



Forensic intelligence for those who act.

READER EDITION

June 2, 2026

ISRAEL BRIEF

Tuesday, June 2

Netanyahu ordered the Beirut strike. Trump turned it back by nightfall, Iran walked from the talks it needs, and the Knesset voted itself toward elections.

◇ URIEL ZEHAVER

THE BOTTOM LINE The Blue Square number is the entry the others orbit — a deadly attack on Jews on American soil, one year on, and the public it happened in front of has already filed it under nothing. That is the diaspora-security environment in one data point: the violence is logged by the people targeted and forgotten by everyone else, which is precisely the condition that lets the next attacker assume no cost. Eli Cohen's widow, Iraq-born, asked at the Farhud commemoration why the displaced Arab keeps the key to the lost house for generations while the displaced Jew is told to move on [she has been asking the right question for sixty years]. Memory is the only deterrent the diaspora controls directly, and it is the one Western institutions are least inclined to fund.

CLASSIFICATION

Reader Edition

DISTRIBUTION

Open · Free to share with attribution

APOLOGIES for this being a little late today — it's been an eventful day. The restraint Washington has imposed on the north all spring was never about Lebanon, and the reversal last night proved it. Netanyahu and Katz ordered a strike on Hezbollah's Beirut stronghold. A few hours later the prime minister had a heated call with Trump and the rest of the apparatus learned from a foreign president's social-media account that they would not be carrying it out. Hezbollah kept firing through the announcement and a soldier-doctor fell near Beaufort. The day reads as a single question about who decides what happens on Israel's borders — and the answer, for now, is not Jerusalem [which is not a good look during an election cycle.

IN THIS EDITION

Flash Brief	3
The War Today	4
Trump Turns the Dahiyeh Strike Around Seven Hours After Netanyahu Ordered It	4
Iran Suspends the Talks Over Lebanon and Threatens Hormuz and Bab el-Mandeb	4
Inside Israel	5
The High Court Clears Gofman for the Mossad and Rejects the Attorney General Outright	5
Haredi Mobs Shut the Country Down Over Arrests as Shas Threatens to Freeze the Knesset	6
The Knesset Votes Itself Toward Elections and Splits the Attorney General on the Way Out	7
Israel and the World	7
France Bars Israel From Eurosatory and Permits Only Its Interceptors	7
Turkey Brings Libyan and Syrian Troops Under One Flag at EFES-2026	8
Britain Bars Two Anti-Israel Streamers and the Free-Speech Defense Arrives on Schedule	8
Lauder Tells a Jerusalem Stage Israel Is Losing the Information War and Asks for an Agency to Fix It	9
California's Ballot Tests Where Jewish Voters Now Sit	10
Three Anniversaries of Murdered Jews Land on One June Morning . .	10

Briefly Noted	11
Frontline & Security	11
Diplomacy & Geopolitics	11
Public Diplomacy & Media	11
Domestic & Law	12
Economy, Tech & Infrastructure	12
Culture, Religion & Society	12
Developments to Watch	13
Northern Front (Lebanon / Syria)	13
Regional Axis (Iran, Houthis, Militias)	13
Diplomatic & Legal	14
Home Front & Politics	14

Flash Brief

Beirut strike reversed: Trump halts the Dahiyeh operation seven hours after Netanyahu and Katz order it. *See The War Today.*

A doctor falls at Beaufort: Cpt. Dr. Ori Yosef Silvester ז"ל is killed by an FPV drone. *See The War Today.*

Iran walks from the table: Tehran suspends the indirect talks over Lebanon and threatens Hormuz and Bab el-Mandeb. *See The War Today.*

Ballistics on Kuwait: CENTCOM intercepts two Iranian missiles aimed at US forces, a rung above the maritime exchange. *See Developments to Watch.*

Gofman clears the court: The High Court installs the new Mossad chief and rejects the Attorney General on each count. For now. *See Inside Israel.*

Haredi mobs shut the country: Roads blocked north to Beersheba over draft arrests as belligerent Shas threatens to freeze the Knesset. *See Inside Israel.*

Dissolution passes first reading: The Knesset votes 106-0 toward elections and advances the bill splitting the Attorney General's office. *See Inside Israel.*

France bars Israel from Eurosatory: No pavilion, no officials, and Israeli strike systems excluded while interceptors stay welcome. *See Israel and the World.*

