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READER EDITION

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ISRAEL BRIEF

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Samaria Turns Hot While the North Holds Its Breath

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THE BOTTOM LINE Israel's diplomatic trajectory won't be determined through Oslo or Brussels discussions. Development will follow engagement with pragmatically-oriented partners. Europe maintains importance but demonstrates increasing unpredictability and procedural ineffectiveness. Israel will prioritize partners demonstrating professional governance.

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Flash Brief

- **Judea & Samaria:** Security forces conducted undercover operations capturing a Fatah–Lions’ Den operative in Shechem, prevented stabbings and vehicle attacks near Ateret and Hebron, and maintained lockdowns around Tubas.
- **Gaza:** Two individuals shot crossing the Yellow Line; Israel confirmed elimination of the Nahal Oz Islamic Jihad commander; remains transferred via Red Cross.
- **Northern front:** U.S. warned Iraq that Israeli strikes inside its territory would follow if militias joined a Hezbollah conflict, as aircraft and unmanned systems operated in the Beqaa region.
- **Iran / Axis:** Israeli officials indicated consideration of additional preemptive action against Iran’s missile capabilities while the IRGC conducted air-defense exercises.
- **Law & security:** High Court hearing on attorney general dismissal failed when government declined attendance; Shin Bet leadership rejected prosecutorial oversight of internal investigations.
- **Draft and manpower:** Coalition support for the current Haredi conscription proposal weakened despite the Hashmonaim Brigade demonstrating viable Haredi military service models.
- **Information warfare & Diaspora:** Artificial intelligence-generated deepfakes targeted celebrity accounts for Gaza messaging; Norway incorporated anti-Israel measures into budget planning; French authorities arrested teenagers plotting attacks on Jewish community sites.

The War Today

The Ridge Turns Kinetic While Israel Burns Out the Terror Pipeline

Undercover units conducted a daylight operation in the Shechem marketplace to apprehend a Fatah–Lions’ Den operative using precise intelligence. Two paratroopers were stabbed near Ateret after surveillance identified a suspect on Route 465; the attacker was neutralized before reaching nearby settlements. A ramming assailant near Hebron struck a female soldier, attempted a second attack, and was eliminated using the same vehicle from the previous night’s incident. Eastern areas including Tubas and Tammun remained under multi-brigade containment as leadership ordered suppression of developing militant network infrastructure. The IDF conducted raids on an organization listed as an agricultural entity in Ramallah and Hebron, detaining operatives and confiscating approximately three-quarters of a million shekels connected to militant activities. Residents in Hebron Hills maintained settlement presence through established communities and livestock operations while Palestinian Authority officials worked on Area C infrastructure development.

ASSESSMENT

Operations reflect a strategic pivot from managing the highlands to establishing control. Iran's theoretical militant corridor is being dismantled before achieving full operational capacity.

Yellow Line Becomes Gaza's Real Border

Two individuals crossing the Yellow Line in northern Gaza were shot immediately—established protocol in a territory where international ceasefire arrangements exist primarily in official documents. Artillery and drone operations targeted positions near Tuffah and Khan Yunis as armored vehicles advanced toward the As-Sanafur junction. Israeli leadership confirmed the elimination of Alaa al-Din Khudar—an Islamic Jihad commander involved in the October 7 infiltration near Nahal Oz—during a retaliatory operation. Militias operating within Israeli-aligned frameworks continue revealing Hamas's organizational collapse: an Islamic Jihad member surrendered in Rafah and disclosed that commanders abandoned subordinates and issued orders to eliminate rival faction members and families. Egypt and European Union personnel are training thousands designated as “Palestinian police” for post-conflict administration—a theoretical force intended to govern neighborhoods still controlled by armed organizations. The IDF received remains through international channels for identification procedures; Hamas continues withholding two bodies.

ASSESSMENT

Israeli enforcement mechanisms represent Gaza's only functional authority: direct consequences for boundary violations, commander elimination for armed attacks, and infrastructure losses for hostage retention. International institutions discuss governance frameworks while actual control remains fragmented among armed groups.

