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READER EDITION

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ISRAEL BRIEF

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Hostages on the clock, Hamas on its heels, and the sober work of winning a real peace

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THE WAR TODAY

HAMAS announced plans to release remaining hostages by dawn Monday through the ICRC, with Israeli officials preparing for simultaneous handover of living captives and deceased remains ahead of President Trump's expected 9 a.m. arrival. Uncertainty persists regarding specific handover locations and whether all bodies can be located.

Palestinian armed factions have erupted in conflict with Hamas across Gaza following the ceasefire, signaling potential authority collapse. Heavy fighting occurred in Beit Lahia, Gaza City's Sabra neighborhood, and Rafah, with local leaders declaring Hamas "finished." This represents the first major internal uprising against the organization in nearly two decades.

Defense Minister Israel Katz directed the IDF to prepare for complete destruction of Hamas's tunnel network as part of Trump's demilitarization plan. U.S. and Israeli officials estimate the network spans approximately 450 miles with over 5,000 shafts beneath civilian areas.

Israel marked 2,000 fatalities from the two-year conflict beginning October 7, 2023, encompassing the initial massacre, Gaza campaign, northern operations, and the 12-day Iranian conflict.

INSIDE ISRAEL

A Bar-Ilan University study documents vicarious trauma among Israeli journalists and therapists treating October 7 survivors, revealing high rates of intrusive imagery and emotional distress from indirect exposure to atrocity.

Israeli middle school teachers report high satisfaction—93% express contentment—yet the nation faces deepening staff shortages affecting classroom quality, with nearly half of principals reporting negative impacts.

Red warning signs across the West Bank indicate roads dangerous for Israelis, noting that "entry for Israelis is dangerous to your lives and forbidden by law." The article argues these warnings reflect Palestinian leadership's historical commitments to Jewish exclusion and terrorist financial support.

Air pollution claims approximately 5,000 Israeli lives annually, with Jerusalem's traffic and dust storms compounding risks. Fewer than 70 monitoring stations track national air quality, prompting researcher calls for citizen science networks and stronger emissions enforcement.

ISRAEL AND THE WORLD

LEAKED U.S. military documents reveal Israel deepened military coordination with six Arab countries—Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE—during the Gaza war under U.S. Central Command’s “Regional Security Construct,” driven by shared Iranian concerns.

Britain ordered universities to employ “every tool” protecting Jewish students following an ISIS-pledge attack near Manchester’s Heaton Park Synagogue, citing record antisemitic hate crimes and campus slogans including “from the river to the sea.”

France and the UK are reportedly repurposing Jerusalem consulates as de-facto Palestinian missions, which critics argue violates the Oslo II Accord and Vienna Convention requirements for host-state consent.

Iran dismissed Trump’s suggestion of joining an expanded Abraham Accords framework, calling normalization with Israel “wishful thinking” while indicating potential willingness to rejoin nuclear negotiations if offered a “fair and balanced proposal.”

BRIEFLY NOTED

- Anti-Hamas commander Hossam al-Astal operates a one-square-mile “safe city” with IDF coordination
- London’s 32nd pro-Palestinian march since 2023 featured confrontational chants despite the ceasefire
- Iran’s proxy network remains sidelined as the regime grasps for regional relevance
- Iran criminalized Starlink use with execution penalties
- Congress repealed the Caesar Act, lifting Syrian sanctions
- Minister Ron Dermer’s resignation deadline aligns with hostage return
- Pakistan closed border crossings following Afghan military incidents
- Senior Hamas official avoided answering whether October 7 “liberated Palestine”

DEVELOPMENTS TO WATCH

THE ceasefire annex permits 600 daily aid trucks, Gazan exit via Rafah with Israeli approval, and carefully regulated re-entry once criteria are established. Turkey will send humanitarian shipments for the first time since war began.

Hamas declared the “war ended” and stated weapons remain “not up for negotiation,” challenging demilitarization provisions.

Egypt's President el-Sisi called for UN Security Council involvement and international troop deployment—a move potentially hampering Israeli operational freedom.

Field units report IDF positions beyond illustrative maps were dismantled; any resulting vacuum could be exploited.

Approximately 200 U.S. service members will stage in Israel supporting stabilization efforts, with no American deployment to Gaza proper.

Egypt plans an expanded Palestinian governance conclave; attendance patterns will signal whether technocrats or terror-affiliated factions shape reconstruction.

The High Court cleared prisoner exchanges, removing the final legal obstacle while freeing hundreds of convicted terrorists.

An Israeli UAV strike eliminated Hezbollah operative Ali Hassin Sultan near Kharbat Salam.

Israeli operations disrupted weapons pipelines from Syria, seizing RPGs, rifles, and night-vision equipment.

A suspected terrorist attempted home invasion in Kohav HaShahar; troops reinforced perimeter security.

Iran's Guards threatened oil flow disruption if Tehran's exports face blockade.

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