



SIGNS OF THE TIMES

News Articles for Episode 314

[Hezbollah escalates attacks in the north of Israel - analysis - The Jerusalem Post \(jpost.com\)](#)

#bibleprophecy, #israel, #hamas, #hezbollah, #war

Jun 1, 2024

The overall picture in the north is of an aggressive Hezbollah that is not deterred by a potential deal between Israel and Hamas, and is willing to expand the conflict.

Hezbollah escalated attacks over the weekend of May 31-June 1. The pro-Iranian Al-Mayadeen media detailed an extensive list of Hezbollah's claims to have attacked numerous [sites in northern Israel](#). The escalation comes as the US and France are pushing for a ceasefire in Gaza. Hezbollah says it is supporting the people of Gaza.

The Iranian-backed group claimed to have targeted the "Yiftach Barracks" as well as a "sensitive" military site and the "Biranit barracks." The group said it targeted the headquarters of the 769th IDF Brigade using Burkan heavy missiles. The group also said it shot down a Hermes 900 drone. Al-Mayadeen claimed this was the fourth [Hermes drone](#) downed in May.

The Hezbollah escalation comes as Hamas has vowed a war of "attrition" in Gaza. It appears that Hezbollah is seeking to increase its attacks at the same time as Hamas is also increasing its [attacks on the IDF in Gaza](#). This is apparently part of a full-court press to show Israel that Iran's "axis of resistance" is succeeding after almost eight months of war.

The Hezbollah attacks began on May 31 at 11:44 am with sirens in Metula. Later, Hezbollah also launched drone attacks targeting areas near Metula. Sirens also sounded in Acre in the afternoon.

"Following the sirens that sounded a short while ago in the area of the city of Acre, one UAV that crossed into Israeli territory from Lebanon was successfully intercepted by the IDF Aerial Defense Array. Alerts were activated in the area due to the danger of falling fragments from the interceptor," the IDF said.

Later Hezbollah targeted the area of Kalil in the northern Galilee and the area of Al-Kosh.

Hezbollah began its attacks on June 1 in the morning with drone attacks. The attacks continued throughout the day into the evening, when sirens sounded in Acre. One of the attacks was deemed to be a false alarm.

Increased tensions in the north

Hezbollah is seeking to increase its attacks in a dangerous escalation that could lead to more tensions in the north. The downing of the drone and the Hezbollah attacks that appear to be reaching deeper into Israeli territory are concerning. In addition pro-Iranian militias in Iraq continue to increase their threats with drone attacks. In addition, on Thursday the IDF intercepted a cruise missile that approached the Golan.

Hezbollah and other Iranian-linked groups are shifting their attacks to attempt to strike at Israel using more drones and other capabilities that they have developed.

The use of a cruise missile, for instance, is a serious escalation. This shows how Iran is exporting its technology to various groups in the region. Recent reports from Iran also noted that the country is seeking to transfer more ballistic missile technology to the Houthis in Yemen. The Houthis have also stepped up attacks since May 30, using numerous drones and ballistic missiles.

It is clear that Iran is seeking to ring Israel with proxy groups and carry out numerous attacks on a variety of fronts. Iran calls this “unifying the arenas.” The escalation over the weekend is an example of this attempt.

Hezbollah’s claims of targeting IDF bases also shows how Hezbollah is trying to showcase its intelligence abilities. For instance it has recently said that it is seeking to target Israeli defense company Rafael Advanced Defense Systems.

The overall picture in the north is of an aggressive Hezbollah that is not deterred and is willing to expand the conflict.

[Netanyahu: Israel ready for 'intense action in the north' - JNS.org](#)

#bibleprophecy, #israel, #hezbollah, #war

Jun 1, 2024

The PM pledged the restoration of security during a visit to Kiryat Shmona.

Israel is “prepared for very intense action in the north” to restore security, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Wednesday, speaking during a visit to [Kiryat Shmona](#) near the Lebanese border.

