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ISRAEL BRIEF

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Terror climbs through the gaps in the fence while diplomacy tries to rename control as ‘process.’

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THE BOTTOM LINE This is controlled surrender in real time: two-tier enforcement, speech indulgence for one camp, concrete barriers for Jews. Europe is back to promoting the ghettos, it seems. Protest culture does not stay symbolic when it is subsidized by permissive law and hostile money. Jews are fair game, consequences are negotiable. Israel should treat this as a diaspora security front—push allies toward real protest policing, terror-finance disruption, and bail reform—and accept that emigration pressure will keep rising.

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Flash Brief

- **Northern Israel Terror:** Multi-site ramming-stabbing attack kills two; infiltrator route exploited civilian mobility.
- **Judea & Samaria:** Qabatiya encirclement expands; enforcement shifts toward accomplices and illegal-entry enablers.
- **Lebanon:** IDF strikes Radwan training and weapons infrastructure; disarmament “phases” remain talk.
- **Gaza:** Airstrikes hit Khan Younis and Al-Bureij as Hamas rebuild indicators persist under ceasefire cover.
- **Washington:** Netanyahu is traveling to meet Trump and Rubio; Phase II sequencing and force mandate decisions tighten.
- **Africa:** Israel recognizes Somaliland; regional condemnations pile up; Al-Shabaab issues threat messaging on cue.
- **Europe:** Germany rejects any Gaza force role; allies keep demanding outcomes while declining responsibility.

The War Today

Terror Spree Exposes The “Illegal Entry” Attack Vector

A rolling terror incident on December 26 ran through multiple sites in northern Israel—ramming, stabbing, another ramming—killing Shimshon Mordechai (68) and Aviv Maor (18) before the attacker was neutralized near Afula. Additional victims were reported wounded along the route, and initial assessments described the attacker as an unauthorized Palestinian entrant from Qabatiya who had been inside Israel for several days, using a stolen/employer-linked vehicle as a weapon system. In parallel, a separate ramming near Adoraim saw a terrorist slam an IDF vehicle and get arrested on scene with no IDF injuries. Hours later, gunfire near the Hashmonaim checkpoint triggered cordons, searches, and worse traffic than usual. The operational response in Judea and Samaria tightened immediately: reinforced deployments, expanded encirclement, a widened pursuit of accomplices in the Qabatiya area, and the familiar demolition-prep sequence—because the state has learned, again, that the difference between “infiltration” and “terror” is usually about ambition, not lethality.

ASSESSMENT

Israel can run the cleanest counterterror raids on earth and still bleed if it allows a permissive internal access lane to persist. The border fence isn't your border if the labor market, smugglers, and wink-and-nod employers can route around it. And yes: weapons save lives. So do consequences for anyone who knowingly employs, transports, houses, or brokers illegal entrants. If the state wants deterrence, it should stop treating the helpers as “a separate issue” and start treating them as part of the attack architecture—because they are.

Lebanon's "Disarmament Deadline" Meets Reality: Radwan Still Trains

Israel expanded enforcement across two arenas that outsiders keep trying to describe as "process." In Lebanon, the IDF reported a wave of strikes on Hezbollah infrastructure—including a Radwan Force training compound used for drills and attack preparation—alongside weapons storage sites and additional terror infrastructure, with strikes reported from Hermel and Bekaa to southern sectors (Jezzine/Jbaa/Bint Jbeil and beyond). In Gaza, multiple indicators pointed the same direction: reported strikes in Khan Younis and Al-Bureij, continued Yellow Line friction, and an accelerating pattern of Hamas rebuilding governance above ground while repairing tunnels, restoring weapons sites, and recruiting—often minors—below ground. Meanwhile, an almost-too-perfect field indicator of Hamas's reconstruction economy emerged with iPhone 17 Pro sales "soaring" in Gaza due to compact smuggling efficiency—because nothing says "humanitarian catastrophe" like prioritizing high-end consumer electronics as a logistics winner.

