



Forensic intelligence for those who act.

READER EDITION

March 23, 2026

ISRAEL BRIEF

Monday, March 23

The regime that cannot show its leader now cannot trust its own officers — and Washington is signaling it may seize the oil terminal that funds what remains.

◇ URIEL ZEHAVI

THE BOTTOM LINE The Hatzola arson and the Shafiei shooting are the same doctrine applied to two different target sets — Jewish community infrastructure in one case, Iranian dissidents in the other — by networks that share a patron and a methodology. The claiming group's footprint across Belgium, Greece, the Netherlands, and now London confirms the targeting of Jewish community sites in Europe is a standing capability, not a wartime improvisation, and the UK charges from last week showed the surveillance infrastructure was in place long, long before February 28. Starmer's condemnation was prompt and unambiguous. It was also the same formula deployed after every prior incident — words, patrols, no structural change. So, namely, it is meaningless. Jewish communities cannot rely on the governments in Europe (or a lot of other places, to be very clear) to protect them. The Handala domain seizures are a welcome enforcement action, but the FBI shutting down four websites does not address the operational cell that breached Israel's largest healthcare provider and disrupted an American medical manufacturer. The domains are replaceable; the capability is not. The cartel bounty detail though... that should keep intelligence services awake — Iran's MOIS is operationalizing relationships with transnational criminal organizations for targeted killing on Western soil. That is a murder-for-hire network with state backing, and a network of operatives that are integrated into virtually every city in every country. The narcos have not lost the war on drugs, and it seems they're starting to pick up new revenue sources.

CLASSIFICATION

Reader Edition

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THE war’s fourth week opens with something the first three did not produce: evidence, on tape, that the regime’s security apparatus is fracturing from the inside. Mossad’s phone campaign has reached deep enough that a senior Iranian police commander told his Israeli caller to come help cut off the heads of his own leadership. Organizational collapse — which arrives at the same moment Washington publicly floated a ground seizure of Kharg Island, the IDF confirmed a civilian killed by its own artillery in Misgav Am, and Hamas reconsolidated control over the central Gaza strip the IDF chose not to enter. The next 72 hours — energy strikes, Hormuz, the budget — will determine which constraints hold and which break.

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FLASH BRIEF

- **Regime fractures on tape:** Mossad phone campaign produces recorded defection plea from senior Iranian police commander; IRGC internal friction confirmed between police chief and Vahidi; Mojtaba appoints Rezaei as military adviser without appearing on camera.
 - **Kharg Island seizure signaled:** U.S. officials openly say that Washington may launch a ground operation; 7,500 Marines deploying; Trump warns “complete destruction of Iran.”
 - **Gaza tunnel hunt stalls:** Statistical drilling halted in central Gaza despite IDF claims; Hamas retains full operational control and stages armed parades; one tunnel fits three trucks side by side.
 - **Moskowitz killed by friendly fire:** Northern Command confirms five artillery shells struck Misgav Am at incorrect angle; Radwan Force commander eliminated;
- Hasmonean Brigade deploys to Lebanon for first time.
 - **Jordan absorbs 240 projectiles:** Kingdom intercepted 222 of 240 Iranian missiles and drones; U.S. radar destroyed at Muwaffaq Salti; parliament votes to erase the word “Israel” from its minutes.
 - **Saudi normalization deal dead:** Iran scales back Saudi strikes fearing retaliation; continues attacks on Kuwait, Bahrain, UAE “as usual.”
 - **Diaspora under operational attack:** Iran-aligned group torches Hatzola ambulances in London; Iranian dissident shot in Netherlands; FBI seizes four MOIS cyber-warfare domains.
 - **Budget in 8 days:** Record NIS 6 billion in coalition funds; no employee compensation framework; comptroller reveals classified air-defense warning sat on Netanyahu’s desk before the war.

