

Muhammad Odeh, New Head of the Hamas Military-Terrorist Wing, Eliminated in the Gaza Strip

May 28, 2026

Overview¹

- ▶ On May 26, 2026, the Israeli security forces eliminated Muhammad Odeh in a strike on an apartment in Gaza City. Odeh headed Hamas' military wing for approximately two weeks following the elimination of his predecessor, Izz al-Din al-Haddad, and was one of the planners of the October 7, 2023 terrorist attack and massacre in his capacity as head of military intelligence for the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades.
- ▶ Hamas and its military wing confirmed the death of the "great commander" who headed the general staff, noting his many years of activity within the al-Qassam Brigades which culminated in the invasion into Israeli territory. They claimed his death would serve as an incentive for continuing the "resistance."²
- ▶ Odeh, considered one of Hamas' more secretive figures, held various positions in the military wing, including command of the Northern Brigade, and was considered a key figure in developing the movement's intelligence capabilities. During the preparations for the October 7, 2023 attack and massacre, he led monitoring the weaknesses of the IDF Gaza Division.
- ▶ It is still unclear who will be appointed to replace him, but a prominent candidate is the commander of the Beit Hanoun Battalion, Hussein Fayyad, reportedly Odeh's deputy.
- ▶ **In Amit Institute assessment, the deaths Izz al-Din al-Haddad and Muhammad Odeh (within two weeks) will pose a significant challenge for the Hamas military leadership, both because of the need for personal survival, given Israel's intelligence penetration, and because of the elimination of the last senior commanders from the founding generation who orchestrated the October 7, 2023 attack and massacre. The new commander will also face difficult decisions regarding Hamas' future, primarily the effort**

¹ Click <https://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en> to subscribe and receive the ITIC's daily updates as well as its other publications.

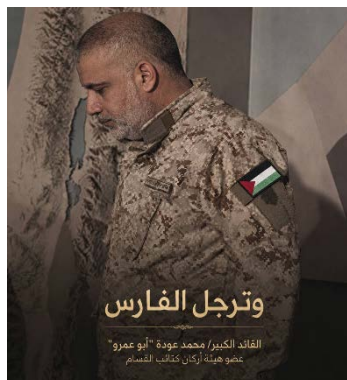
² The concerted acts of the Palestinian and other terrorist organizations to destroy the State of Israel.

to rebuild the capabilities of the military wing in the face of the growing demand for Hamas to disarm and relinquish power.

Official Announcements of Odeh's Elimination

► On the evening of May 26, 2026, the eve of Eid al-Adha, Israel carried out a series of airstrikes targeting a residential building near al-Kanz Mosque in the al-Rimal neighborhood in western Gaza City. According to a report from al-Shifa Hospital, six people were killed and several were wounded (Shehab Agency, May 26-27, 2026). Shortly thereafter Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Israel Katz confirmed that the strike had targeted Muhammad Odeh, head of Hamas military intelligence during the October 7, 2023 attack and massacre and who was appointed the new commander of Hamas' military wing following the elimination of Izz al-Din al-Haddad on May 15, 2026 (Israeli media, May 26, 2026).³

► During the night family members confirmed Odeh's death (Facebook page of Abu Izz al-Din Odeh and Reuters, May 26-27, 2026), and Hamas media channels reported his death before the movement's official announcement. The Telegram channel of the ministry of the interior's Sahm Unit announced the death of the "great commander," Muhammad Odeh, aka Abu Ammar, a member of the general staff of the al-Qassam Brigades (al-Sayyad channel, May 27, 2026). Hamas' *al-Risalah* called him "one of the most well-known figures in national and resistance circles in Gaza City," adding that for years his name had been associated with field work and "resistance" (*al-Risalah*, May 27, 2026).



Death notice for Odeh. "And the knight descended [from his horse]"
(al-Sayyad Telegram channel, May 27, 2026)

³ See the May 2026 Amit Institute report, [Elimination of Izz al-Din al-Haddad, Head of Hamas' Military Wing: Reactions and Significance](#)

► At noon on May 27, 2026, a funeral was held for Odeh and his family members, attended by thousands but without the obvious presence of armed operatives. The cortège left from al-Nour Mosque, participants carrying pictures of Odeh and Hamas flags, and chanting slogans against Israel and in support of Hamas and the "resistance" (Shehab Agency, May 27, 2026).



