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ISRAEL BRIEF

Tuesday, December 9

Phase II Scripts Get Softer, Borders and Barriers Get Harder

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Israel Brief: Tuesday, December 9

Phase II Scripts Get Softer, Borders and Barriers Get Harder

Flash Brief

Gaza: Hamas restores police and checkpoints in territory it holds; IDF strikes imminent-threat cell in Deir al-Balah.

Hostages & Phase II: Body searches resume (Staff Sgt. Ran Gvili ז"ל); Phase B framework discussions accelerate in Doha.

North: IDF targets Radwan Force training compounds and weapons depots; Lebanese Speaker Nabih Berri privately appeals to Iran for a fatwa permitting Hezbollah missile transfer to the Lebanese Army.

Iran/Axis: Western intelligence agencies assess high likelihood of Hamas-linked attacks on Israeli and Jewish targets in Europe within six months — pre-positioned cells, weapons caches, IRGC-backed crime networks.

Inside Israel: Construction begins on 310-mile Jordan border barrier (NIS 6 billion); Emergency Order 8 extended for 280,000 reservists through January 1; Katz–Zamir appointments compromise reached.

Politics: State Comptroller clashes with former Shin Bet official over October 7 testimony; Haredi draft protests intensify; budget coalition under pressure.

The War Today

GAZA: HAMAS BACK ON THE STREET, NOT ON THE WAY OUT

Hamas has restored police and checkpoints across territory it holds. Senior officials are speaking more softly for Western audiences — Bassem Naim now frames Hamas's position as willingness to "freeze or store" weapons — but the demand beneath the soft language is unchanged: full IDF withdrawal and recognition of a Palestinian state in exchange for any arms arrangement. The weapons stay operational under any framework Hamas will accept.

Israeli and Arab intelligence estimates put remaining Hamas fighters at approximately 20,000. More than 50% of the tunnel network is assessed intact. The International Stabilization Force designs being circulated in Washington and Brussels are built explicitly to avoid direct disarmament — the architecture manages the optics of demilitarization rather than actual disarmament. Hamas is transitioning back into power under ceasefire cover.

NORTHERN FRONT: ISRAEL HITS RADWAN WHILE BRUSSELS PLANS POST-UNIFIL LEBANON

IDF struck Radwan Force training compounds and weapons depots in southern Lebanon this week. In Brussels, the EU is circulating a plan to bolster Lebanese Internal Security Forces as a preliminary step before Lebanese

Army disarmament operations. Macron's envoy is developing a separate "assessment" roadmap. Neither plan touches Hezbollah's actual arsenal.

Lebanese Speaker Nabih Berri has reportedly appealed privately to Iran's supreme leader for a fatwa permitting transfer of Hezbollah missiles to the Lebanese Army — a theological authorization Hezbollah would need to move weapons without appearing to capitulate. Berri also requested emergency cash for devastated Shia communities. The key to Hezbollah's arsenal remains in Tehran.

FROM GAZA TO EUROPE: HAMAS EXTERNAL OPS COME ONLINE

Western intelligence agencies are assessing a high likelihood of Hamas-linked attacks on European soil within six months. Targets: Israeli diplomatic missions, Israel-linked businesses, Jewish and Israel-associated religious sites. The operational infrastructure is pre-positioned — cells, weapons caches, and crime networks built between 2019 and 2025, with IRGC-backed financing running through Turkish money pipelines. The Briefly Noted section below flags: a Hamas October 7 participant was spotted at a Belgian Christmas market this week.

Inside Israel

BARAM'S BARRIER AND KATZ-ZAMIR DEAL SIGNAL WAR-FOOTING MATURITY

Construction began this week on a 310-mile barrier along the Jordan border — NIS 6 billion, with the first 80 km in northern Samaria valleys. The project pairs with Nahal outposts, a Jordan Valley division, and reinforced community infrastructure throughout the region.

Emergency Order 8 has been extended: 280,000 reservists remain mobilized through January 1. Reserve days for 2026 will be reduced from 60 to 40 per soldier — a cost-of-war adjustment. Defense Minister Katz and Chief of Staff Zamir reached a partial appointments compromise: brigade and battalion promotions proceed; General Staff appointments remain frozen pending completion of the October 7 review.

Shin Bet wrapped an Iranian infiltration case this week: a 16-year-old recruited via Telegram, paid in cryptocurrency, tasked with vandalism and site reconnaissance.

WAR POOR, HAREDI LEVERAGE, AND A PRIME MINISTER UNDER FIRE

The Latet organization's "war poor" report documents tens of tens of thousands of Israelis in structural economic distress — reservists and small business owners hardest hit, two minimum wages no longer sufficient for basic needs, food insecurity now penetrating the lower middle class.

Boaz Bismuth is advancing a Haredi enlistment outline that critics say is too soft. Shas leader Aryeh Deri is conditioning budget support on restoration of food vouchers. Netanyahu is citing record employment, a strong shekel, and defense exports as indicators of strategic economic resilience — the data is real; the gap between it and the war-poor report is also real.

BEN-GVIR'S NOOSE, SHIN BET SILENCE, AND A STATE STILL AVOIDING THE MIRROR

Itamar Ben-Gvir wore a gold noose pin at a National Security Committee session this week. Otzma Yehudit is advancing a death-penalty bill offering hanging and lethal injection as options for convicted terrorists.

“Oscar,” the former Shin Bet southern commander who was on duty October 7, has formally refused to testify before the State Comptroller — claiming the Comptroller lacks authority until a full state commission is established. Current Shin Bet director David Zini is cooperating under a court-approved framework. The standoff reflects a deeper institutional conflict: the desire for accountability on one side, and the effort to control the accountability process on the other.

