



BIU Newsflash

Bar-Ilan University Student Eldad Regev Captured by Hezbollah

Eldad Regev, one of the two IDF reserve soldiers captured during Hezbollah's ambush on their border patrol on July 12, is a student in Bar-Ilan's Pre-Academic Training Program ("Mechina") and was due to begin studying for his B.A. at the University this Fall.



A few days prior to his capture, Eldad contacted the Mechina in order to postpone an exam he knew in advance that he would miss due to his reserve duty. As is the University's practice with all soldiers called to military service, the Mechina complied with his request and postponed the exam. "The sad part of the

story is that we postponed the exam and made all the preparations for him to take it a few days later,

but he couldn't show up," said **Dr. Dov Levitan**, Director of Academic Regional Colleges and Pre-Academic Study Programs, adding that the Mechina would make every effort to accommodate Eldad upon his return.

Since Eldad's kidnapping, the administrative division of the University's regional college network has maintained regular contact with the Regev family, offering emotional support during their painful ordeal.

Eldad was called to active duty just over a month ago. Ironically, his capture took place just a day before he was to conclude this round of service. We pray for the safe return of Eldad Regev, of Kiryat Motzkin, his comrade Ehud Goldwasser, of Nahariya, and Gilad Shalit, who is being held captive in Gaza.

This war is like no other war we have experienced here. The front line is the whole northern part of the country. And what makes this war particularly odd is the fact that here in the center of Israel, it is business as usual. Well, not quite. We are, of course, glued to the TV, tuned in to the radio and constantly checking the internet, but for now, our daily lives are so much different than our brethren in the north.

This brief news update is designed to provide you with the latest information relating to the conflict vis-à-vis the Bar-Ilan University community. Join us in praying for a speedy, successful resolution to this crisis.



Good tidings!

Eli Cohen
Director of Marketing
and Public Relations

Safed Regional College Heavily Damaged by Katyusha

Bar-Ilan's regional college in Safed fell victim to Hezbollah's wrath when a Katyusha destroyed its library and caused extensive damage to a classroom, electronic equipment, and communication and internet systems. Two employees of the college were lightly wounded in the incident, which took the life of a Safed resident.

Just three hours prior to the attack, all exams at the college were postponed indefinitely - a decision that may well have saved many lives. At the time



the rocket fell, exams were to have taken place in the building, very likely in the same rooms that were hit.

Currently closed due to the situation, it is expected that the damaged portions of the college will be repaired as soon as possible in order to immediately resume classes and exams once life in Safed returns to normal.

Bar-Ilan Regional Colleges

A pioneer in bringing education to Israel's peripheries, Bar-Ilan was the first of all of Israel's universities to recognize the need for regional colleges, instituting its first two colleges at Tzemach and Safed over 30 years ago. Aside from the main campus in Ramat Gan, Bar-Ilan supervises a total of five regional colleges situated throughout the country, facilitating a total of over 5,000 students and offering degrees in a variety of subjects.



Jordan Valley Regional College



Western Galilee College

Western Galilee College Closed Due to Crisis, Jordan Valley College Temporarily Shut Down

Operations at the University's two additional regional colleges in northern Israel - in the Western Galilee and Jordan Valley - have also been affected by the security situation.

The University has closed its college in Acre until further notice, heeding the advice of the Israel Police and the IDF Homefront Command. Like Safed, Acre has also been barraged by rocket attacks.

At Tzemach, exams were halted for about a week, but the college has since been reopened. Located south of Tiberias, the Jordan Valley Regional College has been deemed safe to resume operations.

The regional colleges in the north are offering some summer courses via the internet to students affected by the crisis.

University President Addresses Hampton Synagogue Congregation



BIU President **Prof. Moshe Kaveh** recently spoke about the conflict in an address to some 1,000 congregants of the Hampton Synagogue on New York's Long Island. The event was hosted by the Stern family and Hampton Synagogue spiritual leader, Rabbi Marc Schneier.

Prof. Kaveh explained Israel's current situation to members of the audience, many of whose children are Bar-Ilan students. "The entire nation is united against the threats to the north and south of our country. Bar-Ilan University, as the largest university of the Jewish people, teaches all of its students to respect one another not only during times of crisis, but also under peaceful conditions," said Prof. Kaveh.

"There is an all-embracing love of Jews around the world toward Israel and we all pray for the success of our soldiers in this justified battle to enable residents of the north and south to live without the threat of missiles," he added.

Special Provisions for Students Involved in Fighting

A large percentage of Bar-Ilan University students are in reserve units and have been called to active duty since the crisis began. As a means of alleviating their concerns about fulfilling their academic requirements on time, the University is permitting these students to submit their end-of-year papers and complete their final exams at a later date.