Turkey absorbs an army: Libyan and Syrian troops drill under one flag at EFES-2026, with NATO partners alongside. *See Israel and the World.*

Britain bars Piker and Uygur: The Home Office blocks two anti-Israel streamers, and the free-speech furor arrives within hours. *See Israel and the World.*

California tests the sort: Five primary races ask whether a Jewish community still backs the candidates running against it. *See Israel and the World.*

Three anniversaries, one morning: Boulder, the Capital Jewish Museum, and the Farhud — and most Americans never heard of the first. *See Israel and the World.*

THE through-line is initiative, and most of it is sitting in other capitals. Trump halts a strike Jerusalem ordered, France decides which Israeli weapons may be shown to buyers, Erdogan absorbs a neighbor's army under NATO cover, and Tehran treats the negotiating channel as the asset it withholds rather than the concession it offers. The one place Israel still moves first is the field itself, the 146th Division folding home after three months and 550 terrorists, the ridge above Beaufort held at the price of a battalion doctor. Everywhere a process intervenes, the initiative passes to whoever runs the process.

The War Today

TRUMP TURNS THE DAHIYEH STRIKE AROUND SEVEN HOURS AFTER NETANYAHU ORDERED IT

Netanyahu and Katz ordered a strike on Hezbollah's Dahiyeh stronghold in Beirut yesterday evening, declaring a "new equation" — no Hezbollah headquarters in the capital stays out of bounds while it fires on Israeli cities. Seven hours later Trump announced on Truth Social that the strike was off. Israel had agreed no troops would enter Beirut and any already moving "have already been turned back." And Hezbollah, through Speaker Nabih Berri, had "agreed" to halt all attacks. Israeli and American officials [to say nothing of those with more than three firing neurons] privately doubt it will hold. Trump made the announcement after a profanity-laced call with Bibi. Trump accused Netanyahu of wrecking the Iran negotiation by widening the Lebanon operation, demanded to know what he was doing leveling whole buildings to kill one commander, and reminded him of the cover Washington has given him. Israelis learned of the halt from the American president, seven hours after their own government had ordered the opposite. Hezbollah kept firing through the announcement — sirens in Kiryat Shmona overnight, the Air Force intercepting a launch after the "ceasefire" took effect. Cpt. Dr. Ori Yosef Silvester ז"ל, 30, the Givati Shaked Battalion's doctor, was killed by an explosive FPV drone near Beaufort (the fifteenth Israeli soldier to fall since the Iran ceasefire). Two officers and a soldier were seriously wounded in the same strike. The 146th Division finished three months in southern Lebanon — more than 550 terrorists killed, 2,700 sites and 200 weapons stores dismantled — and folded back across the border as the maneuver continued elsewhere along the front.

ASSESSMENT

Washington gave the green light on Dahiyeh, watched Hezbollah's barrage answer it, and pulled the go-ahead back the same evening when the strike threatened the table in Doha — the restraint was never about Lebanon, and now neither is the reversal. A ceasefire Hezbollah keeps shooting through is the fire-control arrangement we have watched run all spring, except this round Israel takes the bind for it. The prime minister ordered a strike and learned from a foreign president that he would not be carrying it out [Lapid's "full-on vassal" line writes itself, and is correct]. The cost is not abstract. Silvester ז"ל was a battalion doctor near a ridge the army holds at the price of an FPV drone the Litani-north stockpile keeps producing, and the arrangement that halts the Beirut strike confiscates none of it.

IRAN SUSPENDS THE TALKS OVER LEBANON AND THREATENS HORMUZ AND BAB EL-MANDEB

Iran suspended its indirect exchanges with Washington, the IRGC-affiliated Tasnim claimed, blaming Israel's deepened operation in Lebanon and demanding a halt to Israeli action in both Lebanon and Gaza as the price of

resuming. Tehran threatened to close the Strait of Hormuz and the Bab el-Mandeb at the same time, and Iranian state television asserted the April cease-fire was “very likely to end” if the strikes on Hezbollah continue. Trump said he had heard nothing from Tehran about any suspension and would be content to wait: “going silent would be very good, and that could be for a long time,” adding that Washington would keep the blockade and that Iran is “losing a fortune.” CENTCOM reported redirecting 121 commercial vessels and disabling five to enforce that blockade. A drone struck a cargo vessel in the Gulf near Umm Qasr, Iraqi officials reported, and Qatar condemned Iran’s continued attacks on Kuwait as a violation of Kuwaiti sovereignty. Tehran is still angling for a limited interim deal to ease the economic pressure and buy time without touching the nuclear file.

