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This is the Global News podcast from the BBC World Service. I'm Janet Jalil and in the early hours of Sunday, the 29th of October, these are our main stories. The Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said his first priority is to win the war against Hamas in Gaza, bringing home the hostages being held by Hamas come second.

The UN has warned that Israeli ground operations in Gaza could have catastrophic humanitarian consequences. Iranian media say a teenage girl who fell into a coma after an alleged confrontation with the morality police has died.

Also in this podcast,

it was a wet night in Paris, a match full of drama and tension. South Africa have made history at the Rugby World Cup, beating New Zealand at the final in Paris to win a record fourth title.

The Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said the war in Gaza has entered a second stage. As Israel's bombardment of the territory intensified alongside a large ground operation, Mr Netanyahu also warned that the war would be long and difficult.

The Prime Minister said his first priority was to win the conflict against Hamas in Gaza. After meeting the families of some of the more than 200 hostages held in captivity, he said bringing them home would be the second goal.

There are those who think that there is a contradiction between bringing the hostages home at any price and dismantling the Hamas. No, there is no contradiction. We will not change, suddenly, what the objective is.

We intend to give the Hamas a lethal blow, but in addition, our second objective, of course, is bringing the hostages home.

Mr Netanyahu also confirmed that Israeli troops were active all over Gaza in what he called the stronghold of evil.

We are carrying out massive airstrikes in order to assist our ground forces as they go in, and we have used targeted killings and destroyed headquarters of the Hamas. This will be a long war.

It is our second war of independence. We will fight and we will not surrender. We will not withdraw. Overground and underground. It will be a victory of the good over evil.

Our diplomatic correspondent, Paul Adams, who is in Jerusalem, was listening to Mr Netanyahu's address. I asked him about the Prime Minister's comments on the hostages and how their families were likely to react.

There was no contradiction between these two objectives of defeating Hamas and getting hostages released. His defence minister, Joav Galant, said, the more we hit out at them, i.e. Hamas, we know that they will be willing to reach some kind of agreement.

So the strategy does seem to be very much to keep up the military pressure on Hamas and hope that that yields results.

Mr Netanyahu is saying that this will be a long and difficult war, talking about forces in the north and the south of Gaza. Is he preparing Israel for a full ground invasion or something more limited or gradual?

We have no real way of knowing that because the Israelis are not indicating the true nature of their plans and why would they? What we are seeing is a steady escalation. The operation that was launched more than 24 hours ago is still going on, we believe, and it does seem to be bigger in scope

than previous incursions.

But it is possible that we will see more of this kind of thing. I was talking to a Western diplomat yesterday who was saying that the advice that they're giving to Israel is to try and gradually ramp up the pace and the scope of its military operation rather than go for a kind of grand D-Day style all-out offensive,

because that might be the kind of thing that would trigger a regional response from people like Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Houthis in Yemen, Shiite militia groups in Iraq, and there's a real fear among Israel's allies of a regional conflagration.

And so they're urging, I think, Israel to be as cautious as they can be.

And his words of reassurance that there's no contradiction in destroying Hamas and bringing hostages by home is not really reassuring many in Israel. There's been an offer from Hamas to free all the hostages it has in return for Palestinian prisoners. How is Israel likely to respond to that?

This was the first public comments from the leader of Hamas in Gaza, Yahya Al-Sinwa. They appeared on the Hamas website offering to exchange all hostages for all Hamas prisoners held in Israeli prisons.

It is an idea that some former defense and security officials in Israel think would be a good idea, a price worth paying in their view, but it is not one that the Israeli government has so far indicated any willingness to explore.

Paul Adams in Jerusalem. Civilians in Gaza remain cut off from the outside world because phone lines in the internet are down for most people. The UN says these cuts could mask atrocities being committed in the territory.

To date, the Hamas-run health ministry in Gaza says more than 7,500 Palestinians have been killed. Israel has been bombing Gaza since the 7th October when Hamas attacks killed 1,400 people in Israel and saw more than 200 others kidnapped as hostages.

