

# Gaza talks positive as deaths top 40,000

LATEST DIPLOMATIC PUSH IN DOHA AIMS TO AVERT WIDER REGIONAL WAR AS TENSIONS SIMMER

**DUBAI**  
**BY STEPHEN N. R.**  
Senior Associate Editor

The US yesterday hailed a “promising start” to Gaza talks, with mounting pressure for a ceasefire deal to avert the spread of a war that has killed more than 40,000 Palestinians.

Talks involving CIA director William Burns, Mossad chief David Barnea, Egyptian intelligence chief Abbas Kamel and Qatar’s Prime Minister Shaikh Mohammad Bin Abdulrahman Al Thani began in Doha without representatives from Hamas. However, mediators will brief the group shortly.


“Today is a promising start,” US National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said in Washington, adding: “There remains a lot of work to do.”

The parties are working on US President Joe Biden’s three-stage proposal, which aims to suspend hostilities, free more than 100 hostages held by Hamas in exchange for Palestinian prisoners and transfer more aid to Gaza Strip.

The talks are expected to continue today, Kirby said. “We need to see the hostages released, relief for Palestinian civilians in Gaza, security for Israel and lower tensions in the region,” he added.

The latest diplomatic push comes as the death toll in Gaza reached 40,005 – which UN human rights chief Volker Turk called a “grim milestone”.

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## 10 KEY MOMENTS IN THE ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR

### 1 Hamas attacks:

On October 7, Hamas fighters infiltrate Israel resulting in 1,198 deaths. 251 hostages seized.

### 2 North Gaza exodus:

Israel begins bombing and besieging Gaza.

### 3 Ground invasion:

On October 27, Israel launches a ground offensive. On November 15, Israeli troops raid Al Shifa hospital.

### 4 Truce and hostage swap:

On November 24, a week-long truce between Israel and Hamas takes effect.

### 5 Court order to prevent ‘genocide’:

January 26, the International Court of Justice orders Israel to do “everything” to prevent any acts of genocide.

### 6 Deadly food stampede:

On February 29, Israeli forces open fire on Gazans who rush towards a convoy of food aid trucks killing 120 people.

### 7 Aid workers killed:

On April 1, seven aid workers from the US charity World Central Kitchen are killed in an Israeli strike.

### 8 Iran attacks Israel:

On April 13, Iran launches drone and missile attack on Israel in retaliation for a strike on Tehran’s consulate in Damascus.

### 9 Operations in the south:

On May 7, the Israeli army launches a ground offensive in Rafah.

### 10 Regional flare-up feared:

Yemen’s Houthi rebels claim a drone strike on Tel Aviv on July 19. The next day, Israel bombs port of Hodeida. Israel-Lebanon border sees almost daily exchange of fire.

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books build  
brains


**DUBAI**  
**BY LAKSHANA N. PALAT**  
Assistant Features Editor

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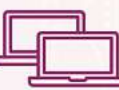
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