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READER EDITION

August 6, 2026

ISRAEL BRIEF

Thursday, August 6

◇ URIEL ZEHAVI

THE BOTTOM LINE Successive American administrations have decided an extradition treaty they signed is worth less than a week of Jordanian street noise. [Rewards for Justice will pay five million dollars for information leading to Tamimi's arrest, and she gives television interviews. I would love to know what information anybody thinks is missing.] The West's failure on Jew-killing usually sits between the arrest and the sentence, where the collar comes fast and the punishment never fits it. In Amman there is no arrest to be slow about. Thirteen years into an open American criminal charge, what the Roths have left is other people writing a letter asking a cabinet officer to raise it with a king.

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Israel answers southern Lebanon with the narrow round and leaves the rest unsettled — while the campaign at home turns on who serves.

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TWO reservists are dead in a house nobody had checked, in a village Israel has held since March, and the scale of the answer is still being argued inside the government this morning. The narrow version went out within hours — an evacuation warning at Mansouri, then the 91st Division's fire brigade working weapons stores from the air and the ground. The army wanted more and is still pushing. Rome broke up three hours early the same afternoon, and at home the campaign has organized itself around who serves.

FLASH BRIEF

- **Lebanon:** A charge at Majdal Zoun kills two reservists, and the scale of Israel's answer is still unresolved. *See The War Today.*
- **Hormuz:** Two ships cross the strait, and Trump and Hegseth fight over what is left in the magazine. *See The War Today.*
- **Gaza:** Zamir promises a permanent hunt for October 7's planners, days after the signature moved to him. *See The War Today.*
- **Elections:** Illouz quits Likud for Liberman, Erdan launches tonight, and a haredi party forms behind real conscription. *See Inside Israel.*
- **Ben-Gvir:** Netanyahu tells the High Court the appointment stands, and a new party bids for the ministry. *See Inside Israel.*
- **Energy:** Israel and Gulf states are working a route to the Mediterranean that misses Hormuz and Bab el-Mandeb. *See Israel and the World.*
- **Michigan:** Harris raises money for El-Sayed within a day, and the pro-Israel Democrat loses his Detroit seat. *See Israel and the World.*
- **Canada:** October 7's defenders advised the national human-rights museum on the Nakba exhibit it opened in June. *See Israel and the World.*
- **Federations:** JFNA drops the consultant who told its next lay leaders to avoid the word "Zionism." *See Israel and the World.*
- **Sbarro:** Jewish leaders press Washington to get Ahlam Tamimi out of Jordan, twenty-five years on. *See Israel and the World.*
- **Reserves:** Katz stops the IDF from releasing the Gaza-border standby squads it calls superfluous. *See Developments to Watch.*

The decisions that matter today all got held over. Israel's cabinet hasn't fixed how hard it hits back in Lebanon, Washington is counting what's in its own magazine before it writes a target list, and the Gulf states are out shopping for a road around a strait Iran shut in February. The only one on a deadline is the decision Israelis take on October 27, and that one is about who serves.

The War Today

Netanyahu Holds Back the Lebanon Answer After a Charge Kills Two Reservists

Maj. (res.) Harel Birenstock ז"ל, 34, of Nokdim, and Sgt. Maj. (res.) Tamir Vaknin ז"ל, 33, of Eilat, were killed early yesterday afternoon when a charge went off inside a house at Majdal Zoun in southern Lebanon. Four more reservists were badly hurt and were still in serious condition at Rambam in

Haifa this morning. All six were from Battalion 2855 of the 55th Reserve Paratroopers Brigade, securing engineering work in a village Hezbollah pulled out of back in March. Nobody had been inside that building. It came down on them as they walked in.

Northern Command opened an investigation into how the force went in — whether the entry followed orders, whether the intelligence said that house could be entered, and whether anyone shook the structure or put a dog through it first. The army doesn't yet know if the charge was old or new. The working assessment is old, which would mean a village Israel has held since March had a live house in it that nobody had checked.

The IDF told the residents of Mansouri in the Tyre district to move a kilometer north, its first such warning for Lebanon in over a month. Then the 91st Division's fire brigade hit weapons stores and infrastructure with artillery and from the air, calling the blast a blatant violation of the ceasefire. Lebanon's health ministry reported one dead and twelve wounded at Tibnin. Lebanese reports through the night have artillery on Majdal Zoun, Haniya and Mansouri, and fighter jets over Mansouri around 1:30. Drones hit Burj al-Shemali outside Tyre. This morning engineers are bringing down buildings at Zotar al-Sharqiya.

