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READER EDITION

September 15, 2025

ISRAEL BRIEF

Monday, September 15

Clear updates on the war, Israel's home front, and the shifting diplomatic theater. Facts, context, and what to watch.

◇ URIEL ZEHAVI

CLASSIFICATION

Reader Edition

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SHALOM and welcome to today's *Israel Brief*. Each day we gather the most urgent developments — from Gaza and the northern front, to Israel's cities, to the global stage where allies and adversaries maneuver. We sift the noise, bring the facts into focus, and keep the wider picture in view.

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One point to hold in mind as you read: Qatar has loudly condemned Israel's Doha strike, yet their own air defenses were silent that night. Washington maintains enormous assets in Qatar and stays in constant communication with Jerusalem. The claim that Israel "blindsided" anyone strains belief. More likely, the summit rhetoric reflects posturing rather than surprise.

The War Today

Elimination of Terrorists Who Infiltrated Israel on October 7th and Hamas Field Commanders

The IDF announced that its 282nd Brigade eliminated more than 20 Hamas terrorists in Gaza this past month, including Yousef Mahmoud Mohammad Jumaa, who led the cell that infiltrated Kibbutz Alumim on October 7. The army emphasized it will continue to target operatives behind the massacre and ongoing attacks in order to safeguard Israeli civilians.

'The Enemy is Still Taking Shape': As Syria Fractures, Israel Digs In

Ynet reports that IDF's Mountain Brigade has spent the last nine months raiding abandoned Syrian outposts on Mount Hermon, destroying more than seven tons of weapons to keep them from jihadist hands. With Assad gone and new president Ahmad al-Sharaa a former al-Qaeda commander, Israeli officers say "the enemy is still taking shape." Troops now prepare for harsh winter deployments to secure the Hermon front against whatever comes next.

Inside Israel

Policeman Killed in High-Speed Chase by Arms Smugglers

Staff Sgt. Niv Peretz, 28, was killed during a firefight with armed smugglers near Umm al-Fahm, reports *Israel Hayom*. Fourteen suspects have been arrested, and police say the chase began as part of an operation to track a weapons squad using ATVs. Leaders from the police commissioner to Peretz's hometown mayor mourned him as a dedicated officer who "fell to despicable murderers" while protecting Israel.

In Beersheba, Missile-Battered Soroka Hospital Still Seeking Cash to Rebuild and Fortify

Iran's June 19 ballistic strike gutted Soroka's ORs and ICU, and the Negev's main hospital still runs at reduced capacity while ministers debate who pays the NIS 1.2b bill. *ToI* reports partial government-Clalit funding is on the table, with the rest left to donors.

Israel and the World

Netanyahu Hosts Extended Meeting with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio
Netanyahu said the Doha strike decision was Israel's alone and vowed that Hamas leaders have no sanctuary. Rubio backed Jerusalem, arguing recognition of a Palestinian state rewards terror, and set clear terms: bring home the 48 hostages and end Hamas as an armed force. *i24NEWS* adds that Rubio heads to Doha while Arab and Muslim leaders craft a tough statement with plenty of rhetoric and no concrete measures.

In an Emerging 'Assassination Culture,' Jewish Leaders Need Added Protection, Experts Say

eJewishPhilanthropy reports growing concern that American Jewish leaders are increasingly at risk in what researchers call an "assassination culture." Recent attacks — from the killing of two Israeli Embassy staffers in Washington to firebombings at pro-Israel rallies — highlight the shift from rhetoric to violence. Experts warn that synagogue cameras and guards are no longer enough; rabbis, CEOs, and community leaders need personal protection plans.

Oct. 7 Documentary Wins People's Choice Award in Toronto

A film about retired Israeli Gen. Noam Tibon's rescue of his family during Hamas's October 7 attack won TIFF's People's Choice Award for best documentary, reports *i24* via *Algemeiner*. Barry Avrich's *The Road Between Us* drew both applause and angry protests, underscoring how even Jewish survival stories face politicized backlash abroad.

Star of David and Hostage Symbol: The Jewish Star Who Lit Up the Red Carpet

At the Emmy Awards, Hollywood voices leaned into anti-Israel gestures — Javier Bardem in a keffiyeh, Hannah Einbinder shouting "free Palestine." But Jewish influencer Emily Austin countered, wearing a *Magen David* and a bag with the hostage symbol. *Israel Hayom* reports she used the red carpet to remind the world that time is running out for those still held in Gaza.

