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READER EDITION

July 21, 2026

ISRAEL BRIEF

Tuesday, July 21

Tehran asks Washington for ten days on the tenth night of American strikes, a military prison fence gives way in Beit Lid, and London changes hands.

◇ URIEL ZEHAVI

THE BOTTOM LINE Two constituencies read the same regime and priced different things. Hamra weighs the synagogues and the cemeteries of a community Assad emptied. Jerusalem weighs a man who commanded al-Qaeda's Syrian franchise until 2016 and now runs forces the UN catches killing Druze in Sweida — both readings are honest, and only one of them shares a border with him. An American Jewish campaign beat Israel's own read in Washington on a security file, and sanctions relief does not come back if the new Damascus turns out to be the old one in better tailoring.

CLASSIFICATION

Reader Edition

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TEN nights of American strikes have produced what a month of Iranian threats to close the strait never did: Tehran asking for a pause. Israel sits at its highest alert, in full coordination with CENTCOM, and fires nothing — the war likeliest to land on it is being settled on other people's paper. At home the night went to what the state cannot enforce, a military prison fence pushed in by twenty thousand Gur hasidim and a ruling party unable to seat 4,500 of its own members to vote on a slate. Abroad, London changed governments and handed the Foreign Office to a man who will not say the word Zionist.

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FLASH BRIEF

- **Iran ceasefire:** Tehran asks ten days through four mediators as American forces strike a tenth night. *See The War Today.*
- **Lebanon pilot:** Beirut's army enters three southern villages, two of which cost Israel nothing. *See The War Today.*
- **Gaza:** Israel builds 23 kilometers of berm along the Yellow Line as Hamas elects Khalil al-Hayya. *See The War Today.*
- **Beit Lid:** Twenty thousand Gur hasidim breach a military prison fence over one jailed yeshiva student. *See Inside Israel.*
- **Ben-Gvir:** Otzma Yehudit stays out of the next coalition unless Baharav-Miara is dismissed. *See Inside Israel.*
- **Likud:** The party cancels its Central Committee vote twice while the Democrats seat twenty names in a day. *See Inside Israel.*
- **London:** Andy Burnham takes office and hands the Foreign Office to Ed Miliband. *See Israel and the World.*
- **Twelve embassies:** Western missions fault Israel's detention law and single out a Hamas colonel as their case. *See Israel and the World.*
- **Biden's principals:** Sullivan, Blinken and Austin go on record that they should have conditioned the weapons. *See Israel and the World.*
- **Mamdani:** New York's mayor floats arresting Netanyahu in September on a warrant no city can serve. *See Israel and the World.*
- **Michigan:** Jewish Democratic donors book Republican fundraisers ahead of the August 4 Senate primary. *See Israel and the World.*
- **Fujairah:** A vessel is struck east of Dibba, on the coast built to bypass Hormuz. *See Developments to Watch.*

Three movements run separately today. Iran, Lebanon and Hamas are each trading paper for ground they mean to keep, and none of the documents in play reaches the thing that matters. At home the question is enforcement, and what the state can compel when twenty thousand people decide otherwise. Abroad it is a Western center-left rearranging its Israel position while it still holds the majority to legislate it.

The War Today

Tehran Asks for Ten Days on the Tenth Night of American Strikes

Tehran initiated the ten-day ceasefire proposal now moving through Qatari, Egyptian, Omani and Pakistani mediators. The draft opens a middle corridor through Hormuz between Omani and Iranian waters, and Doha is ready to unfreeze \$1.3 billion against it. Washington wants a longer halt and at least partial understandings on freedom of navigation before anything takes effect, and administration officials have called the Iranian version absurd. American forces struck for a tenth consecutive night, hitting command centers, launch sites, maritime assets and air defenses. Explosions sounded at Bandar Abbas, Sirik, Qeshm and Bushehr. Trump directed Hegseth and the Joint Chiefs to kill many times the number of Iranians for every American

