



July 4, 2006

Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center
at the Center for Special Studies (C.S.S)

Operation Summer Rains (Update No. 5, July 3)



A family photo of Gilad Shalit, the abducted soldier
(Reuters, July 3)

Overview

✦ **In the field**, the IDF has paused its land activity, while air strikes continue and focus on ground targets, and artillery attacks hit Qassam rocket launching sites. **Politically**, the Egyptian initiative to mediate the release of the abducted soldier apparently came (at least temporarily) to a dead end when the abductors issued “Military announcement No. 3.” It demanded that Israel release all underage and

women prisoners by 6 a.m. July 4 in return for information about the abducted soldier (without detailing what would happen when the ultimatum ran out).¹

The situation on the ground

IDF activity

✦ During the past few days the IDF has continued attacking from the air:

- ✓ On July 2, **there was an air strike on the office of Hamas prime minister Ismail Haniya in the northern Gaza Strip**, causing a fire in the building. It was the second time the IDF attacked a Hamas government target.²



Ismail Haniya viewing his office after the attack (Al-Arabiya TV, July 2).

- ✓ Air strikes on terrorists:
 - Hamas sites in the northern Gaza Strip where terrorists were located were attacked (June 30, July 2).
 - A vehicle in the Saja'iyah neighborhood of Gaza was attacked. It was carrying a squad of Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) terrorists on their way to launch Qassam rockets from the northern Gaza Strip (June 30).

¹ The ultimatum ran out at 6 a.m. on July 4. During the morning hours, spokesmen of the PRC and Army of Islam, two of the organizations which took part in the abduction, stated that from now on, no information would be provided about the fate of the abducted soldier, and that the mediations had stopped because of Israel's refusal to comply with their demands (Al-Jazeera TV, morning of July 4).

² On June 30 Air Force planes attacked the offices of Sa'id Siyam, Hamas interior minister.

- A storehouse for manufacturing and stockpiling of weapons (including Qassam rockets) belonging to Fatah/Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades (July 3) were attacked.
- The Fatah offices in Gaza's Rimal neighborhood and a workshop and store of Fatah weapons in Beit Hanoun (July 3) were attacked.

Preventing a suicide bombing attack on IDF forces in the southern Gaza Strip

✦ During the evening of July 2, near the Dahania airfield, an attempted suicide bombing attack on IDF forces was foiled. Soldiers identified a group of three armed terrorists, opened fire and killed them. Two of the dead terrorists were **wearing explosive belts ready for detonation.**

Qassam rocket fire continues

✦ During the past 24 hours, three Qassam rockets were fired into Israeli territory. During June, **140 rocket hits were identified in Israel, the largest number since the disengagement last August** (See Statistical Data below)



Fatah/Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades fire Qassam rockets during Operation Summer Rains (Al-Jazeera TV, July 1)

The IDF allows necessary goods into the Gaza Strip

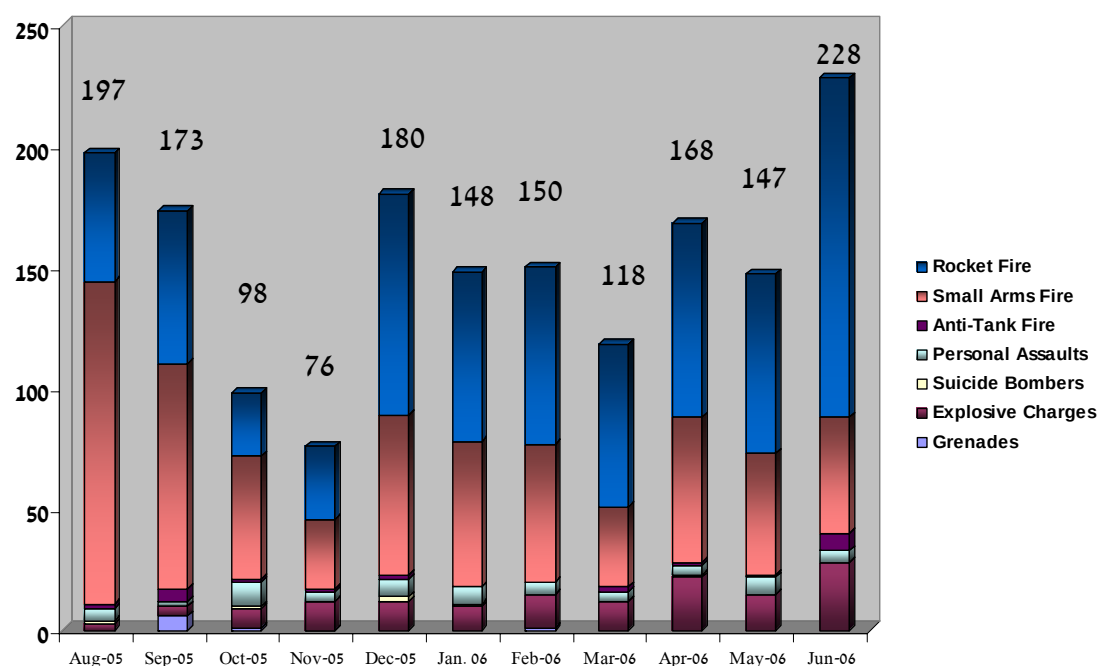
✦ Israeli Defense Minister Amir Peretz authorized the opening of the Karni crossing and the Nahal Oz fuel terminal for a number of days. That was done to enable trucks

with humanitarian aid provided by the UN and international organizations to enter the Gaza Strip. The Palestinians expressed their satisfaction with the terminals' opening.

