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READER EDITION

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ISRAEL BRIEF

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The fronts aren't merging — the excuses are evaporating.

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THE BOTTOM LINE Soft power only functions when backed by structure. Tourism routes, trade enforcement, and coordinated advocacy are buffers against isolation when properly integrated. Israel needs a single coordinating authority for international influence, real integration with capable civil actors, and long-term planning insulated from political churn.

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FEW things moved materially today, though things are far from quiet. Gaza’s demilitarization remains a hands-on problem, the north keeps running on “understandings” that Hezbollah treats as optional, and Iran’s internal stress is now bleeding into further intimidation, more cyber-noise, and increased threat signaling. We aren’t in the midst of one dramatic escalation, we’re just experiencing a widening contact surface—roads, bases, diaspora communities, and the diplomatic calendar.

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Here's the situation in ninety seconds.

Flash Brief

- **Gaza:** IDF extends the Yellow Line denial zone after dismantling a two-kilometer Hamas tunnel. *See The War Today.*
- **Northern Border:** IDF strikes a Hezbollah operative after continued ceasefire violations in southern Lebanon. *See The War Today.*
- **Judea & Samaria:** IDF tightens roadblocks and encircles Ramallah–Birzeit after a suspected ramming incident. *See The War Today.*
- **Iran:** Israel raises readiness as Iranian social media claims ballistic activity and Tehran intensifies arrests. *See Developments to Watch.*
- **Home Front:** A drone incident over Nevatim triggers an arrest amid concern of Iranian-backed espionage. *See Developments to Watch.*
- **Diplomacy:** Israeli and Syrian officials are slated to meet in Paris on a new security arrangement. *See Developments to Watch.*
- **Diaspora:** Lawfare and intimidation continues to migrate from institutions into street-level targeting and threats. *See Israel and the World.*

Below: enforcement patterns, deterrence stress points, and where the next few days are likely to bite.

Contact is multiplying faster than outsiders can “manage” it. Gaza stays about concrete and shafts. The north stays about whether Hezbollah’s violations remain a nuisance or become a decision. And Iran is testing whether pressure can be exported cheaply—by threats, probes, and panic—before it risks anything heavier.

The War Today

Demilitarization Becomes Physical Again As Tunnels And Launchers Surface

Gaza’s “next phase” remains a weapons-seizure problem being marketed as a governance discussion for people who prefer committees to confiscations. The prime minister is trying to hold against the diplomatic tide: Hamas gives up the last hostage and fully disarms—no timeline guarantees, no “partial” arrangements, no flexibility. Hamas still has roughly 20,000 operatives, an arsenal measured in tens of thousands of rifles and untold rocket stocks—not to mention tunnel infrastructure that remains extensive enough to support command survivability and reconstitution. The IDF continues its unglamorous work with forces operating along the Yellow Line dismantling an underground route roughly two kilometers long in the Beit Lahia area.

ASSESSMENT

This is a real test of whether the West has learned anything at all. Hamas can keep its guns, or Gaza can have a future. Pick one. The “Phase Two” chatter exists to create an exit ramp from enforcement while letting Hamas preserve the only asset it truly values—armed control. If outsiders want a role, they can start by volunteering for the parts that involves taking rifles and rockets away from terrorists—even while the terrorists object. Strangely, that job rarely finds applicants.

Kiryat Shmona’s “Civilian” Front Shows How Hezbollah Thinks

Hezbollah keeps probing along the north as it is rebuilding (much like their jihadi Hamasnik friends) under ceasefire “understandings.” Israel keeps responding with targeted force where necessary. Following continued violations, the IDF struck a Hezbollah operative in the Al-Jumayjimah area of southern Lebanon. Lebanese reporting framed it as a vehicle strike with fatalities. Parallel to the kinetic lane sits a quieter one that still belongs to the war: claims surfaced that Hezbollah sought leverage in Kiryat Shmona “from within” by encouraging apartment purchases through Arab Israeli intermediaries, with security services examining whether any of this was directed or opportunistic. Even if the operational details remain under investigation, the mechanism is familiar. The enemy looks for gaps where civic normality can be weaponized—residency, property, municipal strain, and the slow erosion of a border city’s resilience after evacuation and economic shock.

ASSESSMENT

Jihadists’ best tricks make the battlefield look like “civilian life,” then accuse Israel of destabilizing it when Israel refuses to be fooled. The targeted strike in southern Lebanon is necessary. And the Kiryat Shmona issue—whether it proves centrally directed or simply exploited—exposes Hezbollah’s doctrine of pressuring Israel’s periphery with a mix of rockets, rebuild, and social manipulation that turns recovery into exhaustion. A border city where businesses close and residents delay return is a strategic invitation. If Israel wants the north to stay Israeli in more than a legal sense, it has to rework some operational objectives—security posture, rehabilitation decisions, and consequences for anyone functioning as an enemy procurement agent, even if they wear civilian clothes.

