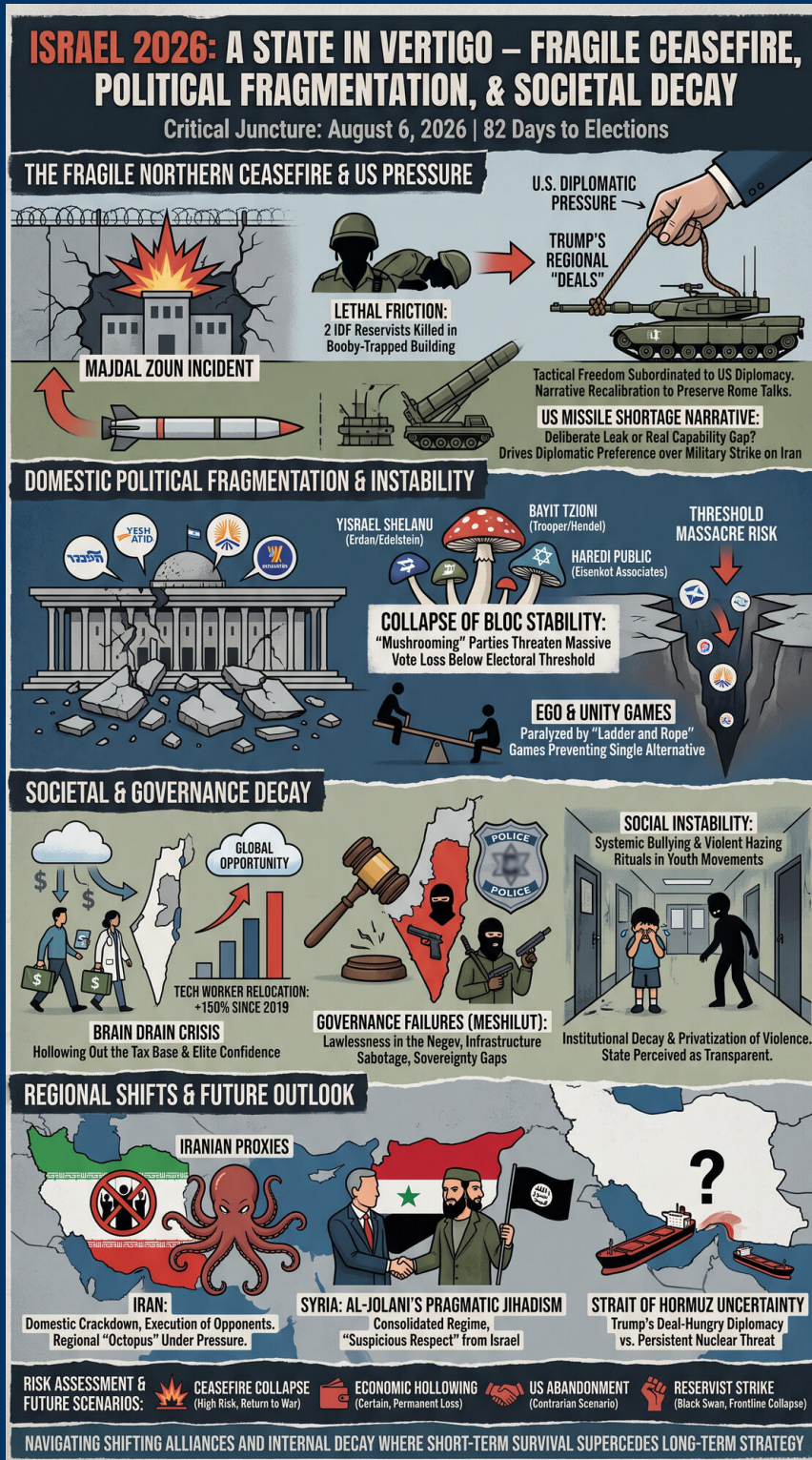


TODAY'S MEDIA TRENDS

KAN11

AUGUST 6, 2026

THE GDELT PROJECT



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ISRAEL CONFRONTS FRAGILE NORTHERN CEASEFIRE AND ESCALATING DOMESTIC POLITICAL FRAGMENTATION AHEAD OF 2026 ELECTIONS