So far, only four of them have been released. Speaking to the BBC, the head of the Palestinian mission to the UK, Husam Zomlot, dismissed Israel's claims this operation was aimed at Hamas. Targeting our families' neighborhood, killing among them 3,000 children is targeting Hamas. Bombing hospitals is targeting Hamas. Bombing churches and mosques is targeting Hamas. Bombing our entire civil infrastructure, rescue teams, medical teams, what have you is targeting Hamas.

Cutting water and food and electricity, cutting telecommunication. Israel is not fighting Hamas. Israel is fighting our people and not only in Gaza.

Despite those problems with communications, our correspondent Rushdie Abu Alouf managed to send this report via a satellite phone on Saturday from southern Gaza.

Hundreds of Israeli airstrikes since last night and they threw out the day across the Gaza Strip here in Chanyounis about 20 airstrikes today but the shelling was intensified in the north and east and west of Gaza Strip.

We understand that the Indonesian hospital was struck with an airstrike yesterday. The hospital was out of service for quite a long time.

A week ago the hospital was out of service because no fuel was evacuated but today the main building of the hospital was destroyed.

Also around Chifa Hospital in Gaza City, there was a lot of airstrikes. 10-15 airstrikes according to people around Chifa Hospital, they are cutting most of the roads towards that hospital.

Communication is extremely difficult. We are unable to verify a lot of reports about the number of

people dead or injured but the health ministry was doing a press conference this afternoon. They said about 400 people were killed overnight but they said hundreds other are missing under the collapsed building in the north.

Also the biggest refugee camp in Gaza-Shatr refugee camp also was bombed heavily. I saw very strong footage of destruction inside the camp with about 100,000 people they live in this camp. About half a million people are still living in Gaza City in the north, the area where Israel asked the people to leave to south.

Tonight more airstrikes, more Israeli airplanes flying over Gaza City and people are expecting more heavy bombing tonight.

Rushdie Abu-Aluf in southern Gaza. As we've just been hearing, the Israeli Prime Minister met the families of some of the hostages being held in Gaza.

After the meeting this man, flanked by other people whose relatives were taken hostage by Hamas, had this message for Benjamin Netanyahu.

We've been for a long meeting with the Prime Minister, Galliers and other people. We were very loud and clear speaking about the situation now.

We were speaking about our concern about what we feel and about our worries about the military operation that has been done or done now.

We are very worried about our dearest that they are there and we don't know that if the military operation takes all these hostages under consideration that nobody will be injured.

And of course we say that we want all the hostages back home, all the hostages. It will not be part by part.

It will be all the hostages with any negotiation that will be with the enemy.

So we were very clear about that all the hostages will come back home with any kind of negotiation that will be done, that we want all back and we don't care what they will give for that.

So that's what we were very clear. Prime Minister was listening, he was listening to everything and he said that he will do everything for that.

Udi Goran, whose cousin is among the more than 200 being held in Gaza, says freeing the hostages should be the government's top priority.

As far as the hostage families are concerned, it's unfathomable that this is not Israel's top priority, that there are ministers in the government that say that we should sacrifice these people for going after Hamas.

I'm only referring to government officials, referring to the fact that this is not Israel's top priority. It's just unimaginable.

And the UN Human Rights Chief has warned that large-scale Israeli ground operations in Gaza could have catastrophic consequences with possibly thousands more civilian deaths.

Volker Turg urged the two sides and others with influence in the region to do everything possible to de-escalate the conflict.

He deplored the consequences for civilians, especially the stepping up of the bombardments on Friday night.

Last night's bombardment and ground operations were reportedly the most intensive yet, taking this terrible crisis to a new level of violence and pain.

Compounding the misery and suffering of civilians, Israeli strikes and telecommunications installations and subsequent internet shutdown have effectively left Gazans with no way of knowing what is happening across Gaza.

