev Desert near Urim, a community close to the Gaza Strip, trying to escape Hamas gunmen pursuing them in vehicles in a terrifying chase. Some were killed and others were seized by armed captors, social media videos showed.



From Instagram

Shani Louk in a post from her Instagram.

Details of hostages from the attack are beginning to emerge as family members recognize relatives in the clips



circulating online.



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In one video that went viral, an Israeli woman and her boyfriend – identified as Noa Argamani and Avinatan Or – were shown being kidnapped. In it, Argamani was hoisted onto the back of a motorcycle and driven away as Or was apprehended and made to walk with his hands behind his back. CNN could not independently verify the video.

“It’s very difficult when you see someone that is so close to you and you know so much being treated like this,” Amir Moadi, a roommate of Noa Argamani, told CNN, adding that he knew about five or six people who had been at the festival and have since gone missing.

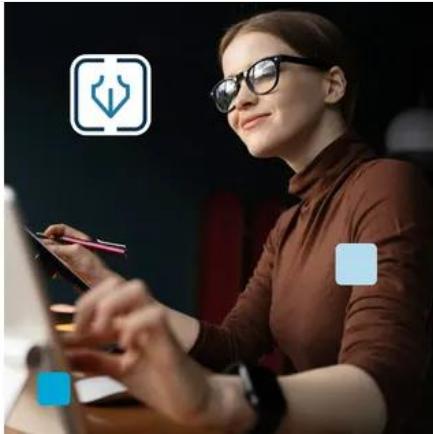


Handout

Noa Argamani, an Israeli woman, who was kidnapped by Hamas militants with her boyfriend.

In another video authenticated by CNN, an unconscious woman who was at the festival could be seen being displayed by armed militants in Gaza as onlookers shouted “Allahu Akbar.”

CNN later confirmed the identity of the woman as German-Israeli national Shani Louk.



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Ricarda Louk, Shani’s mother, told CNN that she last spoke to her daughter after hearing rockets and alarms sounding in southern Israel, calling to see if she’d made it to a secure location. Shani told her mother she was at the festival

with few places to hide.



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“She was going to her car and they had military people standing by the cars and were shooting so people couldn’t reach their cars, even to go away. And that’s when they took her,” Ricarda told CNN, adding that she hopes to see her daughter again, but the situation is bleak.

“It looks very bad, but I still have hope. I hope that they don’t take bodies for negotiations. I hope that she’s still alive somewhere. We don’t have anything else to hope for, so I try to believe,” she said.

