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READER EDITION

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ISRAEL BRIEF

Monday, January 19

Gaza gets a new “administration” face with Qatar and Turkey in the control room. Washington signals ownership. Israel gets irked. Hamas reads it as permission.

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THE BOTTOM LINE APR was engineered to invert the moral polarity: IHRA becomes “censorship,” Jewish safety becomes “racist,” Zionism becomes the offense. Once that inversion enters government policy and teacher programming, it stops being just rhetoric. You don’t win inside rigged forums by smiling harder. You win by refusing to fund the rigging, building reciprocal costs, and treating the language war as pre-violence permission structure dressed up as inclusion.

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Flash Brief

- **Gaza Administration:** Cairo committee publishes mandate; Qatar and Turkey sit in oversight tier under U.S. plan.
- **Ran Gvili:** Islamic Jihad keeps remains underground and dictates conditions; Israel weighs coercive retrieval options.
- **Northern Border:** Multi-Dimensional Unit completes two-month south Lebanon mission; fence probe ends under tank and helicopter fire.
- **Iran Window:** KC-135s deploy from UK; F-15s stage into Jordan; carrier transits toward Indian Ocean.
- **Home-Front Counterintelligence:** Shin Bet arrests Modi'in yeshiva student for Iran espionage; recruitment keeps widening.
- **Government vs Court:** Coalition pushes October 7 inquiry bill and AG polygraphs; opposition boycotts committee track.
- **Budget-Draft Choke Point:** First-reading deadline nears; haredi parties tie votes to exemptions while reserve compensation advances.

The War Today

Gaza “Technocrats” Arrive; Qatar-Turkey Enter, Hamas Rebuilds

A newly formed 12-member “National Committee for the Administration of Gaza,” chaired by former PA deputy planning minister Ali Shaath, issued a mission statement committing itself to “security,” restoration of electricity/water/healthcare/education, and a Gaza rebuilt “in spirit” around “peace, democracy, and justice.” Shaath has separately floated pushing Gaza’s rubble into the Mediterranean to expand territory as a housing fix.

The committee operates under Trump’s Board-of-Peace architecture and an executive board structure that includes Qatar and Turkey in the supervisory layer. This triggered an unusually public Israeli backlash and a notably blunt U.S. rejoinder from a senior official who framed Gaza as “our show,” explicitly telling Jerusalem to focus on Iran and accept the arrangement.

Inside the defense establishment, senior officials now treat ceasefire collapse as a realistic near-term scenario. Violations persist, Hamas is overtly rebuilding, and they refuse to return the body of Master Sgt. Ran Gvili. Islamic Jihad offered conditional “cooperation” with the committee to ease civilian pressure while rejecting any framework aimed at dismantling “the weapons,” and claimed Ran Gvili’s body sits in a tunnel the IDF filled with concrete—requiring special engineering equipment—while blaming Israel for “obstacles.”

ASSESSMENT

The committee's mission statement reads like a grant application. Qatar and Turkey are the Muslim Brotherhood ecosystem's external managers. Placing them in the supervisory layer turns reconstruction into a protected pipeline for Hamas regeneration. The U.S. official's statement is an admission that Washington will overrule Israeli red lines when it wants the optics of progress—then inevitably blame Israel when Gaza's physics reassert themselves.

Hezbollah Refuses Disarmament; Israel Keeps South Lebanon Perishable

Hezbollah says explicitly that it will not disarm and that Israeli strikes “cannot continue.” They claim an inherent right to “defend” Lebanon.

Israel's posture stayed practical rather than rhetorical. The IDF's Multi-Dimensional Unit, operating under the 91st Division, completed a two-month mission along the southern Lebanon strip focused on intelligence collection, locating infrastructure, directing fire, and enabling ground-and-air dismantling of Hezbollah positions and operatives—keeping entrenchment perishable through continuous contact.

A border incident in the Western Galilee ended after Israeli forces tracked a suspect on the Lebanese side of the fence. A tank and an attack helicopter opened fire to remove the threat, and the suspect withdrew northward.

ASSESSMENT

Hezbollah's weapons keeps Lebanon non-sovereign while maintaining a forward base from which to attack Israel. Everything Hezbollah tries to rebuild must stay fragile. Hezbollah wants an untouchable weapons state; Israel and the Lebanese know that's untenable.