The EU foreign policy chief, Yusef Burrell, said a pause in hostilities was urgently needed to allow humanitarian access.

Saudi Arabia condemned any Israeli ground operations that threatened Palestinian lives.

While pro-Palestinian rallies have been held in a number of cities around the world, from London and Paris to Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan.

Speaking at a huge demonstration in Istanbul, the Turkish president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, repeated his stance that Hamas is not a terrorist organization and attacked the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Netanyahu is a terrorist. Shame on you, Israel. We will declare to the world that you are a war criminal. Right now, we are making preparations for this.

Our reporter, Victoria Craig, was at the rally. She told us more about this huge demonstration in Istanbul.

The initial numbers, at least according to the president's communications office, is that 1.5 million people gathered here.

The rally was held at a disused airport called Ataturk Airport here in the commercial capital of the country.

Lots of Palestinian and Turkish flags were waving as the president took the stage.

Lots of impassioned people here today really rallying around the Palestinian cause and what the president had to say.

Yeah, very emotional words from the president. What did people there say to you?

Yeah, I talked to a lot of people as they were sort of filtering in and as they say, lots of different views from various people that we were speaking to.

A lot of people have said that they believe that Turkey will lead the region. They're very happy with President Erdogan's stance.

He's taken a really tough measure, tough talk over the last few weeks, especially as the conflict has escalated.

They criticized the rest of the Muslim world for not being tough enough.

And many said that they would actually support Turkey military action in response to the crisis in Gaza.

So you can hear from a few people that we chatted to on the street here.

Everyone who calls themselves human should have been here because what happens is not related to a religion. It is a crime against humanity.

We are in a stage where we will decide the fate of humanity. Nothing like this can happen again in the future.

So that was the view on the street. But some people say it's somewhat surprising that President Erdogan has come out so strongly against Israel

given that relations between Israel and Turkey had been improving recently.

Yes, indeed. And I think that is a growing concern among some, particularly the Western diplomatic community that I've been speaking to over the last few weeks.

You know, they worry about this really intense rhetoric that he's taken.

He's criticized the West fairly strongly for its support of Israel, particularly the United States here.

The U.S. and Israel are sort of viewed as almost one in the same. I don't think that's too extreme to say, you know, the U.S. really firmly backing Israel.

And so, you know, this all has sort of a knock-on effect on Turkey specifically because as we've

talked a lot in the last couple of years,
Turkey itself has been suffering from a very deep economic crisis. Inflation here is above 60 percent.
And the president, after he was re-elected in May, vowed really to make the economy his top priority.
In the last few months, there had been positive signs that investors were going to return to Turkey.
And, you know, that was going to be a big part of this recovery.
But now there are concerns that, you know, this amped up rhetoric from the president in particular may put those investors off.
And, of course, damaged diplomatic relations between the West and Turkey and Israel as well.
Turkey's president Erdogan had been on a path to more normalized relations with Israel.
And that seems to be solidly not the case anymore.
Victoria Craig. In London, tens of thousands of pro-Palestinian demonstrators march through the centre of the capital,
one of a number of protests which have taken place around the U.K.
A home affairs correspondent Tom Simons has this report.
At one point, this protest stretched a mile and a half through the streets of London.
The protesters called for a ceasefire in Gaza.
They criticised both Rishi Sunak and Sakir Stammer for not demanding one.
Before the protest, police were put under pressure by the government to take a tough line against shouts or banners,
which might breach terrorism laws.
Scotland Yard said there had been just one arrest in connection with racist remarks and a threat to kill.
Police did not respond to shouts of,
From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free,
regarded by Jewish groups and Israel as a threat to its existence,
and by the Home Secretary Sula Braverman as anti-Semitic.
From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free,
Pro-Palestinian activists say it's a call for freedom from repression and not a threat.
Tom Simons, there have also been protests across the Middle East.
Here's our regional editor, Mike Thompson.
They don't come much bigger than the one that's been happening today in Istanbul.
Turkish President Erdogan was speaking there and he accused Israel of behaving like a war criminal and also blamed the West for constantly backing Israel without enough thought.
Protests have also extended right across the Middle East.
For the last 24 hours, we've had protests in the West Bank, in Amman, in Jordan, about 200,000 people there,
in the many capitals of Sana'a, in Lebanon and Iraq as well.
And as you said there, it is a global thing.
I mean, it goes right through to Indonesia, to Malaysia,
and then back of course to Europe, London, Paris, Denmark and Tunisia.
Mike Thompson.
So what do the Israeli forces do next as they continue their bombardment and ground operation in Gaza?