A regime whose commanders are recording their own willingness to defect. A tunnel network growing in the sector Israel left ungoverned. A kingdom that intercepted 222 missiles and still lost the political argument in its own parliament. A coalition funding yeshivas while the comptroller’s warning about unprotected buildings gathers dust. The threads connect at a single point: this war is being won on the fronts where force is applied and lost on the fronts where it is deferred.

THE WAR TODAY

Iran’s Regime Fractures Under Combined Psychological and Kinetic Assault as Washington Signals Kharg Island Seizure

Mossad agents have made hundreds of calls to senior Iranian security officials since February 28, pressuring them to defect — and some are breaking. A recording captured the call to Mohsen Fathi Zadeh, head of the Protection and Intelligence Organization of Iran’s Law Enforcement Forces. The

Israeli agent recited his wife's name, his daughter's name, his parents' names, and told him his fate would match Khamenei's. Fathi Zadeh responded: "I swear on the Quran I'm not your enemy, I'm a dead man already; just please come help us and cut off the head of all of the commanders." Brig. Gen. (res.) Yossi Kuperwasser described the campaign as the extension of tactics used against Hamas and Hezbollah — now operating at a thousand miles — designed to weaken the regime enough for the Iranian people to change it. Police Chief Ahmad-Reza Radan complained to IRGC head Ahmad Vahidi that police forces are being left exposed to Israeli drone strikes without IRGC support — an internal fracture between the regime's parallel security organs. Mojtaba Khamenei — who still has not appeared on video — made his first personnel appointment, naming former longtime IRGC commander Mohsen Rezaei as military adviser.

Kinetic operations continued at pace. The IAF struck weapons production and storage facilities belonging to Iran's Defense Ministry and the IRGC Air Force in the Tehran area, a headquarters of the Ministry of Intelligence, and the emergency command headquarters of Khatam al-Anbiya. Explosions were reported in Bandar Abbas, Bandar Khamir, and Bushehr in southern Iran. U.S. forces continued operations against Iran's attack drone capabilities. An Arrow 3 exo-atmospheric interception was recorded over the Dimona area — an Iranian ballistic missile aimed at the nuclear zone, destroyed in space. A third ballistic missile salvo since midnight triggered sirens across Jerusalem, southern, and central Israel last night. Rescue services found no impact sites. A cluster munition struck a vehicle in Tel Aviv during a morning barrage, seriously injuring one person and lightly wounding fourteen. IDF Spokesman Brig. Gen. Effie Defrin confirmed Israel expects several more weeks of fighting. Israeli media report the security and political establishment supports moving to strikes on Iranian energy facilities as Trump's power-plant deadline approaches. Trump told Channel 13: "There will be a complete destruction of Iran, and this will succeed perfectly." U.S. officials acknowledge "Washington may have no alternative but to launch a ground operation to seize Iran's Kharg Island" — three Marine Expeditionary Units totaling roughly 7,500 Marines are deploying to the region. The IRGC responded that if energy facilities are struck, the Strait of Hormuz will be completely closed. Arab states have warned Trump against targeting energy infrastructure, fearing retaliation against their own grids and desalination plants. Security officials are calling for Ben Gurion Airport to be fully closed. Iran's state TV separately aired a missile bearing a poster thanking Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez for calling the war "illegal" — part of a propaganda campaign that has also launched missiles "in memory of victims of Epstein's island" [the regime's messaging strategy now operates at the intellectual level of a Twitter (X) troll]. Iran's Air and Space Force claimed it shot down an F-15 near Hormuz Island; no evidence supports the claim. Mossad publicly called on Iranians with access to information in the nuclear industry to make contact.