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

August 6, 2026, serves as a critical juncture for Israeli national security and domestic stability, characterized by a **lethal friction** between military realities on the ground and diplomatic constraints imposed by the United States. The deaths of two IDF reservists in a [booby-trapped building](#) in Majdal Zoun, Southern Lebanon, have reignited debates over the viability of the current ceasefire. While the defense establishment initially labeled the incident a "gross violation" by Hezbollah, subsequent reports suggest **U.S. diplomatic pressure** forced a recalibration of the narrative to preserve ongoing negotiations in Rome. This highlights a growing tension where Israel's tactical freedom of action is increasingly subordinated to President Trump's broader regional "deals."

Domestically, the political landscape is undergoing a **rapid and chaotic realignment** 82 days before the general

election. The launch of "Yisrael Shelanu" by Likud veterans Gilad Erdan and Yuli Edelstein, alongside the "Bayit Tzioni" launch by Hili Trooper and Yoaz Hendel, signals a systemic collapse of the traditional bloc structure. These "mushrooming" parties [threaten to fragment](#) the right-wing and centrist vote, potentially leaving several factions below the electoral threshold. This internal volatility is mirrored by a breakdown in social order, ranging from a **brain drain** of high-income earners and tech professionals to systemic violence and "traditions" of [hazing in the Scouts](#) movement and school bullying.

Regionally, the "Trump Doctrine" is being tested by a reported **shortage of U.S. interceptor missiles**, which may be driving the administration's preference for a diplomatic settlement with Tehran over the Strait of Hormuz. In Syria, the consolidation of the [Ahmad al-Shara \(al-Jolani\) regime](#) presents a new, sophisticated jihadist challenge that balances pragmatic diplomacy with radical ideology. Collectively, the day's events suggest a state navigating a "vertigo" of shifting alliances and internal decay, where short-term political survival often supersedes long-term strategic clarity.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

Lebanese Front: Tactical Loss and Strategic Entrapment

- Major Harel Birnstock and Master Sergeant Tamir Vaknin were killed in a [booby-trapped building](#) in Majdal Zoun, highlighting the continued lethality of Hezbollah infrastructure despite the ceasefire.

- The IDF's initial demand for a massive retaliatory strike was [blocked by the political echelon](#) following U.S. messages that no "violation" had occurred if the building was mined prior to the agreement.
- Negotiations in Rome continue between Israeli and Lebanese representatives, focusing on [pilot zones of deployment](#) and prisoner releases, even as the military remains "locked" in a state of high alert.

Political Fragmentation: The Collapse of Bloc Stability

- Gilad Erdan and Yuli Edelstein officially broke from Likud to form [Yisrael Shelanu](#), citing the party's failure to represent traditional Likud voters and the draft exemption issue.
- Hili Trooper and Yoaz Hendel launched "Bayit Tzioni," targeting the ["voice of the soldiers"](#) and reservists, further crowding the "Third Block" space.
- Reports emerged of Gadi Eisenkot's associates involvement in founding a ["Liberal Haredi"](#) party (The Haredi Public) to challenge the Shas/UTJ monopoly.

U.S.-Iran Tensions and the Missile Scarcity Narrative

- The Washington Post reported that President Trump halted plans for a major strike on Iran due to a [shortage of interceptor missiles](#) and long-range munitions.
- Trump maintains a rhetoric of "deals over killing," expressing hope for an agreement on the [Strait of Hormuz](#) via Omani mediation.

- Iran continues its domestic crackdown, with reports of [executions of regime opponents](#) in broad daylight to prevent internal collapse.

Social Instability and Governance Failures

- A 16-million-shekel lawsuit was filed by the mother of a 13-year-old girl who committed suicide following [severe school bullying](#), accusing the Ministry of Education of systemic negligence.
- The Scouts (Tzofim) movement faces scrutiny after reports of [violent hazing rituals](#), including physical abuse and "territorial marking" among different tribes.
- In the Negev, armed groups [prevented electric company workers](#) from repairing infrastructure near police stations, emphasizing a total loss of "governance" (Meshilut).

KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS

Armed Conflict & Militarization

- IDF Paratrooper Brigade 55 remains deployed in Lebanon's "Yellow Zone," conducting engineering work under [high-risk conditions](#) while the political echelon debates withdrawal timelines.
- The IDF faces a significant challenge from the "Ori Tzafon" movement—civilians repeatedly [crossing into Lebanon](#) to establish settlements, forcing the military to divert resources for "chasing girls through the brush."

Leadership Dynamics & Governance

- Yoav Horvitz, Netanyahu's former Chief of Staff, warns that **"power corrupts"** and that Netanyahu has declared war on the state since his indictment, [corrupting moral standards](#) and reality perception.
- Internal Likud dynamics show a **narcissistic trend**, with primary candidates valued for loyalty to the leader rather than professional achievements or [taking responsibility](#).

Macroeconomics & Trade

- Tax Authority data indicates a [doubling of the "brain drain"](#) rate among the upper decile and tech sectors, creating a severe long-term threat to the Israeli tax base and economic stability.

Legal Warfare & Regulatory Risk

- Election Committee Chairman Justice Solberg has banned polling station officials from reporting voter turnout in real-time, a move [Likud is desperately attempting to bypass](#) through legislative changes or appeals.

DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

The Illusion of the "Northern Ceasefire"

The incident in Majdal Zoun reveals a structural flaw in the Israel-Lebanon ceasefire. The IDF describes its mission as "purifying" infrastructure, which involves entering structures that Hezbollah has [intentionally booby-trapped](#). The debate over whether a bomb was "old" or "newly planted" [is a semantic exercise](#) used to manage the U.S.-Israel relationship. Analysts warn that Israel is returning to the "security zone" mud

of the 1990s, where a stationary presence [invites asymmetric attrition](#) without the benefit of a full-scale offensive to clear the threat.

The Fragmentation of the Zionist Right

The proliferation of new parties (Erdan, Edelstein, Hendel, Trooper, Gantz/Simchi) suggests that the "Zionist Right" is searching for a home that is **neither Likud nor Messianic**. However, this search is paralyzed by ego. Dedi Simchi admits that while everyone [understands the need for unity](#), "ladder and rope" games of ego prevent a single, viable alternative to Netanyahu. The risk is a **repetition of the "Dash" party** history—a massive surge followed by total disintegration or the loss of thousands of votes to the threshold.

Institutional Decay and the Privatization of Violence

From the Scouts' hazing rituals to the armed tribes in the Negev, there is a recurring theme of **sovereignty gaps**. The state is perceived as "transparent" or absent. The "Shadow" (Yoav Eliasi) and his interrogation for [breach of trust](#) regarding a club owned by his brother highlights the blurred lines between civilian volunteer forces and personal political interests. Similarly, the "Liberal Haredim" seeking to run independently [reflect a fracture](#) in the most stable segment of the Israeli political system—the Haredi bloc.

INTERNAL DYNAMICS & DOMESTIC INSTABILITY

Israel is experiencing a **societal "vertigo"** as it prepares for the 2026 elections. The traditional reliance on the IDF as a unifying "melting pot" is fraying, evidenced by the [hazing scandals in the Scouts](#) and the intense

bitterness of reservists who feel the government is [trading their lives](#) to maintain a coalition with draft-evading parties. The "brain drain" noted by the Tax Authority is not merely financial; it is a **crisis of confidence** in the state's future. The elite—high-income earners and tech innovators—are "voting with their feet," which limits state capacity to fund the very security measures required to stabilize the borders.

Furthermore, the **Netanyahu-State conflict** has trickled down into every institution. Former associates describe a "war against the state" [conducted by the Prime Minister](#), targeting the judiciary and law enforcement. This has created a polarized environment where even a routine investigation into a police volunteer (The Shadow) or a local theft ring is framed through the lens of "**Machine of Poison**" (Mechonat HaRa'al) vs. "Mamlachtiut" (Statism).