The Northern Front Reaches the Last Quiet Minute

All three neighboring states—Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq—received comparable messaging within 24 hours: the operational pause is concluding. A U.S. diplomatic representative informed Baghdad that Iraqi militia participation in Hezbollah operations would trigger Israeli responses within Iraqi territory. Lebanese political figures expressed concerns about developments following papal departure from the region. Israel reportedly developed extensive attack preparations while unmanned systems maintained surveillance over Beirut and aircraft operated in the Beqaa Valley. Syria, attempting to project stability following recent Beit Jinn operations, signaled openness to “security arrangements” despite casualties identified as affiliated with the current regime's security apparatus. U.S. officials express concern about Israeli actions destabilizing “a Syria representing no threat,” while Israeli assessments prepare for potential regime collapse and competition among ISIS, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Houthi-aligned forces, and other extremist organizations for territorial control along the Golan region. Israeli officials indicated that eliminating Syria's leader represents a probability assessment of “highly likely,” potentially destabilizing the facade of current conditions. Washington additionally requested Lebanon's return of an unexploded precision-guided munition to prevent technology transfer to Tehran or Beijing.

ASSESSMENT

Pressure accumulates with Hezbollah weakened and inactive, Syria experiencing porous borders with jihadi operations, Iraq warned against escalation, and Israel positioned for action. The papal departure removes constraints on operational planning.

Inside Israel

High Court Ducks, AG Clings, Government Moves On

A seven-justice panel reconvened to examine petitions against dismissing the Attorney General—and the government chose non-participation. The hearing dissolved within minutes: an empty government seat, procedural stagnation, and an attorney general still using official authority to impede investigations into her domain. Justice and National Security officials issued joint statements rejecting legitimacy of proceedings where the attorney general serves simultaneously as defendant against elected governance. Outside the courthouse, activists obstructed the Bar Association leadership's vehicle while security personnel intervened—a representation of judicial authority that has lost governmental cooperation and public backing. The attorney general escalated tensions with Shin Bet leadership after demanding authorization before conducting interviews of internal personnel. The security chief responded by clarifying that his service answers to the Prime Minister, not the attorney general—and noted her office had compromised its previous leak investigation by refusing polygraph examinations.

ASSESSMENT

The legal establishment continues fighting 2023 judicial reform arguments while the nation confronts Iran. Elected officials are requiring institutions to cease independent policymaking. Netanyahu's administration prioritizes operational management over procedural performance, and institutional systems are learning that past authority models no longer function automatically.

Herzog Edges Toward a “Yes, But” National Deal

Netanyahu's pardon request positions the President as holder of the nation's most significant authority. Reports suggest the president is considering conditional approval—permitting conclusion of legal proceedings while establishing specific limitations. Following years of procedural conflict, settlement discussions, and prosecutions that most democracies would have concluded years earlier, the legal system demonstrates exhaustion. Netanyahu declines confession, retirement, or acknowledgment of wrongdoing. The legal establishment seeks all three. The general population desires resolution of institutional paralysis, and the President recognizes his legacy depends on whether he restored state cohesion or permitted institutional hostage-taking through legal proceedings.

ASSESSMENT

Conditional pardon with explicit safeguards terminates decade-long institutional conflict between unelected authorities and elected representatives. It enables national coordination facing future crises and concludes proceedings that transformed legal process into political instrument. The opposite maintains paralysis during periods demanding unified leadership.

Coalition Gridlock Masks a Path to Real Reform

The conscription proposal encountered resistance: Religious Zionism demands enhanced requirements, ultra-Orthodox coalition members seek complete withdrawal, and senior officials acknowledge the current language lacks sufficient support. Specific religious figures challenge the proposal; others demand revisions; coalition members investigate alternatives. Yet Netanyahu's ultra-Orthodox partners maintain passage assurances—characterizing push-back as preliminary negotiation preceding final alignment. Observable evidence presents differently: the ultra-Orthodox Hashmonaim Brigade recently finished comprehensive military training with low attrition rates, and commanders project recruitment expansion following religious leadership authorization. The authentic obstacle involves historical reluctance, institutional anxiety, personal interests, and systematic dishonesty.