Tehran Threatens All-Out War

U.S. KC-135 refueling aircraft deployed from the UK. Fighter positioning advanced with F-15s moved toward Jordan. Additional C-17 transport flights tracked into the region. CENTCOM directed to hold major operational support readiness around the clock over the coming month.

The USS *Abraham Lincoln* was detected transiting toward the Indian Ocean corridor. The IDF increased readiness accepting delivery of three additional F-35I “Adir” jets at Nevatim. The chief of staff reviewed response scenarios for an Iran-attack contingency.

Inside Iran, current estimates show more than sixteen thousand killed—with especially fierce clashes in Kurdish regions. Iran's chief prosecutor dismissed claims of halted mass executions and promised “decisive” judicial action. Iranian state broadcasting was briefly hacked to air protest footage and a message from Reza Pahlavi. Israel's Shin Bet arrested a Haredi yeshiva student from Modi'in on suspicion of spying for Iran.

ASSESSMENT

This is what pre-action insurance looks like. Everyone is minimizing single-point failure risk before a decision turns kinetic. The messaging remains disputed—one version pins U.S. delay on confidence about regime collapse; another pins it on interceptor math and retaliation exposure. Both can be true and both still point to the same operational conclusion: Washington wants better odds.

Inside Israel

Government Moves To Box Out Court, Opposition Walks Away

Opposition party leaders announced they will boycott Knesset committee discussions over a bill that would replace the standard independent state commission of inquiry into October 7 with a Knesset-driven appointment mechanism: a six-member panel chosen via attempted 80-MK supermajority agreement, and if that fails, three appointees each from coalition and opposition—while empowering the Knesset Speaker to fill the “opposition” slots if opposition refuses to participate.

The coalition publicly vowed to pass the bill and advertised “broad powers” and “transparency” under its model. The government formally argued to the Supreme Court that the court has no authority to compel establishment of a state commission of inquiry at all—framing the issue as separation-of-powers and executive-branch prerogative.

A ministerial committee advanced legislation requiring the attorney general and senior Justice Ministry officials to undergo periodic polygraph tests every two years focused on leaks of classified information.

ASSESSMENT

Israel is trying to investigate the worst day in its modern history while also litigating who gets to define “investigation.” The opposition boycott hands the coalition an opening to claim “they refused to participate.” The polygraph bill deepens the sense that state institutions exist to settle scores. If Israel wants reform and accountability, it needs a framework that is unimpeachable across camps, subpoena-serious, and structurally resistant to factional capture.

Budget Deadline Turns Draft Politics Into A Government-Survival Weapon

Finance officials warned that if the 2026 budget and accompanying Arrangements Law are not approved in first reading this week, Knesset dissolution, government collapse, and elections within 90 days are likely—with early July floated as practical outcome.

The state operates under a continuing budget with a reported tens-of-billions gap blocking new projects, hiring, and transfers. The formal 2026 budget is described at roughly NIS 662 billion with defense at NIS 112 billion and a deficit target of 3.9%, amid an additional defense demand of roughly NIS 8 billion.

Haredi parties signal they will not carry the budget absent passage of a conscription framework legalizing broad exemptions—even as coalition actors warn internal haredi party splits could reshape the standoff.

ASSESSMENT

A continuing budget during a multi-front era doesn't "save money," it freezes execution, delays rehabilitation, and forces the state to pretend it can do readiness, recovery, and reform with one hand tied. The haredi parties are playing rational coalition hardball; the country is paying irrational national costs.

Israel and the World

MLK Day Gets Hijacked While Lawfare Expands From Soldiers To Comedians

Across Western democracies, anti-Zionist infrastructure is shifting from street noise into institutional language: "anti-Palestinian racism" ("APR") has migrated from activist slogans into parliamentary debate, municipal motions, government-funded training, and school-material recommendations.

A group of NYC public school teachers promoted a "Palestine Teach-In" on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day—explicitly pushing genocide/ethnic-cleansing claims, urging rejection of the IHRA definition, and demanding removal of curriculum vendors that "promote Zionism."

Governor Shapiro admitted that vetting team asked whether he had ever been an "agent" for Israel—an old libel dressed up as "process." Canadian lawfare activists announced they would seek criminal complaints to block or arrest an Israeli comedian ahead of a Toronto performance.