soldier killed. The Pentagon named the two killed in Jordan as First Lt. Tyler James Feehan, 25, and Pvt. Isabella Gonzales, 19. It also put the wounded at nearly a hundred since July 7, with 96 percent back on duty. American fatalities in the war stand at seventeen. The IRGC claimed it destroyed American transport and command aircraft at Aqaba, a claim Israeli assessments reject. Pezeshkian called the fighting a full-scale war and told Iranians to accept its consequences. The Houthis declared an immediate naval blockade of Saudi Arabia and said they would close Bab el-Mandeb, with three quarters of Saudi crude now routed through the Red Sea. Israeli intelligence assesses that Iran moved thousands of enrichment centrifuges into the tunnels under Pickaxe Mountain last fall, carved deeper than Fordow and closed to IAEA inspectors. Israel went to its highest alert and Netanyahu convened the security cabinet on Iran. A senior security official put the IDF at full coordination with CENTCOM and said it will join if Washington asks. Smotrich said this morning that Israel has no interest in pushing itself in, that the present arrangement serves it, and that the aim is to break the regime economically.

ASSESSMENT

Tehran initiated the request, and that is what ten nights of American strikes have bought so far. Washington's counter, navigation terms settled before anything stops, treats the offer as rebuild time. No version of the pause anyone has put on paper reaches the mountain south of Natanz where the centrifuges went last fall.

Lebanon's Army Takes Three Villages as Aoun Reaches the White House

Pilot zone operations began yesterday in Froun, Srifa and Zawtar al-Gharbiya. Froun and Srifa sit outside the Israeli security zone, and Lebanese troops had already deployed in Froun on Friday. Neither village costs Israel a withdrawal. Zawtar al-Gharbiya sits inside the zone, and the IDF will reposition off its outskirts to let the Lebanese army in, with Israeli assessments putting that within hours. The IDF says Hezbollah violations run through the American-led coordination cell and that it will answer any breach with force. Aoun met Rubio on Sunday and sees Trump today, carrying a written plan to disarm Hezbollah and a request for American pressure on Israel to pull back. Washington keeps its assistance tied to militia disarmament and is floating an international force of American and European troops behind it. Forty Hezbollah operatives are meanwhile besieged inside the Ali al-Taher ridge, a bunker and tunnel complex running more than a kilometer with weapons stores and rocket positions. Israeli troops hold the exits, supplies are expected to run out within days, and the army is preparing for a breakout attempt. The air force struck the complex earlier in the war and could not reach it.

ASSESSMENT

The pilot was built to be passable, which is how it opened a day after slipping. Two of the three villages cost Israel nothing and the third costs it the outskirts of one town. The only Hezbollah weapons coming off Lebanese ground this morning belong to forty men under Ali al-Taher, with soldiers on the openings and the food running out.

Israel Puts a Barrier Across Gaza as Hamas Elects al-Hayya

Satellite imagery shows an earthen barrier running more than 23 kilometers along the Yellow Line, across more than half the length of the Strip. The Rafah section grew from about 500 meters on July 1 to 2.4 kilometers by July 15, and more than a kilometer went up near Khan Younis in the past two weeks. Disconnected segments run near Beit Lahiya in the north. The IDF confirmed the work, describing a security zone around the line and denying that it marks a border, though parts of it appear to sit past the line. The IDF and Shin Bet killed Adham Ibrahim Sha'aban Nasman on Saturday, operations head of Hamas's Gaza City Brigade and the Nukhba battalion commander who ran his brigade's infiltration on October 7. He held Romi Gonen, Emily Damari, Ziv and Gali Berman, Eitan Mor, Matan Angrest and Omri Miran, and spent recent months training operatives and pushing weapons out to the brigade's battalions. Two Islamic Jihad operatives died in separate strikes in central Gaza, one of them the man who commanded Inbar Haiman's abduction at the Nova festival. Hamas elected Khalil al-Hayya head of its political bureau over Khaled Mashaal, dissolving the five-man council that has run the movement since Sinwar was killed. The bureau meets in Istanbul within days to rebuild its committees.

ASSESSMENT

Hamas ran an election and returned Tehran's candidate, the same man who negotiated the truce and never conceded a rifle inside it. Israel's answer is 23 kilometers of berm, and a line you can drive along for 23 kilometers has stopped being a negotiating position, whatever the parties drafting Gaza's next government still call it.

