



Forensic intelligence for those who act.

READER EDITION

August 26, 2026

ISRAEL BRIEF

Wednesday, August 26

Theoretically Washington will not strike Iran before November, and the Israelis never agreed to the pause.

◇ URIEL ZEHAVI

THE BOTTOM LINE Bell's reason is the strongest thing in this story, and it is in her own transcript. Senior officials testified that policy they are ready to implement is waiting on her recommendations, so every extra month of hearings is a month those proposals sit. [Australia ran the gun buyback the rest of the world still cites as the model. Bell's April interim report asked for a second one.] What the letter she refused wanted was the accounting — who let this build, and which institutions looked the other way. It would not have got it. Large parts of this inquiry ran in camera behind a live prosecution and security material nobody can read into the record, and that is the half that would have named anyone.

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THE leverage today belongs to whoever can afford to say no and then wait. It costs nothing to hold that position, and the ones holding it have been holding it for months. Everybody doing the asking has a deadline.

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FLASH BRIEF

- **Iran:** Washington puts off striking Iran until after the midterms, and says again that it has cleared Hormuz. *See The War Today.*
- **Gaza:** The Board of Peace warns Hamas through mediators and tells reporters Israel's strikes carry no security value. *See The War Today.*
- **Judea and Samaria:** The Palestinian Authority trains sixty thousand men on infantry standards a kilometre from Route 90. *See The War Today.*
- **MK tours:** The army closes Judea and Samaria to Knesset visits until October, after Sukkot hammers a terrorist's memorial. *See Inside Israel.*
- **The ballot:** Netanyahu tells Winter, Feiglin and Maoz to merge or withdraw before lists close on 8 September. *See Inside Israel.*
- **Saudi Arabia:** Trump sends Congress the thirty-year reactor deal, with normalization a condition Congress can let lapse. *See Israel and the World.*
- **The Netherlands:** Sa'ar expels the Dutch from the Kiryat Gat coordination center over a trade ban taking effect next month. *See Israel and the World.*
- **Sanctions:** Bessent aims sixty Iran designations at third countries, and Beijing threatens all necessary measures. *See Israel and the World.*
- **Australia:** The antisemitism commission refuses more hearings and reports in December, with much of the inquiry held in camera. *See Israel and the World.*
- **Lebanon:** Washington's ambassador in Beirut puts a two-day window on Ali al-Taher as Israeli jets work the ridge. *See Developments to Watch.*

Ofer Winter will not merge and cannot be made to, and Moshe Gafni knows what he means to recommend and is not allowed to say it — and the lists close on 8 September whether either of them moves or not. Abroad a refusal is free, and whoever refuses can outwait whoever is asking. Here it costs seats.

The War Today

Washington Clears the Mines and Puts Off Striking Iran Until November

Trump said on Tuesday that the US Navy has removed or detonated every mine in the international waters of the Strait of Hormuz, the waterway Tehran closed at the end of February to open the Iran war that is still running. Iran has been told that any ship or boat laying new ones will be destroyed immediately. Space Force is watching every square inch of it, he wrote. Zero tolerance on mine placement. He announced this once already, on 10 August, when he said the Navy had swept the entire strait and had 100 percent control of it.

Marco Rubio spent the same day telling several foreign counterparts that Washington does not expect to strike Iran for the time being. An American official said the policy should hold until after the midterm elections on 3 November. Pressure moves to Operation Economic Outcast instead. A return to strikes stays open if Iran hits the United States first. The State Department

has begun sending diplomats back to the embassies it emptied during the war — Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Kuwait and Oman, several of them capped at 85 percent of authorized staff. One American official's version of the demining: "The Iranians have lost control over the strait. Now the US controls it."