The army wanted more than that. Senior officers pressed for a heavy round and the political echelon, after discussions with Netanyahu, approved the limited version instead. That call isn't being described as final, and the argument ran on overnight with the army still pushing. The seventh round of American-brokered talks in Rome broke up about three hours early the same afternoon. Yechiel Leiter, who heads the Israeli delegation, asked the mediators to stop it over what he called repeated misleading leaks from the Lebanese side. Beirut's presidency says the Americans stopped it. The State Department says it ended early because of events on the ground. It resumes today.

ASSESSMENT

Israel answered two dead reservists with the narrower of the two rounds on the table. The army wanted weight and the political echelon gave it precision, on the second day of an American-brokered round in Rome that stopped the moment the evacuation warning went out — the same call that put a targeted killing in Gaza on the chief of staff's desk this week, now running north. And the army being handed those sectors is one Hezbollah is already killing: a Lebanese soldier dead in a charge at Mansouri on July 18, five more wounded by another on August 2.

Two Ships Cross Hormuz as Washington Argues Over What It Has Left

Two vessels crossed the Strait of Hormuz yesterday, down from eight the day before, against the 130 to 140 a day that ran before Iran shut the water on February 28. In the Bab el-Mandeb, one commodity ship crossed. The day before, twenty. The Houthis said they put a missile into a Saudi oil tanker off Yanbu and another into a Saudi tanker in the Gulf of Aden, and Riyadh confirmed neither. CENTCOM's own tally of the blockade reached 48 ships redirected, two disabled and two boarded.

Trump and War Secretary Pete Hegseth reportedly had it out at Camp David on Friday over what is left in the American magazine. Trump demanded to know why he'd been told the stockpile problem was already solved, and Hegseth pushed it onto his deputy, Steven Feinberg, for not getting the president the whole picture. In the first month of the war alone the United States fired more than 850 Tomahawks, more than a thousand Patriot and THAAD interceptors and over 1,300 ATACMS. The ATACMS are close to gone. Feinberg pulled the brass and the procurement office into an emergency meeting afterwards.

In public Trump says none of it is true. He told reporters America has vast stocks, that defense firms are opening more plants than at any point in American history, and that he wants long prison sentences for whoever leaked. Asked why Iran would go differently this time, he said it might and it might not, that you know when you're really ready and when you're bluffing, and that the United States is ready to go.

Officials briefed on the contacts say Abbas Araghchi worked the phones all week — the Saudi, Turkish and Qatari foreign ministers, and Pakistan's army chief. The message was the same to each of them. Hit Iran again and Iranian fire lands on energy infrastructure across the region. He asked them to work Trump. Here, the Defense Ministry test-fired Arrow over the coastal plain yesterday alongside the American Missile Defense Agency, and its director general, Maj. Gen. (res.) Amir Baram, said production is accelerating and Israel's interceptor stockpile is growing.

ASSESSMENT

Trump keeps setting deadlines on Hormuz because a deadline costs nothing and a target list costs ordnance he doesn't have. He said yesterday that America is ready to go, in the same week the fight over his own inventory turned into a leak hunt. [Baram says our interceptor stockpile is growing. Nobody else's is.] Araghchi called Riyadh, Ankara, Doha and Pakistan's army chief to say Gulf refineries burn if Washington fires again, which is what a regime does once it has read the other side's inventory.

Zamir Promises a Manhunt

Eyal Zamir ran an operational assessment inside Gaza yesterday with Southern Command chief Maj. Gen. Yaniv Asor, 99th Division commander Brig. Gen. Elad Tzuri and Gaza Division commander Brig. Gen. Liron Batito. He said the army has significantly weakened Hamas and fundamentally changed the security reality in the Strip. The IDF sits forward of the communities to keep them covered, he said, and running down the Nukhba men who planned and carried out October 7 is a permanent mission. "We will not relent until we bring every person who played a part in it to justice." He said it a day after troops in Gaza were told to hold fire except against immediate threats, and a targeted killing stopped being something a division commander can approve.

