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READER EDITION

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ISRAEL BRIEF

Thursday, September 25

A new year, same enemies: Drones in Eilat, gunfire from Gaza's largest hospital, and Iran racing sanctions.

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THE WAR TODAY

Houthi Drone Strikes Eilat

A drone attack hit Mall HaYam shopping district in Eilat, injuring approximately 20 people, with two in serious condition. This marked the third strike on the city within two weeks. Iron Dome interceptors failed to intercept the aircraft, and an Israeli fighter jet held fire due to the drone's low altitude. Jordanian observers across the border in Aqaba were documented celebrating the strike. Residents received guidance to follow Home Front Command alerts and shelter in protected areas when sirens sound.

Hamas Fires from Al-Shifa Hospital During Operation Gideon's Chariots II, Hamas forces opened heavy fire on IDF troops from within Al-Shifa Hospital, Gaza's primary medical facility, as Israeli forces advanced in Gaza City. The military released video documentation characterizing the attack as evidence of Hamas systematically using civilian infrastructure for cover, endangering patients and medical personnel. Fighting intensified around Shati camp with accompanying airstrikes. Hamas authorities warned the hospital faced potential closure due to fuel shortages.

IDF Casualties Mount Major Shahar Netanel Bozaglo, 27, a company commander in the Armored Corps, died when Hamas fired an RPG at his tank in northern Gaza. His death brings the IDF's wartime total to 465 fatalities since ground operations began and 911 overall since October 7, 2023. Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir described soldiers as Israel's "Iron Wall" during Rosh Hashanah remarks, pledging continued operations toward victory and hostage recovery.

Samaria Operations IDF forces in Tammun near Nablus eliminated two Palestinian Islamic Jihad operatives—Alaa Ga'udat Bani Ouda and Mohammad Qassem Suleiman—who were planning an imminent attack. A separate incident near Jenin saw soldiers neutralize a terrorist who threw an explosive device. Military personnel uncovered and disabled a rocket in Tulkarem, indicating increased deployment of heavier weapons in the region.

Iran Restarts Missile Production Satellite imagery indicates Tehran is rebuilding missile manufacturing facilities struck by Israel in June, though critical solid-fuel rocket production equipment remains absent. Pre-war Iranian production exceeded 200 such missiles monthly, with approximately one-third of the arsenal launched at Israel. UN "snapback" sanctions return September 27, with European nations demanding inspector access and uranium enrichment restrictions. Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar warned that nuclear-armed Iran represents a global threat.

INSIDE ISRAEL

Terror Plot Charges

PROSECUTORS charged a 22-year-old Arab Israeli from Tayibe with preparing a terror kidnapping designed to leverage Israel into ending Gaza operations. The suspect sought accomplices, equipment, and religious sanction, and trained with paintball weapons. The case reflects broader arrest patterns involving Hamas and ISIS affiliations within Israel's Arab communities.

Jerusalem Construction Transforms City Jerusalem is undergoing major infrastructure work for Red, Green, and Blue light-rail lines, closing King George–Strauss to vehicle traffic and disrupting Emek Refaim, Pierre Koenig, and Hebron Road. Shopkeepers report significant revenue declines and navigation confusion. City officials project the network will serve hundreds of thousands daily by 2030, justifying current disruptions.

Gene Therapy Breakthrough Tel Aviv University researchers, collaborating with Boston Children's Hospital, used an optimized self-complementary AAV vector to deliver a corrected CLIC5 gene to inner-ear hair cells in mice, rapidly restoring hearing and balance function. The team is mapping genetic deafness causes across Israeli populations and screening newborns to accelerate human trials.

ISRAEL AND THE WORLD

UN Commission Genocide Accusation

A UN commission of inquiry accused Israel of genocide in Gaza and attributed direct responsibility to President Herzog, Prime Minister Netanyahu, and ministers Smotrich and Ben-Gvir. The report cites land seizures, demolitions, and settlement expansion, demanding settlement dismantlement, operation cessation, and land restitution. Scheduled for late-October UN General Assembly debate, the panel faces credibility challenges from internal resignations and political discord.