ASSESSMENT

The Mossad phone campaign — alongside the targeted killings tracked in these pages since the onset of the war — is producing something rare: documented, recorded evidence of a regime's security apparatus losing confidence in its own leadership. Fathi Zadeh's response is desperation from a man who believes the Israeli intelligence penetration is deep enough that cooperation is safer than loyalty. That calculation, multiplied across hundreds of officials receiving similar calls, corrodes the command chain faster than the airstrikes. The police chief complaining that IRGC won't protect his officers on the street is an organization that has stopped functioning as a unified force. Rezaei's appointment is a performance intended to reassure the officer corps that someone competent is advising the invisible man. Whether Mojtaba is actually receiving that advice, let alone acting on it, is the gap no appointment can close. As we tracked in Thursday's DTW, the Kharg Island escalation was under active planning. It has now graduated to public attribution by named U.S. officials. A ground seizure of Iran's primary crude export terminal would end the regime's revenue base and transform this from an air campaign into an occupation of strategic real estate. The Gulf states' panic — warning Trump not to strike energy infrastructure — reveals the real constraint.

Gaza Tunnel Hunt Stalls as Hamas Regains Operational Control in Central Strip

The IDF's "statistical drilling" program along the Yellow Line — designed to locate tunnels by inserting sensors at fixed intervals — has stalled in central Gaza. The project began in northern Gaza with drill points spaced roughly 14 meters apart, but the volume of tunnels uncovered forced Southern Command to reduce spacing to seven meters or less, dramatically improving detection while delaying the advance south. A senior security official is pushing to accelerate drilling where the Yellow Line runs closer to Israeli communities, and because Hamas retains operational control in the area — as Israeli forces avoided extensive ground maneuvers in part due to the presence of hostages while freedom of action was more flexible. Col. Gil Werner, commander of the southern brigade in the Gaza Division, acknowledged that Hamas's condition in central Gaza remains relatively strong and that the group retains full operational control. The IDF insists statistical drilling is underway in that area. However, senior officers involved in the drilling say no such activity is currently taking place and no equipment has been observed on the ground. Meanwhile, Hamas is exploiting the operational vacuum — conducting armed convoys in pickup trucks, staging parades, and visibly consolidating authority. Dozens of tunnels have been found in northern Gaza in recent weeks, including at least five in the past week — one reaching close to the border fence and described as large enough "to fit three trucks side by side." The IDF acknowledges ongoing smuggling via humanitarian aid channels and Egyptian drones but says interdiction efforts have improved.

ASSESSMENT

The gap between the IDF's public confidence — “highly confident we have an accurate picture” — and its field officers' acknowledgment that no drilling is happening in central Gaza is the kind of disconnect that gets people killed. Hamas's armed parades in central Gaza are a deliberate display: the organization is telling its population, its rivals, and its mediators in Cairo that it governs the zone Israel chose not to enter. The Yellow Line's proximity to Israeli communities in the central sector makes this more than a mapping failure — it is a defense gap that grows wider every hour Hamas is left to rebuild. The original decision to avoid ground operations in central Gaza because of hostage concerns was defensible at the time. The decision to maintain that posture while the tunnel hunt stalls and Hamas reconsolidates is a different calculation. Every day Hamas controls that ground, its tunnel network gets deeper and its governance claim gets harder to reverse. The war with Iran is consuming operational bandwidth, command attention, and reserve capacity — and the second front is advancing through organizational rehabilitation rather than kinetic action.

Lebanon Campaign Deepens as IDF Confirms Moskowitz Killed by Friendly Fire

Northern Command Commander MG Rafi Milo confirmed Sunday that Ofer (“Poshko”) Moskowitz¹ — reported in yesterday's edition as killed by Hezbollah rockets — was killed by IDF artillery fire aimed at enemy positions in southern Lebanon. The inquiry found severe errors in both planning and execution. The artillery was fired at an incorrect angle and did not follow required procedures, resulting in five shells striking the Misgav Am ridge instead of the target. No sirens sounded before the impact. Milo called it “a very severe incident.” The IDF said findings would be presented to the family and made public. Hezbollah had claimed responsibility for a rocket barrage in the area at the same time, which complicated initial attribution.