### Israeli border communities

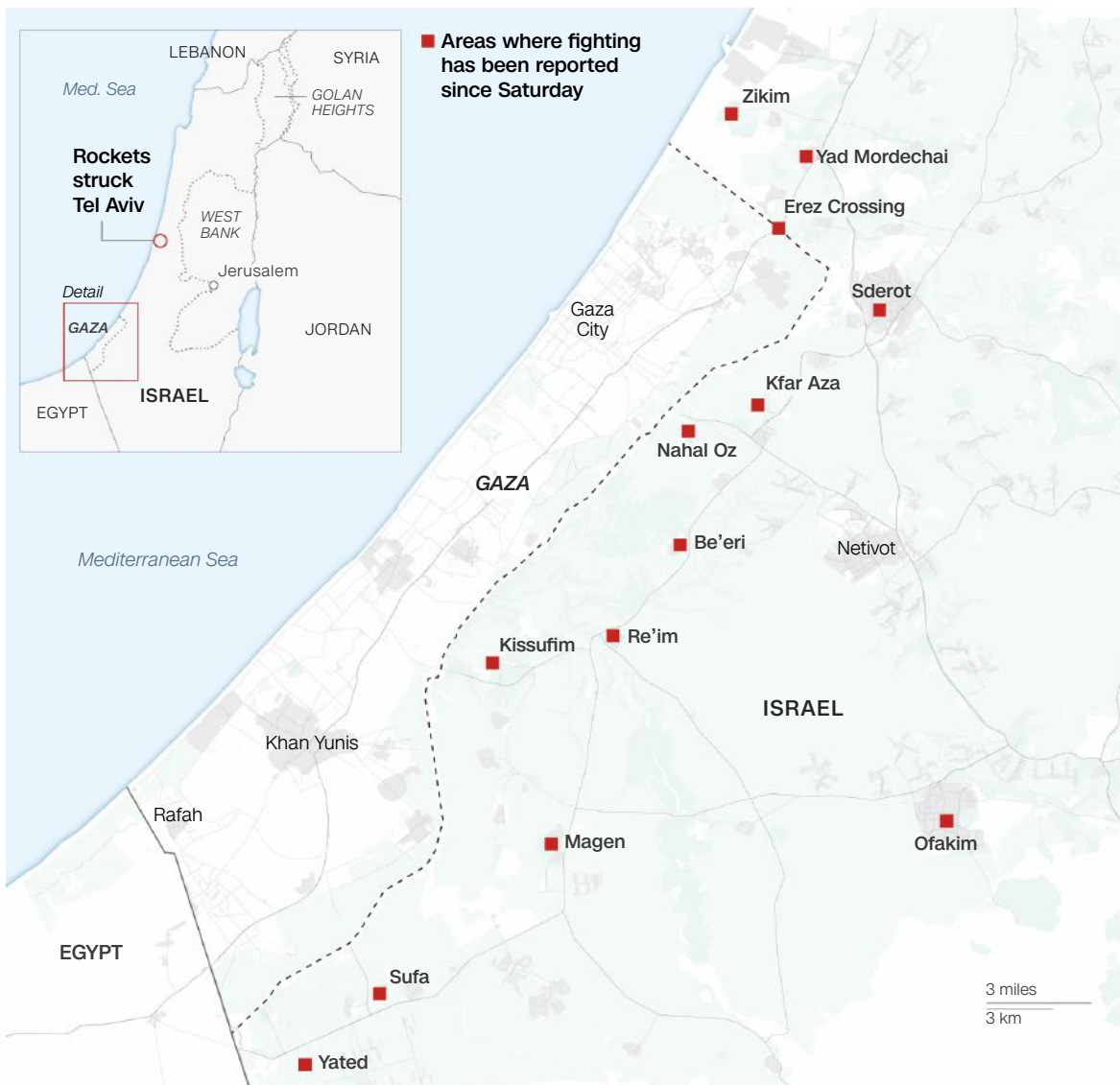
Hamas fighters took hostages in the border community Be’eri, and the town of Ofakim, 20 miles east of Gaza, IDF spokesman Brig. Gen. Daniel Hagari said on Saturday, adding that the two locations were the “main focal points” of the unfolding crisis.

In a televised address, he said that there were special forces with senior commanders in the two communities, and fighting was ongoing in 22 locations.

One video, geolocated by CNN to Be’eri, appears to show Hamas militants taking multiple Israelis captive.

### Hamas launches surprise air and ground attack from Gaza

Early Saturday, militants from Gaza fired a deadly barrage of rockets and sent gunmen into southern Israeli territory in one of the deadliest days in decades between the two sides. Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has vowed “mighty vengeance” on Hamas, and Israeli forces are battling militants in southern Israel and have been pounding Gaza with airstrikes.



Data as of Oct. 8, 2023 at 2:40 a.m. ET

Source: CNN Israel Defense Forces, Hamas  
Graphic: Renée Rigdon and Lou Robinson, CNN

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Residents in Be'eri and another community on Israel's border with Gaza, Nir Oz, told the country's Channel 12 television station that assailants were going door to door, trying to break into their homes.

Channel 12 also reported that infiltrators had taken hostages in Netiv HaAsara. Israeli authorities did not immediately confirm any details about those reports.

One Israeli mother told CNN she had been on the phone with her children, ages 16 and 12, who were home alone when they heard gunshots outside and people trying to enter. Then, over the phone, she heard the door break down.

"I heard terrorists speaking in Arabic to my teenagers. And the youngest saying to them 'I'm too young to go,'" the mother said. "And the phone went off, the line went off. That was the last time I heard from them." CNN is not identifying the mother and her children for safety reasons.

Another Israeli father told CNN he suspects his wife and young daughters may have been abducted while visiting Nir Oz. He said he recognized his wife in a viral video that shows a group of people being loaded on the back of a truck flanked by Hamas militants, while chants of "Allahu Akbar" ring out.

"I don't even know what the situation is regarding the hostages, and the situation is not looking good," Yoni Asher said, adding that he tracked his wife's phone and learned that it was located in Gaza.