Paratroopers working under the Gaza Division found an underground route in the southern Strip packed with dozens of rockets, apparently missed for

the whole war, and blew it with divisional engineers and Yahalom. Engineers spent the morning bringing down buildings in eastern Gaza City.

Hamas is meanwhile moving organizational units to Turkey, including its planning and cyber departments, with most of its covert work going there and Qatar keeping the leadership and the public face. Doha has restricted the leaders' movement and made them ask permission for official meetings since Hamas gave Khalil al-Hayya the political bureau on July 20 over Khaled Meshaal, the man Qatar wanted.

ASSESSMENT

Zamir promised a permanent hunt for the men who planned October 7 while standing in a Strip where he is now the only officer who can authorize killing one of them. What is left to the force under him is engineering work — a rocket tunnel in the south the whole war had missed, buildings coming down in eastern Gaza City — and that is most of what has happened in the Strip since the hold-fire order. [We spent a month arguing about whether Erdogan gets F-35s. Now Hamas's planning and cyber departments are moving to his country, and nobody is arguing about that at all.] Qatar leashed al-Hayya and the covert half of Hamas walked to a NATO member, out of reach of the target folders and of the only pressure Doha had started to apply.

Inside Israel

Illouz Quits Likud for Liberman as a Haredi Party Runs on Conscription

Dan Illouz left Likud yesterday for Avigdor Liberman's Yisrael Beiteinu, and he named the reason on the way out. He'd run this Knesset's fight against the draft-exemption law alongside Liberman's MKs, he said, and Likud has turned into a subcontractor for Arye Deri and Yitzhak Goldknopf. The coalition had already stripped him of his Foreign Affairs and Defense and Economics committee seats for voting against it on the daycare bill. Netanyahu, he added, should take responsibility and go home.

Gilad Erdan launches his own party tonight, with Yuli Edelstein second on the list. Netanyahu's former ambassador to the UN and the Knesset Speaker who walked out of Likud in July are running together on haredi conscription and a promise to hand no bloc a majority. Likud spent yesterday trying to strangle it, offering a reserved slot to Aliza Bloch, the former mayor of Beit Shemesh, who is expected to go to Erdan anyway. Chili Tropper and Yoaz Hendel launched their own party, The Zionist Home – The Reservists, on Wednesday night. Their price for joining anyone's government is a conscription law passed before that government is sworn in.

The demand is arriving from inside the haredi public too. Eli Yishai is in serious talks to lead HaTzibur HaHaredi. He chaired Shas until his ouster and was interior minister before that. The faction says it speaks for working haredim and backs real conscription for young men who aren't learning full time. Its chairman, Moti Leitner, wrote to Deri, Moshe Gafni and Goldknopf this week

demanding representation. Tens of thousands of haredim, he warned, will stay home in October or vote for a party that isn't haredi.

The money went the other way. Judge Stein froze every budget transfer the Knesset Finance Committee approved at Tuesday's mid-recess session. Only civilian emergency spending got through. He sent the petition to a three-justice panel with 48 hours for preliminary answers. The frozen money includes the first full seniority-based pay for haredi kindergarten teachers and transport for the Chinuch Atzmai and Bnei Yosef school networks.

ASSESSMENT

Four parties now run at October 27 on the exemption, and one of them is haredi. Shas and Degel HaTorah know how to fight Liberman. A haredi rival that agrees with the army is new. [I did not expect the pro-draft party to come out of Shas's own alumni. I doubt Deri did either.] Stein froze the transfers on how the committee ran the session and said nothing at all about what the money buys. The coalition handed him the procedure anyway, moving it mid-recess to networks that spent the war telling young men not to enlist. One poll last night put Eisenkot's party first and the blocs at 51 and 58, with Tropper and Hendel short of the threshold. A survey earlier in the week had them clearing it and Eisenkot's side at 60. A few thousand votes decide it.