The broader Lebanon campaign accelerated over the weekend. The IAF struck more than 200 Hezbollah targets, including two waves in Beirut — a command center for Hezbollah's Intelligence Headquarters and a command center for its Aerial Defense Array. In Nabatieh, approximately 15 additional command centers were hit. Abu Khalil Barji, commander of Hezbollah's elite Radwan Force special forces unit, was eliminated in an airstrike in Majdal Selm along with two operatives. Barji had led the special forces responsible for attacks on IDF troops. IDF Chief of Staff Zamir said the campaign against Hezbollah remains in its early stages, is expected to intensify, and that once the Iran campaign concludes, Hezbollah will be left isolated. The Hasmonean Brigade — the IDF's Haredi combat unit — deployed to southern Lebanon for the first time, conducting targeted raids after previous operational rotations in Syria, Judea and Samaria, and Gaza. The brigade simultaneously began its first officer training course [training Haredi commanders while operating on the northern front — the best possible rebuttal to every draft exemption argument made in the Knesset]. In a separate development, an Iranian ballistic missile aimed at northern Israel struck Lebanese territory near Khiam in southeastern Lebanon — the first known case during the current war of an Iranian missile hitting Lebanon. It remains unclear whether the missile targeted IDF positions in the south or simply missed Israel. Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam said it is “not the Lebanese

people's duty to avenge Khamenei" [a sentence that would have been politically fatal six months ago].

ASSESSMENT

The friendly-fire finding on Moskowitz's death is the kind of institutional honesty that costs something. Five shells at the wrong angle, a lack of procedural compliance, a civilian dead in the community the operation was designed to protect. It is a tragic operational cost — stressed crews, simultaneous engagements, and the margin for error measured in the arc of an artillery round. Zamir's "only just beginning" framing and the deepened battle plans signal that the Lebanon front will intensify after — and possibly during — the final phase of the Iran campaign. The Hasmonean Brigade's deployment deserves more attention than it will receive. A Haredi unit operating in combat in Lebanon, training officers in the field, while the coalition fights over yeshiva funding exemptions back home. Salam's statements represent the most significant Lebanese political break from Hezbollah's framework since the war began. Dropping the negotiation prohibition, calling for IRGC removal, and publicly refusing to avenge Khamenei — each of those positions has a cost inside Lebanese politics.

INSIDE ISRAEL

Budget Vote Approaches with Record NIS 6 Billion in Coalition Funds as Comptroller Exposes Pre-War Defense Failures

The 2026 budget vote is on the radar if not the docket — and MK Vladimir Beliak (Yesh Atid) told the Jerusalem Post it contains a record NIS 6 billion in coalition funds, the bulk directed to Haredi institutions. The government also attempted to allocate an additional NIS 5.8 billion outside legal oversight. Yesh Atid identified the maneuver in the Finance Committee and forced a legal mechanism ensuring the funds go toward civilian wartime needs. The total budget stands at approximately NIS 699 billion, with the defense allocation at NIS 143 billion after a NIS 32 billion wartime addition. Beliak noted the budget maintains the government's pattern of favoring private Haredi education — which often omits core subjects — over the state system. No compensation framework for employees or small businesses affected by the war exists. "We are now on day 22 or 23 of the war, and there is still no compensation plan. No one will receive money, I assume, until May," Beliak said. The ministries of Finance and Labor reached a daycare stabilization agreement. Approximately 85% of parents' payments for the closure period will be reimbursed, and caregivers will receive compensation through unpaid-leave mechanisms with advance payments to accelerate salary delivery. The Education Ministry said special education programs will continue operating. Though, holiday camps will open only in municipalities that choose it. Smotrich proposed restructuring the school calendar — designating wartime days as vacation and making them up over summer — calling the current remote learning model a system that "does not deliver educational value" while preventing parents from returning to work.

