



Forensic intelligence for those who act.

READER EDITION

April 15, 2026

ISRAEL BRIEF

Wednesday, April 15

Three tracks converging on April 21 — Lebanon at State, Hormuz at sea, and a Shin Bet weaponization disclosure landing as the Ben-Gvir hearing opens.

◇ URIEL ZEHAVI

THE BOTTOM LINE A French court has ruled that paying Islamic State for safe passage and raw materials in 2013 and 2014, in order to keep a cement plant running, constitutes “a genuine commercial partnership with the Islamic State” — and that corporate executives can go to prison for it. The same logical structure applies to every European corporation that has paid Hamas-controlled intermediaries for access to Gaza markets, every NGO that has funded Hamas-affiliated subcontractors to deliver aid, every aid organization that has paid Hezbollah-aligned vendors to operate in southern Lebanon, and every multinational that has worked through IRGC-linked logistics networks to maintain Iranian operations during sanctions periods. France established the precedent that paying a designated terrorist organization for operational continuity is criminal corporate conduct, prosecutable with prison time on the table. The MSF disclosures — staff who knew Hamas was operating inside hospitals where they worked, an organization whose access depended on not reporting what it saw — sit one analytical centimeter from the Lafarge fact pattern. Plant managers paid Islamic State to keep producing cement. A “humanitarian” organization withheld disclosure of Hamas’s hospital embedding to keep producing access. The French court ruled on the first. The question of whether the second is materially different is no longer purely rhetorical. [If “we needed it for our operations” did not save Lafarge’s executives, it should not save anyone else’s.]

CLASSIFICATION

Reader Edition

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WE are tracking three pressure points all running against the same six-day ceasefire clock — Israeli and Lebanese ambassadors face-to-face at the State Department at a deadlock, the U.S. naval blockade entering its second day with a \$1 billion sanctions-waiver cliff Sunday, and a nine-justice High Court panel hearing the Ben-Gvir dismissal petition [now with the disclosure that the Attorney General activated Ronen Bar’s Shin Bet against the minister and instructed it to keep digging when the inquiry produced nothing]. Much else of we’ve been tracking — Operation Silver Plow’s mop-up at Bint Jbeil, the Cairo “voluntary or by force” framework, the Zini letter, the European procurement realignment — all continued to advance.

IN THIS EDITION

Flash Brief	4
The War Today	4
Israel and Lebanon Open Direct Talks at State as Beirut Demands Ceasefire and Jerusalem Names Disarmament	4
Hormuz Blockade Day Two: U.S. Destroyers in Gulf, Mine Clearing Begins, Iranian Sanctions Waiver Expires Sunday	5
Inside Israel	6
Ben-Gvir Dismissal Hearing Opens Before Nine-Justice Panel as Levin Preempts Ruling and Shin Bet Weaponization Surfaces	6
Hebrew U Poll: 61 Percent Oppose Iran Ceasefire as Public Splits on Whether to Honor It	8
Israel and the World	8
Italy Suspends Defense Agreement; Serbia Doubles Down with 50/50 Drone Joint Venture for 80,000 Units	8
UK Tops Per Capita Antisemitic Assault Tables as March of the Living Adds British Terror Survivors to the Delegation	9
Lafarge Convicted in Paris for Funding Islamic State and Nusra Front — First French Corporate Terror-Financing Verdict	10
Briefly Noted	11
Frontline & Security	11
Diplomacy & Geopolitics	11
Culture, Religion & Society	11
Developments to Watch	12
Judea & Samaria	12
Northern Front (Lebanon / Syria)	12

Gaza & Southern Theater	13
Regional Axis (Iran, Houthis, Militias)	13
Diplomatic & Legal	13
Home Front & Politics	13