Trump Administration Gaza Plan The Trump administration presented a 21-point peace framework at the UN General Assembly proposing all-hostage release, permanent ceasefire, and Hamas rule dismantling in Gaza. The plan envisions civilian administration backed by Arab states and the Palestinian Authority, international financial support, and Israeli withdrawal. U.S. envoy Steve Witkoff expressed “hopeful” and “confident” expectations for breakthrough negotiations, though Qatar-mediated talks remain contingent on phased versus total hostage release disagreements.

British Consulate Address Change Britain's Jerusalem consulate updated its website listing its location as “Palestine,” days after London recognized Palestinian statehood. France and Canada followed suit, with Canada extending

“Palestine” designation to its Tel Aviv embassy. Israeli officials characterized the change as symbolic erosion of Jewish sovereignty in Jerusalem.

Cyprus Deploys Israeli Air Defense Cyprus activated Israel Aerospace Industries’ Barak MX air defense system amid escalating Turkish tensions. The deployment follows prior deliveries and represents Nicosia’s strategic pivot away from Russian systems following Ukraine conflicts. The Barak MX provides layered protection with 150-kilometer interceptor range against aircraft, drones, and missiles, deepening Jerusalem defense cooperation.

Abraham Accords Assessment Five years after the Abraham Accords, trade volumes remain elevated and diplomatic channels functional through ongoing wars. However, Gulf partners now express concern that Israel’s extensive strikes across Gaza, Syria, and Iran signal regional dominance rather than deterrence, prompting reduced relationship visibility and redirected engagement toward Gaza humanitarian assistance and Palestinian stabilization efforts.

Indonesia Peacekeeping Offer Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto declared willingness to deploy 20,000 troops to Gaza if authorized, simultaneously pledging recognition of Israel once Israel recognizes Palestinian statehood. He affirmed Israeli security rights and concluded remarks with “shalom,” signaling Jakarta’s high-visibility bid to shape postwar arrangements despite lacking current diplomatic ties with Jerusalem.

BRIEFLY NOTED

OVER 70 Iranian lawmakers urged the regime toward nuclear weapons as a “deterrent,” recasting religious restrictions while UN snapback sanctions approach and Moscow prepares new reactor installations—indicating accelerated threats requiring sustained Western pressure.

Nearly 80% of Israelis would support Trump’s Gaza war termination initiative if it secures hostage release, disarms Hamas, and normalizes Saudi relations, signaling substantial public appetite for decisive resolution.

A Reichman University researcher warns North Korean battlefield-tested weapons are flowing through Russian and Chinese channels to Iran and Hezbollah, arguing Jerusalem must elevate Pyongyang in security doctrine alongside Tehran’s nuclear program.

Iran has executed at least 1,000 people in 2025, including 64 hangings in recent weeks, according to Norway-based Iran Human Rights, representing escalated repression amid snapshots sanctions approach.

The U.S. restricted Iran’s UN delegation in New York, banning shopping trips and confining travel to official routes as part of Trump’s “maximum pressure” campaign revival.

Anti-Israel activists rallied outside UN headquarters following Palestinian statehood recognitions, chanting for intifada and displaying Hamas and Hezbollah symbols, with Within Our Lifetime organizing over 40 allied organizations.

Denmark's \$25 billion AkademikerPension fund will cease Israeli state asset investment over Gaza and settlements, exemplifying European divestment trends with minimal economic impact on Israel.

Yemen's separatist leader Aidaros al-Zubaidi stated independent South Yemen would join Abraham Accords and normalize with Israel, highlighting how Iranian Houthi warfare reshapes Yemeni politics.

Thessaloniki's Armenian community emphasized shared trauma with Jews, connecting Armenian Genocide and Holocaust narratives as Israel recently recognized Armenian genocide amid strained Turkish relations.

