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READER EDITION

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ISRAEL BRIEF

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Iran shakes internally, Hamas stalls externally, and Washington hands out conditional decisions like they're free.

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THE BOTTOM LINE The goal is exhaustion rather than persuasion, turning reputational harm into policy. Israel's response cannot emphasize explanation harder. It must professionalize influence, name incitement as operational, and defend truth distribution as infrastructure.

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Flash Brief

- **Iran:** Protests spread into new provinces as Tehran runs live-fire drills and escalates warnings.
 - **Washington:** Trump signals conditional strike support on Iran and reaffirms Gaza Phase B ties to Hamas disarmament.
 - **Gaza:** Israel holds territory and aid oversight while enforcement arguments shift to screenings and dual-use fights.
 - **Judea & Samaria:** Attempted ramming ends with terrorist eliminated; smuggling pressure shifts to drone logistics.
 - **Northern Arena:** Lebanon signs gas MoU via Egypt with Israeli-origin supply, inviting Hezbollah sovereignty theatrics.
 - **Red Sea:** Saudi strikes Mukalla over UAE-linked shipments, exposing coalition fracture in Yemen.
 - **Home Front:** Cyber disruptions and post-service suicide alarms surface as readiness variables, not human-interest blurbs.
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The War Today

Tehran Starts Threat Theatrics Again

Iran's third consecutive day of mass unrest expanded across additional provinces. Reports documented regime forces attacking protesters in Shush, while video evidence from Hamedan province reportedly showed armed non-security actors firing near a police station. Iranian senior messaging shifted from "unstoppable" rhetoric to explicit warnings that "any new adventurism" would receive a "very different" response.

Trump's posture remained deliberately conditional, combining "smoke, fire" talk with explicit support for Israeli strikes on missile and nuclear infrastructure if Iran continues rebuilding. The U.S. implemented new sanctions while Israel issued a public warning that Iran is conducting live-fire drills simulating ballistic launches and attempting to rebuild nuclear program elements.

The IDF is treating this as an armament-and-learning competition: senior command conferences, implementation of inquiry lessons, readiness tightening after Lebanon failures rooted in unauthorized civilian exposure, and widening mental-health alarms as suicide figures climb.

The U.S. moved forward on an \$8.6 billion F-15 delivery contract (25 aircraft plus 25-aircraft option), while Greece–Cyprus–Israel defense cooperation will expand exercises and threat coordination in the eastern Mediterranean.

ASSESSMENT

A cornered regime bleeds internally and rattles externally. Trump's conditional permissiveness is useful, but conditionality provides oxygen for Tehran's threshold-testing behavior. The IDF's discipline crackdown after Lebanon represents operational hygiene rather than optics. Rising suicide figures indicate how prolonged multi-front pressure migrates into force retention and cohesion risks. Israel's deterrence depends on maintaining regime uncertainty about whether internal unrest meets external consequences.

Hamas Still Has An Arsenal; The World Still Has Excuses

Israel's message to Washington remains straightforward: disarmament or nothing. Pre-summit intelligence assessed Hamas maintains roughly 60,000 Kalashnikov rifles in Gaza—meaning rehabilitation without collection merely reconstructs the next massacre's supply infrastructure.

The U.S. track stayed warm but elusive: Trump praised Netanyahu, signaled Iran strike support, discussed Gaza reconstruction “pretty soon,” and repeated that Phase B depends on Hamas disarmament. Reports describe an agreed two-month disarmament window and Israeli efforts to exclude Erdogan from any Gaza peace board.

Israel maintains control over approximately 58% of Strip territory. No serious party volunteers to confront Hamas and seize weapons. A U.S.-led coordination center reportedly leaked U.S. drone imagery exposing IDF positions in briefings including Arab-state officials—an operational security breach dressed as coordination.

Daily friction persists over dual-use items like generators and metal pipes convertible into capability. COGAT publicly stressed that suspending non-compliant organizations doesn't reduce overall aid and that registration rules target Hamas diversion.

ASSESSMENT

Gaza presents a straightforward operational challenge: without rifle collection, rifles remain. Phase B minus arms seizures amounts to permission for Hamas survival. The coordination-center breach represents the kind of self-inflicted Western wound requiring training documentation. If Washington cannot enforce mechanisms, Israel's security perimeter logic persists by default.

Small Attacks, Smuggled Guns, And Prison Networks Don't Stay Small

An attempted vehicular attack near Einabus in Samaria ended with soldier elimination of the attacker, with no IDF injuries. A separate assault involved Arab rioters attacking Jewish youths with clubs and stones near Yitav Stream in the Jordan Valley, with one injury reported.

