



Forensic intelligence for those who act.

READER EDITION

October 21, 2025

ISRAEL BRIEF

Tuesday, October 21

Ceasefire on life support. Diplomacy on delay. Israel enforces, Hamas reloads, and allies argue over who gets to “help.”

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CLASSIFICATION

Reader Edition

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H AMAS violated the ceasefire again, Israel hit back, and everyone else tried to rename the problem as diplomacy. Cairo’s intelligence chief landed in Jerusalem to push a multinational “stabilization force” for Gaza—one that somehow includes Turkey and Qatar. Netanyahu drew a red line, while Trump’s envoys and Vice President JD Vance arrived to keep the deal from collapsing before their plane landed.

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At home, the Knesset's winter session opened with fire and theater. Netanyahu claimed he saved the country from "nuclear smoke," Lapid reminded him who was prime minister on October 7, and Ben-Gvir issued an ultimatum over the death-penalty bill. Meanwhile, P.A. police were caught operating illegally in Area C—another reminder of why "security coordination" is a euphemism, not a functional reality—and new data show 125,000 Israelis have left since 2022.

Abroad, Russia hugged Iran tighter, Hamas drafted its own "technocratic" government for Gaza under mediator cover, and Qatar continues playing both banker and arsonist. Even CAIR is suing Northwestern University to kill antisemitism training, proving that in some corners of the West, the real fight isn't about freedom but about permission to hate.

The same players keep testing Israel's patience—and the world keeps pretending that patience is infinite.

And if you've got two minutes, tell us what you think of *Israel Brief* in the reader survey. We actually read them—unlike half the people claiming to "monitor disinformation."

The War Today

LIST OF 30 THOUSAND AIR FORCE SERVICE MEMBERS LEAKED TO AL JAZEERA

Al Jazeera aired a "leaked" database naming some 30,000 IAF pilots and service members, with photos and personal details, and paired it with a segment on foreign "lawfare" against IDF troops. Much of the data appears recycled from a 2022 darknet dump attributed to the "Leak the Analyst" group, which cybersecurity firm Varonis linked to a likely civilian marketing source and later cross-matched to some active personnel. The broadcast repackages old material with social-media scraping to dox Israelis and intimidate their families while priming foreign prosecutions.

BODY OF FALLEN HOSTAGE TAL HAIMI IDENTIFIED AFTER RETURN FROM GAZA

The IDF and PMO confirmed the identification and return of Sgt. Maj. Tal Haimi, 41, commander of Kibbutz Nir Yitzhak's rapid response team, who was killed defending the kibbutz on Oct. 7 and abducted to Gaza. Forensics, police, and the Military Rabbinate completed the process; a military ceremony received the coffin after a Red Cross transfer. The government vowed to bring home all remaining bodies for *kevura* in Israel and pressed Hamas to meet its commitments. May his memory be a blessing.

HAMAS DOCUMENTS REVEAL DIRECT TIES TO AL-JAZEERA

Documents seized in Gaza point to structured coordination between Hamas and the Qatari network Al-Jazeera during the war, according to the Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center. The files describe editorial instructions designed to preserve the "resistance image," including a secure

“Al-Jazeera phone” that linked Hamas command to presenters in Doha. It also names “journalists” who doubled as Hamas fighters. This is propaganda work, not journalism, and it matters for how Western audiences are steered during conflict.

PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY PRESS: HIDE HAMAS FOR A YEAR, THEN IT CAN RETURN

The Palestinian Authority is attempting to implement a strategy to temporarily sideline Hamas, rebrand itself as “moderate,” and then restore Hamas under the PLO umbrella once Western attention fades. The PA’s official newspaper openly proposed persuading Hamas “to leave for a year or two” before bringing it “back to operation.” It’s a calculated ploy to deceive donors and preserve Islamist dominance under a softer flag—an approach that undermines the very premise of Trump’s postwar peace plan.

