

ISRAEL WEEKLY WAR SUMMARY

Week #117 December 28 - January 3, 2026

This is a product of the IDSF Habithonistim Research Department, distributed by the David Institute for Security Policy in coordination with IDSF USA



Account of the main events in the Israel-Hamas war and hostilities by the Iranian Axis



Photo Cover: President Trump and Prime Minister Benjamin took part in the New Year celebrations at Mar-a-Lago, Florida.

Source: Government Press Office on X

Prime Minister Netanyahu visited President Donald Trump in December, their sixth in-person meeting this year.

ISRAEL AT WAR

WEEK 117

0 Total Israeli casualties This Week

0 Total Civilians killed this week

0 Total IDF Casualties this week

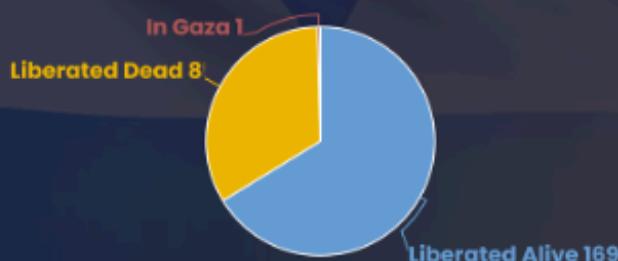
MAIN EVENTS

At Mar-a-Lago, Trump and Netanyahu discussed the stalled Gaza ceasefire. Trump warned Hamas to disarm quickly, while acknowledging disagreements regarding Judea & Samaria annexation and post-war governance.

Israel recognizes Somaliland to secure Red Sea shipping against Iranian proxies and expand alliances with stable, pro-Western partners.

By precipitating the collapse of the Maduro administration, the United States has excised a critical node from the strategic axis opposed to the West and its allies.

HOSTAGES IN GAZA 1



ATTACKS ON ISRAEL & ALLIES 0/37,307

This Week Since Oct. 7



Judea & Samaria + Israel Front



0/120

This Week Since Oct. 7
0 Civilians and 0 security force fell.



12,801

Since Oct. 7
Over 7,000 Palestinians Arrested



Gaza Front



0/1,721

This Week Since Oct. 7
0 IDF soldiers fell in battle. 0 Civilians killed



24,500

Since Oct. 7
Hamas terrorists killed. Over 275 Senior officials killed since Oct. 7



Lebanon Front



0/133

This Week Since Oct. 7
0 civilian and 0 IDF soldiers fell.



+3,500

Since Oct. 7
Hezbollah terrorists killed, 154 Hezbollah Leadership killed.



Greater Middle East Front



0/36

This Week Since Oct. 7
0 Civilian killed this week.



+3,696

Since Oct. 7
Attacks on Israel, +884 from Yemen, 2180 from Iran, +632 from other



Week #117 December 28 - January 3, 2026

- Protests erupted across Iran beginning on December 28, 2025, following an unprecedented economic crisis triggered by the sharp depreciation of the Iranian rial against the dollar and widespread merchant strikes. What began as economically driven demonstrations quickly evolved into overt anti-regime protests, with chants calling for the destruction of the Islamic Republic and slogans such as “death to the dictator.” These protests are assessed as the largest since the Mahsa Amini demonstrations in 2022 and the most significant since October 7, with students and labor unions joining nationwide.
- The pace and scale of protests in Iran surged sharply. On January 1, there were 56 protests nationwide, rising to 70 protests on Friday, January 2, compared to only 31 protests on December 31. By January 1, at least 22 of Iran’s 31 provinces had experienced protests. Most demonstrations took place in small and mid-sized cities and suburban areas, rather than in the central districts of major cities, indicating broad geographic diffusion rather than elite urban concentration.
- On the anniversary of Qassem Soleimani’s assassination, protesters burned his images and escalated tactics by throwing Molotov cocktails, with one individual reportedly using an improvised flamethrower to attack Basij motorcyclists. In another city, protesters took control of a Basij station and set government vehicles ablaze. Some demonstrators openly voiced praise for the Shah-era regime. President Trump reiterated warnings that the United States would intervene if the regime carried out mass shootings of protesters. Iranian officials dismissed these threats, while reporting indicated that the Iranian regime is currently in economic survival mode with no viable solution in sight.