EXTERNAL DYNAMICS & GLOBAL POSTURE

The international system is portrayed as **hypocritical and transactional**. Israel feels increasingly isolated as the "civilized world" ignores [mass executions in Iran](#) while scrutinizing IDF actions in Lebanon. The relationship with the U.S. under Trump is framed as a **strategic straightjacket**; Israel must accept ceasefire terms that leave its soldiers vulnerable [to avoid disrupting](#) Trump's regional diplomacy. The reported U.S. missile shortage adds a layer of skepticism: is the U.S. truly unable to supply munitions, or is this a **deliberate leak** to force Israel and Iran into a deal?

On the Syrian border, Israel is adapting to the "post-Assad" reality by engaging with Ahmad al-Shara's regime. However, this is a **posture**

of **"suspicious respect."** Israel is projecting power by maintaining a buffer zone and [destroying Syrian air force assets](#) to prevent them from falling into jihadist hands, even as it facilitates humanitarian aid to signal it can be a "good neighbor" to the new Syrian power brokers.

THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

The Israeli economy is facing structural threats despite the seasonal boost from internal tourism in the North.

- **The Great Brain Drain:** The Tax Authority reports that the rate of [high-income earners leaving Israel](#) has nearly doubled, with a 150% jump in tech workers relocating since 2019.
- **Wealth Concentration Risk:** The income of those leaving is 50% higher than the national average, suggesting a [hollowing out of the tax base](#) that sustains the military and social services.
- **Strait of Hormuz Uncertainty:** While negotiations may lower oil prices, the current tension continues to [stress global energy markets](#), with Trump promising price drops only after a "deal" is finalized.
- **Governance Costs:** Crime and lawlessness in the Negev, specifically the sabotage of electricity infrastructure, [costs the state millions](#) in repairs and lost productivity annually.

LEADERSHIP CHANGES

The political shifts are driven by a mix of ideological breaks and survivalist maneuvers.

- **Gilad Erdan & Yuli Edelstein:** Once central pillars of the Likud, they are now the **primary disruptors** from the right, launching a party that [refuses to serve in a narrow government](#) dependent on extremist or sectoral parties.
- **Yoav Horvitz:** The former Netanyahu confidant has "crossed the lines" to support Gadi Eisenkot, positioning himself as the **witness to institutional decay** within the Prime Minister's Office [to delegitimize Netanyahu's leadership](#).
- **Ahmad al-Shara (Al-Jolani):** Framed as a **strategic winner** who successfully transitioned from an Al-Qaeda cell leader to a [pragmatic Syrian leader](#) recognized (at least de facto) by regional powers.
- **The Shadow (Yoav Eliasi):** Facing potential **expulsion from the police volunteer force** following a Ma'hash (Internal Affairs) investigation into [breach of trust](#).

EDITORIAL POSTURE & STORY HIERARCHY

The network's hierarchy for August 6 is heavily weighted toward the **human cost of the conflict**, with the funeral of Major Birnstock and the interview with his parents receiving substantial, emotional airtime. This serves a dual purpose: honoring the fallen while **subtly critiquing the government's ceasefire policy**. The political "party launch" stories are treated with a mixture of fascination and skepticism, often labeled as "mushroom parties" [struggling at the threshold](#).

Critically, the network is framing the U.S. role with **caution and frustration**. The reports on missile shortages are presented as a possible excuse for abandonment, while the "Enemies" segment on al-Jolani is a sophisticated attempt to **prepare the public for a new regional order**. Omissions include detailed discussions on the specific terms of the Rome negotiations, likely due to censorship or strategic ambiguity, and the absence of any high-ranking Likud members willing to defend the current "governance" failures in the South.

GEOPOLITICAL FRAMING

The transcripts portray a world where **pragmatism is the new radicalism**, and long-standing allies are becoming unreliable partners.

- **Israel:** Portrayed as **militarily capable but politically paralyzed**. The state can execute "Ippons" against individual attackers abroad [in the Philippines](#), but cannot secure a power line in the Negev or a building in Lebanon without asking permission.
- **United States (Trump):** Characterized as **unpredictable and transactionally obsessed**. Trump is seen as "deal-hungry" at the expense of Israeli tactical safety, [stalling military strikes](#) to avoid "killing people" and managing his own domestic stockpiles.
- **Syria (Al-Jolani):** Framed as a **chameleon-like "pragmatic jihadist"**. He is described as "intelligent" and "charismatic," a man who has [traded his explosive belt for a suit](#) to gain Western legitimacy while retaining a radical core.

