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READER EDITION

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ISRAEL BRIEF

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Bondi proves the intifada is no longer 'over there.' How many more warnings do we need before we take security seriously?

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THE BOTTOM LINE Europe's internal split is Israel's signal to pursue disciplined bilateralism with serious partners and treat institutional theatrics as noise. When sanctions talk collides with operational reality, credibility erodes—and relevance follows. Israel does not need Europe's permission to defend itself, but Europe will need Israel's cooperation far sooner than most of it admits.

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THE intifada has indeed been globalized. If you’ve missed that before this week, Bondi Beach made the point unavoidably clear with bullets and IEDs. Diaspora Jewish life is treated as target practice by people who call it “liberation.”

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At home, enforcement keeps replacing ambiguity—Hezbollah “rebuild” gets hit, Hamas command nodes keep disappearing, and Israel is treating borders like borders again.

Tonight is the second night of Hanukkah, which is a good time to remember what the Maccabees actually taught. It’s not just lighting candles and eating latkes. It’s about standing up when others would prefer you sit down.

Flash Brief

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bondi Beach: Antisemitic mass-casualty attack drives global Jewish-site security surge and cypocat warnings. • Lebanon: IDF targets Hezbollah rebuild operatives and internal-enforcement nodes across the south under ceasefire rules. • Gaza: Hamas command and coercive organs take hits; Rafah “White Sparrow” tunnel complex exposure tightens disarmament logic. • Judea & Samaria: Stabbing attempts near Hebron/Kdumim | <p>stopped; routine “friction” continues along key routes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egypt Border: Another drone weapons-smuggling attempt foiled; unmanned routes become the preferred trafficking lane. • Home Front: North rebuilds under residual fire-risk; compensation and return incentives collide with credibility. • Jerusalem: Legal-political authority fight sharpens around the AG and ministerial appointments under wartime load. |
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THE same axis that fires rockets and rebuilds tunnels also exports narrative permission—then acts surprised when permission becomes action. Bondi is not “diaspora news.” It’s a continuation of everything we’ve been reporting on for months.

The War Today

Hamis Loses Command and Control from Both Ends

Israel’s Gaza campaign continues its decisive enforcement phase marked by simultaneous pressure on Hamas’s senior command, underground infrastructure, and internal coercive organs. Ra’ad Sa’ad—one of the architects of October 7 and a central node in Hamas’s weapons production and rearmament—was eliminated while actively violating the ceasefire. Days later, Ahmed Zamzam, a lieutenant colonel in Hamas’s internal security apparatus, was killed in Maghazi, with responsibility publicly claimed by the anti-Hamas Abu Shabab/Popular Forces militia. Additionally, the IDF revealed the full scope of the Rafah “White Sparrow” tunnel complex—7–10 km of command posts, living quarters, and concealment corridors (used, amongst other diabolical reasons, to hold Hadar Goldin’s remains—while Hamas was exposed extorting displaced Gazans by

charging rent for beach tents during storm flooding. Seems on brand. Hamas's own leadership confirmed the deaths, keeps explicitly rejecting disarmament outright (when will we believe them?), and attempts to reframe the violence as "Israeli-backed mercenary" activity.

ASSESSMENT

Israel is degrading Hamas vertically—removing senior planners and weapons chiefs—while Hamas is losing horizontal control as armed Gazans and rival militias turn on its internal security enforcers. Of course, this is still kicking the can down the road until the populace can be deradicalized. The exposure of the Rafah tunnel network underscores why disarmament talk is fiction—they're not going to give up their arms willingly. Full stop. While the tent-rent shakedown reveals a movement that never left its mafia governance. Hamas can posture at podiums and its allies can invoke international law, but on the ground it is being hollowed out: command decapitated, tunnels mapped and destroyed, coercive authority contested, and ceasefire violations met with immediate force. Gaza is being governed by attrition, and Hamas is losing the ability to control that process.