✦ On July 2, 50 truckloads of food passed through the Karni crossing. The trucks held cooking oil, flour, rice, sugar, and other necessary products. As of July 2, the supply of fuel and cooking gas was renewed through the Nahal Oz terminal. Security sources say that the Gaza Strip is so far not suffering from a shortage of necessary food, medicine or fuel.

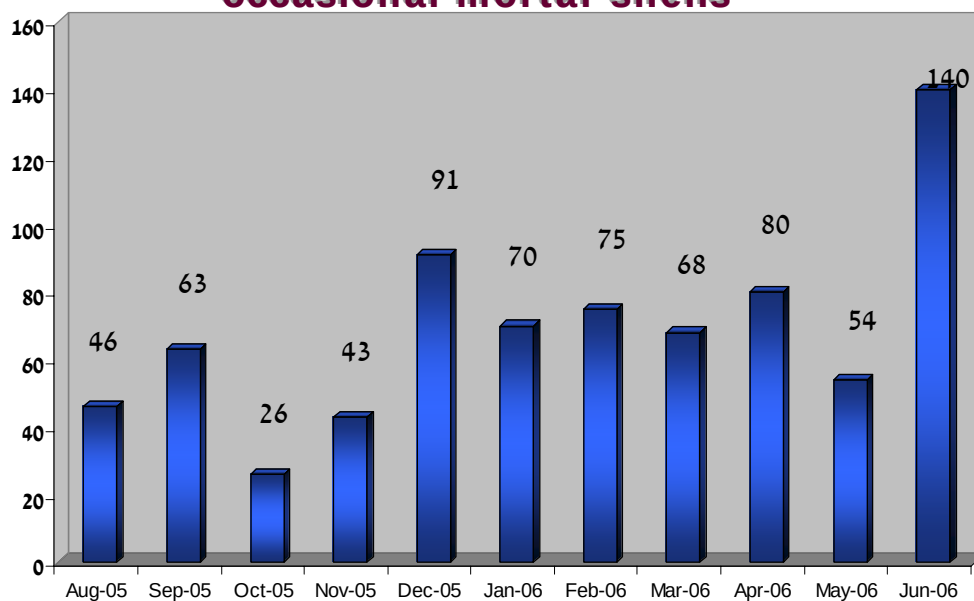
Statistical data since the disengagement³

Monthly distribution of attacks

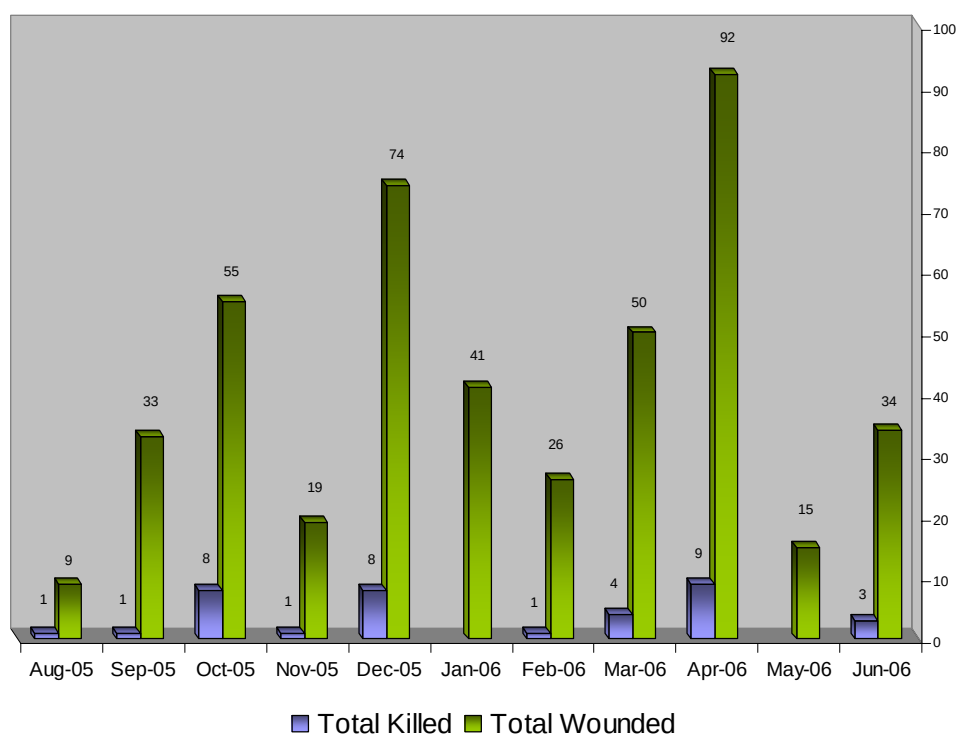


³ For the time being, the Operation Summer Rains updates have replaced the biweekly reports of the Israeli-Palestinian confrontation. This update contains the statistical information for June which would ordinarily appear in a biweekly report.

