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ISRAEL BRIEF

Tuesday, January 6

Enforcement keeps moving forward while everyone else tries to slow it down with paper. Tehran is under pressure, so it searches for cheap ways to export fear.

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THE BOTTOM LINE The state legitimizes a narrative ecosystem that treats Jews as political contaminants, then pretends it's surprised when the ecosystem behaves accordingly. The embassy plaque is not "peace"—it's a flag planted in the mind: Palestinian statehood as a diplomatic achievement decoupled from the basic duties of a state, while Israel's sovereignty is treated as a probationary license. Leaders will fast-track moral posturing, then feign helplessness when the beneficiary's record includes "kill Zionists." As for the NYC Aliyah event? Clearly no one can rely on Mamdani's office to keep things safe, so once again the Jews are on their own—which is the predictable output of a stakeholder culture that confuses performative virtue with security.

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Israel Brief: Tuesday, January 6, 2026

ENFORCEMENT keeps moving forward while everyone else tries to slow it down with paper. Tehran is under pressure, so it searches for cheap ways to export fear.

Flash Brief

- **Northern Front:** IAF strikes Hezbollah and Hamas infrastructure in Lebanon in violation of ceasefire understandings, following evacuation warnings.
- **Gaza:** IDF strikes Hamas operative planning imminent attack in the southern Strip.
- **Smuggling:** IDF downs weapons drone crossing from the west carrying M-16 rifles.
- **Iran:** Netanyahu holds cabinet security consult as IRGC drills and protest deaths pass 40.
- **U.S. Posture:** Trump warns Tehran over protest killings as reports US deploys special forces to the UK for staging.
- **Turkey:** Israel reiterates veto against Turkish troops in Gaza and warns against Turkish presence in southern Syria.
- **Home Front:** Shin Bet arrests suspect accused of Iranian-directed surveillance of a former PM's home.

The War Today

ENFORCEMENT IN LEBANON SHIFTS FROM "VIOLATIONS" TO PREEMPTION

Over the past day, the Air Force struck multiple Hezbollah weapon depots and military structures—above and below ground—used to rebuild capability and advance attacks, while also hitting Hamas weapons-production sites in southern Lebanon tied to the group's military buildup. Israel issued explicit evacuation warnings to civilians in four southern Lebanese locations—ordering residents to clear specific buildings and move roughly 300 meters away—then struck designated Hezbollah infrastructure near two villages and Hamas infrastructure near two others. Reporting indicates that one target was a relatively senior Hamas figure. Separately, Israel killed two Hezbollah operatives in the Jmeijmeh area who were engaged in reconstructing Hezbollah military infrastructure (another reminder that "post-ceasefire" does not mean "post-war"). Lebanese President Joseph Aoun condemned the strikes, claiming they undermined de-escalation efforts and questioning their timing ahead of a ceasefire mechanism meeting. The statement conspicuously avoided addressing the substance of the strikes themselves: active weapons storage, underground infrastructure, and ongoing military reconstruction by Hezbollah and Hamas inside civilian areas—activities that constitute explicit violations of the very ceasefire frameworks Beirut claims to uphold.

ASSESSMENT

Lebanon's leadership never intended to do the humiliating job of disarming a militia that owns the country. So Israel is doing what it must. The evacuation warnings are part and parcel of the IDF's attempt to limit civilian casualties—regardless of what people claim on X. UN patrol complaints about jamming and drones are background noise from a force that can “observe” but cannot impose. Hamas operating in Lebanon is a good indicator of what we talked about in The Jihadist Continuum—namely that jihadists are jihadists and regardless of what you call them, they run parallel lanes under the same civilian cover and the same international excuses.