For readers seeking substantive solutions instead of contemporary anxiety, the established blueprint exists: **universal obligation, religiously compatible service categories, genuine Torah education alongside military roles, expanded participation opportunities, equal responsibility distribution**. This framework previously circulated and remains pertinent despite current draft modifications.

ASSESSMENT

Current legislation may fail—but inevitable settlement follows its direction: comprehensive participation with religious tradition protected, military staffing requirements satisfied, and shared national responsibility. Public preference aligns with fairness standards; military needs demand additional personnel; ultra-Orthodox participation increases when authority encourages rather than blocks engagement.

Corruption at the Checkpoints Meets a Harder State

Three Border Police officers at Ras Biddu were discovered operating a smuggling enterprise with residents from adjacent communities—charging for passage without inspection, allegedly including weaponry. One officer accepted compensation and personal material from a regional woman. This represented breach of the state's security perimeter. Internal Affairs prosecutors are pursuing cases, and leadership now possess additional justification for enforcement doctrine emphasizing uniform application and zero accommodation. Following periods of "avoid inflaming the community" hesitation, elected authorities are approaching internal security comparable to underground infrastructure: identification, elimination, and construction of genuine consequence systems.

ASSESSMENT

The state cannot oppose Iran-backed militant activity if its own security points operate as private enterprises. Ras Biddu remediation advances genuine sovereignty doctrine: single legal framework, uniform standards, singular authority.

Iron Beam Turns Rocket Barrages into Bad Investments

Rafael will transfer its inaugural operational Iron Beam system to the IDF on December 30. The technology eliminates rockets, mortars, unmanned aircraft, and missile systems using directed energy instead of expensive interceptors. Earlier iterations already neutralized Hezbollah aircraft in 2024. Advanced versions promise integrated protection with existing systems and immediate engagement capacity. It supplements rather than replaces current technology, but inverts financial mathematics: missile launches now burden adversaries financially more than Israeli defense expenditures.

ASSESSMENT

Iron Beam represents the inaugural transformative defensive technology since earlier systems that genuinely adjust financial calculations. It demonstrates quiet strategic innovation: deterrence through cost efficiency rather than solely accuracy.

Israel and the World

Europe's Soft-Hate Economy: Budgets Against Israel, Boycotts Against Bakers, And Jews Watching Their Backs

Norway's government fractures regarding whether its \$2 trillion sovereign wealth fund should divest Israeli holdings. Thirty percent of its 2026 budget arrangement concerns Israel—not domestic economy, military spending, or energy development. Concurrently in Britain, anti-Zionist activists attempted to undermine an Israeli-established bakery chain, generating instead 20% sales increases and dozens of location expansions. It demonstrates fundamental reality: European demonstrations voice opposition, bureaucrats perform disapproval, but Israeli-connected enterprises flourish because ordinary citizens prioritize commerce above rhetoric. However, street conditions reveal another narrative. France apprehended two juveniles planning jihadi-style operations targeting Jewish community locations—cases now categorized as standard European law enforcement activity.

ASSESSMENT

Europe's elite perform anti-Israel theater while security forces attempt Jewish protection in locations where visible religious identity invites violence. Leadership penalizes Israel through official channels; extremists pursue Jews through operational means. Both Jewish individuals and Israel supporters require treating European travel as higher-risk environments with insufficient institutional protection.

U.S. CAMPUSES ARE SAFE SPACES FOR ANTISEMITES, NOT JEWS

Brooklyn Law School terminated a pro-Israel presentation when student organizations declared the speaker “unsafe,” subsequently permitting the same groups to conduct anti-Israel demonstrations identical day with institutional approval and administrative participation. Restrooms contained anti-Semitic messages, mock religious observances, requirements that Jewish students relocate mourning ceremonies conflicting with rival programming—all permitted. The institution’s communication proves unambiguous: designated organizations establish acceptable boundaries; Jewish students occupy the perimeter.

ASSESSMENT

Educational institutions continue selecting adversaries. Leaders discover appeasement of minority activism simpler than defending Jewish students’ public participation rights. Possible Qatari financing contributions to this calculation? This explains why diaspora Jewish communities increasingly classify campuses as adversarial environments and why Israeli information operations must expand beyond diplomatic institutions into educational settings.