Tehran's answer came from deputy foreign minister Kazem Gharibabadi. The strait "will not be opened except through Iranian arrangements," he said, Iran remains "in a state of war," and Hormuz is not the only instrument it holds. Iran and Oman announced a phased framework the same day for a temporary joint corridor seven miles wide, its entry point and part of its exit inside Iranian territorial waters. They also agreed to a joint project to clear the strait of mines. Tehran wants the American naval blockade of its ports lifted and its oil waiver restored before anything transits. Five million barrels a day are moving through now, against more than twenty million before the war. Iran's army air-defense commander told state media the force is replicating the systems that performed well in the forty-day war.

ASSESSMENT

Washington has told Tehran when its own restraint expires, and the date is 3 November. Clearing the mines reopened nothing — five million barrels against twenty — because Tehran says the strait opens only through Iranian arrangements, and demining does not change who can put a projectile through a hull. [He announced the mines were gone on 10 August too. Which of the two is the Navy standing behind? Tehran and Muscat spent Tuesday agreeing to go clear the same water.] Israel did not agree to that pause. The IDF sits at readiness with CENTCOM and has been working the option of going back at Iran without American approval. The Iranian answer that would draw is the same one keeping Jerusalem off the fortified complex under the Ali al-Taher ridge in south Lebanon, where the June Israel-Lebanon-United States framework ties the Israeli pullback to a Hezbollah disarmament nobody has agreed how to verify. Ten weeks is a lot to give a regime that says it is rebuilding the air defenses that survived February.

*Closed Dossier: **The Permission Layer** — The Dossier's argument is that the war's durable product is a permission layer — total capability for Israel, with the decision to use it migrating steadily to Washington — which is what a strike pause Israel was told about and never agreed to actually is, and why the option the IDF is working is an option to move without an American signature.*

The Board of Peace Warns Hamas on Kites and Blames Israel's Strikes

Israel gave the Board of Peace three days to stop the kites coming out of Gaza. The Board answered by passing a message to Hamas through Egyptian, Qatari and Turkish mediators, on a monitoring mechanism the United States runs with Nickolay Mladenov. All militant activity in the Strip must stop, kite-flying included, and "there will be serious consequences for continued violations."

The rest of the message was for Israel. A Board official said Israel must comply with the ceasefire too, and that "military action cannot extend beyond responding to genuine and imminent threats." Two papers govern that word.

The twenty-point plan Israel accepted, adopted as Security Council Resolution 2803, has held the Gaza ceasefire since last October, and it is the one the Board is enforcing here. The Board's own fifteen-point roadmap of 30 July, which sequences Hamas's disarmament against a phased Israeli pullback, is the one Hamas accepted and Israel is not party to. Both sides, Board officials said, are still in breach of the twenty points.

Then they went further. The IDF's operations of recent weeks are "tactical operations with no meaningful security value" causing "significant strategic damage," they said. Those operations perpetuate Hamas's civilian and military rule instead of ending it, because for every commander eliminated Hamas signs up a hundred young men. Their alternative is to get both parties onto compliance, start collecting Hamas's heavy and light weapons, and, if Hamas refuses, let Israel act with force and international backing. Israel is missing an enormous opportunity, they said, for a small number of tactical actions.

Eyal Zamir spent Tuesday inside the Strip with Southern Command's Yaniv Asor and Gaza Division commander Liron Batito. The objective has not moved — demilitarize the Strip and disarm Hamas by all necessary means, no containment of threats, no return to the doctrines of 6 October. "Everyone who took part in the massacre will live on the run until they are eliminated." He told the reserve battalion of the 11th Brigade, called up for ninety days this round, that he knows what that costs them and their families.

At Kerem Shalom that morning, residents of the Gaza-envelope communities demonstrated against foreign troops entering the Strip before Hamas is disarmed. They carried the protest on to the American base in the southern Strip. Danny Rahamim of Nahal Oz put their case in a line: after the October 7 of the Hamas monsters, there is no chance Hamas goes on ruling Gaza.

ASSESSMENT

The body that wrote the roadmap Israel refused is now grading Israel's compliance with the plan Israel accepted. Its instrument against Hamas is a message carried by three sets of mediators. Its instrument against Israel is a briefing to reporters. [A hundred new recruits for every commander killed. I have been hearing that arithmetic since Protective Edge, and nobody who runs it says what the number becomes if you stop.] The sequence the Board is defending opens on a disarmament that has not started, and its answer to Israel's three days was to tell Israel that hunting the men who did October 7 carries no meaningful security value.

