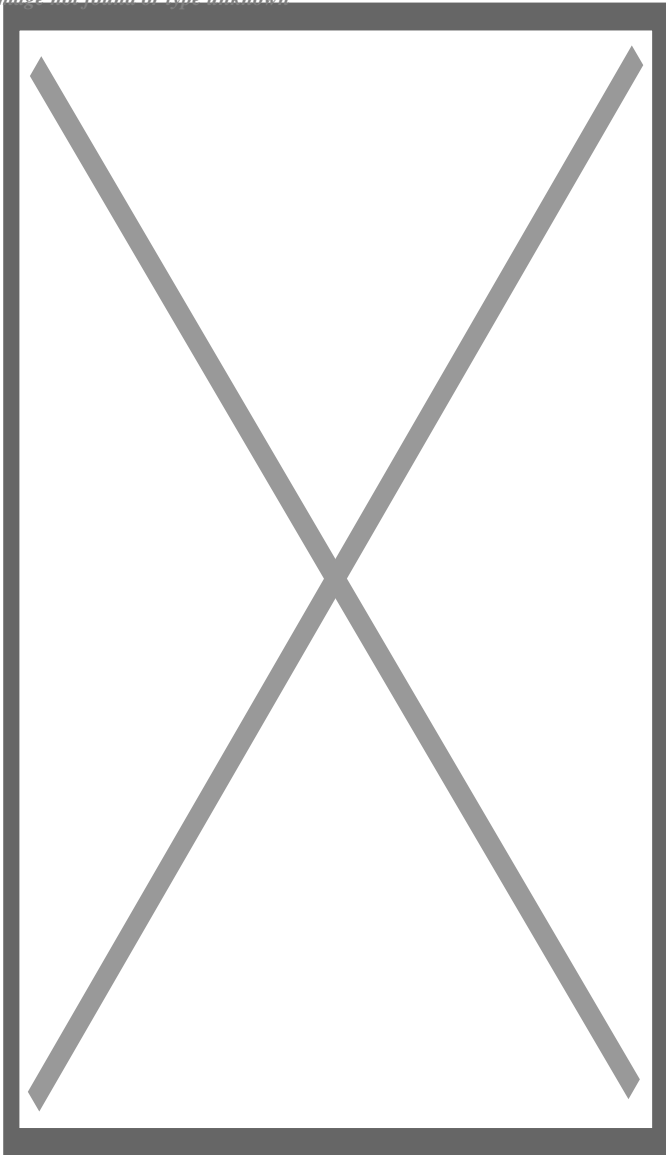


Former Israeli army chief affirms Netanyahu seeks to prolong war

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Tel Aviv, January 24 (RHC)-- Former army chief Moshe Ya'alon lambasted Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu's ruling coalition, saying it is not working in good faith to free captives.

Ya'alon said the regime is acting against the Israeli entity's interest by trying to prolong the war on Gaza. It "wants the war to continue until the end of its term, which goes against Israeli interests," he told Israel's Army Radio. "It is not acting sincerely to free the captives. We could have released them in November 2023."

Itamar Ben-Gvir, Israel's far-right former minister who resigned in protest over the ceasefire agreement, took to X, calling the truce a "reckless surrender" and a "humiliation." He insisted that Israel must abandon this approach and resume military action to "destroy" Gaza.

Ben-Gvir also condemned reports that the military instructed soldiers to remove offensive graffiti in Gaza, labelling it a "disgrace". Ben-Gvir and some other ministers have already resigned from Netanyahu's ruling coalition over the Gaza ceasefire agreement.

Israel's finance minister Bezalel Smotrich also recently threatened to bring down Netanyahu's coalition if the besieged Gaza Strip is not occupied.

Director of Gaza's Kamal Adwan Hospital said Israeli authorities had extended a ban on Dr. Hussam Abu Safia from meeting his lawyers until February 6.

[SOURCE: PRESS TV and NEWS AGENCIES]

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