ASSESSMENT

Tehran suspended the talks because the talks were the asset, not the obstacle — the regime needs the exchange of texts alive to keep the blockade negotiable, and dressing the walkout as solidarity with Lebanon costs nothing it was using anyway. Trump’s “we’ll keep the blockade” reads the same arithmetic from the other side: he has the one instrument the regime cannot wait out, and he knows the Hormuz-and-Bab el-Mandeb threat is a regime advertising a chokepoint its navy can no longer reliably seize [the same regime angling, in the next breath, for a limited deal to buy time]. The probability of conventional escalation inside the regime’s own ceiling, which we have tracked at already more than fifty-fifty, holds: the men reopening the buried launch sites are not the men suspending the talks, and only one of those activities is reversible.

✉ Dossier: *Field Dossier: Axis in the Shadows* — The Houthis pledge to open the Bab el-Mandeb the moment Beirut widens, the ballistic fire on Kuwait, and Tehran’s threat to two chokepoints at once are the synchronized-proxy answer this Dossier maps — the regime routing pressure through the network when its own navy can no longer reliably seize the strait it advertises.

Inside Israel

THE HIGH COURT CLEARS GOFMAN FOR THE MOSSAD AND REJECTS THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OUTRIGHT

The High Court rejected the petitions against Roman Gofman two-to-one, clearing the prime minister’s military secretary to take over the Mossad from David Barnea at this evening’s change-of-command ceremony, with Herzog and Netanyahu attending. Justices Grosskopf and Stein held that Gofman’s role in the Ori Elmakayes affair — the 2022 operation involving a minor — carried no ethical stain capable of disqualifying him. Stein went out of his way to criticize the baseless accusations the Movement for Quality Government’s attorney had leveled as a “public petitioner.” Barak-Erez dissented, arguing the open questions warranted a conditional order before the appointment took effect. The court unanimously rejected the Attorney General’s position and the dissent of committee chair Asher Gronis, the retired court president. Gofman’s clearance triggered immediate departures inside the Mossad: the head

of the Tevel division, which runs the agency's foreign liaison, announced he is leaving, and the head of the international-relations branch followed, with more senior resignations reported to come.

ASSESSMENT

The legal guild ran this appointment to the wall and lost on its own turf — the AG's position rejected by every justice on the panel, including the one who wanted to keep examining it. The pattern the Gofman file fits is the one we've been tracking on Levin's committee and the yeshiva tax credit: the institutions the reform was written to rebalance reaching past the cabinet's unanimous decision to decide who staffs the state, and getting told no. The Tevel and liaison resignations are the cost the brief would name plainly [the people who run Israel's foreign intelligence relationships walking out the week the agency changes hands]. Whether that thins the Mossad's bench at a moment of maximum demand on it, or whether it is the predictable churn a new chief always brings, is the open question — and Gofman walks in tonight with both readings live.

HAREDI MOBS SHUT THE COUNTRY DOWN OVER ARRESTS AS SHAS THREATENS TO FREEZE THE KNESSET

Thousands of haredi men blocked roads from the north to Beersheba on Monday over the arrest of yeshiva students who evaded conscription, climbing onto the rail line near Ben-Gurion Airport, forcing the Jerusalem train back to Tel Aviv, and shutting Highway 4, Highway 1, and the Chords Bridge. The protests turned violent after police declared them illegal. A uniformed soldier had to be forcibly rescued from a mob in Jerusalem. A motorcyclist seriously injured a demonstrator on Route 4, and rioters shook the car of the police's chief medical officer, Chief Superintendent Dr. Valerie Shoshan — a bereaved mother whose son fell in Gaza. In Beit Shemesh, hundreds stormed a police station, torched nearby woodland, and damaged property. [But tell me again how they're honoring HaShem.] All eight detainees walked free. Shas sent Netanyahu and coalition whip Ofir Katz an ultimatum: pass Basic Law: Torah Study in a preliminary reading by Wednesday or the party stops voting for any coalition legislation. Deri told the prime minister the bloc would not survive unless he stood against what the party calls the deposed Attorney General's persecution.