An intercepted drone infiltration from the west carried 20 M-16 rifles plus parts. Prison authorities foiled an attempt to transfer prohibited messages via lawyer visit to a security prisoner, seizing documents with prisoner communications and demands. The lawyer was detained.

Prison service noted dozens of legal proceedings during 2025 over lawyer meetings suspected of endangering prison security. Suspected Bedouin “price tag” vandalism hit Be’er Sheva with multiple vehicles damaged.

ASSESSMENT

Elite raids cannot offset casualties from tolerated micro-channels scaling into macro-risk. Drone rifles represent force design through expedited logistics. Prison-message attempts constitute command-and-control infrastructure using formal channels. Rapid attack elimination, smuggling logistics disruption, prison communications enforcement, and zero-tolerance discipline enforcement remain priorities.

Inside Israel

Enforcement Gets Loud; Critics Call It “Occupation”

Hundreds of police and Border Police conducted large-scale raids in the Negev Bedouin town of Tarabin al-Sana following arson attacks on Jewish property, sealing entrances, arresting suspects, and seizing weapons and IDF ammunition. Residents complained of heavy-handed tactics while ministers hailed restored governance.

Israel began revoking licenses from international aid organizations in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza that refused mandatory registration and security vetting, citing documented cases of employees tied to terror groups and noncooperation after extended deadlines. Officials stressed aid flows continue via other channels and that noncompliant groups represented marginal delivery shares.

ASSESSMENT

Ungoverned areas lack protected status. Negev raids and NGO license revocations represent identical policy in different dialects. Critics invoke collective punishment language; criminals and terror networks recognize governance restoration. Failed quiet governance now returns with noise, and enforcement remains necessary.

Manpower, Money, And Morale Pull In Opposite Directions

Think-tank analysis warns sustained elevated defense spending risks crowding out civilian services without growth acceleration. Public debt climbed sharply with war costs while productivity gaps persist. Service equity remains unresolved: petitions challenge large cash infusions to Haredi institutions amid draft deferrals, while reservists report exhaustion and uneven burden-sharing. Shekel strength eases imports but squeezes exporters. Telecom disruptions exposed infrastructure fragility.

ASSESSMENT

Israel attempts financing prolonged war with short social contracts. Asking identical cohorts to serve longer, pay more, and accept exemptions elsewhere produces consequences. Defense spending necessity doesn’t mean pretending it’s free. The real chokepoint is manpower and legitimacy—who serves, studies, pays, and decides. Universal service treated as negotiation rather than requirement erodes cohesion faster than budget lines.

Israel and the World

Spain Bans, Then Exempts, Then Lectures

Spain became the first major EU economy banning imports from Israeli communities in Judea, Samaria, eastern Jerusalem, and the Golan, invoking a “genocide” decree contested in court for violating EU trade competence. Within weeks, Madrid carved out an Airbus exemption because Spanish jobs matter more than slogans. The government simultaneously threatened platforms hosting Israeli-owned rentals in those areas.

ASSESSMENT

Europe launders politics through trade law and calls it virtue—until costs land at home, then exemptions bloom. Their playbook normalizes boycotts, dares Israel to litigate, and lets process do damage. Israel should counterprice: expose EU law conflicts, push reciprocity, and treat these as leverage operations rather than moral verdicts.

Narrative War Escalates

An anti-Israel coalition demanded retraction of documented reporting on Hamas’s sexual violence on October 7, branding survivor evidence a “racist lie” despite new testimony surfacing. A Princeton course advertised Gaza as “genocide,” comparing Israel to the Holocaust, led by an instructor previously sanctioned for denying Hamas atrocities. Parallel media framing collapsed under scrutiny when war-driven security indicators were misused depicting Israel as a dystopia for women—corrected only after publication.

Across Europe and North America, protest ecosystems escalated from chants to vandalism and arson, with uneven policing and recycled offenders.

ASSESSMENT

The goal is exhaustion rather than persuasion, turning reputational harm into policy. Israel’s response cannot emphasize explanation harder. It must professionalize influence, name incitement as operational, and defend truth distribution as infrastructure.

Briefly Noted

Diplomacy & Geopolitics

- **UN Watch:** UN Watch documented blows to UN anti-Israel machinery, including EU states breaking UNRWA ranks, U.S. sanctions on Francesca Albanese, and forced inquiry official resignations. Naming names and attaching costs transforms UN lawfare from hobby into liability.
- **Iranian Crown Prince:** Reza Pahlavi publicly urged protesters, merchants, and security forces joining nationwide demonstrations. This sharpens regime paranoia and raises odds Tehran seeks external distraction.