Inside Israel

Gur Masses at Prison 10 as Landau Walks the Charge Back

Gur hasidim reached the fence at Military Prison 10 in Beit Lid last night and pushed it in, and police confirmed an attempted breach of the base. Estimates of the crowd ran from eighteen thousand to twenty-five thousand, bused in on some two hundred coaches. The Gerrer Rebbe, Rabbi Yaakov Aryeh Alter, came in person, and UTJ chairman Yitzhak Goldknopf took the microphone to call the crowd back off the gate. One police commander was recorded saying his men had no way to stop them. Military police used pepper spray and MDA evacuated five, four of them for dehydration. The arrest that drew all of it is Israel Reuven Fein, a Sfata Emet student jailed twenty days as a deserter, a classification Gur rejects, saying he presented himself at induction offices repeatedly to settle his status. Hundreds then drove to Tel Aviv and blocked the street outside Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara's home end to end. Dozens surrounded the reservist Idan Benda as he walked his dog and beat him until two officers pulled him clear. Rabbi Dov Landau issued a clarification this morning, calling his recorded charge that religious-Zionist soldiers commit "simply murder" a private conversation distorted by

“ignorant hatred,” and telling students to avoid argument with people who “under the banner of their beliefs persecute the Torah and those who study it.” Netanyahu had rejected the remarks outright. Degel HaTorah called them holy and warned him off the rabbi.

ASSESSMENT

One yeshiva student's twenty days cost a breached military fence and a police commander on tape saying he could not hold it. Landau's clarification withdraws no word of the charge, and Degel HaTorah answered a prime minister defending religious soldiers by warning him away from the rabbi. [Aharon Barak spent the same evening on haredi radio telling the community the Basic Law suits him and their own MKs are to blame for the arrests.] The nine justices who convene next week now have a demonstration of what their own rulings cost at the gate.

Ben-Gvir Prices the Attorney General's Removal Into the Next Coalition

Ben-Gvir wrote to Netanyahu yesterday that Otzma Yehudit will not join the next government unless Baharav-Miara is dismissed. He asked for the same thing at the start of this term, he writes, and was told that is not how things are done. The letter demands her replacement by an attorney general “who does not rebel against the elected leadership,” and a commission of inquiry with criminal investigative powers over her and her staff. It arrived the same day her office told the High Court that the framework built to keep him out of police work has failed. Four working sessions and four drafts produced no signed document. She logged his public claim that a criminal investigation of a senior officer was political, his comments on the stun grenades fired at haredi protesters, and his continued intervention in appointments, and pointed the bench back to the remedy it declined in April — removing him from the government. Separately, the Justice Ministry published a tender for a new head of Mahash before the law moving the unit out of the state attorney's office takes effect, and petitioners have asked to freeze every step until the court rules.

ASSESSMENT

Baharav-Miara is asking unelected judges to empty an elected minister's seat three months before voters could do it themselves. Ben-Gvir's answer runs through the one instrument that does pass through a ballot, the price of his signature on a coalition agreement. The Mahash tender is the same fight one office over, and the attorney general is expected to join the petition freezing it. Predictably. Netanyahu told him in 2022 that this is not how things are done, and the arithmetic of the next coalition decides whether that answer survives.

Likud Cancels Its Own Vote Twice as the Democrats Seat a Slate

Likud's administration cancelled today's Central Committee session, the second cancellation in two days. Its 4,500 members were to approve the proposal from Netanyahu and Haim Katz reserving him eight slots on the slate, along

with the primary rules. Petitions to the party tribunal and an unfinished proceeding at the Lod District Court stopped it. The fight is over whether members vote only on the Netanyahu and Katz text or also on alternatives, including the Social Forum's demand for an ordinary primary and fewer reserved slots. David Bitan says the reserved slots cost Likud seats, and figures close to Netanyahu accuse him of running the obstruction from behind the scenes. Likud figures read the delays the other way, as every petition serving a leader who would rather have an arranging committee than a primary. The Democrats needed one day. Some 97,000 of 112,376 registered members voted by phone, 86.2 percent turnout, seating twenty names behind Yair Golan. Naama Lazimi took second and Gilad Kariv third, while Naor Narkis, whom party officials called extreme, finished 22nd. Omri Ronen finished seventh, a day after Israel Katz barred him from all IDF reserve service for endorsing "whatever it takes," including refusal, against judicial reform.