ASSESSMENT

The evader count tops 39,621 with three in four haredi, projected to 90,000 within half a year against a first-half haredi enlistment of 1,866. And the army is 12,000 soldiers short. So, of course, the haredi response to enforcement is to threaten to paralyze the Knesset over a Basic Law that would entrench the exemption the High Court already struck down. Shas is demanding the legislature lock in the burden's permanent unsharing as the price of letting the government function at all. The Beit Shemesh releases are the same catch-and-release reflex we've tracked since the draft order issued: two officers in a station hundreds were storming and a judge who let them go [the enforcement that lets Bagatz say arrests happen and lets Deri say no haredi sits in a cell].

THE KNESSET VOTES ITSELF TOWARD ELECTIONS AND SPLITS THE ATTORNEY GENERAL ON THE WAY OUT

The Knesset passed the coalition's dissolution bill in a first reading 106-0 early Tuesday, after the House Committee sent it to the plenum and Ofir Katz marked the moment by noting the government had held "until the very end" of a full four years. The bill, which needs two more readings, sets elections between September 8 and October 20 — the House Committee deferring the date itself to the bill's later stages, with Netanyahu pressing toward October and the haredi parties pushing for September. In the same overnight session the Knesset advanced the bill splitting the Attorney General's office in a first reading. Netanyahu moved to put the campaign on a footing, asking Bat Yam mayor Zvika Brot to run both Likud's campaign and his election headquarters, an unusual doubling of two senior roles. Brot ranked first in a recent satisfaction poll of big-city mayors at 75 percent. On the other side, Eisenkot, now outpolling Bennett, took an unmistakable shot at him: parties with a handful of seats should not be able to demand the premiership or threaten to switch sides if denied it. Lapid is pressing Eisenkot to join his alliance with Bennett to unseat Netanyahu.

ASSESSMENT

The AG-split bill reaching the floor is the legislative answer to the fight the Gofman ruling and the Levin standoff have been running through the courts — separating the three functions one office now holds, advising the government, prosecuting it, and deciding whom to prosecute inside it, which is the conflict of interest no Western democracy would treat as a feature. The Attorney General reads it as a "race to dismantle the democratic institutions" before the term runs out. What is running out is the window in which the office that has filed against this government for three years can still do so before voters settle who holds the pen. Whoever sets the date sets how long the draft-enforcement fight runs in the streets before the ballot rules on it, and the September-October gap is the variable Netanyahu and the haredi parties are still fighting over. On the opposition bench, Eisenkot is already litigating the seat-count blackmail problem that sank the last anti-Netanyahu government before this one has a candidate [good luck].

Israel and the World

FRANCE BARS ISRAEL FROM EUROSATORY AND PERMITS ONLY ITS INTERCEPTORS

France barred official Israel from the Eurosatory defense exhibition outside Paris this month — no national pavilion, no government representatives, and Israeli firms restricted to air-defense systems with offensive platforms explicitly excluded. The Defense Ministry called the move "disgraceful," a decision that "reeks of political and commercial calculation," and accused Paris of choosing "the wrong side of history" again. The same ban ran in 2024 before a Paris commercial court reversed it as discriminatory weeks too late to matter; organizers walled off Israeli offensive systems behind black partitions at the 2025 Paris Air Show. It lands a week after France blocked Ben-Gvir's

entry over the flotilla footage, weeks after Macron recognized “a Palestinian state,” and after April’s Israeli procurement freeze answered Paris closing its airspace to Israeli aircraft during the Iran war.

ASSESSMENT

Paris is the only competitor in the European defense market that gets to sanction its rival and call it human rights, and the carve-out is the tell — Israeli interceptors stay welcome while Israeli strike systems, the ones outperforming French kit in front of every prospective buyer in the room, get shown the door. France keeps a drawer of these instruments and reaches for whichever one the week’s occasion permits: the entry ban on Ben-Gvir, the airspace denial, the recognition vote, now the pavilion. [A French government lecturing Israel on offensive-weapons ethics while chasing the same Gulf buyers is merely running a sales pitch]. Incredibly, Macron wants to host the Israel-Lebanon talks Washington has left him out of and requested an emergency Security Council session over Beaufort, which is the posture of a capital trying to price itself back into a war it has no leverage in.