“We said, at the start of the war that we would restore security in both the south and the north, and this is what we are doing,” the premier said at a lookout point in the city after earlier being briefed by commanders at the IDF’s Gibor base.

“Today, I am on the northern border with our heroic fighters and commanders, and with our firefighters. Yesterday, the ground burned here and I am pleased that you have extinguished it, but ground also burned in Lebanon,” Netanyahu continued, referring to [fires](#) that broke out in recent days in the north as a result of Hezbollah attacks.

“Whoever thinks he can hurt us and we will respond by sitting on our hands is making a big mistake. We are prepared for very intense action in the north. One way or another, we will restore security to the north,” he said.

The prime minister was accompanied by his chief of staff, Tzachi Braverman and his military secretary, Maj.-Gen. Roman Gofman.

Defense Minister Yoav Gallant visited the northern frontier on Tuesday for a situational assessment with commanders.

“Minister Gallant and the commanders discussed IDF operational and intelligence efforts in the face of Hezbollah’s aggression, ongoing efforts to thwart Hezbollah terrorists and the forces’ readiness for operations against Hezbollah,” the Defense Ministry said in a statement, adding that Gallant was also briefed on firefighting efforts in the area.

Israel is preparing to launch a large-scale attack against Hezbollah in Southern Lebanon, *Channel 12* security and military correspondent Nir Dvori wrote in an article published on Wednesday.

The past eight months of fighting in the north has been “below the threshold of war,” he added.

The IDF is prepared for an all-out campaign, but also for a more limited attack that would remain below the war threshold but risk a sudden and rapid escalation.

Hezbollah has been engaging in continuous attacks on northern Israel since joining the war on Oct. 8 in support of Hamas. Last month, the IDF raised its response to the attacks to include attacks deep inside Lebanon, destroying terrorist infrastructure and killing terrorists.

The Americans have been undertaking a “feverish” effort behind the scenes to prevent an escalation, and despite the increasingly militant rhetoric from the Israeli side, behind the scenes there is almost complete agreement on the Israeli desire for an arrangement that will calm things down on the Lebanese front, Dvori wrote.

“The northern front is directly related to what is happening in the Gaza Strip and the continuation of the fighting there, which may be stopped following a new kidnapping deal,” he continued. “If, in the end, a new deal is launched, Israel recognizes that this will be an opportunity to lead the political process vis-à-vis Lebanon, thereby preventing escalation and bringing about a political settlement.”

[UN experts urge all countries to recognise Palestinian statehood | Reuters](#)

#bibleprophecy, #united nations, #palestinian state, #middle east

Jun 3, 2024

GENEVA, June 3 (Reuters) - A group of United Nations experts called on Monday for all countries to recognise a Palestinian state to ensure peace in the Middle East.

The call came less than a week after Spain, Ireland and Norway officially recognised a Palestinian state, prompting anger from Israel, which has found itself increasingly isolated after nearly eight months of war in Gaza.

The experts, including the U.N. Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in the Palestinian territories, said recognition of a Palestinian state was an important acknowledgement of the rights of the Palestinian people and their struggle towards freedom and independence.

"This is a pre-condition for lasting peace in Palestine and the entire Middle East – beginning with the immediate declaration of a ceasefire in Gaza and no further military incursions into Rafah," they said.

"A two-state solution remains the only internationally agreed path to peace and security for both Palestine and Israel and a way out of generational cycles of violence and resentment."

Israel's Foreign Ministry did not respond immediately to a request for comment.

With their recognition of a Palestinian state, Spain, Ireland and Norway said they sought to accelerate efforts to secure a ceasefire in Israel's war with Hamas in Gaza.

The three countries say they hope their decision will spur other European Union states to follow suit. Denmark's parliament later rejected a proposal to recognise a Palestinian state.

Israel has repeatedly condemned moves to recognise a Palestinian state, saying they bolster Hamas, the militant Islamist group that led the deadly Oct. 7 attack on Israel which sparked the Israeli offensive in the Gaza Strip.