Flash Brief

- **Lebanon talks:** Leiter and Hamadeh meet at State with Rubio; Israel demands disarmament, Lebanon offers a 15-day pause. *See The War Today.*
- **Hormuz Day Two:** USS destroyers transit and clear mines; 34 ships through Monday; sanctions waiver expires Sunday. *See The War Today.*
- **Ben-Gvir hearing:** Nine-justice panel sits; Levin preempts ruling; AG's Shin Bet inquiry against Ben-Gvir surfaces. *See Inside Israel.*
- **Iran ceasefire poll:** 61 percent oppose extending the truce to Hezbollah; the country splits 39–41 on Iran itself. *See Inside Israel.*
- **Italy and Serbia:** Rome suspends defense agreement; Belgrade announces 50-50 drone JV targeting 80,000 units. *See Israel and the World.*
- **UK per capita Jew-hate:** Britain leads the developed world; March of the Living delegation now includes Heaton Park survivors. *See Israel and the World.*
- **Lafarge verdict:** Paris court convicts cement maker and eight executives for paying Islamic State and Nusra Front. *See Israel and the World.*
- **Hezbollah commander to NPR:** Lebanese disarmament boxes were empty; arsenal intact; Kornet and Konkurs still flowing through Syria. *See Briefly Noted.*

BELOW: what the Shin Bet disclosure means for the Ben-Gvir petition the High Court is hearing as you read this, why Italy's defense suspension matters less than Serbia's drone joint venture, and the Hezbollah commander on the record telling NPR that all Lebanon handed over were empty boxes.

The institutions are all testing themselves against the same war, and the test results are uneven. The State Department gets ambassadorial talks with no enforcement mechanism. The U.S. Navy gets minesweepers in the Gulf and a sanctions waiver that may undo the leverage they were sent to create. The Israeli High Court gets a nine-justice expanded panel and a disclosure that the Attorney General was running the Shin Bet against the minister whose dismissal she is now demanding. None of these institutions are unconstrained, and each constraint will be visible in what they actually do over the next six days.

The War Today

Israel and Lebanon Open Direct Talks at State as Beirut Demands Ceasefire and Jerusalem Names Disarmament

Israeli Ambassador Yechiel Leiter and Lebanese Ambassador Nada Hamadeh met Tuesday at the State Department with Secretary Marco Rubio, senior adviser Michael Needham, and U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon Michel Issa — the highest-level direct contact between the two governments in decades, opened on the explicit understanding that Hezbollah disarmament is the

wedge. Leiter described the goal in plain terms: “a clearly delineated border between our countries, and where the only reason we’ll need to cross each other’s territory will be in business suits to conduct business or in bathing suits to go on vacation.” A senior American official framed the meeting as an effort “to ensure Israel’s long-term security and to support the Lebanese government’s determination to fully restore its sovereignty over its territory and political life.” Lebanese President Joseph Aoun publicly limited his ambition to “a ceasefire in Lebanon, with the aim of initiating direct negotiations.” Culture Minister Ghassan Salameh — whose downgrade of the talks to “discussions of a logistical nature” we covered Sunday — says Beirut wants a 15-day fighting pause as the price of any broader engagement. The joint post-meeting statement reflected the gap: Lebanon “reaffirmed the urgent need” for cessation of hostilities. Israel and the U.S. raised disarmament and Israel’s right to defend itself. Neither side mentioned a ceasefire. Frankly, no Lebanese government will risk civil war to actually disarm Hezbollah while Iran remains intact. On the ground, Brig. Gen. Guy Levy’s 98th Paratroopers Division established operational control over the destroyed Bint Jbeil stadium where Hassan Nasrallah delivered his “spider web” speech in May 2000, with the IDF reporting more than 100 Hezbollah operatives killed in the Bint Jbeil sub-operation, dozens of infrastructure sites dismantled, and “full operational control of Bint Jbeil within days” — the corrective for 2024’s incomplete clear. Hezbollah continues firing rockets and drones at northern Israel.

