

All in a Day's Work

Israel Defense Forces Lt. Aviel Perry is one of the heroic soldiers who performs acts of courage and strength in time of danger. Lt. Perry serves as the commander of an Iron Dome battery unit, which intercepted five Gaza rockets last week.

The IDF blog reports that at 1:00 a.m., Lt. Perry was on duty in an Iron Dome battery near Ashkelon in southern Israel. The battery's last interception was two months ago, according to the blog, and "Lt. Perry and his soldiers always remain alert for the possibility of a rocket attack from Gaza."

"We have prepared soldiers to react to an incident at any moment," Perry said. "We must always remain vigilant and alert, even when we think that an upcoming shift will be normal and uneventful."

When five rockets from Gaza went flying toward Israel, soldiers in the Iron Dome battery had only seconds to react. Realizing that the rockets would strike populated areas, they made a quick decision to activate the battery. Despite the extraordinary pressure under which they operated, their swift actions resulted in the interception of all five rockets.

Israel National News shares that after stopping the rocket attack, Perry was filled with pride and satisfaction.

"You cannot describe the feeling of stopping a rocket that could hurt, injure or kill civilians," he said. "This is what we prepare for all the time—to be there at the right time and do the right thing."

"The environment in the battery is warm and like family," he added. "Events like these increase the motivation of soldiers, and we prove that above all we are fighters who save lives."

Iron Dome is a mobile all-weather air-defense system designed to intercept and destroy short-range rockets and artillery

shells fired from distances of 4 to 70 kilometers away. There has been a significant increase in the number of rocket attacks from Gaza into Israel in December and January. There have been 12 attacks since the beginning of December, as opposed to six in October and November 2013. Rocket attacks from Gaza have increased in recent days, and the Israeli Air Force (IAF) has been retaliating with air strikes on terrorism sites in the Hamas-controlled region.

Many of the rockets being fired upon Israel are intercepted by the Iron Dome missile defense system. Three rockets fired by Gaza-based terrorists exploded late Monday night in the Eshkol Regional Council.

The Ashkelon municipality on Monday morning canceled classes in all schools that are not fortified against rockets, fearing an escalation in attacks on the city a day after the IAF targeted a terror suspect in the Gaza Strip.

"Palestinian terrorists are exploiting the area west of the border to attack soldiers and Israeli civilians," an Israeli army spokeswoman said. "The IDF takes a grave view of this," the *Jerusalem Post* reported today, in news about the ongoing attacks.

Additionally, the *Post* has reported that security forces are still searching for Grad rockets that were fired at Eilat on Monday evening. Residents heard two loud blasts in the Red Sea city, and police and IDF have spent hours searching for rocket remnants fired from Sinai, so far with no success.

Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon warned on Sunday that the IDF would hit hard and fast against terror targets each time Israel is attacked.

"The IDF on Sunday morning targeted a terror cell that was responsible for firing rockets at Israel last week, when rockets were fired at Ashkelon," Ya'alon said.

"We will not accept the targeting by terrorists of Israel, and

we will act to cause damage to anyone that threatens the security of our citizens," he stated.

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