Testimony this week revealed that Southern Command twice submitted operational plans to kill Deif and Sinwar before October 7. Both were shelved by political leadership and the General Staff to “keep Gaza calm.”

Israel and the World

FROM MAMDANI TO MUNK: THE DIASPORA BATTLESPACE HARDENS

New York: President Herzog criticized incoming Mayor Zohran Mamdani’s defense of “intifada” chants and his claim that aliyah events violate “international law.”

Toronto: A StopAntisemitism report graded 14 universities with F marks. Forty percent of Jewish students hide their identity on campus; 60% report being blamed for “Israeli crimes.” The Munk Debate drew 200 protesters, three arrests, and 3,000 attendees — the ratio itself is the data point.

Argentina: Far-left MPs swore a “from the river to the sea” oath in the legislature. DAIA filed a formal complaint. A Jewish legislator introduced a bill barring foreign-policy slogans from official oaths.

Poland: Nationalists attempted to suppress Yoav Potash’s film “Among Neighbors,” which documents Polish perpetrators who murdered Jewish survivors returning after the war. The film was branded “anti-Polish manipulation.”

NO ARAB FORCE WILL FIX GAZA — GRAHAM ADMITS

Senator Lindsey Graham said plainly this week: “there is no way to disarm Hamas through some Arab force.” He backed Israeli operations to “finish Hamas off,” dismissed Trump’s Arab-only ISF concept as unworkable, and tied real Saudi normalization to the neutralization of Hamas and Hezbollah. He also pledged to cut federal funding from universities that fail to protect Jewish students.

Foreign Minister Gideon Sa’ar signed formal restoration of diplomatic ties with Bolivia this week. The Bolivian government scrapped visa requirements for Israeli citizens.

Briefly Noted

Frontline & Security

- Hamas October 7 participant spotted at a Belgian Christmas market.
- Sudan's RSF killed more than 100 people — 63 of them children — in strikes on a kindergarten and hospital using heavy weapons and drones.
- US Army Cyber Chief Brandon Pugh described “expeditionary firing crews” blending cyber and electronic warfare capabilities in operations against China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea.
- United Hatzalah volunteer Moshe Weizman learned this week that the wounded officer he treated on October 7 was Roman Gofman — the incoming Mossad director.
- Testimony established that Southern Command submitted two plans to kill Deif and Sinwar pre-October 7; both were shelved by political leadership and the General Staff.

Diplomacy & Geopolitics

- UAE-backed Southern Transitional Council is seizing territory across southern Yemen; Saudi Arabia briefly closed its airspace as a warning signal.
- The International Court of Justice agreed to hear Russia's counter-case accusing 41 Ukrainian officials of genocide in Donetsk and Luhansk.
- The US House Foreign Affairs Committee gutted the Muslim Brotherhood terror-designation bill — replacing mandatory designations with a softer “assessment” report.

Domestic & Law

- CAIR announced a lawsuit against Florida Governor Ron DeSantis over his terror-designation order targeting the organization.

Culture, Religion & Society

- An Algerian nanny in France is on trial for poisoning a Jewish family's food and drinks with corrosive chemicals. She admitted the motivation was their Jewish identity and resentment over “money and power.”
- The Washington press-club gala held a “memorial” for ten Al Jazeera “Gazan reporters” who were later identified as a Hamas sniper, a Nukhba operative, a PIJ rocket commander, and a cell head.
- An Orthodox Montrealer documented a week at a Beverly Hills Reform synagogue: pink tallitot, extensive singing, a mostly elderly membership — a portrait of an institution in demographic terminal decline.

Developments to Watch

Berri Begs Iran for Weapons Fatwa — Lebanese Speaker Nabih Berri has privately appealed to Iran's supreme leader for authorization to transfer Hezbollah's arsenal to the Lebanese Army, and requested emergency cash for Shia communities. If granted, the fatwa would allow Hezbollah to reframe disarmament as compliance rather than capitulation. *Likelihood: escalation if Iran refuses, slow-motion rearmament under Lebanese Army cover if Iran agrees.*

EU Eyes ISF Support to Free the Army — Brussels is exploring a plan to strengthen Lebanese Internal Security Forces as the first layer of a disarmament architecture. The plan is designed to look like progress while leaving Hezbollah's actual missile inventory untouched.

Syria "Safe" Again — The UK Foreign Office is citing "hope" in post-Assad Syria to justify refugee repatriation. The timing follows the Assad collapse; the policy framing is premature.

Hamas Searches for Gvili's Body — Hamas and the Red Cross are resuming searches for Staff Sgt. Ran Gvili ז"ל in Zeitoun. His recovery is described as the "sole hinge" for Phase II momentum.

IDF Airstrike in Deir al-Balah Breaks Pattern — Targeted strike on Hamas operative planning an imminent attack; a signal that operational tempo continues regardless of ceasefire diplomacy.

Terror Cell Activity Rising in Judea and Samaria — IDF neutralized attackers near Azzun; sniper attack thwarted in Burkin. Cell testing of Israeli response speed typically precedes coordinated escalation.

Hamas External Ops Green-Lit for Europe — Western intelligence warns of Hamas attacks on Jewish and Israeli targets within six months using pre-positioned infrastructure. The Belgian Christmas-market sighting is the current leading indicator.

US-Israel-Qatar Reset Summit — Trilateral meeting in New York to repair ties after the failed Israeli strike near Doha; Qatar continues pushing for disarmament delay.

UNRWA Raid Triggers UN Legal Posturing — Israeli police seized phones during a banned-UNRWA facility raid in Sheikh Jarrah. UN Secretary-General Guterres condemned it as a violation of "inviolable" UN property.

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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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