

# Opinion | Israel's Version of the Nukhba Is Worse Than Hamas'

Sunday 4 August 2024, by [LEVY Gideon](#) (Date first published: 1 August 2024).

**We also have our very own Nukhba [a Hamas elite force]. And it is worse than the Hamas version. After what happened at Sde Teiman, we won't be able to raise a hue and cry about their Nukhba's cruelty and barbarity; ours isn't any better. It's even worse because it was committed on behalf of the state, or at least with its silence and turning of a blind eye. Therefore, Israel's Nukhba is worse than their Nukhba.**

*A protest outside Israel's Sde Teiman detention facility, in May. Credit: Eliyahu Hershkovitz*

The watershed was October 7, when Hamas demonstrated its barbarity. Women, old men and children were shot and killed or taken hostage. The watershed of [the October 7 horrors](#) was the reports about sexual assaults and rapes.

After a number of horror stories - not all of them - were refuted and found to have been incorrect, the [reports about sex crimes](#) remained as defining the barbarity of the Nukhba. Now we have rape by our own Nukhba. There is not just "suspicion of rape" here and there is no need to recite the prefix "alleged." Somebody raped the Palestinian prisoner who was taken to the hospital with a ruptured bowel and severe injury to his anus, and that somebody did all that to him on behalf of the state.

The [rapists were in uniform](#). They were Israel Defense Forces soldiers. The Palestinian prisoner didn't do that to himself, nor did his handcuffed and blindfolded comrades. It was IDF soldiers who stuck the pipe into him. They committed this act in a military internment camp. They did this on behalf of the state. They are more Nukhba than the Nukhba.

But that is not all. Overnight, our Nukhba became the hero of the day in the eyes of many Israelis, and even in the eyes of some Knesset members and cabinet ministers. Rapists as heroes. Heroically sodomizing shackled and helpless men. How can we dare to complain about their Nukhba?

I can't recall a single Palestinian who took pride in the Nukhba's acts of rape. In Israel there is now a large and important part of the public that is [proud of this barbaric rape](#). They deserve it, they are human beasts. Attention must be paid to the public and media storm that has erupted here; it is revolving mainly around the break-ins to the internment camp and the military base. That is the barbarity in the eyes of most Israelis, not the gang rape. That act has been almost forgotten. Our tempers didn't flare about the deeds of our Nukhba, but rather about the deeds of its fans.

But this, too, is not all. Even now it is possible to state with absolute certainty that their Nukhba fighters will be punished much more severely than our Nukhba soldiers. It's doubtful the state will punish ours at all. No one would even imagine a demand to sentence them to death for politically motivated rape. No one is going to hold them handcuffed for months on end. Their limbs will not be

amputated because of gangrene, and none of them will die in prison from torture or denial of medical treatment. They won't be wrapped in diapers, and no one will force-feed them through tubes, like at Sde Teiman.

*Masked and armed protesters outside the Beit Lid military base, on Monday. Credit: Avishag Shaar-Yashuv*

It's doubtful that they will spend more than a few days in detention; the house arrests are already on the way. Two have already been released. No one will think of flattening their towns and villages or of demolishing their families' homes. In the meantime, more and more voices, including [among the army's top brass](#), are protesting the fact that anyone even had the gall to arrest them. How dare they do that? They are, after all, our very own Nukhba soldiers.

The prisoner who was raped was apparently not the only prisoner who has been treated that way. Even the shocking number of prisoners who have died in detention and the number of amputees do not tell the story of the evil and the sadism of Sde Teiman in full. The brutality, torture and inhumane conditions were, insofar as is known, accompanied by various kinds of sexual violence.

Some day we will hear about this violence in detail. And then too, we won't feel shame. And then, too, we will understand and forgive, and perhaps we will even take pride. After all, ultimately, the IDF is the most moral army in the world. Everyone knows that in Israel. Only in Israel.

**Gideon Levy**

---

**P.S.**

• Haaretz. Aug 1, 2024:

<https://www.haaretz.com/opinion/2024-08-01/ty-article-opinion/.premium/israels-version-of-the-nukhba-is-worse-than-hamas/00000191-0a8c-de2c-a7ff-4ead436e0000>