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- During the Israeli cabinet meeting on January 4, 2026, Prime Minister Netanyahu stated that the President Trump is insisting that Hamas must fully disarm in order for negotiations to move forward to the second phase of the ceasefire framework. According to reporting, during their recent meeting President Trump committed that if Hamas continues to refuse disarmament, Israel would be permitted to launch an additional military operation in Gaza. Separate reports indicated that in mid-January the US president is expected to announce the establishment of a peace council, although the mandate and enforcement mechanisms of this body remain unclear.
- In a televised interview, Netanyahu stated that Hamas still maintains roughly 20,000 operatives, around 60,000 weapons, and hundreds of kilometers of underground tunnels, and that the organization continues to categorically reject disarmament. In response, senior Hamas official Osama Hamdan declared that any discussion of disarming the “resistance” has no basis in reality, instead demanding that the Trump administration halt Israeli military action and fully respect the ceasefire.
- The IDF Chief of Staff conducted a field tour in southern Gaza alongside senior commanders and stated that all Hamas frontline units were destroyed during 2025, while emphasizing that 2026 will be decisive in shaping Israel’s post-war security environment. He declared that the Yellow Line will become the new fortified security boundary, serving both as a defensive line and as a base for future offensive operations, and reiterated Israel’s determination to dismantle Hamas’ remaining military capabilities. His remarks strongly suggest preparations for a renewed large-scale campaign.

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- A group of Bedouins from the village of Tarabin deliberately set fire to five Jewish-owned vehicles, explicitly stating that the attack was carried out because the victims were Jewish. The incident followed police activity in the area. The Minister of National Security stated that the Shin Bet and Border Police are expected to intervene, framing the Bedouin sector as part of what he described as the “Red Front.”
- For the first time, Hasmonean (ultra-orthodox) Brigade forces were deployed in the Golan Heights following a series of training exercises. Operating under the Golan Brigade, they began conducting patrols and intelligence-gathering sweeps in the area.
- The Defense Ministry announced the delivery of the first operational high-power laser interception system, known as Iron Beam, to the Israel Defense Forces. This marks a significant technological milestone, adding a cost-effective, rapid-response layer to Israel’s air and missile defense architecture.
- Turkey’s pro-government daily paper *Yeni Şafak*, widely regarded as President Erdogan’s primary media mouthpiece, published a front-page article declaring that “as of today, Israel is the number-one threat.” The article alleged that the Syrian Democratic Forces are in fact an Israeli proxy directed against Turkey, condemned the so- called Jewish–Hellenic alliance as a destabilizing regional trend, and stated that from now on Israel will be placed at the top of the priority list of the Turkish Foreign Ministry, Ministry of Defense, and the Turkish intelligence service MIT. The framing signals a shift from rhetorical hostility to institutional prioritization, indicating a deliberate escalation in Ankara’s strategic posture.

Week #117 December 28 - January 3, 2026

- Lebanon's foreign minister issued an unusually direct and public challenge to Hezbollah, declaring it unacceptable for a non-state armed organization to maintain an independent military system and calling for full disarmament. He accused Hezbollah of exploiting Israeli strikes as justification to retain its weapons, deliberately stalling in hopes of future political shifts rather than engaging seriously in disarmament talks.
- In Yemen, early indicators of a potential revolutionary shift have emerged. On Friday, January 2, 2026, the president of the Southern Transitional Council announced that within two years, by January 2, 2028, the council would declare the establishment of an independent "State of South Arabia", based on the borders of southern Yemen prior to the 1990 unification, and governed under Islamic law. This move would effectively divide Yemen into two states, with the north remaining under Houthi control. The STC called for dialogue among all parties but warned that any attack on its territory would trigger an immediate declaration of independence. In recent days, the internationally recognized Yemeni government, backed by Saudi Arabia, launched a major military offensive involving 20,000 troops and extensive airstrikes, advancing as far as central Hadramawt. This operation threatens to derail the entire southern independence initiative.
- Prime Minister Netanyahu announced that Israel has issued formal recognition of the Republic of Somaliland as an independent and sovereign state. A joint and reciprocal declaration was signed by the Israeli prime minister, Israel's foreign minister, and the president of Somaliland.

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