ASSESSMENT

The region is running a familiar scam: armed actors rebuild, mediators emote, and Israel gets told to behave as if wishes are the same thing as disarmament and compliance. Lebanon's "deadline" talk is a press-release factory unless someone physically seizes launchers and dismantles networks. Hezbollah knows it. That's why Radwan trains, stores, and prepares—while the Lebanese state markets "phases" like a productivity app. Israel is doing the only thing that changes enemy math: making assets perishable at depth, not just at the fence line. Hamas is reasserting civil control while rebuilding its military arm, and it's trying to launder this as "governance" so the world will fund it again. The iPhone surge isn't a quirky headline—it signals cash flows, smuggling channels, and priorities inside the Strip. Proof that the system can move what it values. When the same environment that "can't get baby formula in" (spoiler: they just hid and dumped it) can "get flagship phones in," you don't have an aid problem—you have a capture problem. And of course foreign capitals will keep shopping for Phase II "formats" that avoid seizures. They always do. Confiscating weapons is hard. Condemning Israel is easy.

Inside Israel

Qatargate, Protests, And The Weaponization Of "Accountability"

A volatile mix of inquiry politics, Qatargate allegations, and street protests is grinding directly into Israel's wartime governance. Polling shows bloc lines frozen despite the noise, but trust is fractured along predictable fault lines: opposition voters overwhelmingly trust a Supreme Court-appointed state commission, coalition voters overwhelmingly do not, and neither side accepts the other's legitimacy. The Knesset advanced a hybrid "special state commission" model—coalition-opposition parity, expert members, bereaved-family observers—explicitly designed to bypass unilateral judicial appointment power. At the same time, Qatargate metastasized from a legal probe into a political accelerant: former aides claim pro-Qatar influence operations ran through the Prime Minister's Office during wartime. Likud calls the affair "Qatar-fake,"

allies back investigations anyway, and the media ecosystem treats implication as conviction. Sponsored street protests escalated in Tel Aviv, Haifa, and Jerusalem, with demonstrators invoking “treason,” staging theatrics, and explicitly demanding Netanyahu’s removal from decision-making during an active, grueling war—often alongside networks that have spent months laundering hostile narratives under the banner of “democracy.”

ASSESSMENT

When protests amplify hostile framing, regardless of the protesters’ personal intentions, they function as leverage against the state, not against its enemies. There is no neutral ground between accountability and paralysis. If the inquiry becomes a tool to settle political scores or pre-empt elections, it will fail even if every footnote is perfect. If it becomes a shield to avoid responsibility, it will fail faster. The only viable outcome is boring and brutal: a commission broad enough to command compliance, narrow enough to produce consequences, and insulated from street theater—because Hamas, Iran, and their patrons do not wait for Israel to finish arguing about who gets to ask the questions. This collision maps directly onto the structural vacuum we discussed a few weeks ago.

Arming Citizens While The State Bleeds Manpower

Against a backdrop of rising terror and infiltration, the government accidentally re-exposed a fault line as they expand civilian self-defense and, with spectacle, fail to resolve service equity. The National Security Minister moved to widen handgun eligibility further, including examining access for Hesder yeshiva students outside formally defined “eligible” communities—building on reforms that have already approved hundreds of thousands of licenses since the war began. The draft crisis remains unresolved: universal service is still deferred, coalition arithmetic still dodges enforcement, and reservists continue to absorb disproportionate load under conditions of exhaustion. Citizens are told to defend themselves because the threat is real, while the state still refuses to equalize who is obligated to carry the burden.

ASSESSMENT

Weapons do save lives. So does cohesion. Handguns are a tactical fix. Service equity is a strategic one. The danger is pretending the first can compensate for the second. A country that arms its civilians while signaling that entire sectors remain exempt from shared duty is not projecting strength—it is advertising internal imbalance to enemies who study social fracture as carefully as terrain. The fix is neither ideological nor symbolic: universal service, real alternatives for those who cannot serve in combat, and consequences for those who refuse altogether. Until then, arming citizens treats the symptom while the disease keeps spreading.

Protest Culture, Digital Access, And “Small Favors” Become Attack Vectors

Israeli security services have now exposed dozens of Iranian-directed espionage cases spanning citizens, soldiers, minors, reservists, recent immigrants, and ideologically detached opportunists. The pattern is consistent: recruitment via social platforms, small paid tasks framed as protest, graffiti, photography, or “harmless” surveillance, escalating toward infrastructure mapping, base exposure, and assassination prep. In parallel, internal disorder

compounds the threat: protests normalize state contempt, illegal entry remains a recurring vector, and prisons require emergency measures to contain high-risk terrorists planning internal disruptions. The system is under sustained pressure from actors who understand that social chaos is cheaper than missiles—and we, the public, are falling for it in too large a part.