The Palestinian Authority Trains an Army a Kilometre From Route 90

Hundreds of Palestinian Authority security personnel have been filmed training a kilometre off Route 90 — with anti-tank weapons, and RPG-7s used heavily in the training at Jericho and in the parades. Sources documented PKM belt-fed 7.62 machine guns of the kind the National Security Battalions field, and assault rifles converted into sniper rifles with telescopic sights for long range. Armoured vehicles, explosives and demolition charges as well,

which Oslo bars Palestinian forces from holding or producing. About sixty thousand men, equipped as a small army.

The training changed with the equipment. The police college and the Jericho training centre have put their syllabus onto infantry standards, hot breaching and fighting in built-up areas included. Officer courses study the security layouts of Israeli communities and bases in order to learn how to beat them. The last course graduated on an exercise that included stopping a vehicle and pulling its occupants out. Graduates of courses in Pakistan and Russia have been filmed using jihadist language: “Israel’s wall will be destroyed.” Maurice Hirsch, in a study for the Jerusalem Center, found the Authority hides none of it. It shows off “the Palestinian army” on its own television. About seventy-eight PA policemen and officers were directly involved in attacks on Israelis over three years, to 2024.

The scenario has a name in Israeli planning now. Hipuch kanim, the reversal of barrels, is the Authority’s weapons turned on Israel, and it is what Netanyahu and Katz asked Central Command on Monday to brief them on. A senior political figure’s warning in the recent rounds: in the case of a reversal of barrels there will not be another intifada, there will be a total war. That means the air force and armour. The triggers the political echelon lists are Abbas’s death, a hard fiscal crisis in Ramallah, and an incident in the field that lights the ground on its own. It could happen any moment, one participant said.

The furthest an October 7 cell got from Gaza was Ofakim, twenty-two kilometres in. Measure the same distance from the seam line in Samaria and you are in the middle of the country.

ASSESSMENT

Ramallah built this in the open, under an agreement that held its police to light weapons, and it puts the result on its own television. Coordination holds at the top while the field goes the other way, and seventy-eight uniformed men in attacks over three years is roughly what that looks like once somebody counts it. [Their officer course graduates on a car stop where you pull the people out. We have all seen that footage. It was not an exercise.] The reference scenario in Israeli planning is a war now, with the air force and armour in it. Central Command’s staff work is due to the political echelon in the coming weeks.

Inside Israel

The Army Stops Approving MK Tours in Judea and Samaria Until October

Zvi Sukkot asked the IDF on 12 August to take him through Beita, Burin and Madama, three villages south of Shechem. They sit in Areas A and B, where an Israeli needs military coordination to enter at all. The army told him weeks ago that it had nothing to spare — an escort meant pulling a force off Kusra — and he answered that he would go without one. It gave him about ten soldiers under a junior officer on Tuesday morning. They met

him before the village and did not search his car, because he is a member of Knesset. He and his aides got out with sledgehammers and broke up the memorial at Madama. It carries, among other names, Yaman Tayeb Ali Faraj, the PFLP military-wing commander an Israeli High Court judgment placed behind the December 2003 bombing at the Ge'ha Junction bus stop, where four people were murdered and more than twenty wounded.

By evening the army had stopped approving MK tours in the sector until after the 27 October election. The reasoning inside the General Staff was that operational readiness had started going on campaign material. The soldiers on the detail had been running without sleep. "It was obvious that there would be a mess there," one of them said. "We felt that our time and our forces were being wasted." That same memorial had already been surveyed for demolition and was scheduled to come down in September.

