
Israel confirms three hostages set for Saturday release amid ceasefire deal



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Israel has confirmed the release of three hostages—American-Israeli Sagui Dekel-Chen, Russian-Israeli Alexandre Troufanov, and Argentinian-Israeli Iair Horn—on Saturday as part of the ongoing ceasefire agreement. In exchange, Israel is expected to release 369 Palestinian prisoners, according to Hamas' Prisoner Media Office.

Troufanov, 27, was abducted from Kibbutz Nir Oz on October 7, 2023, along with family members

who were freed earlier. Dekel-Chen, 35, was taken while defending Nir Oz, missing the birth of his third daughter, who turned one in December. Horn, 46, was also captured from Nir Oz; his brother remains in captivity.

The release comes after recent tensions between Israel and Hamas over ceasefire terms. While Hamas initially threatened to delay the exchange, the dispute was resolved, and the process is now set to proceed. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reaffirmed that if the hostages were not freed by noon Saturday, Israel would resume intense military operations.

Former hostages and international organizations continue to voice concerns over detainee conditions. The International Committee of the Red Cross has urged for humane treatment and access to those still in captivity. Meanwhile, reports of mistreatment have surfaced from both Israeli hostages and Palestinian prisoners.

So far, 16 of the 33 Israeli hostages and five Thai nationals set for release in this phase have been freed, along with 656 Palestinian prisoners out of a planned 2,000.