ASSESSMENT

Iran is not running a spy ring. It is running a market. The commodities are Israeli complacency—political, digital, and cultural—and chaos. When burning an IDF uniform, spraying anti-government slogans, or photographing a minister's house is treated as protest rather than hostile preparation, foreign intelligence services do not need ideology; they just need PayPal and Telegram. This is where the protest ecosystem and terror ecosystem touch—not in intent, but in effect. The state's response must be mercilessly clear: espionage is not dissent, payment is not protest, and "I didn't know" is not a defense. Rapid indictments, public exposure, financial interdiction, and social consequences are deterrence tools, not overreach. Terror is rising. Enemies are probing. Protests amplified by hostile actors are not cost-free expressions—they are pressure instruments whether participants like it or not. Israel does not need unity of opinion. It needs unity of authority. Everything else is noise the enemy knows how to exploit.

Israel and the World

Terror Finance Exposed As "Mediation" Collapses

Italian authorities arrested nine suspects accused of raising roughly €7 million for Hamas through front organizations masquerading as humanitarian charities—seizing assets and publicly identifying senior figures in the network. Additionally, new research detailing Qatar's long-term role in enabling Hamas—political sanctuary, ideological reinforcement, and sustained financing—punctured the mediator myth just as Israel formally reclassified Doha as an influence actor rather than a neutral broker. European capitals continued to posture diplomatically while allowing protest ecosystems and NGO pipelines that provide logistical cover for terror financing. States that refuse to disarm Hamas nonetheless demanded Israel "advance Phase II," revealing the core contradiction—pressure Israel to move while shielding those who made October 7 possible.

ASSESSMENT

This is the anatomy of laundering. Money moves under humanitarian branding, ideology moves under "mediation," and violence arrives on schedule. Europe's problem is a regulatory culture that treats terror finance as paperwork until blood forces begrudging arrests. Qatar's mediator costume worked because Western systems wanted it to. Once exposed, the response has been to compartmentalize—arrest the middlemen, preserve the patron (after all, they also fund Western institutions and give pols jumbo jets).

Somaliland, Red Sea Leverage, And Manufactured “Precedent”

Israel’s recognition of Somaliland detonated predictable outrage from Somalia, Turkey, Egypt, Iran, Hezbollah, Hamas, the Palestinian Authority and the Arab League—while celebrations broke out in Hargeisa and quiet support surfaced from actors already invested there. The move formalized ties with a de facto state controlling a strategic Red Sea–Gulf of Aden node, expanding Israel’s reach against the Houthi threat and adding depth along a maritime choke point. Critics framed the decision as a violation of international law and a “dangerous precedent,” even as many of the same states maintain liaison offices, security cooperation, or economic projects with Somaliland. Al-Shabaab issued threats on cue, advertising exactly why the territory’s stability matters. Recognition is already shifting the local threat economy, and jihadist networks are trying to intimidate the region back into paralysis.

ASSESSMENT

Somaliland exists, governs, secures territory, and keeps jihadists out—unlike the virtual state of Palestine. The “precedent” argument collapses on contact with facts—states already treat Somaliland as independent when it suits them. Israel simply admitted. The strategic gain is obvious: surveillance reach, trade-route resilience, and leverage against Iranian proxies in Yemen. The backlash is equally revealing: Turkey screams sovereignty while hollowing it out everywhere it can reach from Syria to the Eastern Med. Somalia invokes unity while barely holding Mogadishu.

Europe’s Protest Economy is a Targeting Engine

Across Europe and the Anglosphere, Jew-hate incidents escalated from intimidation to vandalism and arson, often tracking directly to protest cycles amplified by hostile actors. In Canada, mezuzahs were ripped from doors—again—this time in a Toronto building housing Holocaust survivors. In Australia and Britain, attacks and threats followed weeks of tolerated incitement. In the UK’s politics, far-left figures openly modeled themselves on anti-Israel populism while downplaying antisemitism—normalizing a culture where Jewish visibility becomes provocation. Governments issued condemnations while policing remained uneven and bail regimes recycled offenders back into the street.