[Physically healthy Dutch woman dies by assisted suicide at age 29 | Fox News](#)

#bibleprophecy, death, #assisted suicide, #healthy

Jun 1, 2024

A young [Dutch woman](#) finally got her tragic wish: to die by assisted suicide.

29-year-old Zoraya ter Beek's life was terminated last week after waiting three years for final approval for her euthanasia, which is legal in the Netherlands if the patient is deemed to [be experiencing](#) "unbearable suffering with no prospect of improvement."

Ter Beek was diagnosed with autism when she was 21, and by the time she was 22, she wore a "Do Not Resuscitate" tag around her neck, [The Free Press reported](#). She reportedly had been hoping to end her life since she was a child as she was bullied growing up and often felt like she didn't fit in.

"For me, autism is the major hiccup in my life," Ter Beek told the Free Press. "That bothers me the most."

[CALIFORNIA SENATOR PUSHES 'DEATH ON DEMAND' ASSISTED SUICIDE MEASURE](#)

While Ter Beek was physically healthy, she struggled with mental illness: depression, anxiety and an unspecified personality disorder, The Free Press reported. In school, she dressed as a goth to ward off bullies and seem scarier.

"The whole black look looked right, because that is how I felt on the inside," she said.

Ter Beek lived with her boyfriend, Stein, an IT programmer 10 years her age, but her parents didn't approve of the age difference. She had been estranged from her mother and three older sisters for six years, while her father died from cancer last year.

Stein worried about Ter Beek and encouraged her to seek treatment, so she tried various things to treat her mental illness, including 33 rounds of electroconvulsive therapy, in which electric currents jolt the brain. But, after her last treatment in August 2020, her psychiatrist told her, "There's nothing more we can do for you. It's never going to get any better."

[ASSISTED DEATHS MAY SOON BE A REALITY FOR THOSE SUFFERING FROM MENTAL ILLNESS IN CANADA](#)

"After we heard that, we all kind of knew what that meant," Ter Beek had said, solidifying her decision to apply to the Netherlands' [Euthanasia Expertise Center](#) in December 2020. "I was always very clear: if it doesn't get better, I can't do this."

"My whole friends and my support system, we really did it together," she had told The Free Press. Ter Beek reportedly saw herself as an ambassador for the Dutch euthanasia program and believed there is proper protocol in place to prevent abuse of the system.

"We've had this law for more than 20 years," she had told the outlet. "There are really strict rules, and it's really safe."

Ter Beek opposed "suicide kits" being widely available for those waiting for or have been denied state-sanctioned euthanasia and did not support an update to the law that would allow those seeking assisted-suicide without prior medical intervention or the approval of the state, she had told The Free Press.

[‘KIND OF SCARY’: CONTROVERSIAL MEDICAL PROCEDURE MAY SOON BE LEGAL IN ANOTHER BLUE STATE](#)

"I'm pro-death. But we need to be careful to protect people who're in psychosis or depressed and not thinking straight," Ter Beek said. "If you go on the suicide kit road, you don't know if somebody, maybe with the right help, could have chosen to live."

Suicide related to mental illness is on the rise, The Free Press reported. In 2010, there were only two recorded cases of medically assisted suicide that involved psychiatric suffering, compared to 138 in 2023.

Ter Beek had a back-up plan if her application didn't get final approval. She planned to use a suicide kit she obtained from [Exit International](#), which advocates for the legalization of voluntary euthanasia. But she ultimately didn't need to use her "escape plan," as she called it.

"Zoraya passed away today at 1:25 p.m. Or as she saw it herself: she went to sleep," a friend [posted to X on May 22](#).