Judea And Samaria Mobility Tightens Under Uncertainty

In Judea and Samaria, a suspected vehicle-ramming report near the Maayan Ateret area triggered immediate response as forces moved in, set roadblocks, and encircled Ramallah and Birzeit while searching for the driver who fled. Medical responders treated a 13-year-old struck by a vehicle and transported him in good condition. The IDF assessment—at least at this stage—leans toward a hit-and-run rather than a confirmed terror attack. That distinction matters legally and politically, but operationally it barely changes the first hour: the state has to behave as if an ambiguous act is hostile until proven otherwise, because hesitation is what turns “unclear” incidents into repeatable tactics.

ASSESSMENT

The label the incident gets the next day isn't important. "Probably not terror" is simply a status update. Israel cannot run a country on after-the-fact clarity. The war has moved into the connective tissue: roads, crossings, response time, and the state's willingness to behave like a state the moment something smells wrong. Enemies love that gray zone because it's cheaper than explosives and harder to deter with speeches.

Inside Israel

From Exemption Politics To Manpower Math

While hundreds of ultra-Orthodox men reported for induction—many into combat and combat-support tracks—extremist factions attempted to physically block recruitment centers. They compared enlistment to “extermination ovens” and sanctions to a “yellow badge”—language that drew rare cross-bloc condemnation. Inside the Knesset, the fault lines widened. MK Elazar Stern formally asked that haredi lawmakers be barred from voting on the Draft Law due to direct personal interest. Coalition talks again failed to produce an enforceable policy despite a High Court ruling demanding action. And haredi parties renewed budget threats absent a sweeping exemption. At the same time, IDF manpower warnings grew more explicit, even as induction figures quietly rose. Parts of the haredi street are burning draft notices while other haredim—families included—are showing up, enlisting, and integrating into structured frameworks designed to preserve religious observance.

ASSESSMENT

The Draft Law debate is often framed as theology versus statehood. In reality, it is equity versus collapse. I know a haredi rabbi—fully Torah-observant, an extremely active member of his community—who enlisted into the reserves and led by example. He did not stop learning. He did not stop teaching. He did not stop believing. He did not stop being observant. He simply picked up the slack when his people needed him. If he can manage, others can. Jews have always been called to lead by example, especially when history leaves fewer volunteers than excuses. The state's task is to start enforcing frameworks that make participation the default. Delay now only teaches one lesson—that veto power beats sacrifice.

Israel and the World

From Courtrooms To Doorsteps

External pressure on Israel and Jews abroad is migrating into daily life with alarming speed. Internationally, lawfare continues to scale: Belgium's entry into the ICJ process adds bureaucratic mass to a system already churning out reports, rulings, and “authoritative” language that filters downward into NGOs, campuses, and municipal policy. Western cities are actively weakening enforcement frameworks—revoking antisemitism definitions, tolerating intimidation under the banner of speech, and allowing targeting tools like

business maps to circulate openly. The result is visible escalation: a grenade placed near synagogues in Vienna (later ruled inoperative but operationally terrorizing), arson attacks against the home of Germany's antisemitism commissioner marked with Hamas symbolism, and harassment of Jewish families and officials across Europe and North America. Governments continue to issue condemnations after the fact, while insisting—often implausibly—that these incidents are unconnected, not antisemitic in nature, or apolitical.

ASSESSMENT

I feel like I could basically copy and paste this set of paragraphs every day—yet there is no shortage of news that demands that we include something. We desperately need courageous leadership and we each need to consider our future plans to stay safe. Paper precedes fire. Definitions are removed, enforcement softens, intimidation is normalized—and then institutions act surprised when threats go kinetic. The legal-industrial complex attacking Israel feeds directly into the street-level ecosystem that targets Jews. Israel must treat diaspora security as a foreign-policy front: conditioning cooperation on protest policing, disrupting terror finance and mapping projects, and making clear that jurisdictions that tolerate targeting will pay diplomatic and intelligence costs. When a grenade shows up at a synagogue door—even a “defective” one—that is not symbolism.

Western Hemisphere Resets As U.S. Acts, Israel Re-enters

The Western Hemisphere shifted abruptly from rhetoric to action. The U.S. operation that removed President Nicolas Maduro collapsed a long-standing logistics hub for Iran and Hezbollah. In its wake, regional alignments moved quickly: Israel restored diplomatic relations with Bolivia, appointing a non-resident ambassador as ties resume after a rupture driven by post-October 7 politics. The move follows visa liberalization, early security coordination signals, and a clear pivot by Bolivia's new leadership toward broader international engagement. Together, these developments underscore a hemispheric rebalancing—where regimes that bet on impunity are exposed, and states that severed ties with Israel under pressure quietly look for exits.

ASSESSMENT

The Maduro operation demonstrated that intelligence fusion and precision—not speeches—reorder behavior. For Israel, Bolivia's reopening is less about La Paz than about precedent. Rupture is reversible when pressure lifts and leadership changes. Latin America is not an ideologically rigid arena and it is sensitive to both economic and political leverage. Reward reentry, punish sanctuaries, and keep the cost of hosting Iranian and Hezbollah infrastructure intolerably high. The axis bleeds when logistics collapse.