*Field Dossier: **From Deferment to Duty** — The argument HaTzibur HaHaredi is now taking into an election — that a man who isn't learning full time should serve — is the case this Dossier builds out of halacha itself. ##### Netanyahu Keeps Ben-Gvir as a New Party Bids for His Ministry*

Netanyahu filed his answer to the High Court on Wednesday on the petitions demanding Itamar Ben-Gvir's removal as national security minister. The appointment was lawful, no legal or administrative ground exists to end it, and the question isn't justiciable. He called the attorney general's catalogue of incidents grains, inflated on a shaky evidentiary basis into what she wants read as a pile, sometimes without minimal detail. That the working procedures between the minister and the police haven't been finalized doesn't justify dismissal, he wrote, and Ben-Gvir doesn't deny the principle of police independence. Gali Baharav-Miara told the court last month that talks on a framework to bound his interference had collapsed and that he was still interfering. Ben-Gvir's answer to the filing: "Deep state officials have no authority whatsoever to remove ministers. After the elections, we'll remove the deep state officials ourselves."

The record his ministry runs on moved the other way across the same twenty-four hours. A fragmentation grenade went off at a residential tower in Park Tzameret in north Tel Aviv before dawn, loud enough to be heard into Ramat Gan. It damaged the entrance and hurt nobody. Police call the background criminal. It follows July's run of grenades, a pipe bomb and gunfire at branches of the Japanika chain across the center and the north. Police read that as the Musli-Jarushi fight, reportedly over tens of millions of dollars in cryptocurrency.

Prosecutors indicted three boys of 15 and 16 from Holon and Tel Aviv today for demanding money from a business owner on Sokolov Street, beating him

when he refused, and wrecking his shop the night before. They belong to SSQ, the south Tel Aviv gang whose file already carries stabbings, scooters and phones taken off children, and a grenade thrown in a residential neighborhood. Ben-Gvir called Shin Bet chief David Zini last Wednesday and asked the service into that fight.

Masked men carrying long guns turned back Israel Electric crews in Tel Sheva yesterday morning, after someone shot up a transformer at a quarter to three, and the crews left without repairing it. A man of about twenty was shot dead overnight in Muqeible. On Wednesday evening Ziad Bishara, 57, was shot at point-blank range in his car in Tayibe. His wife Suzan, who campaigned against violence in Arab society, was murdered on her way home from work fifteen months ago. Abraham Initiatives counts 159 Arab citizens killed in crime-related violence since January. Hendel put his claim on the ministry at his own launch that night: “This is our eighth front, and we’re losing it.”

ASSESSMENT

Baharav-Miara’s case against Ben-Gvir is real, and he built it for her. Underneath sits a genuine question about where a minister’s authority over police policy stops and the force’s independence starts, and elected governments are the ones who answer that. She wants the bench to answer it by subtraction, out of a caretaker cabinet, twelve weeks before the voters get their turn. And Hendel spent Wednesday night making the argument against Ben-Gvir that she can’t make, on the record of a grenade in Park Tzameret.

Israel and the World

Harris Endorses El-Sayed Within a Day as Thanedar Loses His Seat

Kamala Harris endorsed Abdul El-Sayed yesterday, one day after he won Michigan’s Democratic Senate nomination running on ending American military aid to Israel and on the charge that the war in Gaza is a “genocide.” She had stayed neutral through the primary. The fundraising email she sent out for him ran entirely on Senate arithmetic — no Democratic majority without Michigan, the stakes too high to hold back, Mike Rogers and his Republican money waiting in November — and it never mentioned Israel. Neither did El-Sayed’s own first email as the nominee.

Then a seat changed hands in Detroit. Shri Thanedar quit the Democratic Socialists after October 7 and spent the years since as a reliable pro-Israel vote, with Hakeem Jeffries’ endorsement behind him. He lost Michigan’s thirteenth to Donovan McKinney, 51.9 percent to 48.1 with 99 percent counted. McKinney is a state representative endorsed by Bernie Sanders and Rashida Tlaib. He has promised to end the military aid and the weapons America sends Israel, and to sign the Block the Bombs Act barring a named list of arms sales.

Zohran Mamdani congratulated El-Sayed from Manhattan and would not rule out going to Michigan to campaign for him before November. Asked to rule it out, New York's mayor said, "I'm here right now." He praised the money-out-of-politics campaign and left Israel alone.

ASSESSMENT

The party's last presidential nominee was raising money for an arms-embargo candidate inside twenty-four hours, on Senate math, and never touched the thing he won on. A sitting member reading that has the rest of the arithmetic in front of him too. A majority of House Democrats voted last month for an amendment ending military aid to Israel. And the one Michigan Democrat who converted to the pro-Israel side after October 7 is the one who just lost his seat. Democratic Majority for Israel is right that this was no rout, and Wesley Bell burying Cori Bush on older, Black and Jewish voters is why — that coalition still wins where it turns out. Both seats that actually changed hands changed the same way.