HAMAS REBUILDS UNDER AID OPTICS WHILE ISRAEL KEEPS KILLING IMMINENT THREATS

Israel struck a Hamas operative in the southern Strip who was preparing an imminent attack on troops—precise, intelligence-driven, and explicitly within ceasefire terms. At the same time, the security picture points to systematic Hamas reconstitution: local weapons production under harsher conditions (including use of unexploded ordnance and attempts to manufacture simple rockets and anti-tank munitions), exploitation risk around humanitarian equipment flows (almost 1,000 trucks each day) as a potential future pathway, and a growing drone corridor from Sinai into the Al-Mawasi area—currently largely used for smuggling, with clear concern it becomes a weapons lane. Overnight, Israel intercepted a weapons-smuggling drone crossing into Israeli territory from the west carrying M-16 rifles and magazines. Meanwhile, the state told the High Court it still will not allow journalists into Gaza without military escort—even while acknowledging the war has entered a “different factual phase”—arguing the environment remains volatile and that independent entry risks both reporters and ongoing operations. The state cited continued escorted press entries in recent months, but maintained that unescorted movement inside Gaza is still a security hazard in a war zone where armed actors remain embedded and incentives still reward kidnapping, ambush, and staged “incidents.”

ASSESSMENT

“Different factual phase” is lawyer language for “we’d like the world to calm down,” while Hamas uses the lull to rebuild. This is the gap Hamas lives in. Fewer maneuvers, more smuggling. Fewer headlines, more infrastructure. The IDF killing an imminent attacker under ceasefire terms is the truth of Gaza right now—anyone pretending this is post-conflict is either lying or illiterate. The drone lanes are the most annoying kind of threat because they’re cheap, deniable, and scalable. Just one successful run becomes routine resupply. The court petition is not a press-freedom seminar. Unescorted journalists in a Hamas battle space wouldn’t produce “independent coverage,” they’d produce hostages—followed by a renewed international chorus demanding Israel restrain itself while it rescues civilians held by terrorists. If Hamas wants foreign reporters roaming freely, it can start by disarming and stopping the behavior that makes “escort” necessary.

Inside Israel

THE HAREDI DRAFT ADVANCES—MOSTLY BY REDEFINING “HAREDI”

Israel recorded its largest single-day ultra-Orthodox enlistment to date, with more than 530 recruits entering the IDF, including roughly 230 into combat

roles and the remainder into combat-support tracks. Over the past year, total enlistment from the haredi sector crossed 3,000—real movement, but still far short of the military’s stated 10,000 target. The IDF is expanding tailored frameworks to accommodate religious observance, while extremist factions continue to block induction centers and deploy Holocaust analogies to deter participation. What the headline numbers obfuscate is composition: a meaningful share of those counted are already socially marginal within their communities—men who have been pushed out of yeshivot, quietly cut off from stipends, or effectively excommunicated for nonconformity. They arrive at the recruitment office not as emissaries of the haredi community, but as its surplus population—men the system already decided it could afford to lose.

ASSESSMENT

The draft is advancing not because the exemption culture collapsed, but because it expelled enough people that enlistment became a rational exit. Counting these recruits as proof of communal buy-in flatters the politicians and insults logic. The real fight is whether the institutional veto survives. Every delay teaches that refusal pays, participation costs status, and sacrifice is optional if your bloc is loud enough. If Israel wants universal service, it has to stop laundering noncompliance as “dialogue” and start enforcing default participation with real consequences for evasion and real protections for those who serve.

CRIME ROUTES BECOME TERROR PIPELINES INSIDE THE STATE

Hundreds of thousands of firearms are estimated to enter annually via Egyptian and Jordanian routes, increasingly by drones, feeding a single axis that runs from regional suppliers through border communities and into Israel’s criminal underworld—and from there into terror networks—both in Gaza and in Judea and Samaria. The Negev, including hubs like Bir Hadaj, functions as a logistics node. Mixed cities serve as transfer points. And the “Palestinian Authority” areas absorb the bulk of the flow. Interdictions are rising, arrests are up, and operations have degraded some networks, but the scale gap between seizures and inflow remains severe. Theft from IDF bases compounds the problem, adding military-grade weapons to an already saturated market.

ASSESSMENT

When guns are cheap and everywhere, intent becomes the only missing ingredient—and intent is never in short supply for communities that pay its citizenry to slay Jews. Enforcement that treats this as mere policing will fail. Shut routes, criminalize facilitators aggressively, and price possession like terrorism—because functionally, it is.

