

Israel needs Qatar's 'influence' over Hamas, analysts say after Netanyahu leak

Criticism of Israel's conduct in negotiations comes as CIA director is dispatched to attempt a new deal

Thomas Helm / Jan 26, 2024

[...]

“We need Qatar because of its influence on Hamas. This is the dilemma and trap that Israel finds itself in,” senior researcher **Yoel Guzansky, of Israeli think tank INSS**, told The National, describing Mr Netanyahu's alleged comments as a “mistake”.

“Even though Qatar is a problematic player, Israel should practise strategic patience,” he said.

Qatar hosts Hamas's senior leadership and therefore holds particular sway over the group.

But many Israelis remain suspicious towards Qatar, given its close relations with Hamas.

Israel vowed to destroy the group in October, after militants stormed southern Israel, killing and kidnapping hundreds of people.

Mr Guzansky criticised Israel's long-term strategy of facilitating Qatari funds to enter Gaza, a policy that has come under a great deal of scrutiny in Israel since the Gaza War.

“Israel should blame no one but itself,” Mr Guzansky said.

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