Inside Israel

PM: ISRAELIS WOULD’VE DIED ‘IN NUCLEAR SMOKE’ IF I’D HEEDED OPPOSITION DEMANDS TO END WAR

The Knesset’s winter session opened with fireworks as Prime Minister Netanyahu claimed ending the war earlier would have left Israelis “in nuclear smoke,” and said Hamas accepted the current framework only under military pressure. Opposition leader Yair Lapid fired back: who was prime minister on Oct. 7, and during Iran’s buildup. Netanyahu read the names of the 16 slain hostages still in Gaza, vowed to eliminate Hamas’s rule at the end of the ceasefire phases, and said ties with Washington are “closer than ever” with VP JD Vance due in Jerusalem. The coalition will push a war-economy budget, try to manage a Haredi draft bill, and take a tougher line on ceasefire violations.

BEN GVR SETS ULTIMATUM: 3 WEEKS TO PASS DEATH PENALTY LAW FOR TERRORISTS OR WILL BOYCOTT GOVERNMENT VOTES

National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir gave the coalition three weeks to bring the death-penalty bill for terrorists to a plenary vote or his Otzma Yehudit party will stop backing government votes. He also demanded a return to full-force operations in Gaza to “conquer and crush” Hamas. If Likud stalls, the dispute could be weaponized into early-election leverage.

PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY POLICE ACTIVE NEAR JEWISH TOWNS IN JUDEA AND SAMARIA

Nearly 20 armed P.A. security men pursued a suspect to the edge of Adam, north of Jerusalem, inside Area C, where they have no jurisdiction without prior IDF coordination. An Israeli regional security chief warned that “within seconds, they can turn their guns on us.” IDF Central Command said the entry was “in error,” escorted the force out, and opened a review. Under Oslo, the P.A. has no authority in Area C and is restricted even in Area A; experts

note repeated breaches and a long record of P.A. personnel implicated in terror. This is why the “settler violence” narrative rings hollow: the data show a tiny fraction of Jews in Judea and Samaria commit crimes, while daily reality is P.A. guns, illegal arms, and organized attacks on Israelis along the main arteries. The incident at Adam isn’t a one-off; it’s a reminder that importing P.A. “policing” into Area C is a security risk, not a solution.

HIDDEN COST OF WAR: 125,000 ISRAELIS EMIGRATED BETWEEN 2022 AND 2024

A Knesset Research Center report shows a net loss of 125,200 citizens from early 2022 to mid-2024, with a spike during the judicial overhaul crisis and the war with Hamas. Committee chair MK Gilad Kariv called it a “tsunami” and said there is no plan to stem departures or lure back academics and tech talent. Returns fell while residency cancellations tripled; aliyah softened the blow but did not offset the outflow. The trend reportedly continued into 2025 despite rising antisemitism abroad pushing some immigration.

Israel and the World

ISRAEL’S CONDITION FOR GAZA REHABILITATION

Jerusalem told Washington it will not back Gaza reconstruction until Hamas shows real moves toward disarmament, with a Rafah pilot to seal tunnels under Israeli supervision on the table, per Kan News. An Israeli team returned from Cairo talks with Egypt, Qatar, and Turkey on rehabilitation mechanics and a future foreign force. The message is simple: no cement for tunnels, and no “day after” that props up Hamas.

HAMAS SECRETLY SHAPES POSTWAR GAZA GOVERNMENT WITH MEDIA-TORS’ KNOWLEDGE, REPORT SAYS

Hamas quietly selected roughly half the nominees for a so-called technocratic cabinet to run Gaza after the war, while the Palestinian Authority filled the rest, with Egypt and other Arab mediators aware of Hamas’s hand. The names are “not openly affiliated” but aligned with Hamas principles, ensuring the terror group’s leverage survives any deal. Qatar’s emir, meanwhile, blasted Israel over the truce while pointedly omitting Hamas.

RUSSIA PREPARED TO EXPAND TIES WITH IRAN IN ALL AREAS, THE KREMLIN SAYS

Moscow says it will deepen cooperation with Tehran “in all areas,” days after top Iranian officials shuttled messages from Khamenei to Putin. The Kremlin blasted European “pressure” on Iran’s nuclear file as Rosatom advances multibillion-dollar projects and Russia leans on Iranian drones for Ukraine. Call it an axis of convenience: more money, more cover, and fewer brakes on Iran’s program. Jerusalem should read this as a warning about sanctions leakage and battlefield tech transfers.