ASSESSMENT

The Lebanese delegation arrived in Washington with a mandate to obtain a ceasefire and nothing else. The Israeli delegation arrived with a mandate to extract Hezbollah’s disarmament and accept nothing less. Those are mirror images of each other built around the same fact — Iran. Salameh has already told the regional press the Lebanese ambassador is authorized only to seek a fighting pause, which is what governments say when they have no intention of solving the underlying problem and would like the bombs to stop while they figure out their next move. Aoun’s government cannot disarm Hezbollah because it cannot survive trying, and everyone in the room on Tuesday knew it. The IDF General Staff has accordingly defined southern Lebanon as the main front of Operation Rising Lion, gone back to Bint Jbeil to clear what it failed to clear in 2024, and is now demonstrating on Lebanese soil the standard the Cairo talks asked Hamas to volunteer for and Hamas refused. Israel is not leaving the north, and a peace agreement that requires Hezbollah’s voluntary self-liquidation is a peace agreement that requires Iran’s defeat first.

Hormuz Blockade Day Two: U.S. Destroyers in Gulf, Mine Clearing Begins, Iranian Sanctions Waiver Expires Sunday

The U.S. naval blockade entered its second full day with CENTCOM Adm. Brad Cooper announcing that two destroyers — USS Frank E. Peterson and USS Michael Murphy — have transited the Strait of Hormuz and begun mine-clearing operations to “ensure the strait is fully clear of sea mines previously laid by Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps.” Cooper arrived in Tel Aviv Tuesday for talks with Chief of Staff Eyal Zamir. Saudi Arabia is privately urging Washington to lift the blockade and return to talks, fearing Iranian retaliation through the Houthis against Bab al-Mandab. The IRGC publicly

threatened that renewed conflict would expose “capabilities the enemy has no idea about.” A separate U.S. sanctions waiver — issued for one month during the war and expiring Sunday — is on track to deliver Iran up to \$1 billion in oil revenue per the Washington Post, with Asian buyers pressing the Trump administration for renewal. The Iranian delegation returning from Islamabad’s failed talks reported it took an alternate route after warning of an attack on its aircraft, per regime mouthpiece Mohammad Marandi to Al-Mayadeen — Marandi added, on the record, that Iran is “very busy preparing ourselves for the next round of war.”

ASSESSMENT

The blockade is doing exactly what blockades do — squeezing the regime’s hard-currency lifeline while leaving the regime’s escalation card (the strait itself) functionally in Iranian hands. Trump’s bet is that fiscal pressure forces concession before military pressure forces escalation. Pezeshkian’s three-to-four-week collapse warning is the operative clock; the IRGC’s rejection of his demand for restored executive powers tells you the people with the guns are willing to ride the regime into the wall to keep their hands on the steering wheel. The \$1 billion sanctions waiver expiring Sunday is a test. Renewing it for Asian buyers cuts the legs out from under the blockade and tells Tehran that Washington isn’t actually willing to suffer for its leverage. Letting it expire turns the screw and puts the Asian relationships at risk that Trump has spent eighteen months cultivating as the alternative to Chinese sphere-of-influence consolidation. Marandi’s “preparing for the next round” is regime mouthpiece language — but it is also factual. The regime has no other plan. The Starmer-Macron “multinational mission” is the European version of the same calculation the Saudis are making: assume the war ends inconclusively, position to take credit for restoring freedom of navigation, and stay clear of the only operation that actually changes Tehran’s incentive structure. [The polite fiction that the UK-French mission is “separate from the warring parties” describes the entire European posture toward this war — present at the press conference, absent from the firing line.] The Italian defense suspension fits the same template, which is why we have an entry on it below.