ASSESSMENT

A party that cannot convene 4,500 of its own members to vote on a slate has already answered the question about its primary. An arranging committee needs no vote if the vote can never be held, and the wartime clause covers whatever the tribunals leave standing. [Bitan's objection is about seat arithmetic, not about Netanyahu, which is why it is the one nobody wants put to the floor.] The Democrats' members answered Katz by promoting the man he barred to their seventh slot.

Israel and the World

Britain Changes Governments and Hands Israel Policy to Ed Miliband

Andy Burnham took office Monday as Britain's seventh prime minister in a decade and gave the Foreign Office to Ed Miliband. Burnham won the Labour leadership unopposed on July 17, five days after being sworn back into the Commons, following Starmer's resignation over Labour's collapse in the May local elections. He cleared out Starmer's people on his first day: John Healey moves from Defence to the Treasury in place of Rachel Reeves, Yvette Cooper leaves the Foreign Office for Health, David Lammy loses the deputy premiership, Shabana Mahmood stays at the Home Office. Miliband, 56, led Labour from 2010 to 2015 as its first Jewish leader, whipped his MPs behind the 2014 Commons motion to recognize a Palestinian state unilaterally, called Israel's operations in Gaza that year "wrong and unjustifiable," called Israeli building in Judea and Samaria "wrong and illegal" on a visit the same year, and led his party against British strikes on Assad after the chemical attack. He declines to call himself a Zionist. His opening statement as foreign secretary named ending the Iran war, "a sustainable peace in Palestine and Israel," and reopening the Strait of Hormuz. Burnham, before the leadership vote, said there is "increasing evidence that war crimes appear to have been committed" in Gaza, apologized for Labour having been "too slow to call for a ceasefire," and put further sanctions on Israel and a ban on trade with Israeli communities in

Judea and Samaria on the table. He did not mention Israel outside Downing Street. His first calls go to Trump and Zelensky.

ASSESSMENT

The hostile baseline in London predates Monday. Starmer had already suspended arms licenses, sanctioned sitting Israeli ministers and recognized a Palestinian state, and the failure Burnham has apologized for is that his party moved too slowly. What arrives with him is a majority willing to legislate the national trade ban Madrid and Dublin already wrote, and a foreign secretary comfortable carrying it into the Council. Miliband supplies the credential no gentile minister could buy — Labour's first Jewish leader, who will not say the word Zionist, signing the paper [he wanted the Treasury and got the department where his name is worth more].

Twelve Western Embassies Fault Israel's Detention Law and Name a Hamas Colonel

The German, Canadian, Danish, EU, Finnish, French, Irish, Dutch, Norwegian, Spanish, Swedish and British missions issued a joint statement Monday holding that Israel is not meeting its obligations under international law. They faulted “the extensive use of administrative detention by Israeli authorities without formal charge” and the prisons’ “inadequate food, denial of medical care and systematic abuse,” and called for Red Cross access to be restored. The case the statement singles out is Hussam Abu Safiya, director of Gaza's Kamal Adwan Hospital and a colonel in Hamas, held since December 2024. Israel holds more than 1,300 detainees under the unlawful-combatants law, in renewable six-month terms under limited court review, with military prosecutors withholding the evidence to protect the source it came from. Doctors Without Borders, which has spent the war treating the sector's staffing lists as a category above scrutiny, demanded the same day that every detained Palestinian health worker be released.

ASSESSMENT

Twelve governments have now put on the record that Israel's detention of unlawful combatants breaches international law, and the paragraph is what travels — into the next sanctions annex and the next filing at The Hague. Administrative detention holds a man without showing him the evidence because the evidence is usually a human source who dies once it is read into a courtroom, which is the sentence none of the twelve had to write. And the health they name as their deepest concern belongs to a colonel in the organization that ran October 7 — not that any of the twelve foreign ministries will be asked about it.

