

Hostage Shlomo Mansour, 85, was slain on Oct. 7, his body is held captive in Gaza, says IDF

Family of hostage twins Gali and Ziv Berman says it has received word they are alive and being held separately; protesters block highway demanding government not endanger deal

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Shlomo Mansour (Courtesy)

Shlomo Mansour, the oldest hostage still in Gaza, was declared dead by Israeli authorities on Tuesday, who said that he had actually been killed in the October 7, 2023, Hamas onslaught and his body taken captive.

Also Tuesday, the family of hostage twins [Ziv](#) and [Gali](#) Berman said it has received signs of life from the brothers, as concern mounts over the fate of the captives remaining in Gaza in light of a Hamas [threat to halt](#) the upcoming hostage releases and fears that future stages of the deal will be torpedoed.

A small group of protesters blocked the Route 1 Tel Aviv-Jerusalem highway on Tuesday morning near the capital, demanding that the government not jeopardize the hostage release deal. Some held up a large banner reading, “Abandoning the hostages is a war crime,” while others set off smoke bombs and chanted slogans.

Families of hostages and their supporters also gathered to protest outside the Knesset as the security cabinet was slated to meet. The cabinet meeting was moved earlier in the day following the Hamas announcement on Monday evening that it would pause releasing hostages until further notice, alleging Israeli “violations” of the ceasefire.

Kibbutz Kissufim announced Tuesday morning that Mansour, 85, had been killed, without elaborating on the circumstances. The IDF later confirmed that it had updated his family that he was killed during the October 7 attack.

The military said Mansour was murdered during the October 7 onslaught and his body taken by Hamas terrorists to Gaza, where it remains held. It was unclear if he was murdered in Kibbutz Kissufim, en route to Gaza, or in the Strip

itself that day. His death was declared by a panel of health experts and members of the rabbinate, following intelligence the IDF says it obtained in recent months.



Illustrative: The destruction caused by Hamas terrorists in Kibbutz Kissufim on October 7, 2023, in southern Israel, seen November 20, 2023. (Chaim Goldberg/Flash90)

“The IDF has been operating throughout the war with a wide range of methods to collect information about the hostages in the Gaza Strip. The IDF and other security agencies will continue to accompany the families of the hostages as long as needed,” the military added.

“This is one of the most difficult days in the history of our kibbutz,” Kissufim said in a statement. “Shlomo was much more than a community member to us — he was a father, a grandfather, a true friend and the beating heart of Kissufim.”

The kibbutz statement added that “his smile, modesty and human warmth were an inspiration to us all. Our hearts are broken that we were unable to bring him back to us alive. The entire community grieves his loss and is united in grief and pain.”

Mansour, a native of Baghdad who survived the Farhud pogrom in 1941, moved to Israel at age 13. He was among the founders of Kissufim, where he worked for years in the chicken coop as well as at an eyewear factory, and learned carpentry as a hobby. He is survived by his wife, Mazal, five children, 12 grandchildren and five siblings. He was 85 when he was killed and his body abducted; he would have turned 87 next month.

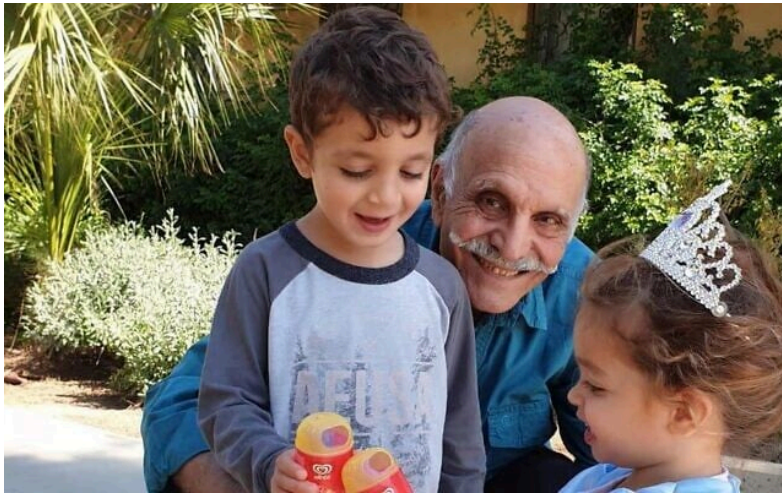
Wife Mazal has said that her husband was abducted in his pajamas after terrorists opened fire on the door of the safe room of their home at the kibbutz. In a May 2024 television interview, she said she last saw him being taken away, handcuffed, by several terrorists.



Shlomo and Mazal Mansour (Hostage and Missing Families Forum)

When they had faced the terrorists, Mazal said, “One of them slapped him. So I said, ‘Why did you do that? That’s not nice.’ He’s an elderly man. And then Shlomo said, ‘I didn’t do anything. I’m an elderly man’.”

Since his abduction, she said in the May interview, there had been no information regarding him. “I’m always disappointed with their answers,” she said, apparently referring to Israeli officials who were in contact with her.



Shlomo Mansour with his grandchildren Ori and Roni (Courtesy)

In a statement, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu expressed condolences to the Mansour family, adding that “we will not rest or be silent until his return for burial in Israel. We will continue to act determinedly and tirelessly until we return all our hostages — both the living and the fallen.”

Mansour was on the list of the 33 hostages slated to be freed in current first stage of the ceasefire deal. Of the 33, Hamas has said that eight are no longer alive, but did not identify them. Israel had earlier expressed concern over Mansour’s fate due to his advanced age. On day 42 of the first stage of the ceasefire, March 1, Hamas is expected to return the bodies of those eight slain hostages.



Protesters block Route 1 near the entrance to Jerusalem, demanding the release of the hostages held by Hamas in Gaza, February 11, 2025. (Yonatan Sindel/Flash90)

Following Tuesday’s announcement, Israel has now confirmed the deaths of 36 of the total 76 hostages remaining in Gaza.

Berman twins ‘alive and in life-threatening danger’

Meanwhile the family of Ziv and Gali Berman, who were kidnapped from Kibbutz Kfar Aza more than 16 months ago, said a sign of life had been received from the twins.

Their aunt, Maccabith Mayer, told the Kan public radio on Tuesday that they received word of the brothers’ status from hostages who were freed in the past three weeks. The twins are not on the list of those slated to be released in the deal’s first stage.

“There’s a sigh of relief, but at the same time there’s also great fear,” Mayer said, adding that the brothers “are not being held together, but they’re alive and they are in life-threatening danger.”



Ziv and Gali Berman were taken captive by Hamas terrorists from their home in Kibbutz Kfar Aza on October 7, 2023. (Courtesy)

Just before he was kidnapped, Gali Berman told his mother that he had to go and be with his neighbor, [Emily Damari](#), who was afraid. Emily was also kidnapped on October 7; she was freed last month on the first day of the ceasefire, January 19.

“We don’t want another sign of life; we want them back home,” said Mayer. “Gali and Ziv need to come home — quickly.”

Times of Israel staff contributed to this report.