ASSESSMENT

APR was engineered to invert the moral polarity: IHRA becomes "censorship," Jewish safety becomes "racist," Zionism becomes the offense. Once that inversion enters government policy and teacher programming, it stops being just rhetoric. You don't win inside rigged forums by smiling harder. You win by refusing to fund the rigging, building reciprocal costs, and treating the language war as pre-violence permission structure dressed up as inclusion.

Briefly Noted

Frontline & Security

- **Jerusalem Post:** Syrian government forces backed by Arab tribal fighters reportedly seized the Al Omar oil field and the Conoco gas field from the US-backed SDF. Energy assets bankroll Damascus's consolidation, squeeze Kurdish leverage, and leave Washington's partner bleeding ground while Turkey's clients tighten the noose.

Diplomacy & Geopolitics

- **Times of Israel:** Trump threatened escalating tariffs on Denmark and other European allies until the US is allowed to buy Greenland—triggering calls to activate the EU’s never-used Anti-Coercion Instrument.
- **JNS:** A JNS column argued Trump’s proposed 25% tariff on any country doing business with Iran functions as an economic siege aimed at choking off the regime and IRGC cash engine.
- **Israel National News:** Former Israeli national security adviser Yaakov Amidror urged Israel to set hard red lines with the Trump White House on Gaza, demand a clear IDF timetable to dismantle Hamas, and warned Qatar and Turkey’s “rehabilitation” push is designed to keep Hamas breathing. If Israel doesn’t lock terms now, “reconstruction” becomes the laundering mechanism for Hamas’s return.
- **The Algemeiner:** A senior Iranian diplomat at the UN in Geneva reportedly defected and applied for political asylum in Switzerland for himself and his family.

Developments to Watch

Judea & Samaria

- **Hebron Sweep Settles In** — IDF launched a multi-day counterterror operation in Hebron’s Jabal Johar area, with route blockages and loud engineering activity expected. Multi-day sweeps reliably trigger revenge fire and IED attempts on arteries once routines form. **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**
- **Iran Recruitment Reaches Haredim** — Shin Bet arrested a Haredi yeshiva student in Modi’in Illit for spying for Iran. Tehran is buying access cheap and local.

Northern Front (Lebanon / Syria)

- **Fence Probe Ends In Fire** — An IDF border incident in the Western Galilee ended after a suspect moved near the fence; a tank and helicopter opened fire and the suspect withdrew north. These micro-probes are rehearsal.

Gaza & Southern Theater

- **Qatar–Turkey Oversight Pushes Forward** — Gaza’s new “administration” committee held its first Cairo meeting under the Board-of-Peace stack, with Qatar and Turkey embedded in the supervisory layer. Watch for near-term demands: corridors, crossings, “policing” optics.
- **Hostage** — Islamic Jihad claims Ran Gvili’s body sits in a tunnel the IDF filled with concrete, requiring special engineering equipment to retrieve.

Regional Axis (Iran, Houthis, Militias)

- **F-15s Land, More Coming** — Reporting says six U.S. F-15s are already in Jordan with more expected, alongside UK-based tankers and continued airlift of supplies into theater. **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**
- **Airlift Chain Tightens** — A U.S. Navy KC-130J tracked into Ben Gurion and additional C-17 flights reportedly moved from a UK base toward Jordan.

Diplomatic & Legal

- **Regime-Change Talk** — Bibi met Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC) as overthrow rhetoric circulates, and Trump amplified “free Iran” framing via a quoted post.

Home Front & Politics

- **Defense Minister Departs For Greece** — Defense Minister Israel Katz is scheduled to leave Israel for a several-day visit to Greece as the Iran window tightens. Travel during a live escalation cycle is always a vulnerability.

Closing Assessment

WASHINGTON just placed Qatar and Turkey inside Gaza’s supervisory layer and then signaled Jerusalem should accept it—meaning Israel’s red lines are being repriced as negotiable. Hamas and Islamic Jihad will treat that as permission to rebuild faster than paperwork can govern, and the Ran Gvili file is where that illusion collapses first. Watch for two tests: whether Gaza’s “administration” demands operational concessions on schedule, and whether Iran’s proxy system tries to create noise as U.S. and Israeli readiness signals stack up. If control doesn’t change hands, the branding is just cover.

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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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