Biden's Principals File Their Defense Ahead of the Memoir

Jake Sullivan, Antony Blinken, Jon Finer, Lloyd Austin and Philip Gordon went on the record with The New Yorker four months before Biden publishes his own account of the war. The charge they bring against themselves is that they never made the president condition the weapons. Sullivan says the administration twice moved toward a decisive break with Jerusalem, before Rafah in the spring of 2024 and again that July, and backed off each time over the hostages and a deal it believed was days away. Biden ran the policy himself, overruled Blinken and Sullivan to their faces, and would have kept going,

one official says, unless somebody told him he could not. Nobody did. The rest of the blame goes to Jerusalem — Netanyahu and Ron Dermer pledging the fighting would end in “two more weeks” until Blinken told Dermer he never wanted to hear the phrase again, and Dermer offered him “fortnight” instead. Finer says the Israelis were not telling the truth about their plans and timelines, and that nothing justified taking their claims at face value.

ASSESSMENT

The men who ran the policy are writing the war's first draft while the president who overruled them is still alive to publish his own, and the version they have settled on is that Washington's failure was insufficient coercion of Israel. That is the citation the arms-conditioning campaign in Congress will lean on for a decade — a sitting national security adviser testifying that he should have squeezed harder, at a moment when more House Democrats vote to cut the military financing than to keep it. Sullivan calls it a trap, which is a generous word for a call his own president made on purpose and against their advice [Dermer's “fortnight” is the most honest line any of them produced].

Mamdani Shops an ICC Warrant He Cannot Serve

New York's mayor says his legal department is in “active conversation” over whether the city can detain Netanyahu when the prime minister arrives for the General Assembly in September, on the warrant the ICC issued in November 2024. A mayor cannot arrest a visiting head of government, the United States never joined the Rome Statute, and Washington would stop the attempt before it began. Danny Danon answered from the Assembly that if anyone in New York belongs in custody it is Mamdani, citing the mayor's eulogies for Hamas terrorists and his description of Jewish organizations as monsters moving their dark money around, and promised that Netanyahu will come and speak from the podium regardless.

ASSESSMENT

The warrant does not have to be served to work, and this is its second life — a mayor renting the Hague's standing for a news cycle he cannot cash. Both men collect. Mamdani becomes the American left's most visible antagonist of Israel without leaving City Hall, and Netanyahu gets an election advertisement he could not have written better himself [the man who wants him in the dock is doing his advance work]. The court that issued the warrant spends Friday deciding whether to keep the prosecutor who signed it.

Michigan's Jewish Democrats Plan Republican Fundraisers Before the August Primary

Metro Detroit's Jewish Democratic fundraisers are booking events for Mike Rogers, the presumptive Republican nominee, as a hedge on the August 4 Senate primary. Haley Stevens faces Abdul El-Sayed, who has questioned whether Israel should be a Jewish state and said Democrats defend it for the money. Dennis Bernard, JFNA's national chair of government relations and a metro Detroit resident, says communal leaders will back Rogers if El-Sayed takes the nomination, and that Detroit Jews keep asking him for introductions. Joel Tauber, 92, a founding chair of JFNA who has voted Democratic in

all but one race of his life, says he would leave the Senate line blank. Elizabeth Warren endorsed El-Sayed yesterday and speaks at his rally Saturday. Her name also appeared on the flier for a fundraiser the same day, co-hosted by Kelly Neumann, who marked Veterans Day 2024 by praising a grandfather who fought “on the German side in WWI & WWII.” The campaign called the listing a clerical error and took it down. Neumann still maintains the man was “a german soldier, not a nazi,” a distinction the US Holocaust Memorial Museum calls a myth.

ASSESSMENT

AIPAC pulled the donate button on fifteen Democrats last week. This week the donors are preparing to pull themselves, and a ninety-two-year-old founding chair of the federation system leaving a Senate line blank is a constituency filing out. August 4 now prices whether a pro-Israel Democrat can survive a Democratic primary in a purple state, and metro Detroit is budgeting for no. El-Sayed keeps a Saturday host who splits the Wehrmacht off from the Nazi regime, and pays nothing for it. Disgraceful.