Separately, State Comptroller Matanyahu Englman revealed yesterday — while touring missile impact sites in Arad and Dimona — that he submitted a "highly

classified” report on air defense gaps to Netanyahu, Katz, and Zamir after Operation Rising Lion last June, before the current war began. “Despite the tremendous efforts of the IDF, there were places we were unable to protect,” Engelman said. He identified the structural problem: TAMA 38 — the national plan designed to reinforce buildings through market-based incentives — fails in the periphery because land values in Dimona and Arad are too low for contractors to profit from fortification work. “The state cannot abandon the periphery to the mercy of the market.”

ASSESSMENT

The comptroller’s disclosure links the budget fight to the missile craters. A classified report identifying defense gaps was on Netanyahu’s desk before a single Iranian missile was launched this campaign — and the buildings in Arad that collapsed Saturday night are the physical manifestation of what happens when a warning sits on a desk. The NIS 6 billion in coalition funds flowing to sectoral priorities while no employee compensation framework exists three weeks into a war is the domestic version of the same structural failure: resources allocated by political calculus rather than operational need. The budget will almost certainly pass — no coalition partner wants to trigger elections during a war. But the vote will pass a budget that funds yeshivas that don’t teach core subjects and still has no answer for the family in Arad whose building fell because TAMA 38 doesn’t work where land is cheap. The Smotrich school proposal is a rare sensible wartime adaptation from the coalition — remote learning is failing, parents cannot work, and pretending otherwise serves no one. Whether it survives the Education Ministry’s institutional inertia is another question. Eight days remain. The math has not changed. The optics have.

ISRAEL AND THE WORLD

Jordan Absorbs 240 Iranian Projectiles as War Strains the Kingdom’s Balancing Act

Iran has fired 240 missiles and drones at Jordan in three weeks of war. The Royal Jordanian Air Force intercepted 222; eighteen got through. Civil defense logged 414 debris incidents across the kingdom. Missile fragments landed on a street in Irbid — a city of 800,000 — while King Abdullah was performing Eid prayers in Aqaba. A child was wounded by shrapnel in Beit Ras west of Irbid. On March 3, air defenses intercepted nine separate threats in a single day — ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, and drones. Twenty-four people have been injured since the war began. One of the most consequential strikes hit a U.S. Raytheon-built radar system at Muwaffaq Salti Air Base in Azraq — worth nearly half a billion dollars, designed to detect incoming ballistic missiles and guide interceptors. A U.S. official confirmed the loss and satellite imagery showed two craters and all five trailer components destroyed. Ukraine’s Zelenskyy confirmed Kyiv sent drone specialists and equipment to protect American bases in Jordan. The U.S. approved a \$70.5 million sustainment package for Jordan’s F-16, F-5, and C-130 fleet. Britain deployed aircraft from Cyprus to defend Jordanian airspace.

Domestically, the pressure is compounding. One Jordanian lawmaker called for replacing “Israel” with “the usurping entity” in official discourse. The chamber voted unanimously to strike the word “Israel” from the session’s minutes. A week later, Iran struck the American radar on Jordanian soil — the contrast between parliamentary rhetoric and strategic dependence visible to every Jordanian watching. Oil prices are up more than 40%, and Jordan imports nearly all its energy. The Cybercrime Unit warned it is monitoring social media for content that “threatens national security” after former Information Minister Al-Maaytah called for legal action against individuals publicly praising Iranian missile strikes. Border crossings with Israel have remained open — Amman has not used the war as cover to suspend the peace treaty’s infrastructure. But the gap between official policy and public mood is widening. Public sentiment strongly sympathizes with the “Palestinian cause.”

ASSESSMENT

Jordan’s position is the clearest illustration of what this war costs the states caught between its principals. Amman kept the crossings open, activated defense cooperation agreements, absorbed 240 projectiles, lost a half-billion-dollar American radar installation, and received in return a parliament that voted to erase the word “Israel” from its minutes and a public that views the kingdom’s Western alignment with deepening suspicion. Abdullah has managed this balance before — 1991, 2003, 2006, 2014, 2021 — and the border crossings staying open is the clearest signal that the structural commitment holds. But each crisis erodes the margin. The cybercrime crackdown on citizens praising Iranian strikes is a government that knows the official line is losing ground.