Hezbollah Pays for Rebuilding Attempts, Not Declarations

Israel conducted a series of precise drone strikes across southern Lebanon targeting Hezbollah operatives engaged in reestablishing terror infrastructure, liaison networks, and internal suppression roles. Among those eliminated were Zakaria Yahya al-Hajj in Jwaya, a senior Hezbollah figure who activated agents inside the Lebanese security apparatus and silenced internal critics, and additional operatives in Yater and Bint Jbeil responsible for infrastructure rehabilitation and asset seizure. The IDF reports more than 1,900 Hezbollah violations since the ceasefire framework took effect and over 380 operatives eliminated in response, including roughly 40 in the last month alone. Iranian officials simultaneously reaffirmed unconditional backing for Hezbollah, while Israeli leadership reiterated that no proxy force will be allowed to entrench along Israel's borders.

ASSESSMENT

Israel is systematically dismantling Hezbollah's post-ceasefire rebuild by targeting the connective tissue—local operatives, financiers, fixers, and internal enforcers—rather than waiting for headline provocations. The scale of Hezbollah's violations and Israel's response gives lie to the assertions that UN mechanisms or Lebanese sovereignty could ever constrain Hezbollah's behavior—the only thing that does? Tehran. By acting continuously, Israel is stripping Hezbollah of the ability to normalize its presence south of the Litani and signaling that any attempt to restore infrastructure will be met with immediate removal.

From Judea and Samaria to Egypt, Enforcement Replaces Containment

In Judea and Samaria, attempted stabbings near Hebron and Kdumim were stopped and attackers neutralized, preventing casualties. Along the Egyptian border, the IDF intercepted another drone-based weapons smuggling attempt carrying assault rifles, reinforcing the assessment that unmanned aerial routes are becoming a preferred method for arms trafficking. In Gaza-border communities, multiple siren activations were assessed as false alarms

linked to IDF activity, underscoring the operational density of Israeli deployments along the Yellow Line rather than a reduction in posture—and the need for those alert systems to be on hair triggers.

ASSESSMENT

Israel is responding by collapsing response time to zero—neutralizing attackers, downing smuggling drones, and treating every border crossing attempt as hostile until proven otherwise. The cumulative effect is strategic. Adversaries are learning that attacks no longer generate ambiguity or political hesitation. From Judea and Samaria to Gaza to Egypt, Israel is reasserting a basic principle that was eroded before October 7. Rules and borders are not suggestions.

Inside Israel

The North Rebuilds, Still Under Fire

The home front is living in two time zones: officials declare a return to normal, while northern families rebuild under the sound of strikes and the memory of direct hits. Metula residents describe themselves as “refugees in our own country,” trapped between incomplete compensation ceilings and the economic absurdity of replacing a destroyed life with a capped check. The government is trying to turn that exhaustion into demographics, approving annual daycare subsidies for confrontation-line communities to pull young families back north. Meanwhile, the coalition is signaling the same “stay put” logic in the south—new neighborhood developments in Dimona framed explicitly as national revival.

ASSESSMENT

Rebuild the north, populate the south, and deny the enemy the strategic win of empty border towns. The constraint is legitimacy through competence—if compensation frameworks feel like an insult, “come back” turns into “why bother,” and deterrence collapses into depopulation. Daycare subsidies and cornerstone ceremonies matter less as symbolism than as a measurable bet that families will return and stay. If Israel wants lasting security depth, it must fund the north like it intends to keep it.

High Court Blocks the Government’s AG Move, Pressure Shifts to Ben-Gvir
Israel’s internal power struggle meanders on. The High Court annulled the government’s attempt to change the mechanism for dismissing the attorney general, effectively keeping her in place and ruling the bypass of a professional-public committee unlawful. The prime minister formally warned the court against intervening in ministerial appointments in response to petitions aimed at removing Ben-Gvir, framing it as an extraordinary breach into the formation of an elected government. The conflict sits in plain view: the elected executive is trying to reassert authority over unelected gatekeepers, and the judiciary is insisting that process—defined by previous frameworks—cannot be bulldozed even in wartime. Meanwhile, the rhetoric escalates, and public trust keeps bleeding.