ECONOMIC “REFORM” MEETS GEOGRAPHY AND LABOR REALITY

Two parallel shifts collided this week. Farmers blocked junctions nationwide to protest dairy-market deregulation that they say will shutter hundreds of farms, hollow out peripheral communities, and trade food security for cheaper

imports. At the same time, Israel's labor market continues a forced realignment: Palestinian workers have largely been removed due to security concerns and foreign labor has surged past 227,000 permits. Construction, agriculture, caregiving, and services now rely on a rotating migrant workforce. Unemployment remains low—for now—but employers admit the change is structural.

ASSESSMENT

You cannot deregulate food, replace labor, and stall infrastructure while pretending the periphery will absorb the shock quietly. Replacing Palestinian labor is necessary. However, replacing it with an under protected migrant class while gutting local production is how you build dependency and resentment at the same time. The state needs coherence: protect strategic sectors, enforce labor standards ruthlessly, and stop treating border communities as test labs for theories written in air-conditioned offices. Neither zionism nor security can be imported.

Israel and the World

TEHRAN HEARS CARACAS AND STARTS CHECKING THE EXITS

Iran's protest wave has widened into a multi-city uprising (now stretching well past a week in duration) described as spanning dozens of locations, with crowds reportedly ranging from hundreds into the thousands by city, and a death toll that has climbed into the dozens while clashes injure security forces as well. Protesters describe a shift from economic rage to direct political defiance, with chants targeting the regime and even invoking the Shah. Organizers emphasize decentralized tactics designed to survive arrests, infiltration, and internet throttling or blackouts. Inside Iran, activists describe security forces escalating from dispersal tools to live fire, and portray internet cutoffs as the regime's preferred window for brutality. Against that, President Trump publicly warned Tehran that killing demonstrators could trigger U.S. action, and Iranian officials are now actively preparing for the possibility of an American-Israeli strike wave, explicitly citing the Venezuela precedent as proof Washington is willing to move from rhetoric to removal. Netanyahu, for his part, is framing the moment as potentially decisive while reiterating red lines: no Iranian ballistic rebuild and no nuclear renewal, with severe consequences if attacked.

ASSESSMENT

Tehran's problem isn't just angry crowds—it's the loss of predictability. When dictators lose predictability, they compensate with coercion and diversion. The West's favorite fantasy is that brutality stays domestic if we politely call it domestic. Meanwhile, the regime reads signals the way it reads everything: by asking whether consequences are real. Trump's warning narrows Tehran's playbook, but it does not civilize it. Expect the regime to tighten repression during blackout windows, claim it's fighting "agents," and search for cheap external pressure points that change the subject.

BRITAIN MAINSTREAMS THE PALESTINE FRANCHISE, THEN ACTS SHOCKED

The UK has now inaugurated a Palestinian embassy in London following its formal recognition of a Palestinian state months ago—an upgrade of status

and symbolism without any demonstrated measure of governance, disarmament, or accountability. Great job. In parallel, the British prime minister publicly expressed “regret” for welcoming home a British-Egyptian activist whose past posts reportedly endorsed killing “Zionists,” then blamed a “system failure” for not flagging it earlier—because apparently vetting is an optional luxury. Across the Atlantic, anti-Israel organizers are openly mobilizing to harass an aliyah information event in Manhattan, framing immigration to Israel as “settler recruitment,” and calling on supporters to bring flags, keffiyehs, and noisemakers—after similar events saw chants including “death to the IDF” and intimidation outside a synagogue.

ASSESSMENT

The state legitimizes a narrative ecosystem that treats Jews as political contaminants, then pretends it's surprised when the ecosystem behaves accordingly. The embassy plaque is not “peace”—it's a flag planted in the mind: Palestinian statehood as a diplomatic achievement decoupled from the basic duties of a state, while Israel's sovereignty is treated as a probationary license. Leaders will fast-track moral posturing, then feign helplessness when the beneficiary's record includes “kill Zionists.” As for the NYC Aliyah event? Clearly no one can rely on Mamdani's office to keep things safe, so once again the Jews are on their own—which is the predictable output of a stakeholder culture that confuses performative virtue with security.