Saudi Arabia Expels Iranian Military Attaché, Ending Beijing-Brokered Normalization

Saudi Arabia expelled Iran’s military attaché, his assistant, and three embassy staff members over the weekend — 24 hours after declaring them *personae non gratae* — following more than 430 missiles and drones launched at the kingdom since February 28. Though the Iranian Ambassador remains welcome. Most drones targeted Eastern Province oil refineries and the Shaybah field; most missiles were aimed at Prince Sultan Air Base in Al-Kharj, 80 kilometers from Riyadh. Saudi analyst Najah Al-Otaibi told the Jerusalem Post that the 2023 Beijing-mediated normalization agreement is “effectively ended.” The Saudi foreign ministry warned that continued attacks would have “significant consequences for current and future relations” — following the foreign minister’s statement last week that the kingdom reserves the right to act militarily and that trust with Tehran has been shattered. Saudi Arabia has shifted policy to allow the U.S. military to use bases on its soil for operations against Iran.

Iran responded to the pressure by recalibrating its targeting: two sources told the Jerusalem Post that Tehran decided to limit attacks on Saudi Arabia — assessing “the Saudis are on edge” — and to avoid targeting Qatar entirely, while continuing strikes against Kuwait, Bahrain, and the UAE “as usual.” Saudi officials previously communicated the red line directly: “If you target

civilian infrastructure, we will be forced to strike you.” UAE Senior Adviser Anwar Gargash called for the war to end with the containment of “the nuclear threat, missiles, drones, and the bullying of the straits” — explicitly rejecting another ceasefire as a sufficient outcome. Qatar, meanwhile, is reportedly attempting on its own initiative to mediate an end to the war with Iran.

ASSESSMENT

Iran is triaging its enemies — pulling punches on Saudi Arabia and Qatar because it recognizes those fronts could generate a military response it cannot afford, while continuing to pound the smaller Gulf states that lack the capacity to retaliate independently. That calibration is itself the strategic finding — a regime that recalibrates based on threats of retaliation is a regime that responds to force, not diplomacy. The Saudi base-access decision and Gargash’s explicit demand for strategic outcome over ceasefire confirm what we tracked in yesterday’s brief. Iran’s attacks on Gulf states are accelerating normalization, not deterring it. The Beijing agreement — presented two years ago as proof that Chinese diplomacy could stabilize the region where American power had not — collapsed the moment Iranian missiles hit Saudi soil. Beijing has said nothing of substance since. Qatar’s mediation attempt is Doha trying to buy relevance with the same checkbook that failed to buy a veto — and the denial of the \$6 billion offer is exactly the kind of denial that confirms the conversation happened.

Diaspora Under Direct Operational Attack. Again.

Four Hatzola ambulances were set ablaze overnight in Golders Green, north London — near a synagogue — in what Prime Minister Starmer called “a deeply shocking antisemitic arson attack.” The London Fire Brigade deployed six engines and 40 firefighters; multiple cylinders on the vehicles exploded, shattering windows in an adjacent apartment block. The Islamic Movement of the People of the Right Hand — an Iran-aligned multinational militant collective — claimed responsibility. The group was behind similar attacks in Belgium, Greece, and the Netherlands. Israel’s embassy said the firebombing was “the consequence of years of hate being tolerated in plain sight.” London Mayor Khan pledged increased patrols. Metropolitan Police confirmed three suspects at this stage. However, there (at press time) have been no arrests.