Bezalel Smotrich phoned Sukkot, asked him what else was coming, and then coordinated with him the condemnation he issued to the press. His own faction chairman, Ohad Tal, asked the party's WhatsApp group whether the move had been coordinated with the campaign, "or have we simply decided to commit political suicide?" Sukkot regrets nothing. Turkey and Iraq were the only governments that condemned him, he says, and the damage abroad was done by Gideon Sa'ar and the IDF spokesman. The Foreign Ministry's people say the sanctions pressure they have been holding off is what arrives next.

ASSESSMENT

The memorial was coming down in September on the army's own schedule, and what the hammer bought was a directive closing the sector to every member of Knesset until the vote. Smotrich condemned a stunt he had been briefed on before he condemned it, which is the coalition's position stated twice in one morning by the same man.

Netanyahu Tells Winter, Feiglin and Maoz to Merge or Quit the Race

Candidate lists for the 26th Knesset close on 8 September, seven weeks before Israelis vote on 27 October, and Netanyahu spent Monday and Tuesday telling his own voters not to split. At the Binyamin Regional Council's annual settlement event on Tuesday evening he named three men and told them to withdraw or merge with an existing party. "I have no personal problem with him, I have a national problem," he said of Ofer Winter. "Whoever doesn't pass the threshold burns the votes. Whoever passes will bring down existing parties." The video he had posted the night before ran 1992 at them: small lists under the threshold, Yitzhak Rabin in power, Arafat brought back from Tunis, Palestinian entities set up in Gaza and in Judea and Samaria, and thousands of Israelis dead for the sequence.

Winter launched Amcha Yisrael the same evening at Jerusalem's Shalva Center, on a slate built around people who were not in the Knesset on 7 October. Yoseph Haddad is at number two — an Arab Christian Israeli and a Golani fighter wounded at Bint Jbeil in the Second Lebanon War, who says he means to rebuild the public diplomacy ministry as a major one and be the first Arab to sit in the security cabinet. Netali Shem Tov, the news presenter evacuated

from Metula, is on it. So is Sigal Kraunik-Attia, widow of Be'eri's security coordinator, killed defending the kibbutz on 7 October, whose body Winter found himself that day. Fleur Hassan-Nahoum, Davidi Ben Zion and Col. (res.) Eli Gino are on it too. Winter's own lines were that there will never be a Palestinian state here and that there is one solution in Gaza, migration. He has told Netanyahu's people he wants neither a merger nor a reserved slot, and officials in Netanyahu's own bloc are briefing reporters that an arrangement will be made to put him under the threshold.

Moshe Gafni, who leads Degel HaTorah, was asked whether he would tell the Council of Torah Sages to go with Gadi Eisenkot. He knows what he is going to recommend, he answered, and he knows he is not allowed to say it. The public around Netanyahu is closer to us, he added, and the conclusion he has drawn from this term is that on the things touching haredi children and families, this partner could not deliver. Blue and White is coming apart in the same week. MK Yael Ron Ben Moshe resigned from the party on Tuesday over Benny Gantz's refusal to be the 61st hand for an Eisenkot government. The members left are weighing an ultimatum. They won't stay on to burn votes under the threshold.

ASSESSMENT

A prime minister asking three rivals in public to leave the ballot is the strongest admission available that he expects to come up short. The threshold is 3.25 percent, four seats' worth, and every new list on the board draws from Likud, Religious Zionism, Otzma Yehudit and Yisrael Beiteinu. None of them brings in a voter from outside the bloc. Winter has said no to a merger and no to a reserved slot, which leaves the arrangement Netanyahu's own officials are describing to reporters, and the lists close on 8 September. Gafni is the half of it nobody is counting, and he spent Tuesday evening saying on the record that he knows his answer and is not allowed to give it.

Israel and the World

Trump Sends the Saudi Reactor Deal to Congress With Normalization Attached

Trump sent Congress the thirty-year civil nuclear agreement with Saudi Arabia on Monday, and it is expected to reach committee today. Energy Secretary Chris Wright and Saudi Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman signed it in late July. It puts American firms at the center of the kingdom's nuclear build-out — AP1000 reactors, tens of billions of dollars, Westinghouse doing the work and foreign competitors shut out.