Soft Power Without Illusions

The Philippines is actively pursuing a direct Tel Aviv–Manila air link to expand tourism and people-to-people ties rooted in historic refuge and a large Filipino workforce in Israel. In parallel, the UK government warned local councils that boycotting Israeli companies exposes them to legal liability under procurement law—signaling limits to municipal freelancing in foreign

policy. Civil society voices inside Israel are also pressing for structural reform in public diplomacy, arguing that fragmented responsibility and an unfilled coordinating post leave Israel reactive while adversaries run decade-long influence campaigns. These threads—tourism, trade law, and narrative capacity—sit uneasily alongside ongoing lawfare but they demonstrate where leverage still works.

ASSESSMENT

Soft power only functions when backed by structure. Tourism routes, trade enforcement, and coordinated advocacy are buffers against isolation when properly integrated. Israel needs a single coordinating authority for international influence, real integration with capable civil actors, and long-term planning insulated from political churn.

Briefly Noted

Diplomacy & Geopolitics

- *Ynet*: Iran's protests have broadened beyond activists into a despair-driven middle class openly chanting for regime collapse and calling on the West to intervene.
- *Algemeiner*: Iran's Supreme National Security Council reportedly convened an emergency meeting to manage nationwide protests while preparing for potential conflict after Trump's warning.
- *Jerusalem Post*: A report claims Khamenei has a "Plan B" to flee to Moscow with close associates if protests threaten regime survival, mirroring Assad's escape route—leaders don't draft getaway plans when they feel strong.

Frontline & Security

- *Israel National News*: Iran's internal security chief says targeted operations have begun to arrest protest leaders across the country. The regime is trying to decapitate coordination fast—because while mass anger is manageable, organized anger is lethal.

Domestic & Law

- *JNS*: Samaria's regional head urged the Defense Ministry to rename COGAT to explicitly reference Judea and Samaria instead of "the territories." Language choice feeds the global narrative, and Israel should stop paying rent in its own homeland vocabulary.
- *Jerusalem Post*: An analysis claims roughly 211,000 Israelis left for 9+ months in 2023–2025, with an estimated net outflow of ~140,000, potentially shifting a couple of Knesset seats.

Culture, Religion & Society

- *Jerusalem Post*: Dozens of prominent Australian athletes urged a full royal commission into antisemitism and the Bondi Hanukkah terror attack after the prime minister opted for an internal review. When governments offer

“process” after Jews are murdered, they’re really searching for plausible deniability.

Economy, Tech & Infrastructure

- *Times of Israel*: German officials say a far-left sabotage attack set fire to Berlin power infrastructure, leaving tens of thousands without electricity for days.

Developments to Watch

Judea & Samaria

- **Jordan Border Slippage** — Two Israelis mistakenly crossed into Jordan and were briefly detained before release.

Northern Front (Lebanon / Syria)

- **Targeted Strike** — The IDF struck a Hezbollah operative near Al-Jumayjimah after continued ceasefire violations.
- **Paris Talks** — Senior Israeli and Syrian officials are slated to meet in Paris to resume security talks.

Gaza & Southern Theater

- **Yellow Line Denial Continues** — A two-kilometer Hamas tunnel in Beit Lahia was dismantled, extending physical denial along the buffer.
- **Al-Mawasi Friction Point** — A reported fatality from IDF fire in southern Gaza adds pressure around humanitarian corridors.

Regional Axis (Iran, Houthis, Militias)

- **Iran Readiness Spike** — Iranian social media claims ballistic activity as Israel elevates alert levels and runs simulations and leadership visits to intelligence units signal preparation. Internal unrest plus military signaling is an unstable combination. **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**
- **Internal Crackdown Accelerates** — Tehran announced arrests of protest leaders and online actors, pairing repression with accusations of U.S.–Israel “soft war.”
- **Venezuela Precedent Echoes** — Post-Maduro warnings from Caracas and U.S. lines about blocking Iranian/Hezbollah hubs harden expectations elsewhere. Tehran wonders whether this was a one-off—or a template.

Diplomatic & Legal

- **Disarmament Red Lines Harden** — Netanyahu continued to publicly tie Gaza sequencing to Hamas disarmament and Iran to zero enrichment plus material removal.

Home Front & Politics

- **Drone Curiosity or Proxy Probe** — A drone incident over Nevatim led to an arrest amid investigation of Iranian spy tasking.
- **Personal Threats Go Persian** — A Likud MK received a Persian-language threat laden with personal family details. Expect more second-circle intimidation (or worse) targeting as Iran's pressure campaign widens.

The next week or so hinges on whether Iran's internal crackdown externalizes into proxy activation or sabotage attempts, and whether the Lebanon arena produces one more "small" incident that stops being small.

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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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