ASSESSMENT

When the legal system becomes the arena where coalition composition is fought, the state's chain of command blurs—and adversaries notice. The court's procedural argument may be tidy, but the strategic cost is that elected authority looks perpetually conditional, governed by injunctions and "proper mechanisms" rather than mandate. Israel needs rules that clarify who governs and how disputes are settled without turning every appointment into a constitutional crisis. The verdict: no functioning country can be run on veto politics.

Demography Advances While Service Stagnates

New data and political maneuvering are converging on the same problem: Israel's ultra-Orthodox population continues rapid growth while their employment and military enlistment remain largely stalled, with enlistment numbers flat over a decade even as the denominator explodes. That trend is colliding with a society running extended mobilization and a public demanding accountability after October 7. The coalition is pushing a Knesset-led "national investigative committee" framework—explicitly designed to avoid a state commission whose members would be appointed via the judiciary—while the opposition calls it a cover-up and refuses cooperation. In the field, daily friction continues: a reported mass crossing over the security barrier north of Jerusalem, stabbing attempts thwarted near Hebron and Kdumim, and ongoing route security stress in Judea and Samaria. The state is being asked to enforce borders, fight a long war, and maintain cohesion—while a growing share of draft-age manpower remains structurally outside the system.

ASSESSMENT

A state that cannot convert demographic growth into service and productive work becomes a state that burns out its reservists, stretches its police, and hollows out its middle class—the people actually holding the line. Seems like we might already be beyond that point, no? The October 7 inquiry fight is part of the same story: accountability structures either reinforce the social contract or accelerate its collapse into factional blame. Israel needs enforceable service pathways that scale with demographics, and an investigative framework that the public treats as legitimate. Israel's war endurance will be decided as much in the draft registry as on the border.

Israel and the World

Bondi Beach and the Cost of Globalizing the Intifada

The Bondi Beach Hanukkah massacre was a mass-casualty antisemitic terror attack against Jews gathered publicly to light candles—children, families, elderly, and Holocaust survivors—carried out with firearms (and almost by explosives, which were active and on the scene) by ISIS-linked perpetrators operating inside a permissive Western environment. The attackers did not improvise their target. They selected a visible Jewish religious gathering, used legally held firearms, deployed multiple IEDs, and exploited open public space—mirroring attack logic seen across Europe and North America over

the past two years. This was not a “local failure” or an intelligence anomaly. No, it was the downstream operational result of a decade-long campaign that normalized genocidal rhetoric as activism, rebranded incitement as speech, and treated slogans like “Globalize the Intifada” as metaphor rather than intent—the entirety of the Western political community should hang their heads in shame and share in the culpability. Bondi sits on a continuum that just this week includes Amsterdam concert intimidation, a drive-by shooting at a Hanukkah-decorated home in California, and repeated high-risk warnings around Jewish events across the West.

ASSESSMENT

Bondi is not an outlier. It is yet another a warning flare. The mechanism is established and historically familiar. When antisemitism is laundered through politics and moral euphemism, it does not remain rhetorical. It metastasizes directly into violence. History does not jump from tolerance to catastrophe overnight—it slides, with long plateaus of denial punctuated by sudden bloodshed. This is not yet 1938, but it is no longer 1998, and pretending otherwise is how communities historically misread the slope. Diaspora Jews are not obligated to make Aliyah tomorrow—but dismissing contingency planning, serious security investment, and sober conversations about future options is how Jews have repeatedly discovered that the window closed quietly. Israel must treat diaspora safety as a strategic theater—intelligence-sharing, diplomatic pressure, and information warfare—because once the intifada is globalized rhetorically (and it has), Jewish life everywhere becomes operational terrain (and it now is). Yehi zichram baruch to those murdered al kiddush Hashem; refuah shlemah to the wounded. Denial is no longer a safety strategy, and history does not offer refunds for late recognition.