- **Tehran Terrorism Designation:** Iran designated the Canadian Navy a “terrorist organization” retaliating for Canada’s IRGC designation—semantic warfare diluting accountability.
- **Saudi Yemen Strikes:** Saudi Arabia struck Yemen’s port of Mukalla over weapons shipments allegedly tied to UAE-backed separatists, warning Abu Dhabi. The Red Sea chessboard fractures within the anti-Houthi camp, complicating regional coordination Israel relies on.
- **Saudi Framing:** Riyadh framed Yemen airstrikes as national-security red lines against UAE overreach, signaling willingness to escalate against “friends” when geography and energy routes face threats.

Frontline & Security

- **Lebanon Arms:** Lebanon’s military claimed confiscating arms from Palestinian camps, including Ain al-Hilweh. Symbolic Palestinian disarmament doesn’t touch Hezbollah and targets international community perception rather than force balance changes.

Domestic & Law

- **Haredi Protests:** Israeli activists announced slow-driving protests choking Bnei Brak access responding to repeated Haredi anti-draft roadblocks.

Culture, Religion & Society

- **Knesset Honor:** UN Watch and Hillel Neuer received formal Knesset honors after high-impact UN hypocrisy confrontations.

Developments to Watch

Judea & Samaria

Western Border Drone Pipeline: A weapons-smuggling drone crossed from the west carrying 20 M-16 rifles plus parts. This cheap aerial logistics represents repeatable lane probing; one successful run becomes weekly resupply programming.

Northern Front (Lebanon / Syria)

Lebanon Gas Corridor Optics: Lebanon signed a gas MoU with Egypt, with supply described as Israeli-origin. Beirut seeks electricity without admitting dependence; Hezbollah sells the arrangement as “resistance” while taxing state sovereignty through intimidation.

Syrian Coastal Backchannel Rumors: Reporting claims former-regime figures made secret Israel visits seeking support for Alawite coastal autonomy as Russia’s interest wanes. Syria’s “new order” already negotiates fragmentation; every faction subcontracts survival to remaining leverage-holders.

Gaza & Southern Theater

Aid Oversight Clash Tightens: Israel reaffirmed suspended organizations historically accounted for approximately 1% of aid and allegedly delivered none during current ceasefire, while aid enters via approved channels.

Two-Month Disarm Window: Reports describe two-month disarmament windows as prerequisites for “day after” movement. Hamas executes standard play: delay, rebrand, and plead for process—because process costs less than disarmament.

Regional Axis (Iran, Houthis, Militias)

Iran Street Pressure Meets Externalization Risk: Protests expanded into additional provinces with commercial body strike signals; footage suggests armed individuals (not security forces) firing near Hamedan police stations. Regimes under street stress either overreact inward or pick foreign diversion. Neither option improves Israel’s week. **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**

Iran’s “Terrorist” Label Inflation: Tehran designated the Canadian Navy a “terrorist organization” retaliating for IRGC designation—semantic warfare diluting accountability.

Saudi-UAE Yemen Rift Goes Hot: Saudi Arabia struck Mukalla over alleged UAE weapons shipments to separatists, warning Abu Dhabi moves are “extremely dangerous.” Fractured anti-Houthi coalitions increase Red Sea volatility, opening miscalculation space Houthis monetize.

Diplomatic & Legal

Turkey In Or Out Decision Point: Trump praised Erdogan while Israel pushed excluding Turkey from Gaza “peace boards,” with Turkey continuing indispensability posturing.

Judea & Samaria “Conclusion” Dangling: Trump publicly stated Washington and Jerusalem don’t agree “100%” and will “come to a conclusion” on Judea and Samaria. That represents leverage language rather than policy; expect cashing in when Washington wants Gaza sequencing movement.

Home Front & Politics

Cyber Disruption Rehearsal: A reported Iranian cyberattack allegedly disrupted communications and payments, with service later restored and official cause initially unclear. Treat as probing runs: test public discipline, test infrastructure fragility, then scale when next rounds matter.

Reservist Aftercare Becomes Readiness Variable: IDF committee findings on post-service suicides and care continuity gaps surfaced alongside rising suicide figures.

Conclusion

T EHRAN faces stress and becomes more dangerous, not less. Gaza remains a weapons-seizure problem marketed as governance discussion for process enthusiasts. Home front endurance—cyber discipline, manpower fairness, post-service care—constitutes a front line whether anyone accepts the designation.

Next moves depend on whether Iran chooses external diversion, Hamas treats two-month windows as stalling tactics, and whether Washington converts “permissions” into enforcement authority.

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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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