Gulf Oil Looks for a Road Around Hormuz, and Israel Has One

Israel and several Gulf states have been meeting for weeks, inside Israel and outside it, on getting Gulf oil and gas to world buyers along routes that miss both the Strait of Hormuz and Bab al-Mandeb. Energy Minister Eli Cohen put the talks on the record. Gulf diplomats confirm them. The Americans are reportedly working the same problem, trying to strip Tehran of the leverage it has held over the world's oil since it shut the strait on February 28.

The immediate version is a workaround. Tankers loading at Yanbu on Saudi Arabia's Red Sea coast unload at Eilat, and the crude crosses to Ashkelon on the Eilat-Ashkelon line and out into the Mediterranean. The longer version is new pipe from the Gulf to Aqaba and on to Eilat. Cohen's pitch is that Israel can defend the line it carries and the alternatives running through Syria cannot. Give it four or five years, he says, and Hormuz stops being worth playing. He spent yesterday on the phone to his Greek counterpart Stavros Papastavrou about the India-Middle East-Europe corridor, which crosses the same ground.

Israel is late to this. Turkey and Qatar are further along on the competing lines. One runs from Basra through Haditha, north to Kirkuk and on to Baniyas on the Syrian coast. The American companies now moving into Syria are part-financing it, Chevron among them, and so is Qatari money. The Emirates are doubling their line to Fujairah, on the far side of the strait, and expect it running by the end of this year. Bahrain and Kuwait have no such door. They are pressing Riyadh to widen the East-West pipeline to Yanbu, which only half-answers Hormuz and puts the cargo on a Red Sea coast the Houthis are shooting at. Israel's own deal with the Emirates to move oil through Eilat was cut back years ago, over environmental objections and a zero-risk rule set under the Bennett-Lapid government. This government left it where it found it.

ASSESSMENT

Washington is negotiating the terms on which Iran administers the water it closed, and the move that actually costs Tehran something is being worked in a different room, in pipe and port capacity. The risk is whose bypass gets built. If the Gulf's road around Hormuz ends up running Basra to Baniyas, the region swaps an Iranian chokepoint for a Turkish and Qatari one, with American oil money paying for the switch. Israel's is the shortest line to the Mediterranean, and two governments in a row have kept the throughput at Eilat small enough that it barely counts. [I'd like that zero-risk rule re-argued now, with the strait shut and the Gulf out shopping for a road.] Cohen's four-to-five-year number is his own. The Emirati line to Fujairah opens this year, and that one is not a forecast.

October 7's Defenders Advised Canada's National Human-Rights Museum on the Nakba

B'nai Brith Canada has gone through the Canadian Museum for Human Rights' Nakba exhibit and through the people the museum says it consulted while building it. "Palestine Uprooted: Nakba Past and Present" opened on June 27. One plaque tells visitors about "the Hamas attack that killed about 1,200 people on October 7, 2023," and never says Hamas is a terrorist organization. Another calls the Second Intifada a "Palestinian uprising" and leaves out the more than a thousand Israelis it murdered.

Two of the advisers come out of the Canadian Palestinian Association of Manitoba, which announced it was "honored to contribute" through something called the Palestinian Content Advisory Network. Rana Abdulla supplied content and the exhibit's website cites her repeatedly. Ramsey Zeid is the association's president, and in October 2024 he posted a reel to his Instagram story saying Palestinians "had the right to do what they did on October 7." The association told its followers in May 2024 to stop condemning October 7, and wrote of the hostages Hamas released that they "almost seemed as though they were returning from a vacation rather than captivity." It has also accused Israel of harvesting the organs of dead Palestinians in Gaza. That one is a blood libel, and the IHRA definition says so.

ASSESSMENT

Nobody inside the museum had to believe a word of it. They put the content question to an advisory network and printed what came back, and what came back won't put "terrorist organization" next to Hamas and won't count the Israelis the Second Intifada murdered. Contracting out the approval is how a group that accuses Israel of harvesting Palestinian organs ends up shaping a national museum's exhibit with nobody in the building having endorsed anything. B'nai Brith has the names on the record now, and the museum has to answer whether it knew whose advice it was taking.