PRO-PALESTINIAN NETWORKS TURN CELEBRITIES INTO AI SOCK PUPPETS

Israeli analysts identified coordinated deepfake operations employing artificial intelligence celebrity recreation for pro-Palestinian promotion directed at hijacked fan communities prepared for psychological influence. Synthetic “endorsements” interspersed with legitimate entertainment material establish viewer confidence, subsequently introducing propaganda. Investigation traces lead to Egypt-based networks. The strategy targets parasocial connection, circumvent analytical thinking, and generate spontaneous emotional amplification.

ASSESSMENT

Information conflict has advanced from inexpensive visual jokes to industrialized persona appropriation. Israel requires treating this comparable to cybersecurity threat, not public relations irritation. When synthesized images become distribution infrastructure, millions transform into involuntary narrative promoters.

SOUTH AMERICAN STATES DRIFT TOWARD ISRAEL WHILE EUROPE DRIFTS AWAY

Bolivia eliminated visa requirements for Israelis—a minor administrative modification indicating strategic positioning. While Europe emphasizes regional security concerns, Latin America’s emerging centrist governments demonstrate practical cooperation: expanded travel, commercial activity, and interpersonal connections. This divergence—European declarative positions versus Latin American operational engagement—continues widening.

ASSESSMENT

Israel’s diplomatic trajectory won’t be determined through Oslo or Brussels discussions. Development will follow engagement with pragmatically-oriented partners. Europe maintains importance but demonstrates increasing unpredictability and procedural ineffectiveness. Israel will prioritize partners demonstrating professional governance.

Briefly Noted

Culture, Religion & Society

The National Library of Israel conducted “Sephardi Voices,” documenting narratives from refugees displaced from Middle Eastern and Persian territories, preserving accounts of nearly one million Jews expelled from the region. The initiative underscores information regularly ignored by international capitals—the region’s genuine historical displacement concerned Jewish populations, and systematic documentation occurs at state institutions rather than suppression to accommodate regional narrative preferences.

Domestic & Law

Opinion commentary examines Israel’s self-designated “institutional safeguards”—officials from specific political backgrounds to prosecutorial leadership—who exercise governance authority through selective enforcement, institutional conflicts, and moral declarations while declining accountability oversight. The analysis captures the immediate reality: institutional review has transformed into political governance, and the system experiences stress from gatekeepers rejecting external governance while maintaining unilateral decision authority.

Diplomacy & Geopolitics

Analysis challenges the idea of “scheduled Palestinian statehood,” observing that neither current administration proposals nor practical circumstances permit bypassing disarmament, legitimate administration, and foundational institution development. The observation matters since international figures keep requesting calendar frameworks instead of preconditions—theoretical approaches that collapse under minimal examination.

Argentina’s President officially initiated the Isaac Accords with Israeli Foreign Ministry officials, generating subsequent regional pro-Israel developments including diplomatic relocation planning, militant organization designations, and diplomatic infrastructure expansion. Latin America develops into Israel’s most energetic geopolitical expansion market—contrasting sharply with European institutional resistance and UN-centered positioning.

Ecuador opened a Jerusalem-based “Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center” with diplomatic standing, with Israeli Foreign Ministry officials characterizing it as pathway toward complete diplomatic relocation. This exemplifies the broader regional pattern: Latin American governments are transferring institutional operations, financial allocations, and political emphasis toward Israel’s claimed capital.

California resident faced federal prosecution following threats against synagogue facilities and dissemination of extremist material. Antisemitic declarations circulate through unrestricted channels absent institutional opposition, with law enforcement representing the sole barrier between dangerous rhetoric and catastrophic violence.

Developments to Watch

Judea & Samaria

Hebron–Binyamin Terror Tempo Rises – Within 24 hours, a female soldier experienced ramming near Hebron, two soldiers faced stabbing assault near Ateret, and perpetrators faced elimination in both instances. Combined with daylight marketplace capture of a militant operative in Shechem and comprehensive Tubas containment, patterns indicate escalation probability.

