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ISRAEL BRIEF

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Power shifts outward as enforcement tightens inward

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Flash Brief

- **Gaza:** IDF struck a loaded Hamas rocket launcher — rearmament in progress post-ceasefire, intercepted before firing toward Sderot.
- **Northern Front:** Israel struck Hezbollah Radwan training compound and weapons storage sites.
- **Judea & Samaria:** Nearly 100 suspects arrested; 26 drones seized in Shomron; over one million shekels in terror funding interdicted.
- **Iran:** Protests escalate — regime implementing lethal force; police stations torched; Khamenei acknowledges economic grievances, orders “rioters” crushed.
- **Venezuela:** U.S. captured President Maduro; large-scale assault severed Venezuela’s role as Iran-Hezbollah logistics and energy hub.
- **Home Front:** Violent incidents in Negev during enforcement operations near Givat Bar.
- **Diplomacy:** Turkey, Qatar, Egypt warn Hezbollah to disarm; Israel rejects Turkish involvement in Gaza.

Special Bulletin: Caracas Falls, Tehran Recalculates, Jerusalem Reads The Signal

THE United States conducted a large-scale overnight military operation capturing Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and his wife and striking military and infrastructure targets across Venezuela. The operation severed Venezuela’s function as an energy and logistics hub for China, Russia, Iran, and Hezbollah — dismantling platforms for money laundering, weapons transit, and terror finance that the Iran-Venezuela-Hezbollah axis built over two decades.

Senior Israeli officials called the operation “a strategic warning to Tehran.” Deep IRGC presence and Hezbollah operational infrastructure inside Venezuela is well-documented. The removal of this sanctuary tightens Iran’s external calculus at exactly the moment Tehran faces serious internal unrest. Regimes that ignored prior warnings are now watching a government lose sovereignty.

The distance shield protecting Iranian proxy infrastructure just collapsed.

The signal Jerusalem is reading: the U.S. is operating in a kinetic register abroad that it hasn’t shown in years. Iranian leadership must now assess whether external activation — Hezbollah, Houthi, Iraqi militias — invites a response calibrated at the source, not the proxy.

Venezuelan opposition leader María Corina Machado called for constitutional power transfer. Trump announced the U.S. will administer Venezuela until a safe transition and oil revenue stabilization.

The War Today

Gaza Violations, Samaria Arrests, and the Weapons Problem

A Hamas-equipped rocket launcher in northern Gaza was struck before it could fire toward Sderot. The launcher was loaded. A terrorist who crossed the Yellow Line in southern Gaza was eliminated by security forces.

The ceasefire's credibility depends on preventing Hamas from arming launchers and dictating attack timing. An armed launcher that requires a strike to stop is already a violation — the question is whether the enforcement architecture treats it as one or absorbs it as background noise.

In Judea and Samaria, a counterterror sweep arrested approximately 100 suspects across multiple sectors. Seizures included 26 drones in the Shomron area, weapons trafficking suspects, and over one million shekels in terror funding. Binyamin night raids expanded, arresting dozens of Hamas operatives in advanced planning stages.

The offensive posture in Judea and Samaria — arrests, drone seizures, funding interdiction — demonstrates what enforcement looks like when it's maintained. The drone seizures alone signal a scale-up in smuggling capacity that was building during the relative operational pause.

From Radwan Training Compounds to a Cabinet-Level Lebanon Decision Point

Israel struck a Hezbollah Radwan training compound used for attack planning and weapons storage sites in Lebanon. The cabinet is reportedly considering expansion beyond aerial containment toward broader Lebanon operations as Hezbollah uses the ceasefire period to reconstitute forward positions.

A false interceptor launch near Bar'am demonstrated the northern front's hair-trigger status.

Turkey, Qatar, and Egypt have warned Hezbollah to comply with disarmament frameworks. The Lebanon-ceasefire-weapons-under-state-control arrangement is not producing confiscation. It is producing a framework that looks like compliance while Hezbollah's inventory reconstitutes.

This is the Hamas ceasefire dynamic in a different uniform. Without the Lebanese state physically confiscating arsenals, Hezbollah's inventory growth becomes Israel's operational problem by default. The aerial-containment posture is buying time, not resolving the underlying question.