The funeral held for Odeh and his family members (Shehab Agency, May 27, 2026)

► According to the Israeli announcement, Muhammad Odeh had been head of the Hamas military wing for approximately two weeks following the elimination of Izz al-Din Haddad and had been head of the intelligence staff in recent years. Odeh had been responsible for choosing the targets of the Hamas attack and massacre on October 7, 2023 attack, and throughout the war had directed numerous attacks and led the effort to collect and analyze intelligence for terrorist operations targeting IDF forces and Israeli civilians. He was among the last senior commanders in Hamas' military wing who commanded the October 7 attack and massacre and managed the fighting, and his death was a significant blow to Hamas' attempts at rehabilitation. In addition, several buildings in the heart of Gaza City which served as Odeh's hiding places were attacked, and a nearby apartment belonging to a Hamas terrorist who participated in the October 7, 2023 attack and massacre and who was one of Odeh's circle of assistants was attacked (IDF spokesperson and Israeli Security Agency spokesperson, May 27, 2026). Reportedly, approximately 20 minutes after the strike on Odeh's apartment, a helicopter attacked an apartment hundreds of meters away, wounding several, including a field commander in military intelligence who was critically wounded (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, May 26, 2026).



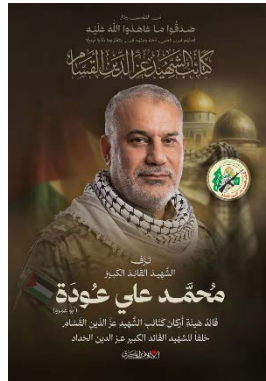
Right: Odeh's ID card. Left: Odeh with former head of the military wing Muhammad Deif (eliminated in July 2024), former military wing spokesman Abu Obeida (eliminated in August 2025) and Khan Yunis Brigade commander Rafa Salama (eliminated in July 2024) (IDF spokesperson, May 27, 2026)

► After the funeral, Hamas formally announced that the "great heroic al-Qassam commander shaheed," Muhammad Odeh (Abu Ammar), had been killed with his wife and two of his sons in a "Zionist bombardment" on a residential building in Gaza, "a desperate attempt to undermine the steadfastness and will of our people and of their resistance, violating divine commandments." He died a shaheed after a "jihad journey of sacrifice, patience and determination," was part of the first generation of the founders of the jihad and military activity and left "a mark on all the stages and milestones [of jihad] leading to Operation al-Aqsa Flood," "in silence, far from media exposure." It was further stated that Odeh "was positioned at the forefront of preparedness, construction and planning," had been targeted in numerous elimination attempts until "the divine choice arrived" and left behind "a wonderful legacy, an influential milestone and a noble example." Hamas again pledged that the blood of Odeh and his family members, and of all the shaheeds, had not been shed in vain and would be "fuel that will ignite the strength and determination of our people to continue the path of struggle and steadfastness"⁴ (Hamas Telegram channel, May 27, 2026). Hamas did not say that Odeh headed the military wing, unlike the announcement after the elimination of al-Haddad.

► Later, Hamas' military wing issued a formal statement regarding the death of the "great commander shaheed," Muhammad Ali Odeh, aka Abu Ammar, head of the general staff of the al-Qassam Brigades, who had been "assassinated." The Brigades called it "a new crime by the promise-breakers, who relate to the faithful [Muslim] only if he is a target." Hamas added that Allah had chosen a "wonderful ending" for "our brave commander" who was killed on the eve

⁴ i.e., anti-Israel terrorism and violence.

of Eid al-Adha and thus with his family joined his shaheed son Ammar. Odeh "left a mark in all the fields of jihad and resistance, from the battlefield to the military production workshops, from leading the Northern Brigade to commanding the weapon and combat services branch, and commanding the military intelligence that played a significant role in the success of the crossing [sic] on October 7, up to his appointment to command the general staff of the al-Qassam Brigades." Hamas added that the blood of the commanders "will only increase our determination to continue on the path of resistance" (Hamas Telegram channel, May 27, 2026).



Izz al-Din Brigades death notice for Odeh's (Hamas Telegram channel, May 27, 2026)

► Sources said Odeh, who lived in the Jabalia refugee camp, joined Hamas when the movement was established during the first intifada in 1987 and was a member of Yahya al-Sinwar's al-Majd, which identified, interrogated and executed suspected Palestinian "collaborators." He was among the first to join Hamas' military wing during the second intifada and was close to Nizar Rayan, one of the heads of the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades who was eliminated in 2009. He commanded a battalion in the Jabalia refugee camp and dealt with "military production" before acting as commander of the northern brigade between 2017 and 2019. According to sources in Hamas, he had a "disciplinary role" in developing the Hamas intelligence wing and preferred to engage in that rather than in operational field activity, and therefore did not have bodyguards or drivers. Under his command, military intelligence examined the weaknesses of the IDF Gaza Division ahead of the October 7, 2023 attack and massacre and the information was transferred on a regular basis to the leadership of Hamas' military council. The sources further noted that Odeh was close to Izz al-Din al-Haddad and they worked together on rebuilding the organizational structure (al-Sharq al-Awsat, May 26, 2026). After the elimination of al-Haddad, sources in Hamas in the Gaza Strip reported that Odeh had been appointed to the position of commander, having previously declined it when

it was offered to him following the elimination of Muhammad al-Sinwar in May 2025 (al-Sharq al-Awsat, May 18, 2026).