Bar-Ilan Organizes Summer Camp for Northern Youth

Beginning this week Bar-Ilan will host a group of youth from the northern towns of Kiryat Shmona, Hazor and Maaleh Yosef at a summer camp which has been designed especially for them by the Unit for Youth Science Activities.

This special adventure has been created as a means of both removing the youth from the imminent danger they face and making their summer vacation a more memorable one. Approximately 60 children from grades 7-12 are expected to participate in the one-week program.

Bar-Ilan University staff and faculty have volunteered to host these special guests in their homes during their weeklong visit.

the gathering is scheduled for Tuesday, August 1, on campus.

Participants will include BESA Center Director **Prof. Efraim Inbar** and Research Associates **Drs. Mordechai Kedar, Hillel Frisch, and Ze'ev Maghen**, as well as **Maj. Gen. Yaakov Amidror**, a former IDF senior intelligence officer, and **Maj. Gen. (res.) Giora Eiland**, who until recently served as director of the National Security Council.

Among the planned conference lectures: Syria's Conduct in the Crisis; Arab Positions vis-a-vis the War; The Iranian Perspective; The War in Lebanon: Spreading Circles; Israel and Lebanon; and Israel's War.



The BESA Center for Strategic Studies

Founded in 1993 by prominent Canadian Jewish community leader Thomas O. Hecht, the Begin-Sadat (BESA) Center for Strategic Studies seeks to contribute to the advancement of Middle East peace and security by conducting policy-relevant research on strategic subjects, particularly as they relate to the national security and foreign policy of Israel.



A view of some of the damage incurred in northern Israel

"Will Israel Win the War?" Special BESA Conference Planned



Prof. Efraim Inbar

In an effort to assess the current crisis and provide additional insight into it, the Begin-Sadat (BESA) Center for Strategic Studies is organizing a timely conference which will focus on the conflict. Entitled "Will Israel Win the War?",

Bar-Ilan Students and Faculty to Volunteer in the North

A group of BIU faculty, along with students from the Jesselson Institute for Advanced Torah Studies and the Midrasha for Women, is planning a one-day trip to Acre and Karmiel to offer support and assistance to residents holed up in bomb shelters.

The group will travel from shelter to shelter, conducting activities for children and conversing with them in an effort to break their monotonous daily routine of sitting in shelters with nothing to do.

Separately, a group of computer science doctoral students specializing in robotics will also head up north to demonstrate the many uses of robots to residents in shelters.

What our Experts are Saying

Bar-Ilan University experts on a wide variety of issues concerning the current conflict have been quoted extensively in the international Jewish and mainstream news media since the crisis began in southern, and subsequently northern, Israel. Below is just a small sample of their expert analysis, which is being called upon by some of the most influential news sources in the world:

Aljazeera
July 25, 2006



Interview with BESA Center Director Prof. Efraim Inbar

“The government that can make a difference is not the Lebanese government; it is the regime in Damascus that can cut off support for Hezbollah.

I advocate attacking Syria - to some extent we are wasting ammunition in Lebanon. But I'm not sure the Israeli government thinks in those terms. It has been making statements that it does not want to escalate the situation by attacking Syria.

Iran is too distant and so I think we're more likely to leave the Iranians to the Americans - for now.

The full text of this interview may be found at
<http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/010676D6-1F09-456F-8C16-6BD44499A644.htm>

Maariv
“Good Thing Israel is Crazy”



Op-Ed by Dr. Ze'ev Maghen, Chairman of the Department of Middle Eastern History and Research Associate at the Begin-Sadat (BESA) Center for Strategic Studies

July 23, 2006

“Iran started to believe that the Zionists are, indeed, without a backbone. But Israel's 'disproportionate' response has made it clear to the Iranians that it is dangerous to fool with us.”

The New Jersey Star-Ledger
July 23, 2006

The Star-Ledger

Eva Gilboa-Schechtman, director of psychology at Bar Ilan University in Tel Aviv and director of a clinic that treats traumatized children... cautioned that the reactions of parents become hugely influential during times of crisis.

Gilboa-Schechtman said it is only after the shooting stops that parents will begin to sort out the children who experience normal and understandable feelings of fear from those who have been seriously disturbed.

“If a kid's ability to have fun, to go on with his or her life, is interrupted, then we need to step in with therapy. Society must keep an eye on these children to see if they are having those reactions.”

New York Jewish Week
July 21, 2006



Prof. Sam Lehman-Wilzig, chairman of Bar-Ilan University's department of political studies, said Israelis' strong support for the war in Lebanon follows a decades-old pattern.

