

## [Hamas releases two US hostages with hope for more](#)

GAZA, Palestine: Gaza's Hamas rulers released two Americans on Friday among some 200 hostages they abducted in brutal October 7 attacks in Israel and indicated that more could follow.

Judith Tai Raanan and her daughter Natalie Shoshana Raanan were back in Israel late Friday, the Israeli government said.

No details were given on their condition but US President Joe Biden quickly said he was "overjoyed" at the news.

And Hamas said it was working with Qatar and Egypt to free its "civilian" hostages, in a sign that more releases could follow.

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## [How GCC-ASEAN Riyadh Summit charted a path for inter-regional cooperation](#)

RIYADH/JAKARTA: The Gulf Cooperation Council and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations adopted on Friday a cooperation road map during their inaugural joint summit in Riyadh, which also called for a ceasefire in the wake of Israel's ongoing bombardment of Gaza.

The gathering of the leaders of the GCC and ASEAN in the Saudi capital was the first top-level engagement between the two blocs since they established relations in 1986, when the GCC Ministerial Council decided to initiate contact with the political and economic union of 10 Southeast Asian nations.

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## [Lebanon national carrier halves flights amid fears of war](#)

BEIRUT: Lebanon's national carrier, Middle East Airlines, said it was cutting more than half of its flights as tensions along the border with Israel prompted more Western countries to warn against travel to the country.

Mohammed El-Hout, chairman of MEA, said only eight of the company's 22 planes would operate as of next week, with the rest relocated to other airports.

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## Hamas official says group 'well aware' of consequences of attack on Israel, Palestinian liberation comes with 'sacrifices'

LONDON: Senior Hamas official Khaled Mashal has said the terrorist group was aware of the ramifications of its Oct. 7 attack on Israel, and added Palestinian lives would need to be sacrificed in order to win "liberation."

Speaking in a fractious interview with Al-Arabiya host Rasha Nabil, Mashal praised the "ingenious" Hamas attack and called it "legitimate resistance" to Israeli occupation.

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## Turkiye's Erdogan, Egypt's El-Sisi discuss Israel-Gaza war, humanitarian aid

ISTANBUL: Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi had a phone call on Friday to discuss what the Turkish presidency said were human rights violations by Israel in the Gaza Strip and how to deliver humanitarian aid.

Erdogan told Egypt's El-Sisi that "Western silence" on the bombing of hospitals, schools, and places of worship was worsening the situation for Gaza, the president's office said in a statement.