Briefly Noted

CULTURE, RELIGION & SOCIETY

HonestReporting: Western media outlets downplayed Iran's nationwide anti-regime protests by framing them as “economic unrest” and sidelining chants calling for the Islamic Republic's overthrow. Media minimization functions as regime laundering, blunting international pressure at the precise moment when visibility could constrain Tehran's brutality.

DIPLOMACY & GEOPOLITICS

Ynet: An Israeli security analysis assessed that Iran's current protests are unlikely to topple the regime and that Israeli or U.S. military action would likely consolidate regime support rather than weaken it.

Jerusalem Post: President Trump openly floated the idea of U.S. military action against Colombia after the capture of Venezuela's Nicolas Maduro, calling Bogota “very sick” and run by a narco-aligned leadership.

FRONTLINE & SECURITY

Jerusalem Post: Venezuela's emergency decree ordered nationwide arrests of anyone accused of supporting the U.S. operation that captured Nicolas Maduro, as the former leader pleaded not guilty in New York and declared himself a “prisoner of war.” Post-capture repression confirms the regime's collapse narrative is being answered with internal terror, not legitimacy—an object lesson other authoritarian allies are studying closely.

Developments to Watch

NORTHERN FRONT (LEBANON / SYRIA)

- **Evacuation Warnings Normalize Preemption** — Israel issued evacuation orders to four southern Lebanese villages ahead of strikes on Hezbollah and Hamas infrastructure.
- **UNIFIL Friction Returns** — A UNIFIL patrol reported Israeli drone interference in Mays al-Jabal during enforcement activity. Expect louder complaints and possible diplomatic attempts to slow Israeli tempo via process rather than facts.
- **Targeting Rebuild Crews** — Two Hezbollah operatives were killed while reconstructing infrastructure south of the Litani.

GAZA & SOUTHERN THEATER

- **Imminent Threat Strikes** — Israel killed a Hamas operative preparing an attack in southern Gaza.
- **Drone Lanes Probe West-to-Israel** — A weapons-smuggling drone carrying M-16s was intercepted crossing from the west.

REGIONAL AXIS (IRAN, HOUTHIS, MILITIAS)

- **Tehran Stress Meets Caracas Signal** — Iran's protest death toll crossed 40 as officials openly prepare for potential U.S.-Israel action, explicitly citing the Venezuela precedent. **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**
- **U.S. Force Posture Tightens in Europe** — Heavy U.S. special forces movements to UK bases to increase readiness without overt escalation. Deterrence signaling aims to compress Tehran's decision space while keeping first moves ambiguous.
- **Debt Claims in Syria** — Iran publicly demanded repayment of Assad-era debts from Damascus. Financial leverage amid Syrian fragility hints at Tehran consolidating influence while it braces for turbulence elsewhere.

JUDEA & SAMARIA

- **Enforcement Expands** — Central Command authorized the use of electronic monitoring devices to enforce restrictions against Israelis, allowing authorities to track compliance in real time and prosecute violations or device tampering as criminal offenses.

DIPLOMATIC & LEGAL

- **Turkey Red Line Reiterated** — Israel publicly warned Ankara against any role in Gaza or southern Syria, underscoring collision risk between IDF and Turkish forces. This hardens Israel's posture as Washington toys with "roles."
- **India Signals Risk Aversion** — New Indian travel advisories urging citizens to avoid Iran reflect rising concern about instability and spillover.

HOME FRONT & POLITICS

- **Iranian Tasking Reaches Inside Israel** — Shin Bet arrested another individual accused of Iranian-directed surveillance of a former prime minister's home.

- **Haredi Intake Spikes—Selectively** — A record day of ultra-Orthodox enlistment hit combat and support tracks. The numbers matter, but composition does too. Institutional buy-in remains the real test as manpower pressure tightens.
- **Rate Cut Amid Strain** — The central bank cut rates by 25 bps to 4%. Monetary easing buys time, not cohesion. Security costs and labor shifts will decide whether relief translates into stability.

Watch for three stress tests. Whether Hezbollah answers preemptive interdiction with a “small” incident meant to restore deterrence. Whether drone smuggling lanes shift from probing to repetition. And whether Tehran’s internal crackdown externalizes into intimidation, proxies, or sabotage attempts.

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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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