[Philadelphia breaks world record for largest drag queen story hour event | Fox News](#)

#bibleprophecy, #stories, #drag queens, #children

Jun 2, 2024

Children exposed to gender ideology as drag queens read LGBTQI+ stories, talk about Pride

Organizers in the [City of Brotherly Love](#) broke a world record after recently hosting the largest-ever drag queen story hour event where children were read LGBTQI+ stories and exposed to gender ideology.

The event was held at the National Constitution Center [in Philadelphia](#) on June 1. It was sponsored by Philly's official tourism bureau, Visit Philadelphia, and organized by Philadelphia Gay News.

The event attracted 268 attendees, a mix of both adults and children. A Guinness World Records adjudicator was present at the event and verified the world record, which is the first time the award has been given.

Children's books that were read to the young audience included "Twas the Night Before Pride" by Joanna McClintick and "The Family Book" by Todd Parr, which both touch on LGBTQI+ culture.

"Kevin the Unicorn: It's Not All Rainbows" by Jessika von Innerebner, "Hello, Philadelphia!" by Martha Day Zschock and "Elmer" by David McKee were also read by drag queens at the event.

In an X post on Saturday, Visit Philadelphia touted the record-breaking event, which it said "brought together famed Philadelphia drag performers."

"Philadelphia, the birthplace of America, today secured a new GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS title for the 'largest attendance at a drag queen story time reading,'" the post reads.

According to Visit Philadelphia's 2023 annual report, the organization disclosed that it received \$16.6 million in funding. Eighty-four percent of its funding came from Philadelphia's hotel tax and 9% came from "grants and contributions." When Fox News Digital inquired if the drag queen story time event was funded by taxpayers, Visit Philadelphia did not immediately respond.

In a statement obtained by the Associated Press, Philadelphia Gay News publisher Mark Segal called the event "history-making."

"[C]reating history-making moments like we've done today, hosted on land synonymous with our country's fight for fundamental rights and freedom, serves as a powerful reminder of the resiliency, talent and culture that make up the fabric of our great American city," he said.

Fox News Digital reached out to Guinness World Records and Visit Philadelphia for comment.

[Giant Venomous Flying Spiders Set to 'Invade' New York, Experts Say \(msn.com\)](#)

#bibleprophecy, #spiders, #poisoness, #northeast

Jun 4, 2024

[New York](#), and most of the Northeastern [United States](#), is set to brace for the upcoming "invasion" of a species of giant [venomous](#) spiders.

[Knewz.com](#) has learned that the Joro [spiders](#) are native to [Japan](#) and other parts of [Asia](#), and have vibrant bodies with four-inch-long legs.

The invasive spider species has sporadically been the topic of discussion for a few years now, first appearing in the news back in 2022, when the Joro spider was found to concentrate its population around [Georgia](#).

The [Smithsonian Magazine](#) had reported at the time that their population had "exploded" in the state, with "golden webs draped porches, powerlines and mailboxes across at least 25 counties."

The New Jersey Pest Control had issued a warning earlier in 2024 that the invasive spider species may continue to spread their numbers toward the Northeast, potentially reaching New York, [New Jersey](#), and the East Coast.

"These spiders are hard to miss, with a leg span of up to 4 inches and a vibrant yellow and black coloration," the New Jersey Pest Control said in a [blog post](#). "What sets them apart, however, is their ability to fly, a trait uncommon among spiders."

"While not accurate flight in the avian sense, Joro spiders utilize a technique known as ballooning, where they release silk threads into the air, allowing them to be carried by the wind."

David Coyle, a scientist and assistant professor in the Department of Forestry and Environmental Conservation at Clemson University, wrote in a peer-reviewed research paper published on [Wiley](#) that the species was spreading in the U.S. like "wildfire."

Furthermore, Coyle and his team believe that the Joro spider is "here to stay." In a Clemson University [press release](#) from 2023, he said that his data predicted "this spider is going to be able to inhabit most of the eastern U.S."

"It shows that their comfort area in their native range matches up very well with much of North America."