In the Netherlands, Mohamed (Mohi) Shafiei — an Iranian-born police official who used his social media platforms to expose regime repression in Kerman Province, share intelligence on missile installations, and publicly support the U.S. and Israel — was shot and seriously injured in Schoonhoven. He has a wife and a two-year-old child. Authorities are investigating regime involvement. Dutch politician Ulysee Ellian — himself of Iranian descent — said “an icy shudder runs through the Iranian community.” Haarlem councilor Matin Abbasi said: “Not the first time that the Iranian regime attacks someone here.”

The FBI seized four domains used by Iran’s Ministry of Intelligence for hacking, transnational repression, and psychological operations — including two domains tied to the Handala group, which claimed the breach of Clalit (Israel’s largest healthcare provider) last month and attacked American medical manufacturer Stryker on March 11, causing a global network disruption. The DOJ cited Handala’s death threats against Iranian dissidents and its offer of

\$250,000 to the Jalisco New Generation Cartel for the beheading of two targets [outsourcing assassination to Mexican narcos — that is the operating model of the Islamic Republic in 2026].

ASSESSMENT

The Hatzola arson and the Shafiei shooting are the same doctrine applied to two different target sets — Jewish community infrastructure in one case, Iranian dissidents in the other — by networks that share a patron and a methodology. The claiming group's footprint across Belgium, Greece, the Netherlands, and now London confirms the targeting of Jewish community sites in Europe is a standing capability, not a wartime improvisation, and the UK charges from last week showed the surveillance infrastructure was in place long, long before February 28. Starmer's condemnation was prompt and unambiguous. It was also the same formula deployed after every prior incident — words, patrols, no structural change. So, namely, it is meaningless. Jewish communities cannot rely on the governments in Europe (or a lot of other places, to be very clear) to protect them. The Handala domain seizures are a welcome enforcement action, but the FBI shutting down four websites does not address the operational cell that breached Israel's largest healthcare provider and disrupted an American medical manufacturer. The domains are replaceable; the capability is not. The cartel bounty detail though... that should keep intelligence services awake — Iran's MOIS is operationalizing relationships with transnational criminal organizations for targeted killing on Western soil. That is a murder-for-hire network with state backing, and a network of operatives that are integrated into virtually every city in every country. The narcos have not lost the war on drugs, and it seems they're starting to pick up new revenue sources.

BRIEFLY NOTED

Frontline & Security

- **Israel National News:** The IDF is using thousands of bombs originally intended for Egypt decades ago — discovered in a forgotten bunker — in strikes on Iranian targets. When your arsenal has archaeological layers, you know the neighborhood has been *difficult* for a while.
- **Israel National News:** The Palestinian Authority maintains an armed force three times larger than the Oslo Accords permit, including elite units and offensive weapons. MK Liberman: “No one can say they were not warned” — and he is correct, though the warning has been on the record for roughly thirty years without consequence. What could go wrong? Certainly there are no lessons from history from which we could deduce possibilities.
- **Times of Israel:** Four Qatari military personnel and three Turkish nationals — including one servicemember and two Aselsan defense technicians — died in a helicopter crash in Qatari waters during a joint drill. These are the first recorded fatalities from either country since the war began; Doha attributed it to a technical malfunction, which may well be true and may well not be.

Diplomacy & Geopolitics

- **Jewish Chronicle:** A UK cabinet minister dismissed the IDF's warning that Iran's newly tested 4,000-kilometer missile places London in range — even as Britain authorized U.S. use of its bases for Hormuz operations and confirmed aircraft deployed from Cyprus to defend Jordanian airspace. You'd think Brits who have a habit of doodling lines on maps could calculate a simple distance.