Jewish Federations Drop the Consultant Who Told Them to Avoid "Zionism"

The Jewish Federations of North America ended its work yesterday with the man running its messaging project, a day after he stood in front of the Federations' National Young Leadership Cabinet retreat and advised the room to avoid the word "Zionism." Matthew Berger runs Project Halo, which the Federations built to give the community research-based language for fighting

antisemitism and defending Israel. His slide said avoid “Zionism.” It offered showcase diversity and focus on the common enemy instead. One person in the room said their jaw hit the floor.

Niv Elis, the Federations’ associate vice president for external communications, said the presentation was not prepared by the Federations and “does not represent our approach to Zionism.” Berger called the whole thing a misunderstanding of his presentation and his beliefs. He’s a Zionist, he said, and he’s frustrated by how the word gets misused and abused by the people attacking Israel — talk to someone about Jewish self-determination and Israel as the Jewish homeland and you’re likelier to keep them in the conversation. His firm has counted some of the largest American Jewish organizations among its clients.

ASSESSMENT

Berger’s fix concedes the ground and calls it messaging. Years of pressure went into making “Zionism” unsayable in an English-speaking room, and the advice his project brought back was to stop saying it — and new survey work in American Psychologist puts conspiracy belief at the center of the hostility, so the man who thinks Jews run the Treasury still thinks it with the word retired. The alternatives on his slide, showcase diversity and focus on the common enemy, both work without ever naming what this community is actually for, which is a Jewish state. And the room being taught that was the Federations’ next crop of lay leaders. The engagement ended inside a day. The project is still running, and it was his.

Jewish Leaders Press Washington to Extradite the Sbarro Planner From Jordan

The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations is writing to the Secretary of State to ask him to tell King Abdullah II to hand over Ahlam Tamimi now. Tamimi, a Hamas operative, helped plan the suicide bombing of the Sbarro pizzeria in Jerusalem on August 9, 2001. It killed fifteen people and wounded some 130. Malki Roth *z”l* was fifteen years old. Sunday is twenty-five years.

Tamimi lives freely in Jordan and goes on television to talk about what she did. The United States charged her in 2013, put her on the FBI’s most-wanted terrorist list, and offered up to five million dollars through Rewards for Justice for information leading to her arrest. Washington and Amman have had an extradition treaty since 1995. Jordan won’t apply it here, and its stated reason is that handing her over would put people in the streets.

Arnold and Frimet Roth have spent a quarter century asking. “We’re alone in every meaningful sense,” Arnold Roth says, “fighting powerful people who never, ever, at any stage, say what they actually mean or what they intend to do.” Nobody in a position to move it, he says, will name the regime that runs Jordan, “which is essentially a family business.”

ASSESSMENT

Successive American administrations have decided an extradition treaty they signed is worth less than a week of Jordanian street noise. [Rewards for Justice will pay five million dollars for information leading to Tamimi's arrest, and she gives television interviews. I would love to know what information anybody thinks is missing.] The West's failure on Jew-killing usually sits between the arrest and the sentence, where the collar comes fast and the punishment never fits it. In Amman there is no arrest to be slow about. Thirteen years into an open American criminal charge, what the Roths have left is other people writing a letter asking a cabinet officer to raise it with a king.

Briefly Noted

Frontline & Security

- *Ynet*: Around forty Israelis, most of them teenage girls from a movement that wants Jewish communities built in southern Lebanon, tried to cross the border yesterday afternoon in the middle of the strike wave — the IDF says about ten got over and were handed to police, one of them carrying a toddler. Soldiers fighting in a live sector spent the afternoon looking for Israeli teenagers.
- *JNS*: Five Palestinians accused of running a Hamas cell in Cyprus and planning attacks on Israeli targets there go before a Larnaca court today, where prosecutors are folding three separate cases into one indictment — one has admitted being recruited by a Hamas operative and buying the chemicals, and another, a physics professor, is alleged to have entered through the Turkish-occupied north to build the devices.
- *Jerusalem Post*: A civilian drone got into Ben-Gurion's airspace at peak hours yesterday, takeoffs and landings stopped until it was gone, and the Transportation Ministry's director-general has opened an investigation. The defense establishment has been pressing ministers for a blanket ban on civilian drones over the fear of an Iranian attack, and the industry's answer is that there are millions of them in the country and most are flown by children.
- *Arutz Sheva*: The Defense Ministry ran a planned test launch of the upgraded Arrow system yesterday with the American Missile Defense Agency, the air force and Israel Aerospace Industries — the same interceptors that have been catching Iranian and Houthi ballistic missiles over Israel, some of them outside the atmosphere.