Inside Israel

Ben-Gvir Dismissal Hearing Opens Before Nine-Justice Panel as Levin Preempts Ruling and Shin Bet Weaponization Surfaces

The High Court convened an expanded nine-justice panel Wednesday morning to hear petitions seeking to compel Prime Minister Netanyahu to dismiss National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir built on Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara’s filing arguing Ben-Gvir’s interventions in the Saban promotion, the Sde Teiman and Beit Lid investigations, the Shabtai dismissal cycle, and the humanitarian aid convoy directives constitute “extreme and unreasonable administrative omission” by Netanyahu in failing to act. Justice Minister Yariv Levin announced minutes before the hearing opened that any dismissal ruling will not be honored: “the authority to appoint or dismiss a minister is, by law, vested in the prime minister and not in the court... my friend, Minister Ben-Gvir, will continue to serve in his position, by virtue

of the will of the people and the confidence of the Knesset.” Foreign Minister Gideon Sa’ar separately warned that if the court accepts Baharav-Miara’s position, “there will be a need to establish a constitutional court.” Inside the chamber, Court President Yitzhak Amit ordered MK Almog Cohen removed for calling him “corrupt” and ejected four additional coalition MKs for interrupting. Amit told the government representative he had counted 16 prior cases in which the court discussed ministerial appointment or removal. Ben-Gvir’s attorney David Peter opened by citing a disclosure that Baharav-Miara had directed then-Shin Bet chief Ronen Bar to gather material on Ben-Gvir for use in her own future submission to the court — that Bar’s subordinates failed to substantiate the AG’s initial suspicions, and that Bar instructed them to expand and deepen the investigation regardless. Justice Ofer Grosskopf objected to discussion of “media reports.” Peter responded that “this entire petition is based on media reports.” Peter further noted that Justice Khaled Kabub was hearing a petition partly built on Ben-Gvir’s tweets directed at Kabub himself. Kabub volunteered from the bench that “it was a vile tweet.” Deputy President Noam Sohlberg proposed a compromise of returning to the framework agreement Baharav-Miara and Ben-Gvir originally signed. Amit countered with a review of whether the settlement documents had been breached. Peter argued Ben-Gvir’s Temple Mount policy change “defended human rights — the ones who were supposed to do that are you, not a politician.”

ASSESSMENT

The Attorney General activated the secret intelligence service to gather material against a sitting cabinet minister in support of her politically-motivated attempt to remove that minister. When the service’s investigation failed to produce the goods, the AG-directed investigation was expanded rather than closed. That disclosure should organize how we all read what the nine justices do next. The same Shin Bet that the country was told last week could not be trusted to provide an honest threat assessment about Iranian targeting of the prime minister was, a year earlier, being run by the AG as a political research arm against a senior member of the government. Levin’s preemptive announcement is terrible for optics but constitutionally correct and politically necessary. The Basic Law: The Government vests ministerial appointment and dismissal in the prime minister. The High Court has spent twenty-five years expanding its supervisory jurisdiction over executive personnel decisions on the strength of its own self-authored “reasonableness” doctrine, and Amit’s “16 prior cases” is the cumulative artifact of that expansion, not its constitutional foundation. Sa’ar’s constitutional-court suggestion is a reasonable response to a court that has decided the absence of a written constitution authorizes it to write one as it goes. Sohlberg’s framework-agreement compromise is the responsible exit ramp — return to the document the parties themselves negotiated, treat any breach as a contract dispute, and stay out of the business of removing democratically appointed ministers from cabinets the prime minister still wants them in. Amit’s settlement-documents framing is the expansive alternative, in which the court reserves to itself the question of whether Ben-Gvir’s conduct breached norms only the court is qualified to define. The proximity to the next election, the depth of the divisions within the bench, and the Shin Bet revelation make a decisive ruling unlikely. A deferred or proceduralized outcome is where this lands. The minister will continue to serve. The political cost of the petition will fall on the petitioners and the AG who built her case on a problematic Shin Bet inquiry — and may, in the longer arc, be what finally forces the Knesset to write down what the Basic Laws have left implicit for too long.

