



Hamis releases names of hostages due for release on Saturday



Hamis has released the names of three hostages due to be freed on Saturday in exchange for Palestinian prisoners in Israel, after days of fears over the future of the ceasefire.

They are Russian-Israeli Alexander Troufanov, Argentine-Israeli Yair Horn, and US-Israeli Sagui Dekel-Chen. Israel has said it will resume bombing if the three are not released on time. The warning came after Hamis said it was postponing the releases in response to alleged Israeli violations of the ceasefire.

President Trump said the ceasefire should be scrapped if Hamis did not release all the hostages held in Gaza by midday on Saturday. Since the ceasefire began on 19 January, 16 Israeli and five Thai hostages have been released in exchange for 766 prisoners.

During the first six-week phase of the ceasefire, a total of 33 hostages should be freed in exchange for around 1,900 Palestinian prisoners and detainees in Israel. The war was triggered by Hamis's attack on Israel on 7 October 2023, when gunmen killed about 1,200 people and took 251 hostages. More than 48,230 people have been killed by the Israel offensive in Gaza since then, according to the territory's Hamis-run health ministry,

There are 73 hostages taken on 7 October who are still being held in Gaza. There are also three other Israeli hostages - one of whom is dead - who have been held in Gaza for a decade or more. Alexander Troufanov, 29, Yair Horn, 46, and Sagui Dekel-Chen, 36, were all seized from Kibbutz Nir Oz on the edge of Gaza.

The ceasefire has been under strain since it began, with each side taking reciprocal action over alleged violations. Intense efforts by mediators US, Egypt and Qatar have managed to stop it from collapsing. Israel has been especially infuriated by the staged way hostages have been released - publicly displayed on platforms alongside gunmen and in front of crowds of spectators, before being handed over to the Red Cross in chaotic scenes.

For its part, Hamis has accused Israel of preventing what the group says are the amount of tents and aid lorries required to be let into Gaza under the terms of the ceasefire. Israel denies this.