Syrian Jews Lobbied Washington to Lift the Sanctions Israel Wanted Kept

The yearlong campaign that repealed the Caesar sanctions on Syria was driven in part by Syrian-American Jews working against Jerusalem’s stated wariness of the government that replaced Assad. Henry Hamra, a cantor whose father led the Damascus Jewish community and whose uncle served as Syria’s last chief rabbi, flew into Damascus with Mouaz Moustafa of the Syrian Emergency Task Force. Moustafa built the Caesar Act around the photographs First Lieutenant Farid al-Madhhan carried out of Assad’s prisons on a flash drive, and Trump signed it in December 2019. He spent five years assembling those sanctions and the year after Assad’s fall dismantling them. Hamra’s family left Syria in 1992, part of a community of more than 30,000 driven out under Ba’athist restriction. The two men first met over the salvage of Judaica from the Jobar Synagogue after Assad’s forces bombed it.

ASSESSMENT

Two constituencies read the same regime and priced different things. Hamra weighs the synagogues and the cemeteries of a community Assad emptied. Jerusalem weighs a man who commanded al-Qaeda’s Syrian franchise until 2016 and now runs forces the UN catches killing Druze in Sweida — both readings are honest, and only one of them shares a border with him. An American Jewish campaign beat Israel’s own read in Washington on a security file, and sanctions relief does not come back if the new Damascus turns out to be the old one in better tailoring.

Briefly Noted

Frontline & Security

- *Jerusalem Post*: The IDF sent Hermes 450 drones after five suspected infiltrators near Mount Hermon two weeks ago and aborted the strike seconds out, when observers saw peyot and identified HaBashan Pioneers activists trying to found a Jewish community in Syria. The movement answered

that its people crossed three times last week without being seen and that it will not stop.

- *Walla*: Prosecutors charged a 20-year-old from Masudin al-Azazma with running 32 rifles and pistols out of Sinai and selling them inside Israel at up to 35,000 shekels apiece, several of them delivered by drone until troops intercepted one carrying three M-16s.
- *Israel Hayom*: Bahad 1 stood up a new officers' training battalion, "Rimon" — four companies under combat-experienced commanders — to widen the infantry, armor and engineering officer pipeline for the units the war has added.

Diplomacy & Geopolitics

- *JNS*: Israel's Foreign Ministry called Turkey's presence in northern Cyprus unacceptable on the anniversary of the 1974 invasion. Jerusalem picks at Ankara's oldest occupation while Washington still weighs the F-35 sale.
- *Times of Israel*: Israel's embassy in Canberra publicly faulted the governing Labor party's draft platform days before its national conference. Embassies do not usually litigate a ruling party's internal text in public.
- *Walla*: The Brussels-based Hind Rajab Foundation asked Belgium's federal prosecutor to open a "war crimes" case against an Israeli who attended Tomorrowland. Its business is chasing Israeli soldiers on vacation through whichever European prosecutor will take the complaint.

Public Diplomacy & Media

- *Algemeiner*: Sixty percent of voters aged 18–24 chose Hamas over Israel in the forced binary of July's Harvard CAPS-Harris poll, the only age cohort that did. Overall support for Israel held at 73 percent, unchanged since May.
- *JNS*: Israel Police say the group Ro Khanna described as detained by rifle-toting "thugs" had walked into a closed military zone, on a Breaking the Silence tour whose leader was already on a final warning for doing it before.
- *Times of Israel*: Campaign Against Antisemitism's first-day open letter to Andy Burnham puts the cost of Britain's new normal at a quarter of a billion pounds of police protection for synagogues and Jewish schools.
- *Jewish News UK*: Craig Guildford, the West Midlands chief constable whose force recommended barring Maccabi Tel Aviv's away fans from Aston Villa, left in January with £57,800 for loss of office after the Home Secretary said she had lost confidence in him.

Domestic & Law

- *Israel Hayom*: Aharon Barak says the judges in Netanyahu's trial were wrong to ask the prosecution to drop the bribery count in Case 4000. Withdrawing it would shrink the defense case and shorten the trial with it.
- *Walla*: A Nazareth court sentenced Sheikh Kamal Khatib to nine months of community service for incitement to terror. The state had asked forty

to fifty months in prison for Raed Salah's deputy in the outlawed Islamic Movement.

