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ISRAEL BRIEF

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Nearly Two Years On: Deadlines, Divisions, and the Unfinished Reckoning of October 7

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The War Today

Trump plan: Hamas willing to free hostages, but seeks talks on the rest

Hamas told mediators it accepts “in principle” the Trump framework and would release all Israeli hostages, living and deceased, but wants negotiations on timelines and conditions; a senior figure called the 72-hour handover “unrealistic,” and reporting indicates Hamas still rejects disarmament. Jerusalem expects hard bargaining in the coming hours on sequencing and retrieval of bodies, while Trump set a Sunday 6 p.m. Washington deadline with threats of “very grave” consequences. If Hamas stalls, Israel will press on; if it signs, the test will be compliance, not headlines.

IDF shifts to solely defensive operations in the Gaza Strip

Israel has reportedly ordered the IDF to hold lines around Gaza City, pivoting to defensive activity while preparing for a hostage-release phase tied to the Trump plan. The army says parts of Gaza remain active combat zones and warns civilians not to return north; Gazan authorities still claim Israeli strikes hit several targets.

IDF uncovers Hamas weapons tunnel beneath hospital complex in Gaza City

The IDF and Shin Bet revealed a 1.5-kilometer Hamas tunnel network running adjacent to the Jordanian Hospital in Gaza City, with rooms for weapons manufacturing, meetings, and senior commanders’ quarters, reports *Israel National News*. Another shaft was found beneath Hamad Hospital, confirming long-standing intelligence that Hamas systematically embeds military infrastructure under medical sites. The army emphasized the hospitals’ proximity was exploited without Jordan’s involvement and that operations continue to dismantle nearby terror networks.

Israeli airstrikes thwart Hamas attack on rival armed Gazan group in Strip’s south

The IDF says drones killed around 20 Hamas gunmen who raided the Israeli-designated humanitarian zone in al-Mawasi near Khan Younis; footage shows terrorists dragging children as human shields before being struck again. A local anti-Hamas militia told *The Times of Israel* it helped repel the attack with Israeli air support, marking a rare, open instance of Gazans fighting Hamas alongside the IDF. The clash underscores two truths: Hamas preys on Gaza’s civilians, and Israel is targeting terrorists even when they hide among them.

Israel sees no sign of imminent Iranian attack, but fears ‘miscalculation’ over political remarks

Israeli defense officials told *Ynet* that intelligence shows no evidence Iran is preparing to strike or restart its nuclear weapons program, despite political

warnings from former Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman. Tehran is rebuilding parts of its missile industry with help from Russia and China, but its nuclear efforts remain stalled. Officials caution that inflammatory rhetoric — such as Lieberman’s warning of a coming confrontation — could lead Iran to misread Israeli intentions and trigger an unintended escalation.

Inside Israel

50 Arabs attack Jews near Carmel in Southern Hebron Hills; Four injured

Around 50 Arabs assaulted six Jewish residents near Carmel in the Southern Hebron Hills, leaving four hospitalized with head injuries before the IDF restored order and made arrests. This violent mob came from an illegally built Arab outpost abutting the Jewish community — one of many encroachments that place Jewish residents directly in harm’s way. These residents, often smeared by foreign media as “settlers,” live under Israel’s municipal and military authority with regulated building codes and security oversight; they are there as part of Israel’s lawful defense and presence in Judea and Samaria. The recurring violence they face — not mythical “settler violence” — is part of a deliberate campaign of Arab intimidation aimed at pushing Jews off their ancestral land.

Right-wing activists set up sukkahs on border, seek to spend festival at Gaza settlement ruins

Religious Zionists from the Nachala movement, joined by Otzma Yehudit MK Limor Son Har-Melech, built sukkahs near the Gaza border and demanded permission to reestablish Jewish communities in the Strip. Calling Trump’s ceasefire proposal a “national disaster,” they urged full conquest and resettlement of Gaza, framing it as both historic correction and divine mission. Finance Minister Smotrich echoed their rejection of Trump’s plan, signaling mounting pressure on Netanyahu.

From surviving the Nova festival to battling cancer: Raz Peri’s fight to inspire – interview

Jerusalem Post profiles Raz Peri, a 25-year-old Haruv Recon veteran who survived the Oct. 7 massacre by fighting off a terrorist in a Mefalsim shelter, crawling out under fire, and enduring months of surgeries and chemo — only to face a fierce lymphoma relapse. Peri is back in treatment while speaking nationwide, raising funds, and planning a center that pairs conventional care with nutrition, breath work, and family support so others can “choose life” with knowledge and dignity. His stubborn hope is the Israeli story in miniature: get hit, get up, help the next person.