"Barring some unforeseen circumstance, we expect the range of these things to continue expanding, likely to the north, and we've already seen that with some populations in Maryland," Coyle added.

José R. Ramírez-Garofalo, an ecologist in the Lockwood Lab at Rutgers University, said in a recent statement to the news outlet [SI Live](#) that with the advent of summer and spring, the spiders will start reproducing and spreading to other states.

The ecologist added that "it is a matter of when, not if" the spiders arrive in New York and New Jersey.

Given that the Joro spiders are originally from Asian countries like Japan, Korea, [Taiwan](#), and [China](#), the question remains: how did they end up in the U.S.?

The New Jersey Pest Control theorized that they were "unintentionally transported to the United States via human activities."

"Cargo shipments, international trade, or personal travel could have facilitated their journey across the ocean."

Although a terrifying and venomous specimen, Coyle believes that the spider invasion is not something to be scared of, as his research has shown "no evidence that they've done any damage to a person or a pet."

However, he also mentioned in a statement to [CBS News](#), "Anyone that doesn't sort of like all the creepy crawly things, [the Joro spider] has all of the characteristics that make them squeamish."

[Pope Francis Names 3 Pro-Gay Prelates to Vatican Doctrinal Office \(breitbart.com\)](#)

#bibleprophecy, #pope, #lgbt, #vatican, #apostasy

Jun 2, 2024

ROME, Italy — Pope Francis appointed three prelates, known for their support for homosexuality, to the Vatican’s doctrinal office Saturday, just as LGBT groups were kicking off gay pride month.

Edward Pentin, a veteran Vatican journalist and [author](#) of *The Next Pope*, [noted](#) that the three [men](#), two of whom are cardinals, have all been on the front lines in the push to relax the Church’s moral teaching on the evil of homosexual acts.

Portuguese Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça, who adopted a “Who am I to judge?” approach in his pastoral [work](#) with homosexuals in Lisbon, has been a public advocate for former sister Maria Teresa Forcades i Vila, notorious for her [promotion](#) of “queer theology.” Cardinal Tolentino wrote a preface to one of her books and invited her to speak at the launch of a book of his in 2016.

The second appointment was Cardinal Marcello Semeraro, who has reportedly turned his diocese of Albano into “the Italian capital of the Catholic-gay movement,” annually hosting the Forum of Italian LGBT Christians, which seeks to make the homosexual lifestyle fully accepted inside the Church. Semeraro also wrote the foreword to a [book](#) by Father Aristide Fumagalli ([dubbed](#) “the Italian version of Fr. James Martin”), which bore the title *Possible Love — Homosexual Persons and Christian Morality*.

The pope’s third nominee was Archbishop Bruno Forte of the Italian diocese of Chieti-Vasto, the [author](#) of sections on homosexuality in the controversial interim document of the first Synod on the Family in 2014 that attempted to open the door to acceptance of homosexual relationships in the Church. Forte made a [stir](#) in 2023 by inviting people to pray for those taking part in Gay Pride events in the month of June.

Curiously, the Vatican announced these three new appointments on Saturday, just days after Pope Francis provoked [outrage](#) among certain LGBT groups by reiterating the Church’s ban on allowing homosexuals to enter seminary training, telling Italian bishops there is already too much “faggotry” in the Church.

The bishops should “get all the fairies [*checche*] out of seminary, even those who are only semi-oriented,” the pope added.

[United Methodist Church loses more than 1 million members in single day when group takes stand for 'God and His word' | Blaze Media \(theblaze.com\)](#)

#bibleprophecy, #united methodists, #lgbt, #membership, #apostasy

Jun 4, 2024

Last month, the UMC officially adopted pro-LGBT values.

In one fell swoop last week, the United Methodist Church lost more than 1 million members.

Weeks after the United Methodist Church [voted to allow LGBT-practicing clergy](#) and [reverse prohibitions on same-sex marriage](#), the United Methodist Church of Ivory Coast (Eglise Méthodiste Unie Côte d'Ivoire) [voted](#) on May 28 to leave the UMC.