Hebrew U Poll: 61 Percent Oppose Iran Ceasefire as Public Splits on Whether to Honor It

A Hebrew University Agam Labs poll of 1,312 Israelis conducted April 9–10 — the first national survey since the U.S.-Iran ceasefire took effect — found 61 percent oppose extending it to include Hezbollah, with the public split on Iran itself: 39 percent want Israel to resume strikes, 41 percent want the truce respected, and 19 percent unsure. The poll lands as the IDF Home Front Command suspends school activities and restricts gatherings in northern communities ahead of an assessed Hezbollah escalation, as Italy suspends its defense agreement, and as the April 21 ceasefire expiry sits six days out. Margin of error 3.2 percent.

ASSESSMENT

The numbers describe a country that has read the room. Sixty-one percent oppose extending the truce to Hezbollah because sixty-one percent have a memory longer than a week — Naim Qassem rejected negotiations with Israel from the podium this week, told Lebanon's army not to enforce against the resistance, and said "we will let the field speak." There is no version of an extended ceasefire to Lebanon that does not end with Hezbollah reconstituting north of the Litani while Israeli soldiers stand and watch. The split on Iran itself — 39 to 41 — is the more interesting number. It is not simply a war-weariness number (though that is certainly part of it). It is the number of a country that built the operational capacity to keep going, watched the United States hold the leash for two weeks, and is now waiting to see whether the regime's collapse clock or Trump's patience clock runs out first.

Israel and the World

Italy Suspends Defense Agreement; Serbia Doubles Down with 50/50 Drone Joint Venture for 80,000 Units

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni announced Tuesday that her government has suspended the automatic renewal of its defense cooperation agreement with Israel, citing "the situation we are experiencing" — the same day the Defense Ministry confirmed Israel had already halted all defense procurement from France over Paris's UN arms embargo support, exhibition exclusion, and the June 2025 Paris Air Show pavilion blocking that Defense Ministry Director-General Amir Baram called "absolutely, bluntly antisemitic." Hours after the Italian announcement, Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic unveiled a 50-50 drone joint venture with Israel — Serbia provides production infrastructure, Israel provides technology and know-how — with a goal of manufacturing up to 80,000 unmanned aerial vehicles within two years, including loitering munitions and indigenously manufactured systems. Vucic: "I am proud that we will do it together — 50 percent to 50 percent. This guarantees that we will have the best drones in the region." Serbia has supplied Israel with munitions throughout the war as several Western European partners suspended exports.

ASSESSMENT

Meloni's suspension is symbolic. Her government's actual leverage over Israeli defense procurement is negligible. The Italian decision joins France's defense divorce, Britain's arms-license suspensions, and the Spanish, Belgian, Dutch, and Irish chorus of partial export embargoes — a Western European political class whose defense industries depend on Israeli systems they no longer want to be seen buying, signaling to their domestic activist coalitions while quietly assuming the relationships will be restored once the war ends and the press loses interest. Serbia's calculation is the more strategically literate one. Belgrade reads the European retreat as a procurement opportunity and the joint venture as a route into the regional drone market that Western Europeans have neither the production schedule nor the political latitude to contest. Eighty thousand units in two years is the number of a serious industrial program — for context, the entire Western contribution to Ukraine's drone fleet across multiple years has not approached that scale at the unit-economics Serbia and Israel are quietly building. Israel's defense industrial base produces most of what it requires domestically. The residual gaps are being filled by the U.S., Germany, the Czech Republic, India, and — increasingly — partners like Serbia. France and Italy chose a posture. Belgrade chose a market.