Briefly Noted

- *Jewish Press*: SCN and the Jewish Federation of Florida's Gulf Coast ran a joint disaster-prep drill with FBI and local law enforcement, simulating hurricanes and active shooter crises.
- *Jerusalem Post*: London police charged a man with 11 offenses after a spree of antisemitic vandalism, smearing feces and urine on synagogues and Jewish sites in North West London.

- *Algemeiner*: Scarlett Johansson cast real Holocaust survivors, including Israeli actress Rita Zohar, in her directorial debut *Eleanor the Great*, a film shaped with help from the USC Shoah Foundation.
- *Israel Hayom*: Ivette Marzbacher's "LivingStones" project restores Jewish cemeteries in Moldova, confronting deep-rooted antisemitism while preserving memory.

Developments to Watch

- **Minister's office scandal** – Police uncovered a marijuana grow room in the home of the office manager for the Ministry for Social Equality and the Advancement of the Status of Women. Channel 12's Amit Segal reports Minister May Golan has been summoned for questioning as investigators probe possible misuse of public funds.
- **Infiltration attempt near Jerusalem** – Border Police shot and killed a Palestinian from Silat ad-Dhahr who traveled from Jenin and tried to breach the security barrier. Security forces say they have increased patrols after the deadly Ramot attack by infiltrators using the same route.
- **Qatar's Arab summit** – Doha circulated a draft declaration for today's emergency Arab-Islamic summit condemning Israel's strike on Qatari soil. Qatar's prime minister warned: "No one will be protected from Israeli escalation if we do not stand against it with strength." Iran backs the push for an "anti-Israel axis."
- **Egypt's red line** – Cairo's foreign minister told CNN that Palestinian displacement from Gaza is a "red line" for Egypt's sovereignty and security. He warned that such a move would mean "the end of the Palestinian idea," signaling that even humanitarian evacuations could trigger a crisis with Israel.
- **Lebanon tension point** – Arab outlets claim Israel's moves in Syria are preparations for a Lebanon invasion targeting Hezbollah assets in the Bekaa Valley. Israeli officials deny any ground war plans, insisting airstrikes remain sufficient unless Hezbollah provokes escalation.
- **Hezbollah commander killed** – The IDF eliminated Muhammad Ali Yassin in Nabatieh, southern Lebanon. Yassin was a senior Hezbollah figure involved in weapons development.
- **Iran's uranium tracked** – The *Jerusalem Post* reports Israel has precisely located Iran's enriched uranium stockpile. Officials say the Mossad is ready to act if Tehran moves it closer to weapons capability.
- **Booms across Israel** – Heavy IDF activity in Gaza City sent rumbles echoing through southern Israel, up the coast, and into the Judean Hills. The military says preparations for a ground operation are now complete.

- **Israeli Air Force signals strength** – Open-source analysts tracked an Israeli air drill over the Mediterranean opposite Egypt, including a KC-130H refueler and fighter jets. The message: Israel maintains reach far beyond its borders.

THESE stories together, revealing the battlefield, the home front, and the world's shifting lines. Some narratives will echo for days, others will vanish by morning, but the task remains the same: clarity, vigilance, and memory.

— *Uri Zehavi* · Intelligence Editor With *Modi Zehavi* · Data + Research Analyst

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Uriel Zehavi

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR · MITZPE INSTITUTE

Uriel Zehavi is the executive director of Mitzpe Institute, where he writes the daily Israel Brief and co-directs its Institutional Intelligence practice with Modi Zehavi. He is the author of four books from Mitzpe Press and advises Israeli and allied clients on strategic communications for Western audiences.



ABOUT MITZPE INSTITUTE

Mitzpe Institute is an intelligence and strategy organization focused on Israeli security, diaspora threat assessment, and the strategic challenges confronting the Jewish people and the West. We produce daily intelligence, forensic analyses, strategic assessments, and tactical briefings read by policymakers, military leaders, and institutional decision-makers across more than 90 countries and all 50 US states — from the Knesset and the US Congress to allied governments, major policy institutions, and Jewish organizational leadership worldwide.

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