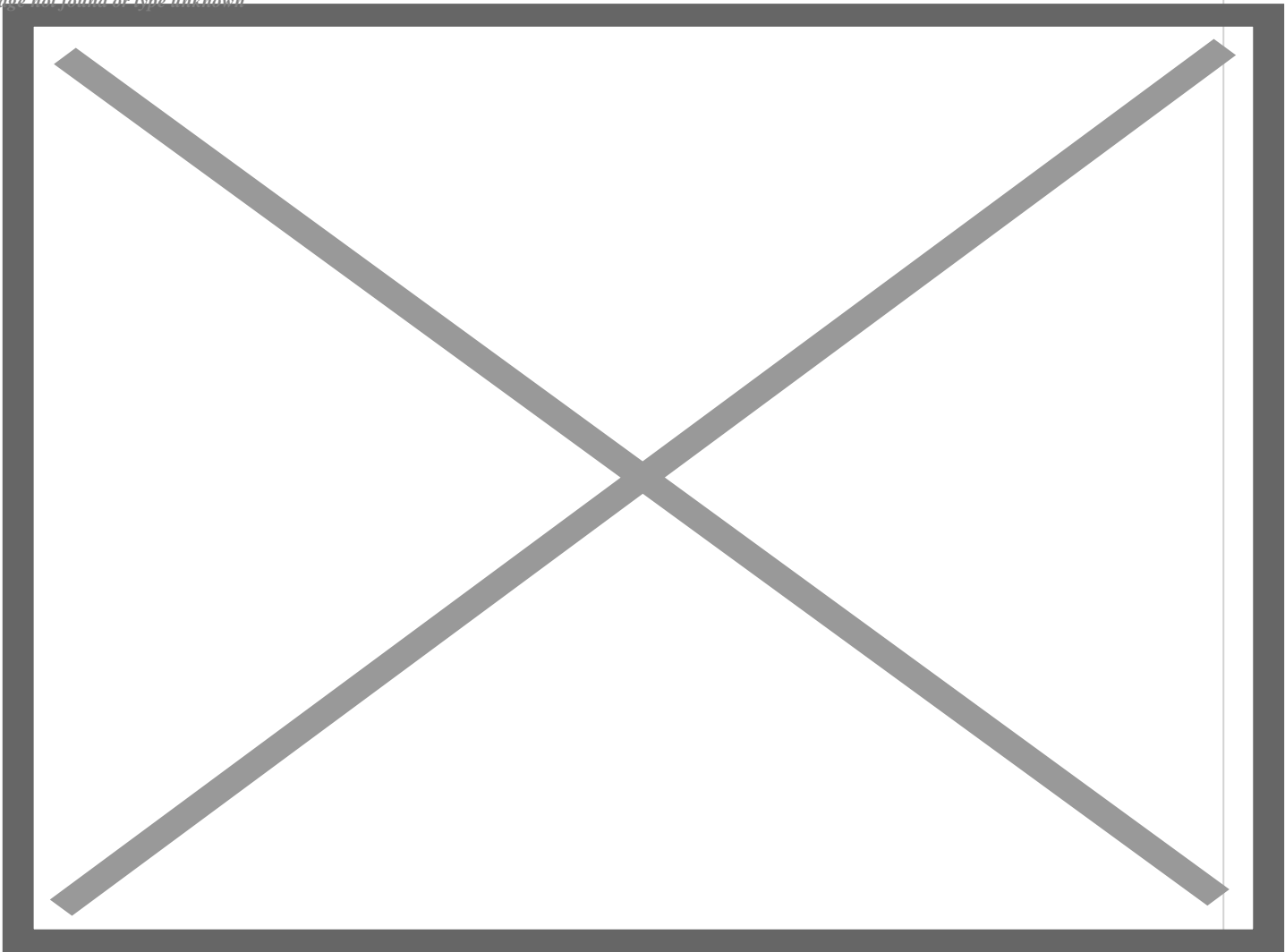


Report says Washington believes Gaza ceasefire deal unlikely in Joe Biden's term

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Washington, September 20 (RHC)-- Officials in the United States believe that a ceasefire deal between Israel and Hamas in Gaza is unlikely before President Joe Biden leaves office in January, according to

the Wall Street Journal.

The newspaper on Thursday cited top-level officials in the White House, State Department and Pentagon without naming them.

The officials told the Journal there were two key obstacles to a deal: the number of Palestinian prisoners Israel must release in exchange for each captive held by Hamas, and the rising tensions between Israel and Hezbollah.

In public, officials in Washington have stressed that they will continue to work for an agreement. "I can tell you that we do not believe that deal is falling apart," Pentagon spokesperson Sabrina Singh told reporters on Thursday before the Wall Street Journal report was published.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said two weeks ago that 90 percent of a ceasefire deal had been agreed upon. Washington has been working for months with mediators Qatar and Egypt to try and bring Israel and Hamas to a final agreement.

Biden laid out a three-phase ceasefire proposal on May 31 saying that Israel had agreed to it. The U.S. holds its presidential election on November 5 with Vice President Kamala Harris running against Republican Donald Trump.

The latest bloodshed began nearly a year ago when Hamas launched a surprise attack on Israel on October 7, killing 1,139 people and taking more than 200 captive.

Israel's subsequent assault on the Hamas-governed territory has killed at least 41,272 Palestinians and injured 95,551. It has also led to the displacement of nearly the entire population of 2.3 million, a hunger crisis and a genocide case at the World Court.

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