General David Petraeus commanded NATO and US forces in Afghanistan and Iraq and was a former director of the CIA.

He's also author of Conflict, The Evolution of Warfare from 1945 to Ukraine.

Speaking just before the Israeli Prime Minister gave his TV address,

General Petraeus told my colleague Matthew Amrallawalla what he thinks the Israeli forces are likely to do next.

This appears clearly to be a very substantial push by the Israelis.

My sense is that they're seeking to establish a lodgement, a foothold in the urban areas.

They're using air attacks to set the conditions, if you will, to attack any known Hamas headquarters, bases, logistical sites.

They've turned off the ability for them to communicate with mobile phones so that that restricts their command and control capacity.

Up until now, you could have a sense that what they were doing was feeling the edges of Hamas, seeing how they would respond to reconnaissance, a probe.

This appears to be the offensive and I'd be surprised, given the magnitude of this, if they would withdraw from this, rather I would suspect that they will again seize a foothold and then commence what is going to be a very, very tough fight in which they will have to clear every building, every floor, room, cellar, tunnel and then hold it. So you have to leave forces behind before you can move on to the next one.

That's the only way that you can destroy an enemy like Hamas, a terrorist army essentially, not reconcilable extremists who, of course, visited the worst, most horrific violence on the Israelis and Jews really since the Holocaust.

I'll come to that fight and that battle and what it would be like because you have so much experience in that whole area, but in terms of the next stages from what you were saying there in your first answer, you think it only goes in one direction, which is to intensify.

I think that's right and now the intensification will be the actual ground operations.

Again, the air operations have been to set the conditions so that when the first instrument exposes himself to the enemy and eventually that will have to be the case.

This is an enemy who doesn't wear a uniform, fights from within civilians, uses civilians as human shields.

Of course, there's over 200 hostages that are still in captivity as well.

So the challenges of this could not be more substantial.

In fact, Andrew Roberts, again, my co-author in the book Conflict, and I look back at all the cases that we looked at

in the period since 1945 and we can't think of anything that is comparable to the magnitude of the challenge in this particular case.

Yes, we oversaw very substantial urban operations during the surge in Iraq particular when I was privileged to command that, clearing major cities like Ramadi, Fallujah, Bakuba, Mosul and parts of Baghdad, but none of them presented as formidable a set of challenges as does this for the Israeli forces.

That is quite something to say that this possibly represents a challenge like no other in history in terms of what you have recently looked at and actually experienced.

What then are the principal challenges here? What makes it so difficult potentially?

Well, the challenge is that the enemy, again, you're going to have to reveal yourself to have the enemy fire on you.

Some of the enemy may actually be willing to blow themselves up to take the Israelis with them. Presumably, they've had months, if not years, to plan this, and if it is as creative, if you will, in the horrific sense that that original attack on 10-7 was, then we can expect a very creative defense

that will have improvised explosive devices, booby traps, rooms will blow up, buildings will blow up. Again, they're not concerned about what they're doing to bring this violence on the innocent Palestinian civilians in Gaza City.

And it's going to be a very, very tough fight. And then you add to that 300 miles of reinforced concrete tunnel underneath the city.

And yes, the Israelis have a lot of...

It's just as extensive as that. Is it 300 miles of these tunnels?

Yes. And again, Israelis have technology. They've developed a deal with some of this.