ASSESSMENT

This is controlled surrender in real time: two-tier enforcement, speech indulgence for one camp, concrete barriers for Jews. Europe is back to promoting the ghettos, it seems. Protest culture does not stay symbolic when it is subsidized by permissive law and hostile money. Jews are fair game, consequences are negotiable. Israel should treat this as a diaspora security front—push allies toward real protest policing, terror-finance disruption, and bail reform—and accept that emigration pressure will keep rising.

Briefly Noted

Diplomacy & Geopolitics

- Prime Minister Netanyahu is heading to Mar-a-Lago to meet President Trump and Secretary Rubio with Gaza's Phase II, Hezbollah, Iran, and sequencing at the center of talks.
- A senior Palestinian Authority cleric blamed Israel for the Bondi Beach Hanukkah massacre, framing the mass murder of Jews abroad as an understandable "reaction" to Israeli policy. This is official PA doctrine going global: justify jihad, normalize diaspora targeting, and then demand Western governments not change their permissive policies.
- The plane crash that killed Libya's western military chief near Ankara has exposed Turkey's hollow security guarantees after Ankara rushed to send the black boxes to a "neutral third country." Erdoğan's neo-Ottoman posture collapses when he won't even investigate a decapitation event on Turkish soil, signaling weakness to Russia, Libya, and every proxy watching.

Culture, Religion & Society

- Police arrested demonstrators at a Jerusalem protest amid a broader weekend of emergencies and unrest. Protest culture that bleeds into disorder isn't "expression"—it's friction the enemy happily exploits while Jews keep paying the security bill.

Developments to Watch

Northern Front (Lebanon / Syria)

- **Radwan Training Sites Hit** — Israel struck a Radwan Force training compound and weapons infrastructure across Lebanon, including depth strikes in Hermel and repeated hits in the south.
- **Hezbollah Paranoia Leak** — A rare on-air interview with a Hezbollah operative described deep Israeli penetration and internal mistrust, including wild claims about compromised ranks. Even if the numbers are fantasy, the fear is real, and fear corrodes command faster than bombs do.
- **Syria Airspace Tax Builds** — Turkey is pushing radar deployments inside Syria to constrain Israeli freedom of action. Israel will either puncture it early or accept shrinking operational geometry. **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**

Gaza & Southern Theater

- **Khan Younis Strike Drumbeat** — Palestinian reporting described fresh strikes in Khan Younis and elsewhere as enforcement stays steady.
- **Phase II Timeline Pressure** — The U.S. is moving toward an International Stabilization Force while Israel insists on real demilitarization and the return of Ran Gvili. Expect a near-term diplomatic push to substitute "frameworks" for seizure authority—because foreigners love plans that don't require them to do anything hard.

Regional Axis (Iran, Houthis, Militias)

- **Iran War Threat** — Iran warned that a wide-scale war with Hezbollah triggers direct Iranian entry. This is Tehran trying to deter Israeli action by pre-booking escalation and calling it “defense.” **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**
- **Horn of Africa Threat** — Al-Shabaab vowed to fight any Israeli “use” of Somaliland after Israel recognized it. Jihadists don’t issue statements for fun. They issue them to recruit, threaten, and pressure states into backing off leverage points.

Diplomatic & Legal

- **Somaliland Blowback** — Somalia, Egypt, Turkey, Arab League and others condemned Israel’s recognition of Somaliland, while Washington said it is “studying” the question. Expect a fast-moving UN/Arab diplomatic campaign to use this as a lazy cudgel because they don’t like Jews having strategic depth.
- **Qatar Mediator Narrative Under Fire** — New research and public Israeli signaling sharpen the claim that Qatar is not neutral mediation but an enabling ecosystem for Hamas. Watch for Doha and its media network to answer with influence ops, not facts—because facts don’t buy impunity.

Home Front & Politics

- **Central Command Reinforcement Cycle** — After the northern Israel terror spree, the IDF surged forces, tightened encirclement, and accelerated procedures against the Qabatiya network, with the Chief of Staff ordering escalated enforcement against illegal-entry enablers. This is the state finally treating infiltration and “civilian help” as part of the attack chain, not a separate, minor problem.

Terror doesn’t need brilliance, it needs access—and permissive access becomes policy when it is tolerated long enough. The external push to move Phase II advanced while nobody credible has volunteered for the parts that involve seizing weapons and potentially taking casualties. The next inflection launches from the Trump–Bibi tete-a-tete: either mandates come with teeth, or Hamas and Hezbollah get a rebrand instead of a defeat.

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