Why Israel's Balance Sheet Is Strategic Power

Israel ranked among the world's strongest economies even while prosecuting a multi-front war, with equity markets, banking, and employment showing resilience that few states under sustained security pressure can replicate. Share prices surged, labor participation remained strong, and Israel's deep-tech ecosystem continued to post outsized exits and valuations, reinforcing the country's role as a global node for advanced engineering, AI, and security-linked innovation. At the same time, the data is not without problems: venture funding is down from its 2022 peak, R&D employment has tightened, and new firm formation has slowed. These are not contradictions; they are the profile of a war economy absorbing shock while reallocating toward core strengths. In a hostile diplomatic environment, this performance matters because capital flows, supply-chain trust, and innovation density translate directly into geopolitical leverage.

ASSESSMENT

Economic resilience is not a feel-good headline—it is deterrence by other means. States that can fight and grow simultaneously set terms. Israel's challenge is not merely survival but optimization. Protect deep-tech, retain talent, and ensure wartime reallocations do not calcify into long-term stagnation. The opportunity is clear—dual-use innovation, defense-adjacent R&D, and allied capital can turn wartime necessity into post-war dominance.

Taiwan, the Indo-Pacific, and Coalition-Building Beyond the West

As the China–Iran–Russia–North Korea axis deepens coordination across military, cyber, and information domains, Israel is quietly expanding ties with states that understand existential pressure. Engagement with Taiwan has accelerated across technology, research, and economic cooperation, anchored in shared vulnerabilities: proximity to hostile powers, dependence on secure supply chains, and the need for credible deterrence without illusions. Israel is seeing the maturation of non-traditional alliance structures, including large-scale mobilization from Christian allies that reframes Zionism not as a niche Jewish cause but as a frontline defense of Western civilizational values. This is coalition math, measured in semiconductors, cyber resilience, diplomatic cover, and narrative reach.

ASSESSMENT

This is bloc formation without ceremony. Taiwan cooperation hardens Israel's industrial sovereignty and embeds it deeper into Indo-Pacific security logic; Christian coalition-building expands Israel's strategic depth in the information war and domestic politics of allied states. The risk is complacency. Treating these relationships as optional or symbolic would be a grave mistake. They are force multipliers in a prolonged systemic contest. Alliances built before crisis are cheaper, sturdier, and more loyal than those improvised under fire.

Lawfare Fatigue, Bilateral Drift, and Israel's Plan B

Europe is a fractured arena. While parts of Brussels continue to flirt with sanctions, boycotts, and moral theater, key member states are recalibrating—quietly restoring security cooperation, resuming arms ties, and bypassing EU institutions to deal directly with Jerusalem. Germany's shift toward security realism stands in sharp contrast to the obsession of others who continue to invoke “genocide” regardless of facts on the ground. The result is an EU increasingly sidelined in the very region it claims to manage, as Israel works pragmatically with capitals that prioritize outcomes over posture.

ASSESSMENT

Europe's internal split is Israel's signal to pursue disciplined bilateralism with serious partners and treat institutional theatrics as noise. When sanctions talk collides with operational reality, credibility erodes—and relevance follows. Israel does not need Europe's permission to defend itself, but Europe will need Israel's cooperation far sooner than most of it admits.

Briefly Noted

Culture, Religion & Society

- A gunman killed two and wounded nine during a Brown University exam review tied to a professor who teaches Jewish studies, with a person of interest detained. Jewish-adjacent academic life is becoming a soft-target

category, and attributing attacks to unknown motives masks an emerging pattern.

- A Toronto woman reports an Uber driver ejected her mid-ride after hearing Hebrew, one of many incidents this year. Everyday services are turning into discrimination checkpoints, and corporate driver-unmatching protocols substitute for actual enforcement.

Frontline & Security

- An IAF drone operator described receiving rapid tasking to strike Ra'ad Sa'ad, executing with precision, then returning to Tel Aviv for leisure. Israel's operational advantage rests on normalizing high-value targeting as routine labor.
- Syria claims arresting five ISIS-linked suspects after a Palmyra attack that killed U.S. troops and an interpreter, noting the attacker was suspected days prior. Reports indicate direct responsibility by Syrian armed forces.