ISLAMIC GROUP CAIR'S LAWSUIT AGAINST UNIVERSITY TO BLOCK ANTI-SEMITISM COURSE PROMPTS DERISION

CAIR sued Northwestern University to kill mandatory antisemitism training, alleging it censors “Palestinian identity” and violates Title VI; Jewish civil rights groups call the case baseless and an attack on civil-rights enforcement. Northwestern has adopted IHRA and says the training protects Jewish students after years of harassment; a federal probe into the school’s handling of antisemitism is ongoing. The *Jerusalem Post* adds that “Graduate Workers for Palestine” and two doctoral students filed a class action portraying campus rules and the IHRA definition as “coercive” and threatening expulsion for noncompliance, underscoring how lawfare is being used to normalize anti-Jewish agitation on campus.

Briefly Noted

- **Bedouin Reconnaissance Battalion corruption:** Soldiers smuggled hundreds of thousands of shekels in cigarettes into Gaza using IDF vehicles and aid trucks; indictments filed in at least one case. Corruption at a combat unit is a security threat, not a footnote.
- **Sinwar’s remains:** Miri Regev proposed cremating Hamas chief Yahya Sinwar’s body “like bin Laden’s,” arguing some terror symbols must never be returned. Israel has refused to hand over his remains since his 2024 killing in Rafah—a stand meant to deny Hamas another martyr spectacle.
- **Hamas extortion messaging:** Senior Hamas official Musa Abu Marzouk says Israel must “bear all the costs” of Gaza’s reconstruction—while refusing any Hamas disarming or realistically even to stop shooting. Extortion dressed up as diplomacy.
- **Qatar’s influence operation:** Doha’s “civilian” build-out—hospitals, schools, funds—locks in influence and, experts warn, keeps Hamas viable “the day after,” irking Abu Dhabi and Riyadh.
- **Gazan lawyer’s moral critique:** Gazan lawyer Moumen al-Natour says Hamas’s executions of its own people expose the moral void of “resistance” and the hypocrisy of Western activists who go silent when Palestinians are the victims. His call: civilian rule and an end to the regional profiteering built on Gaza’s misery.
- **Women and rabbinic exams:** The Chief Rabbinate asked the High Court to revisit its ruling letting women sit state rabbinic exams, proposing “alternate” tests and citing halachic limits; Justice Sohlberg previously rejected “separate but equal.”
- **Naming dispute:** Egged’s new app labels areas as “West Bank,” drawing a demand from rights group B’Tselem to use “Judea and Samaria,” which appears in Israeli law and government usage; the developer blames Google Maps. Words matter—especially on maps.

- **Soccer violence warning:** After the Hapoel–Maccabi derby collapsed amid flares and injuries, the State Comptroller called it a “warning sign” and urged tech bans for repeat offenders before tragedy sets the schedule.
- **Maccabi safety concerns:** After UK authorities banned away supporters for Aston Villa–Maccabi Tel Aviv and faced political blowback, Maccabi declined any allocation anyway, citing fan safety and a toxic climate around Israeli teams.
- **AI data center expansion:** Israel’s largest AI compute site opened in Modi’in, Mega Or is mapping a \$2B campus in Beit Shemesh, and rivals add capacity near Netanya. The bottleneck is electricity and planning; without firm energy targets and faster hookups, the racks sit cold and Israel cedes ground to the UK, US, and UAE.
- **AI-generated antisemitism:** OpenAI’s Sora 2 feed is flooded with antisemitic remixes—rabbis buried in coins, Hasidim as thieves—showing how easy it is to industrialize old tropes with new tools. If guardrails don’t catch this, the algorithm will teach it.
- **Tourism boost:** Kibbutz Neot Smadar in Israel’s southern Arava was named one of the UN’s 52 “Best Tourism Villages” and immediately flooded with visitors seeking its desert art center, winery, and eco-community life. Proof that even the UN sometimes recognizes real creativity in the desert.
- **Haredi draft protest:** Thousands of fringe anti-Zionist Haredim rallied outside Israel’s New York consulate to oppose the IDF draft for Israelis back home, with Satmar leaders headlining. Protesting conscription you don’t face, on a different continent, is a choice.