- *Walla*: Rahat's mayor says shootings in the city fell about 60 percent in two months, crediting round-the-clock patrols and a reconciliation committee.

Economy, Tech & Infrastructure

- *Times of Israel*: The Innovation Authority opened bidding on a NIS 100 million national quantum computing center, pitched as the fix for Israel's lag in the field.
- *Ynet News*: The Navy is rebuilding the 35-year-old INS Lahav for \$73 million and arming it with naval Iron Dome to cover the offshore gas rigs. A new corvette costs \$235 million and eight to ten years.
- *Globes*: Leviathan's partners have signed \$35 billion in gas exports to Egypt and Tamar's are negotiating up to \$20 billion more. Israel still has no gas-export policy — the Dayan Committee's interim conclusions are fifteen months old and its final report has never appeared.

Culture, Religion & Society

- *Times of Israel*: Archaeologists unearthed sycamore roof beams in the City of David, charred when Jerusalem burned in 586 BCE. The Antiquities Authority announced the find the week of Tisha B'Av.
- *Jerusalem Post*: Judit Polgar declined Prime Minister Peter Magyar's offer of Hungary's interim presidency, saying she lacks the strength to unite a divided nation.
- *JNS*: The Orthodox Union's Israel arm is turning a Jerusalem center for Anglo olim into a national network, from Nahariya to Yeruham.

Developments to Watch

Northern Front (Lebanon / Syria)

- **Hezbollah threatens Beirut's airport** — Hezbollah's deputy political chief told the government to reopen Beirut to Iranian flights or lose its patience. Aoun asks Trump for pressure on Israel today, while the group he came to disarm threatens his airport.

Gaza & Southern Theater

- **Jabarin takes the negotiating seat** — Hamas is putting Zaher Jabarin at the head of its negotiating team, with Mashaal as al-Hayya's deputy. Cairo now negotiates disarmament with the man who runs Hamas's money out of Turkey.
- **Ramallah phones the new Hamas chief** — Abbas's deputy and designated successor is reported to have called al-Hayya to congratulate him, as did

Egypt's intelligence minister. Both governments Washington means to seat over Gaza credentialed the man refusing to disarm.

Regional Axis (Iran, Houthis, Militias)

- **Jordan's interceptors are being spent** — Jordan shot down five more Iranian drones this morning, after a week of ballistic launches from Tabriz and Kermanshah. Amman's air defenses sit in front of Israel's, and Iran is drawing them down without aiming west.
- **Yemen's other war reopens** — Yemen's Presidential Leadership Council chief called to unite forces against the Houthis and to restart oil exports. Riyadh's clients read the naval blockade as their opening, and both sides are reinforcing on the front lines.
- **Tehran floats taking American hostages** — A former Iranian foreign minister urged storming the American bases in Kuwait and Bahrain, per remarks reported from Tehran. He wants two hundred Americans taken captive to end the war, and Tehran says a ground invasion is welcome.

Diplomatic & Legal

- **The attacks move past the strait** — A vessel was struck seventeen miles east of Dibba, outside Hormuz on the UAE's Fujairah coast. Fujairah exists to bypass the strait, and tanker-to-tanker transfers in the Gulf of Oman are already slowing. **LIKELY TO ESCALATE**
- **France's staff held in Tehran** — Iranian security services detained two French embassy officials for several hours, and Barrot has promised consequences. Tehran holds French nationals it has never charged, and it reaches for them at every pressure point.
- **UNESCO votes on Beaufort Friday** — UNESCO's members begin voting Friday in Busan on listing Beaufort Castle and four other southern Lebanese fortresses as heritage in danger. The IDF retook Beaufort two months ago, and the listing turns a held position into the next filing.

Home Front & Politics

- **Ben-Gurion loses thirty flights a day** — Seven more American tankers would put forty at Ben-Gurion and force thirty flight cancellations a day from August 1. Israel is not firing a shot in this war, and its only international airport is being rationed to host it.

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

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