UK Tops Per Capita Antisemitic Assault Tables as March of the Living Adds British Terror Survivors to the Delegation

Israel's Diaspora Affairs and Combating Antisemitism Ministry's annual report, released on the eve of Yom HaShoah, found the United Kingdom recorded the highest per capita rate of violent antisemitic assaults of any country with a major Jewish population in 2025. With Australia second. France third. Canada fourth. And the United States lowest per capita despite the highest absolute count. The report documented 20 Jews murdered in antisemitic attacks outside Israel in 2025, the highest toll in more than three decades — with 15 killed by jihadists at Bondi Beach in December, two at the Manchester synagogue attack on Yom Kippur, the two Israeli embassy staff murdered in Washington in May 2025, and the Boulder victim. The UK delegation to this week's March of the Living from Auschwitz to Birkenau formally includes — for the first time — survivors of contemporary antisemitic terror attacks on British soil, among them a survivor of the Heaton Park synagogue attack. CST head of investigations Marc Goldberg argued that what is being deployed in Britain is “weaponised” antisemitism — Palestine Action supporters chanting about “Zionist parasites that have infiltrated our government,” the Hatzola arson attack in Golders Green, the Jihad Al-Shamie attack on a Heaton Park synagogue with the killer reportedly shouting “this is what they get for killing our children” at elderly Jews — fused with a “Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact” between Islamists, the far right, and parts of the far left.

ASSESSMENT

The British state has the highest per capita rate of violent attacks on Jews of any major Jewish community in the democratic world, and the British political class has spent the last eighteen months responding to that fact by recognizing Palestinian statehood, suspending Israeli arms licenses, and barring the IDF from the Royal College of Defence Studies. Goldberg's diagnosis is precisely correct and precisely too generous: antisemitism in Britain is not merely being weaponized against Jews — it is being weaponized against the British state by hostile foreign actors, ideological fellow travelers, and a domestic political class that has decided pretending the connection does not exist is cheaper than disrupting the activist coalitions on which electoral majority partially depends. The March of the Living's inclusion of British terror survivors collapses the narrative distance Britain has spent eighty years building between Auschwitz and itself.

Lafarge Convicted in Paris for Funding Islamic State and Nusra Front — First French Corporate Terror-Financing Verdict

A Paris court Monday found Holcim's Lafarge unit guilty of financing Islamic State and the al-Qaeda-linked Nusra Front to keep its Jalabiya cement plant operating in northern Syria between 2013 and September 2014, ordering the maximum corporate fine of €1.125 million and convicting eight former Lafarge executives, including former CEO Bruno Lafont (six years) and former deputy managing director Christian Herrault (five years). Judge Isabelle Prevost-Desprez characterized the payments — €5.59 million in total, including over €800,000 for safe-passage tolls and €1.6 million for raw materials sourced from Islamic State-controlled quarries — as “a genuine commercial partnership with the Islamic State.” This is the first time a company has been tried in France for financing terrorism. Lafarge separately pled guilty in the United States in 2022 to a similar Syrian arrangement, paying \$778 million in forfeiture and fines. The French parallel investigation into Lafarge for complicity in crimes against humanity over the same Syrian operations remains active.

ASSESSMENT

A French court has ruled that paying Islamic State for safe passage and raw materials in 2013 and 2014, in order to keep a cement plant running, constitutes “a genuine commercial partnership with the Islamic State” — and that corporate executives can go to prison for it. The same logical structure applies to every European corporation that has paid Hamas-controlled intermediaries for access to Gaza markets, every NGO that has funded Hamas-affiliated subcontractors to deliver aid, every aid organization that has paid Hezbollah-aligned vendors to operate in southern Lebanon, and every multinational that has worked through IRGC-linked logistics networks to maintain Iranian operations during sanctions periods. France established the precedent that paying a designated terrorist organization for operational continuity is criminal corporate conduct, prosecutable with prison time on the table. The MSF disclosures — staff who knew Hamas was operating inside hospitals where they worked, an organization whose access depended on not reporting what it saw — sit one analytical centimeter from the Lafarge fact pattern. Plant managers paid Islamic State to keep producing cement. A “humanitarian” organization withheld disclosure of Hamas's hospital embedding to keep producing access. The French court ruled on the first. The question of whether the second is materially different is no longer purely rhetorical. [If “we needed it for our operations” did not save Lafarge's executives, it should not save anyone else's.]