The day after that signing Trump added his condition: no Abraham Accords, no deal. The White House has repeated it since, and an administration official said again on Tuesday that the president's position has not changed. Congress now has ninety session days. If it raises no objection in that time, the agreement enters into force. Henry Sokolski of the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center says opening the process is itself the risk. Congress can let the deal through with no normalization requirement and no bar on

enrichment, and the text does not stop Saudi Arabia enriching uranium or reprocessing spent fuel.

Riyadh has said repeatedly that it will not recognize Israel without progress toward a Palestinian state, and it has not moved off that since the signing.

ASSESSMENT

Trump has handed the one piece of leverage he says he is holding to a body whose default answer is yes. Ninety session days of congressional silence and the reactors are approved with neither the normalization requirement nor an enrichment bar written into them, and the argument he wants to have with Riyadh becomes an argument with an agreement already in force. [The Emiratis gave up enrichment in 2009 to get their reactors, and I have yet to hear why Riyadh should not have to.] Saudi Arabia does not have to answer this. It has to wait, and the demand it hangs on recognition is worth more to it every month the recognition does not arrive.

Israel Expels the Dutch Over a Trade Ban on Judea and Samaria

Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar expelled the Netherlands' representatives from the international coordination center in Kiryat Gat on Tuesday evening, with Netanyahu's approval, and gave them a week to leave the country. CENTCOM stood the center up last October under Trump's twenty-point plan. It is where the Gaza ceasefire's aid deliveries and post-war planning get worked out, between the IDF, American personnel and dozens of foreign delegations. The Dutch embassy and Washington were both told before Sa'ar posted it.

What set it off is a Dutch law taking effect on 22 September. It bans importing, buying, selling or brokering goods made in Israeli communities in Judea and Samaria, eastern Jerusalem and the Golan. The cabinet approved it in May and finalized it in late July, once the Council of State had given its opinion. It reaches past imports, to any arrangement built to route around it. "Whoever acts against Israel will have no foothold in the region," Sa'ar wrote. Spain was thrown out of the same center in April.

ASSESSMENT

The expulsion does not touch the law, which takes effect on 22 September whether or not the Dutch keep a desk in Kiryat Gat. What it takes away is the seat. Israel has now done this twice in four months, to Spain in April and the Netherlands on Tuesday, and reportedly held off on France out of concern about what Paris would do back. Belgium and Ireland are sitting on the same legislation, and neither of them is France.

Washington Aims the Iran Sanctions at Third Countries and Beijing Threatens Countermeasures

Scott Bessent unveiled Operation Economic Outcast in Washington on Monday and called it the single greatest financial offensive ever mounted against Iran. It designates sixty individuals, companies and vessels, several of them in mainland China and Hong Kong, and the audience for it is everyone still trading with Tehran. Governments get a defined timeline to stop. Anyone helping the regime launder money or evade the measures can be cut out of

the American financial system. Trump will telephone heads of government with specific requests to end their dealings. Bessent also spoke over their heads to Iranian soldiers, telling them to ask, when the pay stops arriving, whether their commanders are taking Iran to victory or to ruin — the Berlin Wall came down, he said, when ordinary soldiers decided not to fire on their own people.

What the package leaves alone is the large Chinese banks that clear Iranian oil money. Beijing answered anyway. Foreign ministry spokesman Lin Jian called the measures illegal unilateral sanctions and said China will take all necessary measures to protect its interests. China buys more Iranian crude than anyone else, it processes most of the world's rare earths, it has tightened those export controls once already inside a trade negotiation, and Trump meets Xi next month.

The State Department followed on Tuesday with money. Rewards for Justice is offering up to ten million dollars for information on Iran's senior leadership — supreme leader Mojtaba Khamenei, IRGC commander Ahmad Vahidi, Ali Abdollahi, who left Khatam al-Anbiya in early August to take over the regular army, and the men running the IRGC's drone and cyber commands. Informants are offered relocation along with the money. Also on the list is Majid Khademi, named as head of IRGC intelligence. Israel killed him in early April.