Diplomacy & Geopolitics

- *JNS*: The lawyer for the Palestinians suing over Israel's UNRWA ban told the High Court this week that a different UN agency could legally provide the same services. Guterres's spokesman was asked about that and would not dispute her — after two years of the UN calling UNRWA irreplaceable.

- *Jerusalem Post*: Nawaf Salam answered Naim Qassem's charge that Beirut is handing Israel free concessions by telling Hezbollah's leader that the greatest service anyone ever did Israel was dragging Lebanon into the "support front." Salam's government has still not taken a rifle off him.
- *Jerusalem Post*: Iraq's oil exports have gone from 100 million barrels in February to around 32 million in May and June since Iran shut the strait, and Baghdad has not paid many of its public employees for July. The finance ministry is weighing 45-day pay cycles against a \$6.5 billion monthly wage bill, in a country that takes 90 percent of its government revenue from oil.
- *Walla*: The US Treasury lifted counter-terror sanctions on three airlines tied to the Quds Force, the Iraqi carrier Fly Baghdad among them, and on two Boeing 737s, while leaving one of the airline's executives designated. American officials called it a routine review of a designation and said it is no concession to Tehran, not for the negotiations and not otherwise — which is a lot of denying for routine housekeeping.

Public Diplomacy & Media

- *Israel Hayom*: An analysis of 63,964 posts on X between April and August reports a "Saudi first" turn in Gulf discourse that casts Hamas as an Iranian branch that spent Gaza on Tehran's strategy, with the demand for a Palestinian state left exactly where it was.
- *Jerusalem Post*: Former Netanyahu spokesman David Keyes built a site that picks a country and a disaster at random and writes the theory blaming Israel for it. Cyberwell's analysts logged the real ones this week — posts in English, French and Spanish saying Jews set Europe's wildfires for money or for politics.

Am Yisrael

- *Jerusalem Post*: Abdul El-Sayed, Michigan's new Democratic Senate nominee, told CNN he is against Iron Dome and doesn't see a difference between offensive and defensive weapons. Iron Dome shoots down rockets already in the air over Israeli towns, and calling that offensive takes some doing.
- *Jewish News UK*: Joshua Bonehill-Paine, jailed in 2016 for harassing a Jewish MP, withdrew as the Conservatives' Somerset council candidate hours after the paper pressed the party on Kemi Badenoch's claim that the Home Office had certified him to train police officers on antisemitism — multiple sources say it never did. He is staying on to advise the party's culture and integration commission on how young men get radicalised.
- *Jerusalem Post*: A peer-reviewed review of antisemitism in the health professions found 88 percent of Jewish American medical students and physicians reporting it since October 7, against 40 percent before. Fewer than 2 percent said their own institution covers antisemitism in its anti-discrimination training.
- *The JC*: Bell Bird Books in Nashville cancelled the launch of Alyssa Rosenheck's "White. Blonde. Jew." after an antizionist pile-on online, the owner

saying she could not responsibly host an event that looked likely to need heightened security. She is still stocking the book.

Domestic & Law

- *Jerusalem Post*: Eyal Zamir's election directive puts polling stations inside Lebanon, Syria and Gaza so the combat soldiers deployed there can vote on October 27, and bars political tours and lectures on the bases while a new team monitors what commanders say and what soldiers post. The third October 7 anniversary and the Rabin anniversary both fall inside the campaign, and that's where the no-politics rule gets tested.
- *Israel Hayom*: Divorce filings, exit-ban orders and Jewish-status rulings all stop at the rabbinical courts on Sunday, because the High Court's freeze on the Finance Committee transfers caught the NIS 18 million that pays the company running their servers. Officials there note that the same order carved out essential security spending and did not carve them out.
- *Arutz Sheva*: Democrats chairman Yair Golan, in remarks from a conference a month ago that surfaced Wednesday, said no issue has fallen victim to cheap populism like haredi conscription and that the army would not want "such a population of people that is uneducated, lacks motivation, and lacks physical capability." He was making the case for a phased draft with alternative service tracks, and he'll be hearing that line quoted back at him until October 27.