Developments to Watch

- **Egyptian intel shuttle diplomacy** – Cairo’s spymaster Hassan Rashad met Netanyahu, Shin Bet chief Zini, and US envoys Witkoff and Kushner to coordinate the Trump plan’s “next phase.” The Egyptians are pushing a Security Council–blessed international force for Gaza—4,000 troops from Egypt, Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Indonesia—but Israel has declared any Turkish role a red line. **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**
- **International force friction** – Israel told Washington that it will not tolerate Qatari or Turkish boots in Gaza and insists that the strip’s management stay “Palestinian but not Islamist.” Expect diplomatic sparring this week over composition, command, and whether the force actually constrains Hamas.
- **Haniyeh family exfiltration** – Sixteen relatives of slain Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh quietly left Gaza to Turkey after an Ankara request—an Israeli goodwill gesture toward Erdoğan. The optics risk rewarding the very network that bankrolled terror.

- **Hezbollah infrastructure hits** – IDF engineering units and the Air Force destroyed Hezbollah positions on Mount Dov and near Nabatieh, halting renewed fortification efforts along the border. The strikes underscore Israel's intent to block a creeping Hezbollah rebuild. **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**
- **US VP visit disruptions** – JD Vance landed for a 48-hour swing focused on the ceasefire's enforcement mechanism. His motorcades will shut Route 1 and major Jerusalem arteries Tuesday, snarling travel between Tel Aviv and the capital for hours. Plan flights and commutes accordingly.
- **Gaza aid restarts under pressure** – Following US intervention, Israel reopened crossings for hundreds of aid trucks. Washington's priority is keeping the deal alive; Jerusalem's is deterring Hamas without alienating Trump's team. The uneasy rhythm continues.
- **Weapons haul in Galilee** – Border Police in Yarka uncovered 24 bombs, two grenades, and hundreds of rounds hidden in open terrain. The arsenal's scale suggests organized trafficking, not lone-wolf crime.
- **Smuggling link to African gangs** – A recent IDF arrest exposed ties between African migrant networks inside Israel and Arab-Israeli crime families in Ramla, fusing migrant trafficking with weapons smuggling. **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**
- **Iran executions as messaging** – Tehran hanged another man for “spying for Israel” while boasting of untouched uranium stocks after the US-Israel strikes. The publicized killing is less justice than deterrence theater aimed at Mossad.
- **Hamas refuses disarmament again** – Senior operative Mohammed Nazal told Reuters that Hamas will retain “security control” of Gaza and accept only a 3-to-5-year ceasefire. Translation: the terror army plans to reload, not rebuild. **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**
- **IMF forecast rebounds** – The IMF projects Israeli growth at 3.9 percent for 2026 and GDP per capita near \$64 thousand, signaling investor confidence even amid war. Fiscal strength remains a rare bright spot.
- **Bolivia's turnabout with Israel** – Freshly elected president Rodrigo Paz plans full diplomatic restoration after years of hostility. Israel will send a delegation to his November 8 inauguration—another small but visible crack in the anti-Israel bloc.

THIS is what the “day after” really looks like: Hamas drafting its next cabinet while Russia and Iran deepen ties, Egypt sells foreign troops as “stabilizers,” and Washington tries to hold the deal together by sheer willpower. The fighting *might* have paused; the maneuvering didn't.

The lesson hasn't changed. A ceasefire is not peace, foreign “forces” are not neutrality, and appeasement still costs lives. Focus on the substance—on deterrence restored, truth defended, and Israel's allies tested in daylight. Everything else is theater.

Take the survey, share the brief, and stay steady. Clarity wins by repetition.

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

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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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