Tehran Burns Internally and Eyes Cheap Diversion

Iran's internal situation crossed a threshold this week. Security forces clashed with protesters in multiple cities, police stations were torched, and mass arrests accelerated. Regime leadership divided the population into "protesters" (grievances acknowledged) and "rioters" (lethal force authorized). Khamenei addressed economic grievances publicly while ordering the crackdown.

The Israeli concern is structural: internally threatened regimes externalize pressure. The most probable Iranian response to sustained unrest is seeking a controlled external conflict to change the subject domestically — proxy activation calibrated to generate international headlines without crossing the threshold that invites direct response.

Iran-linked cyber actors published materials from Israeli officials' phones this week. The operation targets less at intelligence theft than at poisoning institutional trust — leaked materials are amplified through social channels to create factional damage inside Israel's civil-military structure. This is operational preparation framed as espionage.

The U.S. is signaling an unusually kinetic posture abroad. Tehran's calculus on cheap diversion just became more expensive.

Inside Israel

Rot In The Gatehouse: Illegal Entry, Drones, And Black-Market Firepower

A bribery-for-passage mechanism operated at Givat Ze'ev checkpoint throughout 2025. Guards allegedly coordinated vehicle details, switched positions, and waved unauthorized entrants through for payment — a systematic corruption of the checkpoint function.

An Azazima network allegedly used drones to smuggle heavy weapons across the Egypt border while monitoring IDF radio communications. A downed drone carried four MAG machine guns; another interception recovered rifles and parts.

An illegal Palestinian worker arrested at a Bat Yam construction site was found carrying an Arabic copy of *Mein Kampf*. An off-duty officer in Rosh Pina discovered a vehicle containing shoulder-fired missiles, grenades, explosives, machine guns, rifles, and ammunition — much suspected stolen from IDF stores.

These incidents are not isolated. They describe a system: illegal entry treated as a nuisance rather than an attack vector, employer-housing-transport networks that operate as criminal infrastructure, and stolen military materiel with consequences too light to deter. Each point in the chain that isn't closed is a platform for the next incident.

When Investigations Become Leverage, Order Becomes Negotiable

Violence near Givat Bar overnight — enforcement operations in the Tarabin area, a resident shot, a PID examination opened. Ben-Gvir backed the operation as necessary against criminals terrorizing residents.

The Sde Teiman investigation has become something more damaging. The police chief reportedly delays submitting findings from a video-leak investigation. Partisan claims circulate that the investigation direction faces pressure to target the attorney general rather than officers allegedly implicated

in the leak and cover-up chain. Police deny the allegations and cite ongoing probes.

The Negev requires consistent, visible consequences — not endless procedural loops. Sde Teiman is more corrosive because it bleeds into civil-military and judiciary-executive fault lines simultaneously. Enemies don't need to penetrate a system that volunteers to discredit itself.

Israel Rebuilds Muscle Where Trust Broke

Sderot expanded its alert squad into a 100+ “Defense Division” training for urban combat. The mayor is building a structured “Community of the Armed” — roughly 5,500 armed civilians in a city of approximately 40,000, with formal registries, subsidized ammunition, rules-of-engagement training, and layered municipal response units.

War-driven demand expanded Israel's defense-tech startup field from a handful of prewar firms into hundreds of active companies. Faster concept-to-field cycles, state-backed investment, and procurement reforms characterize the expansion.

A five-year initiative allocating approximately \$7.8 million establishes innovation centers serving Druze, Circassian, and Bedouin communities in the north and Negev — explicitly designed to widen talent pools and anchor entrepreneurship beyond Tel Aviv.

The stock market shifted to Monday-Friday trading aligned with global markets, maintaining shortened Friday hours for Shabbat.

A locality building parallel defense capacity signals that government response inadequacy has been priced in. The defense-tech surge is strategic self-reliance at industrial scale. The minority tech integration addresses manpower mathematics during prolonged war and demographic strain — it is less a goodwill gesture than a force-multiplication calculation.

Israel and the World

NGO Neutrality Collapses Under Vetting Pressure

Israel presented evidence that senior Gaza-based Doctors Without Borders staff simultaneously held operational roles in Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and the PFLP — including a Hamas sniper and a PIJ figure linked to rocket capability.