‘It will take time to rebuild our beloved kibbutz, but we will’

A year after the October 7 massacre, survivor Irit Lahav describes the slow rebirth of Kibbutz Nir Oz — the community that suffered the highest losses

of the attack, with one in four residents murdered or kidnapped. Lahav recounts returning to the kibbutz where 117 of 415 were killed or abducted, including 48 still held in Gaza, and finding traces of family life frozen in time — a baby's rocker, a tricycle, a washing basket — now symbols of both devastation and endurance. Her message is clear: rebuilding is not just physical, but an act of collective faith that life in Nir Oz will resume.

Israel and the World

UK synagogue attacker was under investigation for rape; his dad praised Hamas for Oct. 7

The aptly named Manchester terrorist, Jihad al-Shamie, was out on bail for alleged rape and had prior convictions, yet was not on the UK's terror radar. His father publicly lauded Hamas's Oct. 7 massacre, while witnesses say the attacker shouted that Jews were being punished "for killing our children" as he tried to force entry into Heaton Park Synagogue on Yom Kippur; mourners later jeered Deputy PM David Lammy over unchecked "pro-Palestinian" marches. *The Times of Israel* details the failures and the atmosphere that let this fester.

London Police Arrest Dozens at Protest Against Ban on Palestine Action

London police arrested dozens of demonstrators who defied orders to cancel a protest supporting the banned "Palestine Action" group, which was outlawed under UK anti-terror laws after attacks on military property. The rally, held days after a deadly antisemitic attack at a Manchester synagogue, went ahead despite appeals from Prime Minister Keir Starmer for calm. Police said the protest diverted security resources from protecting Jewish and Muslim sites amid rising tensions.

Upstaged by war, Israeli film and music artists battle global boycott calls

Israel's cultural sector is facing a coordinated wave of boycotts, as over 4,000 Hollywood figures pledge to isolate Israeli institutions and major music acts withdraw distribution in protest of the Gaza war. Film festivals in Sderot and Jerusalem are losing screenings, Eurovision faces political pressure to exclude Israel, and global campaigns brand Israeli art as complicit in "genocide." Despite the backlash, Israeli artists and festivals vow to keep creating and performing, insisting culture must remain open even in wartime.

U of Maryland student government passes BDS resolution on Yom Kippur

The University of Maryland's Student Government Association voted 29–1 to adopt a symbolic BDS resolution on Yom Kippur, effectively excluding most Jewish students from participating. Eighteen Jewish campus organizations, including Hillel, vowed to boycott future meetings in protest. This is the fourth BDS attempt since 2017 — the last two deliberately scheduled on

Jewish holidays — revealing how campus “activism” now openly merges anti-Israel bias with contempt for Jewish inclusion.

Arrest of Syrian in Berlin signals European push to prosecute Assad-linked ‘refugees’

German police arrested Anwar Sultan, a former pro-Assad militia member accused of torture and murder in Aleppo, marking another milestone in Europe’s effort to prosecute Syrian war criminals living under asylum. Sultan, posing as a refugee since 2020, continued money-laundering and regime-linked operations from Berlin before being tracked down through victim testimony. His arrest underscores Germany’s role as Europe’s main enforcer of universal jurisdiction against Syrian regime crimes — and the uneasy reality that many perpetrators of state terror live freely in Europe.

Briefly Noted

- *Jewish Chronicle*: Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood is weighing new police powers to curb or ban recurring pro-“Palestine” marches whose “cumulative impact” strains security, following the Manchester synagogue terror attack.
- *Jewish Chronicle*: UK Health Secretary Wes Streeting said he will change NHS law to make antisemitic or racist speech by doctors grounds for being struck off the medical register, after a “Jewish supremacy” post by a doctor praising October 7 drew public outrage.
- *Jewish Chronicle*: UK Green Party leader Zack Polanski called Britain “an active participant in the murdering of the Palestinians,” prompting outrage for branding Israel’s war as slaughter while downplaying the Manchester synagogue attack he also labeled “horrific.”
- *Jerusalem Post*: British activist Tommy Robinson told the paper he will visit Israel next week at Minister Amichai Chikli’s invitation, insisting his support for Israel is “a matter of principle” despite backlash from UK Jewish groups and Chikli’s critics.
- *Times of Israel*: Under U.S. and corporate pressure, Ireland plans to dilute its settlement-sanctions bill, trimming its scope to a token €200,000 in annual goods.
- *JNS*: At a La Liga match in Pamplona, Osasuna fans unfurled “Destroy Israel” banners, waved PLO flags, and halted play by tossing tennis balls onto the pitch — another case of European sports turning into an anti-Israel stage.
- *JNS*: Analysis warns Egypt is hardening against Israel — military buildup in Sinai beyond treaty limits, joint drill with Turkey, escalating rhetoric — while other experts say Cairo still has much to lose from war; calls grow to restore MFO oversight and press Egypt to halt incitement.