Culture, Religion & Society

- **Jerusalem Post:** New York Mayor Zohran Mamdani's first two months produced a 182% spike in antisemitic incidents, a welcome of Jew-hater Mahmoud Khalil at Gracie Mansion, and executive orders targeting Israel since day one — alongside inadequate condemnations and lackluster outreach to Jewish groups. French Jews can tell their New York counterparts where that formula leads.
- **Jerusalem Post:** “Catbam” — a hip-hop song written by 11-year-old Nir Krigel about enemy drones, riffing on the Superman intro — has gone viral across Israeli social media and become the unofficial anthem of Operation Roaring Lion. Krigel wrote it during last June's 12 Day War; his sister posted it when this one started. “We're at war, everyone feels a little sad and in pain. I simply wanted to write that.”
- **Times of Israel:** Jerusalem's Bible Lands Museum and Bloomfield Science Museum reopened under the 50-person Home Front Command cap, selling out sessions within hours and marching visitors to basement shelters between gallery rotations when sirens sound. The Israel Museum — too large to manage the logistics — sent its Youth Wing into neighborhood shelters with a mobile art workshop instead.

DEVELOPMENTS TO WATCH

Gaza & Southern Theater

- **Hamas leverage over ceasefire terms** — Hamas told Trump's Board of Peace in Cairo it “may” abandon commitments if Israel maintains wartime restrictions; Jerusalem subsequently reopened the sole pedestrian crossing to Egypt. The sequence confirms Hamas retains operational leverage over a deal it does not respect — and the concession came during a week when the tunnel hunt in central Gaza stalled.

Northern Front (Lebanon / Syria)

- **Iraqi theater expands** — Kataib Hezbollah spokesman Abu Ali al-Askari was killed in a U.S. strike; separately, a drone struck the Royal Tulip Al Rasheed Hotel in Baghdad's Green Zone — housing the EU Advisory Mission. A new take on a wake up call, literally. The EU will undoubtedly hit “snooze” or simply reach the most incorrect conclusion possible.

Regional Axis (Iran, Houthis, Militias)

- **Trump energy-strike deadline imminent** — Trump threatened to target Iranian power plants “starting with the biggest one first” if the Strait of Hormuz is not fully reopened. The Israeli security establishment supports moving ahead. Iran’s counter-threat — complete Hormuz closure and retaliatory strikes on Gulf energy and desalination infrastructure — differs from their standard operations in exactly no discernible way. **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**
- **Russia expanding direct military support to Iran** — Moscow is providing satellite intelligence, improved Geran-2 drone technology refined through Ukraine combat experience, and tactical advice on U.S. force positions in the region. Which, somehow, seems totally acceptable to Washington. Absurd.
- **Houthi joint operations rooms still active** — No new strikes reported, but the Political Council’s declaration of military solidarity and confirmation of joint operations rooms with Iran remain in effect. A Tasnim-quoted military official said destabilizing Bab al-Mandab and the Red Sea “is one of the options being considered.” Egypt’s Suez Canal revenue already collapsed 61% — the Houthis hold the economic lever whether or not they fire another missile this week.

Home Front & Politics

- **Ben Gurion Airport facing closure pressure** — Pre-Passover outbound flights will be limited to 50 passengers per departure while incoming flights remain at full capacity. At least for now. Security officials are urging a complete closure of the airport. El Al already canceled flights through the holiday. Passover travel — the single largest annual movement of Israelis and diaspora visitors — is already functionally grounded.
- **March 31 budget deadline: 8 days** — The NIS 5 billion Haredi allocation has not cleared legal review. UTJ has demonstrated willingness to defect. The AG’s objections reopened the wound days after the draft bill shelving was supposed to close it. Final votes are expected in the hours before Passover begins — meaning the coalition’s survival and the country’s fiscal framework will be decided while the air force is striking Tehran and the home front is under missile fire.

Four weeks ago, the premise was that speed and precision would compensate for the costs of a multi-front war. That premise holds — barely. The regime cannot show its leader, cannot keep commanders alive, cannot stop Mossad from calling its police chiefs by name and reciting their children’s birthdays. The production base is in rubble. The officer corps is triaging loyalty against survival. And yet: Hamas governs central Gaza from tunnels the IDF has not drilled, a classified report on air-defense gaps sits under a stack of coalition demands, and the budget that funds the war cannot pass without funding the institutions that exempt their students from fighting it.

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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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