

26 Key Points to Know About the Latest Rocket Barrage Across Israel

You could be forgiven if you hadn't heard of the latest round of Palestinian Arab terrorists firing an unprecedented barrage of rockets from Gaza into Israel this past weekend. Since most of the world media broadcast limited details, if you've heard about it, odds are that you've only heard part of the reality, if at all.

Following please find a variety of observations about the situation that you've probably not heard of or considered to give you a sense of what life is like on the ground.

Another battle, not a war: With this week being Israel's 71st Independence Day, the latest barrage of missiles underscores that this is another battle in the war that began 71 years ago and that has never ended. Israel has not known a day of peace in 71 years.

Who started it: Foreign media reports have suggested that Israel started the latest round of violence, indiscriminately, and that the Palestinian Arabs in Gaza merely responded. In fact, a terrorist sniper shot an Israeli soldier Friday night and Israel responded. Reports also are that the terrorists responded to Israel destroying another terror tunnel that crossed the border from Gaza to Israel.

Pray for the victims: The names of the four victims who have the distinction of being the newest of more than 3100 Israeli civilians killed in terror attacks on the eve of Israel's Memorial Day are Pinchas Menachem Prezuazman, 21; Moshe Agadi, 58; Zaid al-Hamamdeh, 47; and Moshe Feder, 68.

What's a few rockets between neighbors: Palestinian Arab

terrorist fired some 690 projectiles at Israel during the 41 hours of fighting from Saturday morning to Monday—the largest-ever number of projectiles fired from Gaza in a two-day period. During one hour, 7:00- 8:00 p.m. on Sunday evening, at least 117 rockets were fired at the city of Ashdod. Only one of the projectiles made it past Israel's air defenses.

Terrorist color war: Gaza is dominated by Hamas, but there are other terror groups that operate there. They compete for hegemony, followers and money. Their “sport” is terror. It's understood that Islamic Jihad instigated the latest round. However, not to be outdone, Hamas joined in to compete to be the most aggressive and not lose control.

Welcome to Ramadan: Most religions celebrate their holy seasons with prayer and introspection. As Ramadan began this week Islamic terrorists welcome their holy month with belligerence, their common denominator.

Threats to shut down Eurovision: On May 14, Israel is hosting the international musical competition, Eurovision, with participants from 41 countries and thousands of tourists. The terrorists want to hold Israel hostage, threatening to shut down Eurovision by escalating the violence. Israelis are debating whether we should take care of business in Gaza, even if that means Eurovision being canceled. Others think that we need to be sure Eurovision goes on, because if the terrorists succeed, there will never be an end as to what they can and threaten in the future.

Red Alert annoying: Like many Israelis and its supporters, we have apps that sound whenever there is an air raid siren in Israel. These days the Red Alert sirens have sounded like a room full of slot machines hitting the jackpot, over and over and over. Designed to keep people safe, these also create stress particularly among children.

Frightened to shower: At one point, one of my kids was going

to take a shower. While we are far from the front line (for now) and would have 90 seconds to get cover if there were to be an air raid siren, the stress of something as mundane as being in the shower and hearing (or not) an air-raid siren is hard to deal with. How much more so for people who have 15-30 seconds to get cover within just a few miles of Gaza!

Protecting our children: Israelis went to great lengths to protect their children physically as well as psychologically. In one case, so as not to make her child more frightened, a mother spoke on national TV about how she told her child that the rockets and countermeasures exploding overhead were fireworks.

No public mourning: As Israeli victims are buried, public warnings are issued people not go to the funerals because cemeteries don't have public bomb shelters in case of an air raid.

No public parties: People who scheduled weddings or other family celebrations within 40 km. of the Gaza border had to cancel or rethink plans. In one case, a couple was told they had to uninvite 70% of the guests to their wedding because the wedding hall did not have space in bomb shelters for everyone.

Dozens injured and treated for shock: In addition to those killed, dozens have been injured and treated for shock. This doesn't include children who are scared and suffering PTSD by the thousands.

Schools and workplaces closed: Israel has employed emergency measures within 25 miles of the Gaza border. Schools, universities and places of work are closed, disrupting the ability to attempt to have any sense of normalcy.

Parents stay home: Even if parents were able to get to work, they need to stay home with their kids who can't go to school, much less go out of the house, for fear of a rocket attack.

Several hundred rockets—As of Monday morning, several hundred rockets and mortars have been fired at dozens of Israeli communities in about 36 hours. Rockets are packed with shrapnel to maximize injuries.

No other country would behave like this—A familiar mantra that's heard in Israel and abroad where people know what's going on. We sometimes say it as a matter of pride, that we don't go in with an all-out blitz. But other than bemoaning the situation, or engaging in an all-out war to clean up the terrorist situation once and for all, there are limited answers and many more questions.

Israel values life and invests to protect its citizens: The irony is that the Iron Dome probably protects Palestinian Arabs more than their own leaders do. If a fraction of the rockets fired at Israel were not shot down and hit their targets, Israel would have no choice but to respond in a way that would cause much more collateral damage and many more casualties among Gazan Arabs.

Terrorists value death: When they die, they win. When we die, they win. For terrorists, it's all about death.

A distraction: One wonders if this is not all a set-up for a more serious drone or other attack from Gaza, or from Lebanon. Israel needs to be on alert, and imagine any possible means of attack from all directions.

Life is surprisingly normal: For the 80% of Israelis not in the line of fire (yet), life has been surprisingly normal: people go to school, work, shopping and play sports as usual. In Jerusalem, one sees Palestinian Arabs and Jews mingling freely as if nothing is going on. Arab teens can be seen taking selfies and bantering in Arabic and mingling with Israeli Jews in public as if nothing was going on 50 miles to the south.

The hazard of the news: Broadcasts from areas under fire are

interrupted by announcements of all the places that air raid sirens are being sounded. When air raid sirens interrupt live broadcasts where they are sitting, the anchors quickly get up and go to public bomb shelters with everyone else.

Open house: Throughout Israel, people have opened their homes to host strangers whose lives have been impacted. Hotels and guest houses have offered their vacant rooms. Israel is like one small community and when pushed hard, we become closer.

National test in "citizenship": In 11th and 12th grade, standardized tests in the same subject are taken on the same day throughout the country. This week is the test in "citizenship." For the students in the areas under rocket fire who can't go to school, the tests will be postponed. However, this week their very lives embody a text in citizenship, albeit not for a grade.

Celebration and mourning: How do we celebrate Independence Day and observe Memorial Day this week, with four new victims and a heavy heart over the situation clouding the festive day?

Cease fire: Even if there is a cease-fire, there are two catches. Each time Hamas increases terror and things get too close for comfort, meaning that they are not deriving any benefits, they need to climb down from the tree they put themselves in. To do so, they increase demands from Israel so when they back down they can somehow claim victory. Second, while Hamas might agree to a cease-fire (to restock rockets for next time), Islamic Jihad and other terror organizations will resist, in order to try to challenge Hamas for leadership and influence.

No end—The conflict will never end as long as there are Islamic terrorists that want to kill Israelis and Israelis who don't want to be killed. If the Arabs put down their weapons, there would be no more violence. If the Jews put down their weapons, there would be no more Israel. {eo}

Jonathan Feldstein was born and educated in the U.S. and immigrated to Israel in 2004. He is married and the father of six. He is president of . Throughout his life and career, he has been blessed by the calling to fellowship with Christian supporters of Israel and shares experiences of living as an Orthodox Jew in Israel. He writes a regular column for *Standing With Israel* at and other prominent web sites. He can be reached at firstpersonisrael@.