- *Times of Israel*: Syria's post-Assad interim regime held parliamentary elections via appointed electoral colleges, excluding Druze and Kurdish regions; analysts call the process undemocratic but note its results will test whether minorities and women gain real representation.
- *Jerusalem Post*: Rabbi Henry Yosef Hamra, son of Damascus's last chief rabbi, announced his run for Syria's parliament — the first Jewish candidate since 1967 — testing whether the regime's "pluralism" claims have substance.
- *JTA*: Israel's Foreign Ministry contracted a U.S. firm for a \$4.1M campaign to deepen Christian support across the western United States via ads, events, and pastor engagement.
- *Jerusalem Post*: Stop calling wounded veterans "shell-shocked," the author argues; use "combat reactions," treat them with respect and concrete help, and end the stigma that keeps fighters from care.
- *Jerusalem Post*: The Ushpizin Festival (Oct 8–10) brings Israeli poets and musicians together at Confederation House to mark a year since Oct 7, exploring fear, faith, and renewal through art.

Developments to Watch

- **Gaza clan vs. Hamas** – In Khan Yunis, the Al-Mujaida clan battled Hamas's elite SAHM unit after a raid tied to earlier disputes; 11–22 Hamas fighters were reportedly killed, five captured, and some bodies dumped in trash sites. The firefight — reportedly staged from the Nasser Hospital area — shows growing cracks inside Gaza as frustration with Hamas hardens. **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**
- **Cairo talks, narrow window** – Formal hostage-deal talks are slated to open in Cairo on Monday with U.S., Egyptian, Qatari, and Israeli envoys; Jerusalem says the negotiation window is "days," with an immediate return of the living as the non-negotiable first step.
- **Hamas tactics, decoys** – Minister Avi Dichter warned Hamas is demanding IDF withdrawals "to recover bodies," calling it a deception play. Israel's line: return all 20 living hostages within ~72 hours or face resumed pressure — military and diplomatic.
- **Islamic Jihad spoils it** – PIJ chief Ziad al-Nakhala threatened renewed rocket fire on Ashkelon and Ashdod and vowed to "arm Gaza as never before," signaling rejection of disarmament baked into the Trump framework.
- **Houthis: fire at will** – The Houthis said their operations began at Hamas's request and will stop only if Hamas asks; a Houthi ballistic missile aimed at central Israel was intercepted at 05:00. The group also teased a "major operation" amid talk of wider strikes. **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**
- **Iran strike rumors swirl** – An Iranian adviser floated scenarios of parallel Israel-U.S. action against Tehran and its militias; the U.S. Embassy in

Iraq urged Americans to leave Iraq and Iran. Israeli security services say they see no unusual Iranian prep — but misreads can trigger preemption.
LIKELY TO ESCALATE

- **Hezbollah front pressures** – The IAF hit Beaufort Ridge (fire-management/defense site), while Washington approved \$230M for Lebanese security forces to tighten the squeeze on Hezbollah's arms and freedom of action.
- **Iranian handlers inside Israel** – The Shin Bet arrested a 23-year-old Israeli recruited by Iran while working at a Dead Sea hotel; officials say the pool of Iranian assets is “substantial,” with undetected operatives still active.
- **Home-front disruption at Sufa** – Far-left activists blocked the Sufa crossing and delayed reserve rotations into Gaza, carrying “By Land and Sea, Break the Siege” signs as units waited to relieve exhausted troops. Commanders questioned why the area wasn't closed immediately.
- **Dutch court punts, for now** – The Netherlands' Supreme Court declined an immediate ban on exporting F-35 parts to Israel, ordering the government to review policy within six weeks — signaling legal pressure continues while supplies flow.
- **Turkey leaned on Hamas** – Arab sources say Ankara's pressure tipped Hamas toward agreeing to return all captives at once; how far that leverage stretches into disarmament remains doubtful.
- **Economics under fire** – Iran's parliament lopped four zeros off the collapsing rial; a large blaze hit Tehran's refinery overnight, while Tel Aviv stocks surged on hostage-deal hopes.
- **Skies reopening** – British Airways plans to resume Israel service on Oct. 26, a modest vote of confidence that will matter if the hostage phase begins on time.

TWO years on, Israel stands between memory and movement. The hostages are the thread that still binds the nation's will to the war's unfinished task, and every front — diplomatic, military, and cultural — now turns on that thread.

The world is watching for Israel to falter, but what it will see this week is the same pattern that has carried Jews through millennia: we remember, rebuild, and resume.

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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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