Terror Infrastructure Includes “NGOs” – Operations against organizations operating under agricultural designation in Ramallah and Hebron recovered wanted individuals, additional suspects, and approximately 700,000 shekels connected to militant groups using humanitarian fronts. Anticipate additional organizations operating under development or humanitarian branding in territories and Palestinian Authority areas receiving treatment as security liabilities instead of grant recipients.

Northern Front (Lebanon / Syria)

Post-Pope Lebanon Window Opens – Following papal departure from Beirut, Israeli aircraft and unmanned systems resumed Beqaa operations, with Jerusalem publicly confirming “extensive attack” preparations for Lebanon. Lebanese political leadership expresses shared understanding: the pause enabled planning instead of encouraging peace.

Syria Regime Fragility Becomes a Risk Vector – Israeli assessments classify Syria’s current leader elimination as probable, with projections indicating ISIS, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Houthi-connected, and other extremist organizations positioned to contest territory if governmental collapse occurs. Stability assessments represent Washington’s public position, while Israel’s planning anticipates militant competition across the Golan boundary.

Gaza & Southern Theater

Yellow Line Drifts Westward – The IDF eliminates boundary-crossing individuals immediately while advancing armored units and firepower resources deeper into Tuffah and Khan Yunis territories; civilian reports document building destruction near As-Sanafur as effective control boundaries move westward. Each advancement reduces Hamas-controlled territory, making reversal progressively more difficult in future diplomatic arrangements.

Hostage Bodies Turn into Central Lever – Hamas and Islamic Jihad personnel investigate Beit Lahia seeking Israeli hostage remains while Israel receives transferred remains through international channels for identification.

Regional Axis (Iran, Houthis, Militias)

Iraq Warned, Militia Frontline Defined – U.S. diplomatic representatives instructed Baghdad that militant participation supporting Hezbollah generates Israeli responses within Iraqi boundaries, with Washington expecting Iraq to manage militia activities. The coalition received updated parameters: any attempt establishing the Iraqi theater transforms Iraq itself into valid military objective territory.

Next Preemptive Strike Likely Target: Iranian Missiles – Israeli security officials continuously reference potential “preemptive measures” against Iran’s revitalized ballistic infrastructure, while the IRGC conducts air-defense drills encompassing missile development regions. Extended inaction permits Tehran weapons accumulation, raising subsequent operational expenses.

Diplomatic & Legal

Trump Sells “Peace with Syria,” Jihadists Sell Reality – Trump praises Syria’s leader, eliminates economic restrictions, and urges Israeli restraint regarding Syria’s “development into a prosperous country,” while Israeli intelligence catalogs ISIS, Islamic Jihad, Houthi-linked, and regime security units preparing operations in southern Syria. White House communications distance from enemy force arrangements represents an independent strategic consideration.

Home Front & Politics

Draft Bill Looks Dead; Problem Doesn’t – Coalition mathematical analysis suggests the conscription proposal lacks sufficient parliamentary votes: one faction demands stronger measures, another seeks complete rejection, and government coalition members demonstrate uncertainty, even as Haredi military units demonstrate functional integration when religious authorities authorize participation. Current political legislation may terminate this cycle, but demographic necessity and widespread equity demands will require cleaner versions addressing identical issues returning to consideration.

AG vs. Shin Bet Shows Who Answers to Whom – The attorney general attempted preventing Shin Bet leadership from conducting polygraph examinations of subordinates; the security service head clarified that his organization answers to the Prime Minister instead of the attorney general—and highlighted her office’s prior leak investigation failure caused by personal refusal of examination.

Closing Analysis

GROUND operations treat Judea and Samaria as the country's eastern defensive perimeter rather than an international agreement framework, while Gaza's Yellow Line functions as a concrete, consequences-enforced boundary. Northern operations shift from diplomatic language about "dialogue with Syria" and "Lebanese accommodation" to planning assumptions that subsequent conflicts represent scheduling questions. Domestic disputes address whether historical legal and conscription frameworks remain viable—not whether breakdowns occur, but whether wartime conditions permit replacement.

— Uri Zehavi • Intelligence Editor With Modi Zehavi • Data + Research Analyst

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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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