It's quite sophisticated. It's quite impressive. I think we'll start to see it unveiled over time.

But at the end of the day, this will inevitably end up in soldiers having to clear buildings and clear rooms.

And that is a very challenging endeavor indeed.

General David Petraeus.

Still to come?

Mike Pence's campaign had been struggling virtually since it was launched back in June.

The former US Vice President, Mike Pence, has withdrawn from the 2024 presidential race.

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Dear Daughter.

Welcome back to the Global News Podcast.

Nearly a month after she was reportedly attacked by Iran's so-called morality police for not covering her hair,

a 16-year-old girl has died, according to Iranian media.

Amita Garavand had been in a coma since a reported confrontation with police officers on the Tehran Metro.

Her case has been compared to the death of Masa Amini in police custody last September, which sparked months of widespread protests across Iran.

Sia Vash Adalan of the BBC Persian Service gave us more details.

We know that 28 days ago she entered one of Tehran's subway stations as she was boarding the train.

She fell back, she hit her head against the edge of the platform, and then she was dragged out and then went into a coma.

And subsequently today she passed away.

But we don't exactly know what happened while she boarded the train.

Human rights campaigners say that she was confronted by a member of the morality police who asked her to cover her hair.

She refused, then that member of the police pushed her back, and that's why she fell down.

While the official version of events is that as soon as she boarded, her blood pressure fell, she became dizzy, and that's why she fell.

And the Iranian authorities will be very worried about the possible reaction to this, possibly more protests like the ones we saw in the aftermath of Masa Amini's death last year.

It would be very unlikely that we would see a repeat of those protests, because really the government reigned in with an iron fist, they executed seven people, they arrested tens of thousands of people.

So everyone's pretty much scared, but there is a funeral ceremony to be held.

The family is called for people to join in.

And given the situation with Israel and Gaza, perhaps the international pressure is off Iran, because it is a key player in that conflict, because it is a big supporter of Hamas.

It is. When you look at the social media, one of the theories that people are putting forward is that she had already passed away a few days ago, and the government held on to that news, and especially announced it today as people are all watching what's happening in Gaza, and their attention is elsewhere, so as to probably, you know, avoid, you know, anger on resentment on the street.

Sir Vash Adalan.

Let's turn now to Bangladesh, where a huge anti-government rally by the main opposition party in the country on Saturday ended in violent chaos.

One police officer was killed and more than a hundred people reportedly injured.

Charles Haveland reports.

As activists of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party poured into Dhaka and chanted slogans against Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina,

street battles escalated, demonstrators threw bricks and stones, police deployed stun grenades and tear gas,

and dispersed the crowd, which the opposition numbered at more than a million, but the police at one-tenth of that.

The BNP has called for a nationwide strike on Sunday in protest at Saturday's events.

The party wants Sheikh Hasina to give way to a neutral interim administration to oversee January's elections.

She's been in power 15 years.

Charles Haveland.

The former US vice president, Mike Pence, has dropped out of the race to become the next president of the United States.

He told supporters, this is not my time.

He'd hoped to win the Republican Party's nomination, but that contest is overwhelmingly dominated by the former president, Donald Trump.

From Washington, here's David Willis.

Mike Pence's campaign had been struggling virtually since it was launched back in June, and with

only weeks to go,

he remained well short of the polling and donor thresholds required to qualify for his party's third presidential nomination debate.

The former Indiana governor, who was a loyal vice president to Donald Trump until the insurrection on the 6th of January

caused them to drift apart, had tied his campaign to the conservative principles of Lincoln and Reagan,

but his voice was lost amongst a crowded field of candidates, all chasing the support of those still loyal to Donald Trump.

David Willis.

Police in the US state of Maine say there are still questions about why a gunman killed 18 people in America's deadliest mass shooting so far this year.

Robert Card, an army reservist, was found dead on Friday night after a three-day manhunt. It's believed that he shot himself.