Brno's 1932 Villa Wittal, designed by Jewish architect Heinrich Blum who died in Terezin, will become a Jewish cultural hub with kosher café and Hebrew instruction, transforming a stolen home into living memory.

JNF-USA named "Top 25 Young ViZionaries" and unveiled a \$350 million World Zionist Village in Be'er Sheva, highlighting rising Jewish leaders following October 7.

Swiss International Air Lines resumed daily Zurich–Tel Aviv flights, joining carriers restoring routes as Israel's aviation sector rebounds post-June Iranian conflict.

DEVELOPMENTS TO WATCH

Annexation Signals: Netanyahu considers imposing Israeli sovereignty on Judea and Samaria portions while seeking Washington approval; Europe and Saudi Arabia warn of consequences, with Jerusalem asserting independent border determination authority. **Likely to escalate.**

Samaria Military Readiness: The IDF increases alert levels for potential unrest tied to Palestinian statehood recognitions, signaling expanded checkpoints, raids, and rapid-response deployments preventing heavier weapons movement from Gaza tactics.

Syria Security Track: Israel pursues Damascus agreements protecting Druze communities and constraining southwest Syrian militias while maintaining Hermon buffer claims. Quiet diplomacy accompanies calibrated strikes.

Khan Yunis Anti-Hamas Militia: A group led by former PA officer Hossam al-Astal operates east of Khan Yunis against Hamas while coordinating with Israel, suggesting a post-Hamas order emerging from within Gaza.

Allenby Crossing Reclosure: After brief reopening, the prime minister ordered Allenby Bridge closure to all movement, intensifying PA pressure and constraining Jordan's Gaza humanitarian supply pipeline.

EU Flotilla Naval Escorts: Italy and Spain plan Gaza flotilla naval “escorts” following alleged drone incidents near Greece, creating maritime law and Israeli interdiction risks. **Likely to escalate.**

Lebanon Warnings: An Israeli official states new ground operations remain possible if Hezbollah continues regrouping; a U.S. envoy cautions Beirut about cross-border Israeli strikes when threatened, as Lebanon blocks two Iranian celebratory flights. **Likely to escalate.**

Iran Info-Operations: Tehran publicizes “Dimona leaks” and 189 personnel data; Israeli and independent experts dismiss it as psychological noise, though paired with looming UN sanctions it signals escalated psychological warfare. **Likely to escalate.**

Egypt Displacement Rejection: Cairo refuses Western Sinai resettlement proposals, offering instead reconstruction and security coordination preserving Gaza resident placement and Egyptian leverage.

Hamas Letter Hoax: After a Fox report of Hamas hostage-release offers, senior Hamas figures disowned the letter, reinforcing that terrorist propaganda treats families as negotiation instruments rather than people.

Jordan Hospital Evacuation: Amman withdrew 107 individuals from its Tel al-Hawa field hospital amid intensified Gaza City IDF operations.

Spy Recruitment Alerts: Israeli authorities flag WhatsApp and social media Iranian and Arab service recruitment outreach seeking photographs, “friendship,” and sensitive information; individuals advised to report and block.

Turkish UN Escalation: Erdoğan accuses Israel of “genocide” and demands immediate ceasefire and prosecutions, fueling lawfare campaigns queued for late-October UN debates.

Closing Reflection:

ROSH Hashanah has underscored both Jewish fragility and strength. From Samaria to Eilat, enemies persist through rockets, drones, and propaganda. Internationally, London to Jakarta debate Israel’s future. Yet the narrative endures: *Am Yisrael Chai*—the Jewish people survive and remain.

Key takeaways: Israel confronts live threats from Gaza, Iran, and Houthis; Europe tightens diplomatic pressure; allies and adversaries position for post-conflict arrangements. Monitor annexation rhetoric in Judea and Samaria, emerging Gaza militia activity, and Washington’s strategic initiatives.

Shanah Tovah U’Metukah — may it be a year of strength, sweetness, and peace.

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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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