Trump posted on Tuesday that the failed Islamic Republic is not paying large parts of its military while killing protesters at levels never seen before. He called it “a humanitarian crisis of epic proportions” that has to be stopped now. The rial hit a record 2.04 million to the dollar on the open market, off more than seven percent in under a week. Queues formed at Tehran filling stations on Tuesday. By accounts from inside the country, bread and chicken cost twice what they did six months ago and beef three times what it did in March. Some medicines are up three hundred percent. Police commander Ahmad-Reza Radan warned on Monday that Iran's enemies are working to turn livelihoods, fuel, unemployment and the economy into unrest. Economy Minister Ali Madanizadeh told state television the government is fully prepared and has had a two-year plan for this.

ASSESSMENT

The campaign is aimed at everyone except the institution that decides whether it works. Sixty designations, several of them Chinese, and not one of the major Chinese banks that clear the oil money — so the greatest financial offensive ever mounted stops exactly where China's purchases begin, and Beijing spent Tuesday saying what widening it would cost, three weeks before Trump sits down with Xi. [Katz named Khademi dead in April and the IRGC buried him with its other eliminated commanders, so I would like to know who signed off on this list.] Israeli officials reading the package expect one of two answers within weeks: Tehran bends toward Oman on the strait, or it reaches for the lever it has left and puts missiles into Gulf energy. Squeeze a regime that has already closed Hormuz and the Gulf's own infrastructure is most of what it still has to aim at.

Australia's Antisemitism Commission Chooses Its December Deadline Over More Witnesses

Australia's Royal Commission on Antisemitism and Social Cohesion closed more than sixty days of public hearings on Wednesday. Canberra stood it up after two ISIS-inspired brothers killed fifteen people at a Hanukkah lighting on Bondi Beach last December. Rabbi Yehoram Ulman, who runs Chabad of Bondi, was the last of more than 340 witnesses. He presided over ten of the funerals. The first was his son-in-law Rabbi Eli Schlanger's *z"l*. Twenty thousand submissions came in, and 550,000 documents against notices to produce.

Commissioner Virginia Bell, a former justice of Australia's High Court, refused to extend. Julian Leeser, the Jewish Liberal MP, had moved in parliament on 18 August for months more, so that the individuals and institutions responsible could be put on the stand. It failed. New South Wales premier Chris Minns wanted the extension too. On Wednesday morning a group of former security chiefs published an open letter asking for the same — former governor-general David Hurley, two former chiefs of the army, and two former heads of Australia's foreign intelligence service. Bell said she had noted the push and did not seek any meaningful extension of her timetable.

She did move the report four days, from 14 December to Friday the 18th, so it doesn't land on the first anniversary. Richard Lancaster, counsel assisting, opened the final day by telling the room that large parts of the inquiry had run in camera. One of the accused gunmen is still on trial, and much of the security material can't be read out. Anyone following the hearings, he said, has seen only part of it.

ASSESSMENT

Bell's reason is the strongest thing in this story, and it is in her own transcript. Senior officials testified that policy they are ready to implement is waiting on her recommendations, so every extra month of hearings is a month those proposals sit. [Australia ran the gun buyback the rest of the world still cites as the model. Bell's April interim report asked for a second one.] What the letter she refused wanted was the accounting — who let this build, and which institutions looked the other way. It would not have got it. Large parts of this inquiry ran in camera behind a live prosecution and security material nobody can read into the record, and that is the half that would have named anyone.

Briefly Noted

Frontline & Security

- *Times of Israel*: Police and the Defense Ministry's counter-terror-financing bureau raided homes in eastern Jerusalem belonging to terrorists Israel let out in the January 2025 hostage deal, and came away with hundreds of thousands of shekels in cash, five cars and 96,000 shekels' worth of jewelry. Ramallah told the world last year that it had ended the stipends and put need-based welfare in their place, and an outside audit reported it had

been carried out. [I sat in a Palestinian home about a year ago where a Palestinian tried to sell me that story and, when pressed, admitted that pay-for-slay continues. He didn't work, but the PA paid him anyway. Wonder why?]

