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After Successes, Israel's Military Is in a 'Long Game' With No Clear Outcome

A year after perhaps the worst military and intelligence debacle in the country's history, its armed forces have regained the momentum. Some ask: to what end?

By Isabel Kershner Reporting from Jerusalem / Oct. 3, 2024

When thousands of Hamas-led gunmen breached the Gaza border last Oct. 7 and overran Israeli communities, army bases and a music festival, victims of the surprise assault sent desperate messages to loved ones from their hiding places and safe rooms.

[...]

According to **Assaf Orion**, a retired Israeli brigadier general who is now a senior fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, "The strong and smart Israel from before Oct. 7 is back."

Mr. Nasrallah's demise sent a message of its own to Israel's enemies, Mr. Orion added: "You understand Israel can get to you."

[...]

A survey conducted this week by the Institute for National Security Studies at Tel Aviv University showed that 87 percent of Israel's Jewish population had high or very high confidence in the military. Only 37 percent expressed such levels of trust in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Initial Israeli euphoria aside, Mr. Orion said the military actions were a "long game" with no clear outcome. After a string of successes for Israel in Lebanon in recent days, he said, the question is, "Then what?"

[...]

The trick, said Mr. Orion, "is to find an exit before the inflection point when things can start going wrong."

For now, he said, "We are still in the middle of the movie."

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