Our North America correspondent, Nomiya Iqbal, sent this report from the city of Lewiston.

Police have been giving more details about what they describe as a very intensive manhunt.

Divers were sent into the Maine River that runs through Maine before Robert Card's body was found in the town of Lisbon,

near an area searched twice by police.

At a news conference, officials said a number of guns were found at the scene and there was a note at Card's home.

There were reports it was a suicide note but they said it wasn't explicitly that.

It was addressed to a loved one with Card's phone, passcode and bank account numbers.

The names of the 18 victims have now been made public by police.

They ranged from 14 to 76 years old with many from the deaf community.

Police say Card legally bought his guns days before the attack.

However, he was also known to have undergone mental health evaluations.

Officials say they're still trying to find out whether specific gun laws in the state designed to address unwell individuals were applied in this case.

Nomiya Iqbal.

Next to Sport and South Africa have made history at the Rugby World Cup, beating New Zealand at a thrilling final in Paris to win a record fourth title.

The defending champions, the Springboks, held on to secure a narrow 12 point to 11 victory at the Stade de France.

I heard more from Andy Barwell from BBC Sport.

It was a wet night in Paris, a match full of drama and tension and South Africa are the world champions again in Rugby Union.

The Springboks retained the trophy with a narrow 12-11 victory over New Zealand.

When they're beaten France by a point in the quarterfinals, they're defeated England by a similar margin in the semifinals

and they did it again against the All Blacks in the final.

No quarter was given in the game.

The New Zealand skipper Sam Caine was sent off for a head-on-head tackle in the first half.

South Africa's captain Siya Kolisi was yellow carded and sent to the Sinbin for a head contact in the

second period.

Martin Johnson is a world cup winning skipper for England and he gave BBC Sport his thoughts on those massive decisions.

I really enjoyed the game because at times it was scrappy, at times it was chaotic.

It was brutally physical and it was a fantastic game of rugby.

It wasn't like a polished game of rugby but I will always go back to unfortunately in this game how you can say one guy,

one accident was an accident and one accident is a red card.

Explain that to me.

That's Martin Johnson.

Well it was Bowdoin Barrett who got 14 man New Zealand back to just a single point deficit with a 58th minute try

but the attempted conversion was off target and that proved to be costly.

The four penalties scored from the boot of South Africa's Andre Pollard ultimately settled it for the spring box

and that was their fourth Rugby World Cup final success.

Andy Barwell.

Let's return to our top story now, Israel's ground operation in Gaza.

The Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said his first priority is to win the war against Hamas

and his second is to bring home the hostages held in Gaza.

He insisted that there's no contradiction between the two objectives but destroying Hamas had to come first.

With his assessment here's our international editor Jeremy Bowen who's in the Israeli town of Starot close to Gaza.

Israel says it's making the earth shake in Gaza.

It believes overwhelming power can restore its security but military force alone has never brought lasting quiet

let alone peace in this conflict's long history.

Israel might be able to destroy the Hamas military wing.

If it succeeds it will also need a political strategy even a new peace process for the days after.

Well before that the war carries many risks for the region as well as Israel and the Palestinians.

The more Palestinians that Israel kills, especially civilians,

the greater the levels of anger and outrage in the Middle East among Israel's friends as well as its enemies.

That doesn't automatically mean the war will spread but it increases the volatility and danger in a region that is already very fragile.

Israel's ground war has started.

Containing it here is now the biggest political and diplomatic challenge in the world.

Jeremy Bowen.

And that's all from us for now but there will be a new edition of the Global News Podcast later.

If you want to comment on this podcast or the topics covered you can send us an email.

The address is globalpodcast@bbc.co.uk.

You can also find us on X at Global NewsPod.

[Transcript] Global News Podcast / Israel enters "second stage" of Gaza war

This edition was mixed by Dan Ehrlich, the producer was Liam McCheffrey.

The editor is Karen Martin.

I'm Janet Jalil. Until next time, goodbye.