- *Jerusalem Post*: Yair Netanyahu is reported to be the son Iran tried to kill, with Israeli intelligence picking the plot up in December 2025 and Iranian operatives already on the ground in Miami watching his house — he was told to get out of Florida immediately, and he has been in Israel since.

Diplomacy & Geopolitics

- *Ynet News*: Mazloum Abdi stood in the presidential palace in Damascus last night and announced that the Syrian Democratic Forces have finished merging into the Syrian army and no longer operate as an independent force, ending an autonomy that once covered a quarter of the country. Washington's main ground partner against ISIS now sits inside the army of Ahmad al-Sharaa's Syria, which Washington took off its list of state sponsors of terrorism on Monday.
- *Jerusalem Post*: Ilham Aliyev opened a direct Israel-Turkey channel over Syria a year ago, Israeli sources say, and Baku is now using the coordination mechanism it produced to keep the two air forces from running into each other. Washington is working the same problem and Jerusalem does not trust the envoy doing it — Tom Barrack called Israel's last strike in Syria an unnecessary escalation and put the strikes down to the October election.

Public Diplomacy & Media

- *Times of Israel*: Mayor Soraya Martinez Ferrada's administration moved the amendments that took "genocide," "apartheid" and the demand to cut institutional ties with Israel out of Projet Montreal's motion, and they carried 38-22 before the council passed what was left of it 54-6. The version that passed names Hamas a terrorist organization and still backs international courts examining "genocide" allegations.
- *Jerusalem Post*: Amnesty International told Hamas on Friday to stop executing Palestinians it accuses of collaborating with Israel, documenting nine executions since the October 2025 ceasefire — eight of them Dughmush men shot shackled in a Gaza City street two hours after they surrendered on a promise of a fair trial. Erika Guevara-Rosas, who made the demand, still found room in it for "Israel's ongoing genocide against Palestinians."

Am Yisrael

- *Jewish Insider*: Brad Schneider and Josh Gottheimer say Abdul El-Sayed's statement on Jewish safety condemned nothing Hasan Piker actually said, and Gottheimer is asking House Republican leadership for a floor vote next week on the resolution he wrote with Mike Lawler condemning both Piker and Candace Owens. A recorded vote is what makes every Democrat who has campaigned with Piker answer for him by name.

Domestic & Law

- *Israel Hayom*: The Palestinian woman who told the press that Israelis fire-bombed her house at Beit Amra now says she dreamt them, and she is in custody on suspicion of false report and incitement. The detectives who broke her account work the police's nationalist-crime desk in Judea and Samaria.
- *Ynet*: A Jerusalem court has ordered two men from the mob that attacked three Israelis driving to the Kotel during the May 2021 riots to pay each of them 60,000 shekels, and wrote the nationalist motive into the judgment — the three were picked out for looking religiously Jewish.

Economy, Tech & Infrastructure

- *Arutz Sheva*: The Finance Ministry's chief economist put the economic cost of a month of reserve duty at about NIS 53,000 a man, ten percent above the 2024 figure, and counted non-haredi Jewish men as 36 percent of Israel's employees and 83 percent of everyone missing work for it. The ministry ran the other half of the sum itself — swap 10,000 reservists for conscripts and the cost per man halves to NIS 26,000 a month, worth NIS 2.7 billion a year to the economy.
- *JNS*: EasyJet will not fly to Tel Aviv next summer either, extending a suspension that now matches Ryanair's, while Wizz Air — back on the route since May — negotiates an Israeli hub of up to thirty daily flights that Israel's own carriers are fighting.