Diplomacy & Geopolitics

- A report claims Tehran is dissatisfied with Hezbollah chief Naim Qassem and considers leadership restructuring under Iran's foreign minister oversight. Multiple parties are waiting for his position to become available.

Developments to Watch

Northern Front (Lebanon / Syria)

- **Post-ceasefire rebuild strikes** — The IDF conducted multiple drone strikes in southern Lebanon against Hezbollah operatives tied to infrastructure reestablishment, liaison networks, and internal enforcement. This treats “rebuild” itself as the violation, not waiting for subsequent rockets.
- **Hezbollah violation tally** — Israel reports 1,900+ Hezbollah violations since understandings took effect and 380+ operatives eliminated in response, with roughly 40 struck in the last month. Numbers signal steady drift from “mechanism” to managed attrition ahead of year-end.
- **Hezbollah security services penetration hit** — Zakaria Yahya al-Hajj was eliminated in Jwaya, described as activating agents inside Lebanese security systems and suppressing internal Hezbollah criticism. This touches the organization's survival architecture. **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**
- **Iran reaffirms the remote control** — Tehran publicly reiterated “firm support” for Hezbollah as the “main pillar” of resistance. That message stiffens Hezbollah's backbone just as Israel cuts local ligaments—an escalation recipe. **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**

Gaza & Southern Theater

- **Yellow Line contact kill** — IDF forces in northern Gaza identified an operative crossing the Yellow Line toward troops and eliminated him as immediate threat.
- **False-alarm sirens under dense posture** — Multiple Gaza-border siren activations were assessed as false alarms tied to IDF activity. The operational signal is not “calm” but density—high tempo and high sensitivity create conditions for accidents and misreads.

Judea & Samaria

- **Hebron junction stabbing stopped** — A terrorist attempted to stab soldiers near Hebron and was eliminated; no IDF injuries reported. This represents low-cost tactical attempts by various groups seeking “victory footage” and wider response provocation. **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**

Regional Axis (Iran, Houthis, Militias)

- **Egypt-border drone smuggling** — The IDF downed a drone crossing from Egypt carrying assault rifles. This method scales because it reduces trafficker risk while forces Israel into constant aerial policing along borders previously considered “quiet.”

Diplomatic & Legal

- **Sydney attack’s second-order effects** — Australia confirmed multiple IEDs at the Bondi Beach scene. Israel urges Israelis abroad to avoid unsecured gatherings, and multiple capitals moved to reinforce Jewish-site security. Near-term risk includes copycats plus disinformation noise overwhelming local security bandwidth. **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**
- **Foreign-terror attribution pressure** — Israel examines possible Hezbollah retaliation logic and broader Iranian infrastructure targeting Jews abroad. This becomes a diplomatic test—allies either treat it as terrorism with sponsors, or as “community safety” requiring press statements only.

Home Front & Politics

- **Oct. 7 probe clock closes** — The coalition pushed a Knesset-led investigation framework as the opposition signals boycott, creating another legitimacy collision amid public demands for accountability.
- **Confrontation-line demographic incentives** — The government approved substantial daycare subsidies for northern border communities to pull families back. This is not “social policy”; it’s strategic depth procurement, and it fails fast if security and compensation credibility don’t keep pace.

The Maccabees didn’t win by filing a complaint with the ombudsman. They won by deciding what strength meant, and paying its price. That’s the question for Am Yisrael: strength can mean coming home and standing together (Aliyah), or it can mean standing your ground wherever you are with real physical security for your person, your family, your home, your shul, your

schools, and your institutions. The only unacceptable option is sleepwalking. History does not gently tap Jews on the shoulder—at best it clears its throat. Then it throws things.

Watch these pressure points: Retaliation incentives in the north as “rebuild” keeps getting deleted. Hamas’s loss of internal control as coercive figures fall. Diaspora copycat risk as the Bondi narrative spreads faster than police deployments.

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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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