TURKEY BRINGS LIBYAN AND SYRIAN TROOPS UNDER ONE FLAG AT EFES-2026

Turkey hosted Libyan and Syrian forces at its EFES-2026 exercise near Izmir, the first foreign deployment for either — 502 Libyan troops from both rival factions training together under a single flag, and the first deployment abroad of Syria’s reconstituted military since Assad fell. Ankara trained the Libyans in amphibious and electronic warfare, mines, and special-forces tactics under its “One Libya, One Army” framing, and is rebuilding the new Syrian army under an August 2025 defense memorandum covering training, weapons, and air defense. Foreign Minister Fidan has accused Netanyahu of needing a new enemy after Iran and called Israeli strikes in Syria a direct threat to Turkish security. The 10,000-strong exercise drew the US, Germany, France, and the UK — NATO partners standing alongside the Syrian units Ankara is absorbing.

ASSESSMENT

Iran spent two decades wrapping Israel’s flanks through proxies and deniable channels; Erdogan is doing it through signed memoranda, defense ministries, and the cover of NATO membership, which is the harder version to interdict because there is no militia to strike and no shipment to intercept. The multilateral exercise is the laundromat — when Damascus’s new army drills beside American and German troops under the Turkish flag, Ankara buys the optics of normalization that Tehran’s network could never purchase, and the absorption of a state on Israel’s northern approach proceeds as reconstruction. Pair it with the 2019 Turkey-Libya maritime line that Greece, Egypt, and Israel all read as illegal across the eastern Mediterranean gas fields, and the encirclement and the energy claim are one move. This is the patient build the Israeli defense establishment will be answering for years, and Israel still has a say in what the Syrian army becomes only while it is being built.

BRITAIN BARS TWO ANTI-ISRAEL STREAMERS AND THE FREE-SPEECH DEFENSE ARRIVES ON SCHEDULE

The Home Office revoked the travel authorizations of Hasan Piker and his uncle Cenk Uygur [can you imagine a shared holiday table in that family?],

blocking both from a planned run through SXSW London, the Oxford Union, and an UnHerd recording on the grounds that their presence “may not be conducive to the public good.” Piker has refused to condemn Hamas, said he would “vote for Hamas over Israel,” called Zionism “a mental illness,” argued any “Zionist tendency should be treated the same way as being a rabid neo-Nazi,” and described Orthodox Jews as “inbreds.” The Jewish Leadership Council and the Community Security Trust both backed the decision, the CST naming his record of “denial of well-documented atrocities and apparent support for extremist groups.” Piker and Uygur both attributed the ban to Israel — Piker’s phrasing was “at the behest of Israel” — and Green Party leader Zack Polanski, the Oxford Union, and a string of social accounts converted the revocation into a free-expression cause within hours.

ASSESSMENT

The man who wants Hamas to beat Israel at the ballot box has discovered the principle of free movement at the precise moment a Western government applied to him the same standard it has long applied to Tommy Robinson and Kanye West — and the speed of the “this is authoritarianism” pivot is the tell that the principle was never the point. Starmer’s Home Office is not a reliable friend to British Jews, which is what makes the move worth watching: a Labour government that polices a Nakba march at four-thousand-officer scale rather than ban it decided this particular pair crossed from criticism into the category it already polices for the far right. The “at the behest of Israel” reflex [a foreign Jewish hand behind the British state, supplied without evidence and received without friction] is the same conspiracy grammar the ban was responding to, performed in real time by the people protesting it.

LAUDER TELLS A JERUSALEM STAGE ISRAEL IS LOSING THE INFORMATION WAR AND ASKS FOR AN AGENCY TO FIX IT

World Jewish Congress president Ronald Lauder used the Jerusalem Post Conference to call for a standing Israeli government body to fight hostile narrative — “not a political appointee, but someone who knows PR and news backward and forward” — and named the specific libels that traveled unchecked: the al-Ahli hospital strike misattributed to Israel, the fabricated UN claim that 14,000 babies would die in Gaza within 48 hours, the invented charge that Israel trained dogs to rape Palestinian prisoners. “As good as it is militarily, that’s how bad it is on PR,” he said, urging that Israel “hit back twice as hard” and that the diaspora partner in the fight.