Monthly distribution of Qassam rockets and occasional mortar shells⁴



Monthly distribution of Israeli casualties



⁴ These data relate only to identified hits and not to the total number of rockets fired. That number is, in our assessment, 20%-30% larger.

The current situation regarding the abducted soldier

✦ On the morning of July 3, the three Palestinian terrorist organizations claiming responsibility for the abduction of Gilad Shalit issued **“Military announcement no. 3,”** a demand for the release of underage prisoners held in Israeli prisons. In return, it said, Israel would receive information about the abducted soldier. The announcement was signed by Hamas/Izzedine al-Qassam Brigades, the Popular Resistance Committees/ Salah al-Din Brigades and the Army of Islam (Izzedine al-Qassam Brigades Website, July 3).

✦ According to the announcement, in view of Israel’s “arrogant stance,” they were **extending the ultimatum until 6 a.m., July 4.** If by that time Israel had not complied with the demands in “Military announcement no. 2” (See below) and **had not carried out its first article** (i.e., the release of the underage and female prisoners), then the announcement said, **“We will consider the current affair closed... and the enemy will be responsible for all consequences”** (without detailing what they would be).



“Military announcement no. 3” as it appeared on the Izzedine al-Qassam Brigades Website (July 3).

✦ Two days previously, on July 1, Gilad Shalit's abductors issued "**Military announcement no. 2,**" detailing their demands, which were the following (Izzedine al-Qassam Brigades Website):

✓ **Paragraph 1: The release of all prisoners under the age of 18 and all the female prisoners** as a sign of Israel's "seriousness" and "good will;" in return Israel would be given **information about the abducted Israeli soldier.**

✓ **Paragraph 2: The release of 1,000 prisoners,** among them all the leaders of the Palestinian organizations, all those who have served long terms and all those with medical problems.

✓ **Paragraph 3: The end of all Israeli military activity** (or, to quote the announcement, "the end of all forms of aggression against the Palestinian people").

✦ The ultimatum issued on the morning of July 3 is at this time, in our assessment, a sign of the **failure of Oman Suleiman, head of Egypt's general intelligence service, to mediate the situation.** A "Palestinian source" said that Khaled Mashal refused to go to Cairo to discuss the Egyptian proposals and asked Egypt to deal directly with the soldier's abductors (www.palpress.net, July 2). The Izzedine al-Qassam Brigades issued a statement congratulating Khaled Mashal and the Syrian régime on their "firm stand" in the face of the regional and international pressures exerted on them (Ma'an News Agency, Bethlehem, June 30).

Hezbollah leader in public statement to Hamas: Do not release the Israeli soldier without compensation.

✦ Hassan Nasrallah, Hezbollah leader, gave a speech in which **he called upon Hamas not to release the Israeli soldier without compensation.** He warned governments and other elements (i.e., the governments of the Arab states and the international community) not to exert pressure on the "Palestinian resistance" (i.e., Hamas and the other terrorist organizations) to release the abducted soldier.



Hassan Nasrallah: the abduction is a “historic crossroads”

(Al-Manar TV, July 1)

✦ The abduction was described by Nasrallah as a “historic crossroads” because, he said, its outcome would determine how the issue of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons would be dealt with in the future. He claimed that the way the affair ended would determine whether their release would be achieved through abduction, which was the method he favored, or in “a different way,” which would, he said, “close the door on the release of Palestinian prisoners from Israeli prisons” (Al-Manar TV, June 30).

Palestinian reactions to Operation Summer Rains

✦ PA chairman Abu Mazen, visiting Ismail Haniya’s burned out offices, described the attack as “criminal.” Many demonstrations were held in the Gaza Strip and throughout the West Bank supporting Hamas and there were even manifestations of solidarity between Hamas and Fatah ground forces.

✦ The Palestinian and Arab media reported broad popular support for the abductor’s demand to release prisoners in return for the abducted soldier. Palestinian TV inflamed and manipulated public opinion by airing propaganda on the subject of prisoners, such as “The prisoner’s song” broadcast on the staged background of prisoners being tortured in Israeli prisons.

✦ **The Hamas government geared itself to continue functioning** despite the arrest of one third of its members. A government spokesman reported that government meetings continue despite the destruction caused to Ismail Haniya’s offices. The

government general secretary stated that the portfolios of the ministers arrested by Israeli had temporarily been transferred to other ministers in the Gaza Strip.