Briefly Noted

Frontline & Security

- *Ynetnews*: A Hezbollah field commander, equivalent to brigadier general, gave NPR a 40-minute interview describing the group's post-2024 reconstitution under Naim Qassem — decentralized cells using radios, motorcycle couriers, and handwritten notes after the pager operation, with the commander claiming Lebanese forces seized only “empty boxes” during the disarmament theater and that anti-tank weapons including Kornet and Konkurs continue to flow through Syria. The on-record contradiction of every official Lebanese disarmament claim. All while the Lebanese ambassador opens talks at the State Department on the premise that disarmament is a Lebanese sovereignty matter — and confirms what the IDF has been saying since the 2024 ceasefire: the boxes were empty, the arsenal was hidden, and the next round was always the plan.

Diplomacy & Geopolitics

- *Ynetnews*: Trump will not travel to Israel for Independence Day or the April 22 Israel Prize ceremony where his selection — the first ever for a non-Israeli — was to be honored, with Israeli officials citing the April 21 ceasefire expiry and U.S. domestic political risk. Argentine President Javier Milei is still flying in and will inaugurate Argentina's Jerusalem embassy.
- *Ynetnews*: Shurat HaDin filed an Article 15 submission to the ICC requesting an arrest warrant for Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez over Spain's approval of roughly €1.3 million in dual-use detonator and explosive-component exports to Iran between 2024 and mid-2025, citing Iranian state media imagery of missiles bearing Sánchez's portrait alongside thank-you messages. Israeli legal advocacy is using the same court Spain has spent two years weaponizing against Israel — and the evidentiary record on Sanchez happens to be the kind the ICC cannot easily wave off.
- *Jewish Insider*: AOC, Ro Khanna, Brad Lander, Michael Blake, and Sen. Ruben Gallego have all reversed earlier positions to oppose U.S. funding for Israeli missile defense — including Iron Dome — with J Street echoing the framing that Israel can fund its own defense, while Saikat Chakrabarti calls for sanctions and Ritchie Torres remains the rare progressive hold-out. The Overton window on Israel inside the Democratic primary lane has now moved past offensive aid and onto purely defensive systems whose function is intercepting projectiles aimed at homes, hospitals, and synagogues — a position whose internal logic only coheres if the desired outcome is the projectiles landing.

Culture, Religion & Society

- *Jerusalem Post*: Polish Confederation MK Konrad Berkowicz unfurled a blue-and-white flag with the Star of David replaced by a swastika on the Sejm floor on Yom HaShoah, declaring Israel “the new Third Reich” — an act

criminal under Polish law. Confederation is the same far-right party whose leader Grzegorz Braun extinguished a Knesset Hanukkah menorah with a fire extinguisher in 2023.

- *Times of Israel*: The Weimar court upheld a police ban on a “Kufiyas in Buchenwald” rally that would have invoked the 1945 Oath of Buchenwald to compare Israel to the Nazis on the 81st anniversary of the camp’s liberation, the day before Yom HaShoah. The activists’ theory — that drawing a direct line from Buchenwald inmates to Palestinians honors the oath — is the standard inversion ritual antizionism performs at every Holocaust memorial site it can access.
- *JTA*: At least a third of the families at Temple Beth El in West Palm Beach have “adopted” a Jewish child murdered in the Holocaust under the synagogue’s 40-year-old Remember a Child program — saying Kaddish for children whose entire families were murdered and who therefore have no one halachically obligated to remember them. With 1.5 million Jewish children killed and 587,226 names of child victims in Yad Vashem’s database, the program is one of the rare answers to Menachem Rosensaft’s warning that without active commemoration the Holocaust eventually becomes “just another statistic, just another catchphrase.”
- *Times of Israel*: Plant an Olive Tree Foundation laid out thousands of shoes in Amsterdam’s Dam Square days before Yom HaShoah to commemorate Palestinian children killed in Gaza — visually echoing the Auschwitz children’s-shoes display and Budapest’s Shoes on the Danube memorial, with names read aloud and 313 photographs displayed. The aesthetic theft is the message: the campaign cannot generate moral authority on its own terms, so it imports it from the European Jewish dead.
- *The Canadian Jewish News*: Toronto entrepreneurs Daniel Carson and Daniel Schreiber sent their KSA-certified Goldy’s Superseed Strawberry Lavender cereal — produced in an Etobicoke kosher facility — aboard NASA’s Artemis II crewed mission, with Canadian astronaut Jeremy Hansen personally selecting it for the menu on the 400,000-kilometer journey around the moon. Talk about out-of-this-world kosher food.