ASSESSMENT

Lauder is naming the gap we have been screaming about in these posts — the adversary owns the institutional terrain while Israel funds reactive broadcast — and prescribing the reactive broadcast as the cure. A counter-messaging agency that “hits back twice as hard” answers each libel after it has already cleared the UN annex, the wire desk, and the campus, which is the half of the kill chain Israel has always been able to reach and never the half that matters. The libels Lauder lists were not won on PR budgets. They were laundered through institutions — a UN mechanism, a health ministry, a corporate-left press that cites the annex without sourcing it — and an agency that argues louder on the same platforms enters the fight at the broadcast layer the other side abandoned a long time ago [the dogs-and-prisoners libel did not need rebutting; it needed never to have reached print, and that is an editorial problem, not a hasbara one].

CALIFORNIA'S BALLOT TESTS WHERE JEWISH VOTERS NOW SIT

California votes today in five races that read as a single experiment: can a Democrat who says Israel meets the legal definition of genocide still bank his local Jewish community's support, and can an Israel antagonist be unseated in his own backyard. Ro Khanna's turn into the party's leading anti-Israel voice — while embracing figures and groups credibly accused of anti-semitism and terror sympathy — has split the Jewish community in his Palo Alto district, with Jewish elected officials still behind him even as donors and constituents peel off. In New York's 13th, Mayor Mamdani's preferred candidate to topple Adriano Espaillat, Darializa Avila Chevalier, carries a record of posts assailing Israel, interracial relationships, "white liberals," and the U.S. military, and co-hosted a podcast with an October 7 cheerleader. The throughline is a progressive flank that now treats Jewish political participation as something to contain.

ASSESSMENT

The vocabulary arrived months ago in a McMorrow dodge and a Tlaib resolution. Now the sort reaches the candidate slate a Jewish voter actually has to choose from on primary day, which is the layer that allocates power. Khanna's Jewish officials staying put while his donors walk is the American Jewish "but" rendered as a fundraising spreadsheet [the community that pays for the campaign and the community the campaign courts are no longer the same people]. The mechanism we've flagged runs through the primary — a 2029 arms-conditioning floor and the candidate-layer capture both get built in low-turnout June elections like this one, where the activist base is the electorate. Whether a Khanna survives a Silicon Valley with money and a long memory is the variable worth watching past tonight.

THREE ANNIVERSARIES OF MURDERED JEWS LAND ON ONE JUNE MORNING

American Jews marked one year since the Boulder firebombing — an "anti-Zionist" [i.e., a raging Jew-hater] hurled gasoline bombs at a rally for the hostages, killing an elderly woman — and Blue Square polling finds most Americans never heard of it. The same day brought the first anniversary of the Capital Jewish Museum shooting, where Israeli embassy staffers Sarah Milgrim and Yaron Lischinsky ז"ל were murdered in Washington, commemorated at the embassy with their families present. [I have no polling to prove this, but anecdotally most non-Jews I know didn't know about this one either — and, sure, we control the media]. And at the President's Residence in Jerusalem, Iraqi-born Israelis marked 85 years since the Farhud, the 1941 Baghdad pogrom that murdered some 180 Jews and began the end of a community that traced to the Babylonian exile. Herzog drew the line from 1938 Germany through the Farhud to October 7.

ASSESSMENT

The Blue Square number is the entry the others orbit — a deadly attack on Jews on American soil, one year on, and the public it happened in front of has already filed it under nothing. That is the diaspora-security environment in one data point: the violence is logged by the people targeted and forgotten by everyone else, which is precisely the condition that lets the next attacker assume no cost. Eli Cohen's widow, Iraq-born, asked at the Farhud commemoration why the displaced Arab keeps the key to the lost house for generations while the displaced Jew is told to move on [she has been asking the right question for sixty years]. Memory is the only deterrent the diaspora controls directly, and it is the one Western institutions are least inclined to fund.

Briefly Noted

Frontline & Security

Israel National News: A Hebron-area assailant rammed his car into pedestrians at the Gush Etzion Junction on Sunday evening, wounding three — a 17-year-old girl in serious condition with severe lower-limb injuries, a 15-year-old with facial wounds, and a third treated for shock — before a soldier from Kfir's Nahshon Battalion put him down at the scene.