- **Iran:** Depicted as a **brutal but terrified mafia state**. The regime is "hunting" its own people [like animals](#) to prevent collapse, while its regional octopus (proxies) remains active but increasingly under pressure.
- **Hezbollah:** Viewed as a **persistent and dishonest actor** that uses the ceasefire "as a mask" [to prepare the next disaster](#) while the international community looks away.

INFORMATION WARFARE ENVIRONMENT

The day is a masterclass in **narrative management** regarding the Majdal Zoun explosion. The IDF and Ministry of Defense initially pushed a "Hezbollah violation" narrative [to justify a response](#). However, once the U.S. signaled their opposition, the narrative shifted toward the "difficulty of identifying when mines were placed" [to de-escalate the rhetoric](#). This demonstrates how "ground truth" is often secondary to the diplomatic "spin" required to keep the Rome talks alive.

In the domestic sphere, **Likud's counter-propaganda** against the new parties is already in motion. The network reports on a ["poison machine"](#) that attempts to frame Erdan and Edelstein as "Leftists" or "traitors" to the National Camp. Meanwhile, the Eisenkot camp is **"seeding"** the narrative that a "Liberal Haredi" party is a natural development [to break the religious blocs](#), despite it being a strategically timed political tool.

HYPOTHESES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

- **The Threshold Massacre:** With the proliferation of small centrist/right-wing parties, the 2026 election will likely see a **massive loss of votes** as multiple factions fall just short of the 3.25% threshold, potentially handing a victory to the most disciplined bloc rather than the most popular one.
- **The "Security Zone" Trap:** If the IDF continues to linger in Southern Lebanon without a clear civilian supervision mechanism (the "Pilot Zones"), the attrition rate [will rise](#), leading to a domestic "reservist rebellion" as the public loses patience with a "non-war" that continues to produce casualties.
- **Syrian Realignment:** Al-Jolani will likely secure **partial U.S. sanction relief** by positioning himself as the only force capable of keeping Iran and ISIS out of Damascus, forcing Israel into an [uncomfortable security partnership](#) with a former Al-Qaeda commander.

STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

Short Term (1-4 Weeks): We can expect a **tightening of IDF safety protocols** in Lebanon, which will slow engineering work. The political arena will see **desperate merger talks** as polling for Erdan/Hendel/Gantz remains dangerously close to the threshold. Real-time turnout reporting will become a [major legislative flashpoint](#).

Medium Term (1-6 Months): The formation of a **new Syrian military identity** will force the IDF to redefine its "red lines" on the Golan Heights. In Israel, the "brain drain" will start showing in **quarterly tax revenue dips**,

potentially forcing emergency budget cuts to defense or social services.

Long Term (1-5 Years): The "Trump Accord" on the Strait of Hormuz may create a **temporary energy boom**, but the underlying Iranian nuclear threat will remain. Israel may face a **demographic-economic shift** where the loss of its productive tech sector to emigration permanently alters the country's GDP growth trajectory and its ability to maintain its qualitative military edge.

RISK ASSESSMENT

- **Collapse of the Northern Ceasefire:** Triggered by another Majdal Zoun-style mass casualty event or a successful Hezbollah drone strike. Likelihood: High. Impact: Immediate return to high-intensity war. Mitigations: Rapid deployment of international monitoring forces [beyond the "pilot zones"](#) and stricter Lebanese Army enforcement.
- **Economic Hollowing (Brain Drain):** Triggered by continued political instability and the passing of Haredi-favoring budget laws. Likelihood: Certain (Ongoing). Impact: Permanent loss of the high-tech sector and middle-class tax base. Mitigations: Immediate [equality in the burden \(service and work\)](#) and tax incentives for tech professionals.
- **U.S. Munitions Depletion:** Triggered by a regional escalation requiring massive Iron Dome/Patriot usage. Likelihood: Medium. Impact: Vulnerability to Iranian saturation attacks. Mitigations: Diversification of defense suppliers and [acceleration of domestic laser defense](#) systems.