Economy, Tech & Infrastructure

- *JNS*: El Al doubled its second-quarter net profit to \$132 million, with revenue up 27 percent to \$986 million, and it is putting up to ten percent more seats in the air next quarter — most of the foreign carriers that left over the Iran war still aren't back.
- *Israel Hayom*: Israelis put a record NIS 54.9 billion on their credit cards in July, 5.8 percent up on last July, and took out NIS 6.1 billion in cash, the most in a month since the summer before October 7. Restaurants and leisure drove the rise, and aviation and tourism went the other way.
- *Israel Hayom*: The Israeli security firm Zenity showed at Black Hat in Las Vegas that the AI agents now built into the major browsers can be turned against their own users by instructions hidden in an ordinary email or calendar invite — no click required, and the agent acts with every permission the user already gave it.

Culture, Religion & Society

- *Israel Hayom*: Police arrested a youth this morning on suspicion of throwing feces at Cafe Basimta, weeks into the haredi campaign to force the Jerusalem cafe to close on Shabbat.
- *The JC*: Nechama Tzivin, a lawyer from Kfar Chabad, has asked the Chabad rabbinical court to put price oversight on sheitels, the wigs married women in her community wear to cover their hair, after the cost of a good one climbed from a few thousand shekels to as much as NIS 40,000.

- *The JC*: Arafat Abdulla Ali came to Israel from Zanzibar in 1999, aged four, and Israeli doctors closed the hole in her heart. Last week she brought her 19-month-old son Khatib, born with the same defect, and he came through it too.

Developments to Watch

Judea & Samaria

- **The Qalandiya raid names the next ones** — Israeli forces ran a large operation in the Qalandiya camp north of Jerusalem yesterday, and COGAT said it went after terrorists, terror infrastructure and weapons trafficking, and would not let the camp become a haven “just as we do not allow this in other camps throughout Judea and Samaria.” Every other camp just got the same notice.

Northern Front (Lebanon / Syria)

- **Damascus changes a division's commander** — Syrian sources say Ahmad al-Shara has put a Turkish citizen over the army's 62nd Division in place of Abu Amsha, whose men were loyal to him and not to the army, and that fear of a mutiny is what raised Syria's alert level this week. The units Damascus sent to the Iraqi border come out of an army worried about its own divisions.

Gaza & Southern Theater

- **Katz stops the reserve drawdown** — The IDF wanted to release the Gaza-border standby squads from reserve duty as superfluous and costly, and Israel Katz reportedly told it not to, and not to cut anywhere else until he says otherwise. Two divisions are working inside Gaza under an order to hold fire, and the army's own assessment is that the communities behind them no longer need men on duty.

Regional Axis (Iran, Houthis, Militias)

- **Netanyahu reserves Israel's exception** — Netanyahu called Trump Israel's greatest friend yesterday and then said Israel's existence is not negotiable, and that with or without an agreement Israel will do what it has to. Washington is writing terms that leave Tehran administering the strait, and Israel has put its exception on the record before anyone signs them.
- **Tehran's president is shown the door** — Mojtaba Khamenei reportedly wrote to Masoud Pezeshkian that he would accept the president's resignation if it came again, and Pezeshkian told state television this week that interacting with the supreme leader is “very difficult.” Iran is negotiating a sixty-day arrangement on the strait with a president its own leader has offered to let go.

Diplomatic & Legal

- **Amman puts the Temple Mount on paper** — Arab and Muslim foreign ministers meeting in Amman signed a declaration accusing Israel of altering the status quo on the Temple Mount and excavating illegally beneath it, and Israel's Foreign Ministry answered that the declaration is built on false accusations and historical distortion. Saudi Arabia and Egypt signed it, Jordan says it is working the legal route, and a filing needs exactly this paper under it.
- **Hawaii votes Saturday** — Ed Case, in the House since 2002 and sitting on Appropriations, is being run close in Saturday's Democratic primary by a 42-year-old progressive state senator, in a race nobody has been watching. Israel is not the issue in it, which makes it the cleaner test of whether pro-Israel incumbents are simply being swept out.

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