Jerusalem Post: The police maritime unit and Ashdod customs intercepted a speedboat off Ashdod running some 4,000 cartons of cigarettes — NIS 7 million worth — the crew dumping the boxes overboard as officers closed in, before the supply ship and its two Azerbaijani officers were seized.

Diplomacy & Geopolitics

JNS: Sa'ar inaugurated Israel's embassy in Suva, nine months after Fiji opened its own mission in Jerusalem and became the seventh state to do so. It is his fourth new embassy in sixteen months, with La Paz and an African capital next and a hostile-state mission slated to close — the map redrawn toward the states that recognize the capital.

Jerusalem Post: Smotrich spent the week in Washington meeting Latin American leaders to sign a fresh agreement under the Isaac Accords, the conviction-based normalization track now holding Argentina, Uruguay, Panama, and Costa Rica. The defense-and-counter-narco framework keeps adding partners on the merits, without waiting on Riyadh.

Public Diplomacy & Media

Israel Hayom: The Tourism Ministry is buying placement on Disney+ and YouTube for an "I AM ISRAEL" campaign aimed at three separate audiences and meant to prime the day-after tourist return. It is the broadcast layer again — a paid run on platforms the other side already saturates for free, sold as image repair.

JNS: Brad Lander, challenging Dan Goldman in New York's 10th, told a progressive LGBTQ club he would not have voted to censure Rashida Tlaib over "from the river to the sea," pledged to refuse AIPAC money, and said he "look[s]

forward to working with her” in Congress. The Jewish candidate running to the antizionist flank of a Jewish incumbent is the partisan sort arriving inside a single primary ballot.

Algemeiner: Kanye West drew more than 118,000 to an Istanbul concert after being barred from venues elsewhere over his record of Jew-hatred. Erdogan’s Turkey is the open door for the act every other market closed.

Israel Hayom: Anti-Hezbollah Lebanese accounts produced their own version of the viral “I’m a Bibist” dinner-table sketch, with the son coming out not against family but for the Lebanese state and a peace deal with Israel — and the on-screen family threatening to kill him as a “Zionist.”

Domestic & Law

Jerusalem Post: Netanyahu asked the Jerusalem District Court to trim Tuesday’s testimony and scrap Wednesday’s hearing for the incoming Mossad chief’s ceremony and the comptroller vote, and Judge Friedman-Feldman pushed back — “either they adjust to us, or we continue as planned.” The ridiculous “case 2000”’s cross-examination is in its final stretch, and the court is unmoored from reality.

Walla: The Lod District Court convicted Daniel Ki-Tov of Elad on two counts of contact with a foreign agent — graffiti on an IDF memorial, signs on bridges and at bus stops, all filmed and sent to Iranian handlers for cash during the war, plus an offer to photograph Gantz’s home. Tehran is still recruiting Israeli citizens off Hebrew-language Telegram, one paid errand at a time.

Economy, Tech & Infrastructure

JNS: Motorola Solutions agreed to buy Israeli counter-drone firm D-Fend for \$1.5 billion.

Globes: Israeli startups raised \$750 million in May, putting the year at \$5.15 billion across five months — Decart’s \$300 million AI round led, with defense-tech and cyber filling out the table. Capital is finding the war economy, not fleeing it.

JNS: Arkia will open twice-weekly Tokyo flights in October, breaking El Al’s monopoly on the route as Israelis increasingly fly east to skip the Jew-hate waiting for them in the West.

Times of Israel: A Weizmann Institute team is trucking a mobile climate lab across East Africa to measure land-use effects, starting in Kenya — Israeli science filling a data gap in places that publicly keep their distance.

Culture, Religion & Society

Jerusalem Post: A 12-year-old turned up a rare carved gemstone on a dig at Korazim, the ancient Jewish village above the Kinneret. The country’s archaeological floor is, as ever, closer than people think.

Jerusalem Post: An immersive installation, “We Shall Rise,” opened on the roof of the Azrieli mall in Tel Aviv, walking visitors from the morning of October

7 through the wars with Iran to the hostages coming home. Ziv Koren's two and a half years of documentation, staged where the city shops — let's hope the MFA helps this one travel.

Jerusalem Post: The Beaufort Ridge outpost the IDF took in southern Lebanon sits under Qal'at al-Shaqif, the Crusader fortress Fulk and Melisende's forces built in 1139 and the Golani recon unit held from 1982 to the 2000 withdrawal. Lebanon filed it to UNESCO's heritage list nine months ago; the ridge has changed hands again since.