- **Internal Governance Implosion (Negev/Crime):** Triggered by a tribal feud escalating into a siege of government infrastructure. Likelihood: High. Impact: Disruption of national electricity and transport grids. Mitigations: Massive [police and GSS intervention](#) in civilian criminal sectors.
- **Syrian Jihadist Pivot:** Triggered by Al-Jolani's failure to control his radical base once sanctions are lifted. Likelihood: Medium. Impact: A new, well-armed jihadist state on Israel's border. Mitigations: Maintaining a [deterrent buffer zone](#) and strictly monitoring Syrian-Turkish arms flows.

GAPS & BLIND SPOTS

- **Rome Negotiation Details:** The public is unaware of the specific [prisoner exchange ratios](#) or the exact GPS coordinates of the "Pilot Zones" being discussed.
- **U.S. Missile Stocks:** The claim of a shortage [may be a psychological operation](#) to manage Israeli expectations, rather than a physical reality.
- **The "Shadow" Investigation:** The extent of political pressure [from the Ministry of National Security](#) on the police regarding Eliasi's status remains hidden.
- **Haredi Liberal Viability:** There is no data on whether the "Haredi Public" party [actually has voters](#) or is merely a strategic distraction created by Eisenkot's advisors.

CONTRARIAN NARRATIVE SCENARIOS

The "U.S. Abandonment" Maneuver: The reported missile shortage is a fabricated narrative by the Trump administration to

justify a **grand bargain with Iran**, effectively ending the U.S. commitment to Israeli regional hegemony. In this scenario, the Rome talks are not about Lebanese sovereignty, but about facilitating a **U.S. exit strategy** from the Levant.

The Al-Jolani "Double Cross": Al-Jolani's pragmatism is a **strategic ruse** to gain Western military hardware and reconstruction funds. Once consolidated, he will merge his forces with remaining radical elements to **open a unified jihadist front** from the Mediterranean to the Iraqi border, viewing the current Israeli "buffer zone" as a target for a future October 7th-style invasion.

Black Swan: The Reservist Strike: A total **cessation of volunteer reserve service** occurs not due to ideology, but due to physical and mental exhaustion. Following the Majdal Zoun blast, Entire units [running for 470+ days](#) simply stop reporting for duty, leading to an **unprecedented collapse of IDF frontline readiness** 60 days before the election.

RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

For Statecraft/Public Sector:

- **Security:** Transition Lebanon operations to "intelligence-based raids" rather than [static presence](#) in booby-trapped villages to reduce attrition.
- **Economic:** Draft emergency legislation to provide "tech-sector retention" benefits [to counter the brain drain](#).
- **Diplomatic:** Publicly challenge the U.S. missile shortage narrative to force a clarification of the [defense treaty commitments](#).

For Private Sector/Investors:

- **Supply Chain:** Diversify away from Negev-based infrastructure [given the loss of Meshilut](#) and risk of sabotage.
- **Capital Allocation:** Hedge against Shekel volatility as the electoral threshold fragmentation increases the [likelihood of a hung parliament](#).
- **Safety Standards:** Private educational institutions must implement [independent bullying monitoring](#) systems to mitigate the massive regulatory and legal risks identified in current lawsuits.

LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

The current legislative agenda is dominated by **election integrity and the distribution of sectoral funds**. Likud is pushing for a change to the [real-time turnout reporting](#) rules to mobilize its base, while the opposition is using the [High Court of Justice \(Bagatz\)](#) to freeze hundreds of millions of shekels intended for Haredi educational institutions that prevent drafting.

BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED:

- **Election Transparency Act Amendment:** Proposed to bypass Solberg's ruling and allow [party observers to report](#) voter data to headquarters in real-time.
- **Haredi Education Funding Bill:** Controversial transfer of [hundreds of millions](#) to Haredi institutions; currently frozen by Bagatz due to procedural flaws and the draft issue.

- **"Hok HaMa'atzarim" (Detention Law):** Discussion regarding the use of [administrative detention](#) for both Jewish and Arab extremists, a major point of friction between the Defense and National Security ministries.

HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS:

- **Yisrael Shelanu Launch:** Erdan and Edelstein presenting their [alternative to Netanyahu's](#) Likud leadership.
- **Bayit Tzioni Launch:** Hendel and Trooper defining the ["reservist platform"](#) for the upcoming vote.
- **The Rome Talks Press Briefing:** Lebanese and Israeli officials [trading accusations](#) over leaks and ceasefire violations.

KEY STORIES

- **Majdal Zoun Explosion:** Two IDF reservists, Harel Birnstock and Tamir Vaknin, were killed when [they entered a booby-trapped building](#) in Southern Lebanon while providing security for a backhoe. Four others were seriously wounded. The IDF faces pressure to retaliate despite U.S. calls for restraint.
- **Yisrael Shelanu Political Break:** Gilad Erdan and Yuli Edelstein announced a new party [shaking the Likud base](#). They claim Netanyahu's current list does not represent true right-wing values and will not join a narrow coalition with extremists.
- **U.S. Missile Shortage:** The Washington Post reports a [crisis in U.S. munitions stocks](#), specifically Patriot and THAAD interceptors, which reportedly influenced President Trump's decision to pursue diplomacy over military action against Iran.
- **Tax Authority Brain Drain Report:** A study shows [emigration among Israel's wealthiest](#) has doubled, with tech professionals leaving at a rate 150% higher than in 2019, threatening the nation's long-term financial stability.
- **Ahmad al-Shara (Al-Jolani) Profile:** A deep dive into the [new leader of Syria](#), charting his evolution from Al-Qaeda operative to a pragmatic head of state who is currently negotiating for international legitimacy and the removal of sanctions.
- **Adva's Lawsuit Against Education Ministry:** The mother of a girl who committed suicide due to bullying is [suing the state for 16 million NIS](#), alleging that school officials ignored her pleas and even removed the girl from WhatsApp groups.
- **Scouts (Tzofim) Hazing Scandal:** Reports of [violence, sexual harassment, and physical abuse](#) disguised as "traditions" within the youth movement, prompting calls for systemic reform and criminal investigations.
- **Loss of Governance in Tel Sheva:** Armed masked men [prevented electric repairs](#) by threatening workers with M16 rifles near police stations, highlighting a failure of law enforcement in the Negev.
- **The Shadow (Yoav Eliasi) Interrogated:** The singer and police volunteer was [questioned for breach of trust](#) for allegedly using his connections to protect his brother's nightclub from police scrutiny.
- **Strait of Hormuz Deal:** Negotiations mediated by Oman and Omani mediation [await approval from Iran's Supreme Leader](#) to reopen the vital waterway, as Trump emphasizes a "deals over war" policy.

- **Eilat Theft Family:** New footage reveals a family [using their children to steal](#) hundreds of thousands of shekels' worth of electronics and luxury goods in Eilat and Hadera.
- **Haredi Settlement Funding Freeze:** Bagatz [stops the transfer of millions](#) to Haredi and settler groups, sparking a backlash from religious parties ahead of the election.
- **The Baltic Crossing:** Polish swimmer Bartłomiej Kubkowski successfully [swam from Sweden to Poland](#) in a continuous 55-hour effort, described as an unprecedented feat of physical and mental resilience.
- **Menopause Awareness Show:** A new KAN11 series, "Ham Li Kar Li," [examines the medical and social taboos](#) surrounding aging and hormonal therapy for women.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Today's Media Trends is a public interest experiment in applying deep thematic trend analysis to television news coverage from around the world to explore how responsibly applied advanced AI can help journalists and scholars better understand the overarching trends, themes and patterns of our global world.

No data is used to train or tune any AI model.

Each morning, in collaboration with the Internet Archive's TV News Archive, we apply

Google's Gemini 3 to deeply examine yesterday's coverage from each television news channel to tease out the overarching themes and trends of its news coverage into a richly annotated thematic analysis. Each high-level insight is connected back to the original broadcast, allowing journalists and scholars to understand the dominate themes and trends and instantly click out to the underlying sources for details.

By helping journalists and scholars see the broader trends and patterns of global news coverage, this analysis helps them identify relevant stories and coverage they might not otherwise have encountered and uncover connections, emphases and narrative shifts that enable more comprehensive reporting and deeper, evidence-based research.

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