Developments to Watch

Judea & Samaria

- **Al-Ram M4 supply chain** — IDF soldiers seized a M4-pattern rifle and ammunition during a Saturday-night arrest operation in Al-Ram, on the Jerusalem perimeter. A modern carbine inside the capital ring is a logistics question.

Northern Front (Lebanon / Syria)

- **Hezbollah 48-hour escalation window holds** — IDF defense establishment continues to assess Hezbollah will intensify rocket and drone attacks on northern communities in the immediate term. The State Department talks change nothing on the ground — Naim Qassem rejected negotiations from

the podium this week, and “we will let the field speak” is operational guidance. **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**

Gaza & Southern Theater

- **Cairo “voluntary or by force” decision window** — The U.S. official’s “within days” timeline on Hamas’s response to the disarmament framework collides with Mashaal and Abu Marzouk’s on-record rejection that weapons surrender is “the ummah’s honor and pride.” **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**

Regional Axis (Iran, Houthis, Militias)

- **Sanctions waiver expires Sunday — \$1 billion cliff** — The one-month waiver issued during the war is on track to deliver Tehran up to \$1 billion in oil revenue, with Asian buyers pressing the Trump administration for renewal.
- **Kharg ground option still positioned** — Two Marine Expeditionary Units remain forward-deployed for the Kharg seizure Trump described as “very easy.” Iran’s First VP Aref called it a one-way trip “to hell.” The ground option remains the single biggest escalation card Washington has not played, and the one Tehran’s behavior continues to suggest it most fears.

Diplomatic & Legal

- **April 21 ceasefire expiry — six days out** — The two-week U.S.-Iran truce ends next week. Israeli officials have been told to prepare for renewed large-scale hostilities including a potential Iranian surprise attack. Trump skipping the April 22 Israel Prize ceremony is a visible artifact of Washington threat assessments.
- **Magyar’s ICC reversal window — before June 2** — Hungary’s withdrawal from the ICC becomes permanent June 2; Tisza is expected to walk it back before that deadline as a low-cost demonstration of “rule of law” credentials to Brussels, which puts the Netanyahu arrest warrant back inside EU member states’ enforcement reach. The Judea and Samaria sanctions package 26 EU states have been waiting on Budapest to unblock is the second test.

Home Front & Politics

- **Ben-Gvir ruling timing — Sohlberg vs Amit fork** — The nine-justice panel will choose between Sohlberg’s framework-agreement compromise (return to the document the parties signed) and Amit’s settlement-document review (court reserves dismissal authority). A deferred or proceduralized outcome is the most likely landing, with the Shin Bet weaponization disclosure carrying more political weight than whatever the court ultimately writes.

The ceasefire ends in days and nobody at the table has any incentive to fix that. Iran needs the regime to outlast Trump’s attention span. Lebanon needs the bombing to stop without disarming the militia that calls the bombing down. The Trump administration needs a deliverable that can be sold as a victory in a campaign Tehran has not yet conceded losing. In Jerusalem, the same

court that spent yesterday demanding Haredi conscription enforcement is being asked today to remove a sitting minister. Six days, three tracks, and a court hearing that is going to tell us more about Israel's institutional future than the dismissal petition that triggered 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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