Developments to Watch

Northern Front (Lebanon / Syria)

Katz names a permanent Litani buffer — Katz set out a standing military-controlled belt north of the border up to the Litani, with Hezbollah fire to trigger strikes back into Beirut. The "ceasefire" Trump announced covers troop entry into the capital, not the zone the IDF intends to hold past it, and the two arrangements will collide soon.

Night-capable FPV drones reach the IDF's worry list — The officers tracking the explosive drone that killed Capt. Silvester *z"l* say the enemy's learning curve on night-flown FPV strikes is rising. The weapon that holds the ridge at the price of a battalion doctor gets harder to intercept after dark, and the Litani-north stockpile keeps producing it through every halt.

Regional Axis (Iran, Houthis, Militias)

Iran fires ballistics at US forces in Kuwait — CENTCOM intercepted two Iranian ballistic missiles aimed at American forces in Kuwait, and the GCC condemned the strike on a member state. Tehran moving from blockade-running drones to ballistic fire on US bases is a rung above the maritime exchange Washington has been managing, and it puts the regime's own ceiling to the test before any text is signed. **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**

Houthis pledge to open for Hezbollah — Houthi figures say they will not let Hezbollah fight alone if Israel widens the Lebanon operation, reviving the Bab el-Mandeb threat Tehran issued from the other end. A second maritime chokepoint activating off Yemen is the cheapest way Iran's axis answers Beirut without spending the launchers it is busy reopening.

Grossi presses Iran on the enriched stockpile — Grossi raised removing Iran's enriched uranium as the verification piece the draft memorandum defers into its sixty-day window. The regime reopening eighteen buried complexes is not the actor that lets inspectors carry the material out, and the gap between the inspection ask and the excavation is where the next confrontation forms.

Diplomatic & Legal

A US court tries an Iran-backed militiaman as a soldier — An alleged Kataib Hezbollah operative told a US courtroom “we are in a war,” as Washington presses Baghdad to bring the armed factions under state control. Trying the man as an enemy combatant sets the template for the Iraqi militias the next premier is being pushed to confront.

The UN readies an Israel listing for sexual violence — The Secretary-General’s annual mechanism is preparing to name Israel over alleged sexual violence, the listing that travels through the institutional layer regardless of evidence. The annex entry is the drafted instrument waiting on a surface date, and it arms the delegitimization line the moment it publishes.

Home Front & Politics

Shas sets a Wednesday ultimatum on the draft law — Shas told Netanyahu to pass Basic Law: Torah Study in a preliminary reading by Wednesday or stop voting for any coalition bill. The party wants the exemption the High Court struck down locked into a Basic Law before the term runs out, and it is holding the government’s ability to legislate hostage to get it.

The yeshiva tax-break repeal opens a second front — The Attorney General moved to end the tax breaks for yeshiva students, drawing coalition fury the same week the draft arrests put thousands in the streets. The measure reaches the haredi household directly, which is the pressure point that turns a Knesset fight into a street one before the ballot rules on any of it.

The men reopening Iran’s buried launch sites are not the men suspending the talks, and only one of those activities can be undone. What the diplomacy pauses is reversible; what the excavation and the Litani-north stockpile keep producing is not. Hezbollah rebuilds north of the Litani while Washington negotiates the entry into Beirut, Tehran threatens chokepoints its navy can no longer seize while angling for the deal that buys it time, and the coalition votes itself toward a ballot that will decide who holds the pen on all of it. Israel still wins on the field and keeps losing the argument over what it is permitted to do there.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Uriel Zehavi

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR · MITZPE INSTITUTE

Uriel Zehavi is the executive director of Mitzpe Institute, where he writes the daily Israel Brief and co-directs its Institutional Intelligence practice with Modi Zehavi. He is the author of four books from Mitzpe Press and advises Israeli and allied clients on strategic communications for Western audiences.



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.

PASSED ALONG TO YOU?

The daily Israel Brief is free at mitzpe.org. The operational layer — Closed Dossiers, Vantage, and Watchwords — is members-only. Become a member, gift a membership, or book a briefing at mitzpe.org.

Reader Edition · Free to share with attribution to Mitzpe Institute.