Culture, Religion & Society

- *Arutz Sheva*: Givati confined a hesder platoon in Gaza for 21 days and considered removing three of its men from combat roles, after they refused to board a Namer with a female medic inside on instructions from Rabbi Tzvi Kostiner and Rabbi Shlomo Shoshan. When commanders asked the rest of the platoon, nobody else would board either.
- *Israel Hayom*: In about two weeks the IDF stops feeding its haredi soldiers out of sealed prepackaged trays and starts cooking for them to mehadrin standard in the base kitchens, under a new section the Military Rabbinate has set up inside its kashrut branch.

Developments to Watch

Northern Front (Lebanon / Syria)

- **Two days on Ali al-Taher** — Israeli aircraft struck the Ali al-Taher ridge overnight along with al-Dabsheh, Srebbine and Qantara, after Kiryat Shmona's municipality told residents they would hear the blasts from a planned operation. Washington's ambassador in Beirut, Michel Issa, quoted on an Arabic-monitoring channel, put the reason on Hezbollah's refusal to disarm and said he is watching that ridge for the next two days.

- **Suwayda claims Israel as the Kurds fold in** — Sheikh Hikmat al-Hijri, who leads southern Syria's Druze from Jabal al-Druze, told a gathering his community is an inseparable part of the State of Israel and wants self-determination in the Bashan. He said it the night Mazloum Abdi dissolved the SDF into al-Sharaa's army, which leaves Suwayda as the one place in Syria still asking to stay out of it.

Regional Axis (Iran, Houthis, Militias)

- **Tehran sends Taeb back to the Basij** — Tehran removed Hossein Taeb in 2022 after a run of Israeli penetrations, and this month's appointment order returns him as Basij commander with instructions to widen the informer network until every Iranian is in it. A regime waiting for the protests to start has put the streets under a man who answers to Mojtaba Khamenei personally.
- **Iran blacklists 46 hulls** — Iran's Persian Gulf Strait Authority threatened 46 vessels by name with fines or confiscation on Sunday, ten of them LNG carriers, and eight LNG ships left the strait in all of July against roughly three a day before the war. North-west European gas opened this week at its highest since January 2023, and the governments Washington is asking to cut Iran off are the ones paying it.
- **Iran's empty tankers shelter off Sri Lanka** — About twenty Iranian state-owned tankers sit at the edge of Sri Lanka's exclusive economic zone with several shadow-fleet hulls alongside them, all of them empty, because the American blockade closes their home ports to them. Samir Madani of TankerTrackers says an empty hull is one heading back for cargo, which is the pattern CENTCOM has struck before.
- **Sanaa puts Yanbu in the target bank** — A Houthi official told Arabic media the movement will widen its Red Sea blockade to every foreign ship working off Saudi Arabia and shut the tanker route out of Yanbu, until Riyadh pays salaries in Houthi-held Yemen and leaves the country. The Houthis put a ballistic missile into a tanker there on Monday, so this one arrives with a demonstration behind it.

Diplomatic & Legal

- **Turkey buys 13 percent of its gas from Iran** — Bloomberg's figures, carried on an Israeli monitoring channel, put Turkey third among Iran's trading partners, with 13 percent of Turkish gas consumption coming across the Iranian border on top of billions of dollars in other trade. Operation Economic Outcast hands governments a stated deadline to cut those ties, and Ankara cannot meet that one without turning the heat off.
- **"Death to Zionism" booked for Basel on Saturday** — A group calling itself basel4palestine has called a rally for Saturday afternoon at Theaterplatz in Basel, on the 129th anniversary of the First Zionist Congress, under a banner reading "Free Palestine — Death to Zionism" with Hamas's inverted red triangle. Basel requires fourteen days' notice for a demonstration and this one filed none, so the Swiss police have three days to decide whether that rule means anything.

Home Front & Politics

- **Ben-Gvir gives Eisenkot 72 hours** — Itamar Ben-Gvir's lawyer sent Gadi Eisenkot a pre-suit letter over podcast remarks tying politicians to TikTok videos that tell young Israelis a good Arab is a dead Arab, and calling Ben-Gvir a worrying phenomenon. It demands an apology, the post taken down and 100,000 shekels by Friday.

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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.



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