Jerusalem is enforcing a regulatory framework requiring full personnel, funding, and structure disclosure from NGOs operating in or adjacent to conflict zones. Licenses failing security and transparency standards are suspended. Activity that constitutes delegitimization or legal warfare against IDF personnel is barred.

Terror organizations franchise legitimacy through humanitarian cover — manpower and logistics laundered under neutrality language. The enforcement move forces a choice: transparency or exit. Pushback from affected organizations will rebrand the vetting as “collective punishment.” The publication has a word for that move.

From Courtrooms To Living Rooms

Jerusalem underplayed its case in international forums for two years, ceding initiative to adversaries who filled the vacuum. Consequences: Belgium joined the ICJ case. UN paperwork migrated into NGO networks and campus infrastructure. BBC filmed inside a destroyed family home without consent days after October 7 — later apologized and paid compensation, a correction buried well after the original damage.

Israel cannot explain harder its way through adversary production lines. Lawfare and media misconduct operate as force multipliers for a well-resourced production effort. Narrative defense requires professionalization, resources, and relentlessness at the same scale. It has not had them.

City Halls Normalize Targeting and Communities Pay

Pro-Hamas demonstrators harassed the bereaved mother of slain hostage Ran Gvili ז"ל in Miami. New York Mayor Zohran Mamdani revoked the IHRA definition and the anti-BDS order on day one of his term — prompting rebuke from major Jewish organizations. Spanish activists launched a public map labeling 150+ Jewish and “Zionist” businesses in Catalonia, echoing tactics with a very specific European genealogy. A U.S. neo-Nazi cell in Arizona was assessed as a credible threat after vandalizing a Jewish center.

This is Controlled Surrender in practice. Definitions removed, enforcement diluted, intimidation rebranded as politics. Two-tier policing — abstract in principle, concrete in escalation — is how the ambient hostility converts into targeting that leaves marks.

Israel should treat diaspora security as foreign policy. That means conditioning partnerships on protest policing, terror-finance disruption, and the removal of targeting tools — including digital maps that publish addresses of Jewish-owned businesses.

Briefly Noted

Frontline & Security - Trump warned Iran of U.S. intervention if the regime fires on protesters as clashes spread. - Khamenei acknowledged economic grievances publicly while ordering “rioters” crushed and rejecting U.S. pressure.

Diplomacy & Geopolitics - Trump announced Maduro’s capture after the large-scale overnight assault. - Trump said the U.S. will administer Venezuela until a safe transition and oil revenue stabilization. - Venezuelan opposition leader

María Corina Machado called for constitutional power transfer. - Analysis detailed the Iran-Venezuela-Hezbollah nexus built over two decades — the assessment is that the axis is cracking.

Culture, Religion & Society - A comparative study traced child indoctrination methodology from the Khmer Rouge through Hamas and PA systems. - The New York Times and BBC buried Iran's mass protests off their home pages. Named as narrative warfare.

Developments to Watch

Judea & Samaria: Drone seizures signal scale-up in enforcement operations; Binyamin night raids expanded.

Northern Front (Lebanon/Syria): Cabinet weighing broader Lebanon option beyond aerial strikes as Hezbollah rebuilds under ceasefire. Radwan training nodes and weapons storage continue to be struck. False interceptor launch near Bar'am demonstrates northern hair-trigger status.

Gaza & Southern Theater: Hamas equipment of launcher post-ceasefire; immediate Israeli strike. Yellow Line contacts continue. Division 80 multi-domain Red Sea exercise simulating land-sea surprise attacks.

Regional Axis (Iran, Houthis, Militias): Iran unrest crosses threshold with police stations torched and lethal force in use. Venezuela shock reverberates as Hezbollah/IRGC Latin America sanctuaries become liabilities.

Diplomatic & Legal: Turkey, Qatar, and Egypt warning Hezbollah. Iran files UN letters condemning U.S. statements on protests.

Home Front & Politics: Negev gunfire loop tightens. Markets sync globally via Monday-Friday trading week alignment.

Clarity is a civic intervention — pass it to someone outsourcing judgment.

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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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