In another video, geolocated by CNN to Gaza's Shejaiya neighborhood, a barefoot woman is pulled from the trunk of a Jeep by a gunman and then forced into the backseat of the car. Her face is bleeding, and her wrists appear to be cable-tied behind her back. The Jeep also appears to have an IDF license plate, suggesting it may have been stolen and brought into Gaza.

## Soldiers

Al Qassam Brigades claimed to capture "dozens" of Israeli soldiers on Saturday.

"We bring good news to our (Palestinian) prisoners and our people that the al Qassam Brigades have dozens of captured (Israeli) officers and soldiers in their hands," the group's spokesman Abu Obaida said in a post on Telegram. "They have been secured in safe places and resistance tunnels."

Video geolocated and authenticated by CNN shows at least one Israeli soldier being taken prisoner.

The video, posted to Hamas' official social media accounts, shows militants yank two clearly terrified and stunned soldiers out of a disabled tank. It's unclear from the video how the tank was disabled, but Hamas has used drones to drop bombs onto Israeli tanks before.

One of the soldiers is then seen in a short snippet of video being kicked on the ground by the militants. In the next clip, the soldier is seen lying motionless on the ground.

The second soldier is seen being led away by Hamas militants. A third soldier – his face very bloody – is seen lying on the ground motionless near the tank track. CNN does not know the current whereabouts or status of the three soldiers.

A second video, taken afterward, shows a number of different armed men around the tank. The three soldiers are nowhere to be seen.

The armed men are then seen pulling a fourth Israeli soldier from the tank. The soldier is motionless as he's dragged down the side of the tank and onto the ground. The armed men are seen stomping on his body.

On Monday, the sister of an Israeli soldier told CNN's Christiane Amanpour the soldier called her and their parents to say goodbye before she was kidnapped by militants.

"The last call my sister made was on the 7th of October, Saturday, 6:30 a.m.," Alexandra Arieiev said about her sister Karina. "She called me, then my parents. She basically called to say goodbye, that she loved us."



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Family photo

Karina Arieiev is believed to have been captured by Hamas militants.

Karina Arieiev, a 19-year-old corporal, was stationed at the Nahal Oz base at the border with Gaza.

On Saturday, family members identified the soldier's bloodied face in a Telegram video, where men can be heard shouting "this is nothing, we are just starting." After the family reported the video to Israeli authorities, Alexandra Arieiev said they eventually confirmed Karina had been abducted.

Alexandra believes her sister is a hostage in Gaza, because the family "didn't get any match with the DNA from the corpses found on the base," she told Amanpour.

"I'm devastated inside, and my parents are crying all day long," she said from Jerusalem.

## Foreign nationals

The attack has impacted families around the world, with a growing list of foreign nationals kidnapped.

US President Joe Biden said in a statement Monday that it is "likely" that American citizens may be among those being held hostage by Hamas, and that his administration is working with Israeli officials on "every aspect of the hostage crisis."

He noted that there are American citizens whose whereabouts remain unaccounted for.

Two Mexican nationals, three Brazilians, a Nepali student and a British citizen are also among those missing.

Two Mexican nationals, a woman and a man, have "presumably" been taken hostage by Hamas, Mexico's Foreign Minister Alicia Barcena said on Sunday.

The Brazilians and 26-year-old British citizen Jake Marlowe were all at the Nova music festival near the Gaza border which was attacked on Saturday.

Marlowe, who was working there as a security guard, has been missing since Saturday morning, his mother told the Israeli Embassy in the UK.

A source at the German Foreign Ministry told CNN late Sunday that it "has to assume" there are German citizens

amongst those kidnapped by Hamas. "As far as we know, they are all people who have Israeli citizenship in addition to German citizenship," the source said, but would not comment on individual cases.

Eleven Thai nationals have been taken hostage, a spokesperson for Thailand's Foreign Ministry said on Monday.

Israel has long been a major destination for Thai migrants, most of whom work agricultural jobs. There are approximately 30,000 Thai workers in Israel, according to the Foreign Ministry, and over a thousand have requested help to be evacuated.

CNN's Gianluca Mezzofiore, Ibrahim Dahman, Niamh Kennedy, Sharif Paget, Mohammed Tawfeeq, Eyad Kourdi, Francesca Giuliani Hoffman, Claudia Rebaza, Elis Barreto, Lucas Mendes, Mia Alberti, Sophie Jeong, Kocha Olarn, Maddie Araujo, Ana Bickford, Hannah Holland and Manveena Suri contributed to this report.

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