Right: Odeh (left) with Muhammad al-Sinwar, head of the military wing who was eliminated in May 2025, driving in a tunnel near the Erez crossing when Odeh commanded the northern brigade. Left: Odeh (left) in his youth, seated beside Ayman Siyam (commander of the rocket array who was eliminated in November 2023) and Ibrahim Sahib (who commanded the central Jabalia Battalion and the nukhba terrorists in the October 7 attack) (al-Sayyad Telegram channel, May 27, 2026)

► The identity of the new commander of Hamas' military wing is still unknown. Imad Aqel, commander of the home front of the al-Qassam Brigades, is the last surviving member of the command staff of the October 7, 2023 military wing, however he was not involved in planning or supervising the attack and massacre (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, May 26, 2026). A prominent candidate is Hussein Fayyad (Abu Hamza), commander of the Beit Hanoun Battalion, who was reportedly appointed deputy head of the military wing under Odeh (AshAndIntel X account, May 2026). In May 2024, the IDF announced that Fayyad, who was responsible for anti-tank missile and mortar fire at Israeli territory, had been eliminated in a strike in the Jabalia refugee camp, however in January 2025 the IDF spokesperson admitted that the information was mistaken after Fayyad appeared publicly after the ceasefire went into effect (IDF spokesperson, May 23, 2024 and January 22, 2025).

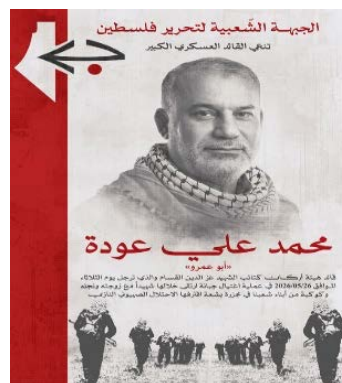


Hussein Fayyad (Mumen Miqdad X account, July 31, 2025)

► Condolence statements also arrived from additional organizations within the framework of the "resistance axis:"

◆ The Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) issued a death notice for "our mujahid brother," the great commander of the al-Qassam Brigades, Muhammad Odeh, who was "assassinated by the army of the Zionist entity." The PIJ declared that "the continuing acts war carried out by Zionist entity's government" contradicted their commitments to the mediators of the ceasefire. The PIJ also said the blood of the dead will not have been shed in vain and would only strengthen the determination to continue the "resistance" as "the only means to deter the occupation" (Telegram channel of the PIJ's information office, May 27, 2026).

◆ The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) said it mourned the death of the "great commander and resistance fighter," Muhammad Ali Odeh, who was killed with his family in a "massacre carried out by the Zionist occupation." The PFLP praised the "exceptional contribution" of the commander "who preferred to work quietly in the shadows for decades, wrote with his blood and with the sacrifices of his family the highest meaning of redemption and sacrifice." Odeh's activity on the battlefield, in developing an "industrial military reservoir" and the "exceptional leadership" of the military intelligence wing, which "brilliantly contributed to shaping the dawn of the glorious October 7 saga [*sic*],"⁵ were also mentioned. According to the statement, the "resistance forces" would only increase their determination to continue the "resistance" and that the blood of Odeh and the dead would "pursue the Zionist enemy and hasten its disappearance" (PFLP Telegram channel, May 27, 2026).



PFLP death notice for Odeh (PFLP Telegram channel, May 27, 2026)

⁵ The atrocities of the October 7, 2023 terrorist attack and massacre.

◆ The political bureau of the Houthis in Yemen issued a death notice with feelings of "great sorrow and pride" for Hamas, all the Palestinian "resistance" organizations, all the Palestinians and the Islamic nation on the death of the "great commander" Odeh, and raised the banner of "the marks he left in the jihad and military activity for three decades." The statement called the attack on Odeh "another in the series of continuing crimes committed by the Zionist enemy" against the Palestinian people since the ceasefire, adding that attacks on the jihad commanders "reflects the moral and ethical bankruptcy and the enormous failure of the Zionist and American enemy," and it would not undermine the "determination and steadfastness of the jihad fighters, but rather strengthen their determination and unity in the face of the enormous sacrifices they are making on the road to Jerusalem" (al-Masirah, May 27, 2026).