'This is not an emotional issue but a matter of unchangeable truth. Homosexuality is clearly a sin.'

The West African Methodists [made](#) the decision to leave the UMC "for reasons of conscience, before God and His word, the supreme authority in matters of faith and life." The decision of the UMC to embrace LGBT culture and same-sex marriages "deviates from the Holy Scriptures," according to the EMUCI. The UMC church is, therefore, "sacrific[ing] its honor and integrity to honor the LGBTQ community."

In a statement, Bishop Benjamin Boni [said](#) the UMC "is now based on socio-cultural and contextual values which have consumed its doctrinal and disciplinary integrity."

This is a significant development because it means the UMC [is losing more than 1 million members](#).

Even more important is the fact that Methodism of the conservative/traditional variety is growing in the Ivory Coast. The UMC in the U.S., on the other hand, has seen years of decline — especially as the denomination began embracing liberalism.

Ministry Watch [explained](#):

With 900 churches and 100 preaching points, the church has experienced 7-8% annual growth. Its demographic reflects the country's, with 60% under 35 and women as the majority. Alongside its spiritual mission, the church runs schools and a hospital while engaging in community development.

The Côte d'Ivoire Conference was granted provisional membership in the denomination during the 2004 General Conference and fully admitted in 2008. It quickly became one of the denomination's largest conferences, with over 1 million professing members as of the most recent report.

The EMUCI is not the first group of Methodists to walk away from the UMC.

Over the last several years, [thousands of UMC congregations](#) in the U.S. have disaffiliated from the UMC, joining the Global Methodist Church or remaining independent. They left over the denomination's liberal drift.

The Korean Methodist Church — which boasts approximately 1.5 million members — [could soon also be on its way out](#) of the UMC.

"Homosexuality cannot be accepted until the Lord returns. This is not an emotional issue but a matter of unchangeable truth. Homosexuality is clearly a sin," a coalition of conservative Korean Methodists said last month. "This is an issue concerning the sanctity of life that the church must teach correctly, without compromise."

[Sadie Robertson, Host of 11th Annual K-LOVE Fan Awards, Encourages This Generation to 'Be the Light of the World' - Milton Quintanilla \(crosswalk.com\)](#)

#bibleprophecy, #christians, #sadie robertson huff, #young generation

May 31, 2024

Author and podcast host Sadie Robertson Huff encourages this generation of young Christians to “be the light of the world.”

Huff, who rose to fame in the reality series “Duck Dynasty,” will host the 11th annual K-LOVE Fan Awards along with Brandon Lake on TBN at 8:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. ET. She is also nominated for the Podcast of the Year Award for her “WHOA That’s Good” podcast.

“What an honor to know that people care about it, and are nominating it,” Huff told [Church Leaders](#). “If people listen to my podcast and receive what I receive when listening to others’ podcasts, that is so special to me.”

Moreover, she encouraged this generation of young Christians to “be the light of the world” because it’s what “[Jesus](#) said” for his followers to be.

“I think when things get dark, it’s so tempting to do what he said not to do and hide and be like, ‘Oh, it’s so dark,’ and get scared,” Huff said.

[Sadie Robertson Huff | 2024 K LOVE Fan Awards \(red carpet\) from ccm-magazine on GodTube.](#)

But “you” are called “to actually help make the world a better place” by being that light, she continued. “So it’s not the time to cower back. It’s not the time to hide; it’s actually the time to fully take him at his word and be the light.”

Huff hopes that people can begin to take that command “seriously and take on the call of their life” that Jesus has given them.

“In this generation, we struggle a lot with our identity—with who we are,” Huff said. “And I love that that’s one place in Scripture that Jesus says, ‘You are the light of the world.’ Like that is your identity.”

“And when you step into that,” she concluded. “I think people are gonna be a lot more confident in who they were created to be because they’ll be living it.”