“In the beginning of every single war, including the first Lebanon War, which ended catastrophically, the public has consistently supported the government, at least for the first few days,” he said.

This support traditionally waned, Lehman-Wilzig said, after the number of Israeli casualties started to mount. “What is different now is that there are no Israeli troops in a foreign country,” the political scientist said of the IDF's decision to hit Lebanon by air and to blockade it by sea, without the entry of ground troops. “We can't get bogged down because we're not in Lebanon. There is no worry on how will we get out,” he said.

The Wall Street Journal
Europe's Disproportionate Criticism

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

**Op-Ed by Prof. Gerald M. Steinberg,
Research Associate, Begin-Sadat (BESA)
Center for Strategic Studies and
Director, Conflict Management and
Negotiation Program**

July 17, 2006



“[But] many idealistic European policy makers cannot see that a small war stopped prematurely now may only pave the way for a much larger war later. In order to understand Israel’s military actions, it is imperative to

consider the two powers standing behind Hezbollah. The larger strategic threat to Israel is the Damascus-Tehran axis. To view Israel’s actions in Beirut and Gaza as ‘disproportionate’ means ignoring the radical Islamic regime in Tehran, which threatens to destroy Israel and is bent on acquiring the weapons to actually carry out its threat.”

The full text of this article may be located at
<http://www.imra.org.il/story.php3?id=30130>

Reuters/Turkish Daily News
July 16, 2006

daily news
turkish Turkey's first and only English daily

Some analysts suggest that Olmert has domestic political as well as security concerns in mind for the tough action, given signs of waning public support for his narrow coalition government and untested centrist Kadima Party.

“Clearly if Olmert and (Defense Minister Amir) Peretz do not come out looking strong, their tenure is going to be short,” said **Gerald Steinberg** of Israel’s Bar-Ilan University.

London Jewish Chronicle
July 14, 2006

theJC.com

Gerald Steinberg, a Bar-Ilan University strategic analyst, told the JC: “This is the test for a new government in which the Prime Minister and defence minister have no serious military experience. Ehud Olmert and Amir Peretz will either survive or be replaced, depending on how they cope.”

“If there is a sense that they are not successful, we are likely to see a strong push for a wider government which will bring in ex-generals like Shaul Mofaz and Ami Ayalon and eventually transfer more power to them in terms of making military decisions.”



Some of the many homes and vehicles destroyed by Katyusha attacks

The New York Times
July 13, 2006

The New York Times

The loss of confidence on both sides is extreme, which is why Mr. Olmert has decided that Israel must act to control its own security in Gaza and not expect Egypt or the Palestinians - especially not Hamas - to do it for them, suggests **Gerald M. Steinberg** of Bar-Ilan University near Tel Aviv.

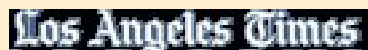
“Israel is in a long-term operation to reassert security control,” Mr. Steinberg said. Mr. Olmert must try to stop the firing of Qassam rockets on Israel and the smuggling of weapons and expertise from Egypt if he hopes to carry through his plan to pull up to 70,000 Israeli settlers out of the West Bank.



Residents survey vehicles and other damaged property

Los Angeles Times/The Chicago Tribune

July 13, 2006



For some in Israel, the Hezbollah raid raised the alarming and crucial question of whether Israel's powers of deterrence, long the linchpin of its military strategy, were on the wane.

Israeli analysts said the raid might point to an emerging rivalry between Shiite Hezbollah and Sunni Muslim-dominated Hamas.

“There is a competition, though nobody talks about it. Hezbollah is under pressure to do the same thing to show they are at least as able,” said **Mordechai Kedar** of Bar-Ilan University.

St. Petersburg Times (Florida)
July 13, 2006



Nonetheless, in hitting back hard on Wednesday, “Israel is about to change the rules of the game - what we have seen for two and half weeks in Gaza we might see in Lebanon,” said **Mordechai Kedar**, an expert on Islamic groups at Israel’s Bar-Ilan University.

“The whole world is waiting for these weapons to evaporate in the Mideast heat, but it doesn't happen. When somebody has too many weapons and ammunition they use them, as we see in Iraq.”

New York Jewish Week
July 7, 2006



But **Efraim Inbar**, director of Bar-Ilan University’s Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies, said the advanced Kassam rocket launching now gives Olmert the “political justification” needed to launch a “large scale invasion of Gaza that was planned before the kidnapping.” He said the operation in Gaza may be similar to the one Israel launched in the West Bank in March, 2002 after the Passover seder suicide bombing that killed 29 in Netanya. In that operation, Israeli troops combed the West Bank and broke up terrorist cells.

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