

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2026 ■ 25 SHVAT, 5786



## Breeding ground

Tommy Robinson on why Epstein thrived  
Page 9

## Defense & Tech

Israeli firms rewire exports map, pivot to Asia  
Page 13



## Withering away

'Wuthering Heights' disappoints  
Page 16



# Trump: I told Netanyahu Iran talks must continue



US PRESIDENT Donald Trump greets Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the White House yesterday. (Avi Ohayon/GPO)

## PM meets US president in White House for three hours on how to contain Tehran

• By AMICHAI STEIN in Washington and SETH J. FRANTZMAN

Negotiations between the US and Iran on the nuclear issue will continue, US President Donald Trump said after his meeting on Wednesday with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the White House.

"There was nothing definitive reached other than I insisted that negotiations with Iran continue, to see whether or not a Deal can be consummated," Trump wrote on Truth Social. "If it can, I let the Prime Minister know that will be a preference. If it cannot, we will just have to see what the outcome will be."

**Report from Iran: Extrajudicial murder in hospitals, Page 2**

ments related to its ballistic missile program. He also conveyed the message that if Trump decides to strike Iran, the operation should include targeting the ballistic missile project.

"The prime minister emphasized the security needs of the State of Israel in the context of the negotia-

tions, and the two agreed to continue close coordination and maintain direct communication," the Prime Minister's Office said.

According to Israeli media, a variety of other security and political officials were present at the meeting, including US

See IRAN, Page 7

## PM's balancing act

ANALYSIS

• By YAAKOV KATZ

Wednesday's meeting between Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and US President Donald Trump was critical for Israel not only because Netanyahu was expected to try to persuade Trump to stay tough in the Iran negotiations (as one Trump official said, "Bibi knows how to be persuasive").

The other reason the meeting was critical is that the last thing Israel currently needs is to be viewed in Washington as dragging the United States into another Middle East war.

The military buildup around Iran began after the regime's barbaric crackdown, in which thousands of Iranians have been murdered for demanding freedom. Trump said at the time that "help is on its way," and the images of body bags, overflowing morgues, and Basij violence made the threat of force completely legitimate.

But the center of gravity has now shifted to diplomacy. Trump openly said on Tuesday night that Iran wants a deal and that he also prefers one. If Israel is seen as pushing for war, while the US president is pursuing negotiations, the damage to Israel's standing in America could be profound, and not just among Democrats.

Within the Republican Party, there is a real debate between the "America First" camp, often seen as having isolationist tendencies, and the camp that critics call "Israel First." The terminology itself is harmful, and if Trump appears to be pulled in that direction, especially heading into midterms, this could cause long-term damage.

If anyone should understand this, it is Netanyahu. The question now is whether he can balance Israel's needs and interests in the very country it depends on most.

The writer is a co-founder of the MEAD policy forum, a senior fellow at JPPF, and a former editor-in-chief of The Jerusalem Post. His newest book is While Israel Slept.

## PMO wants 'massacre' out of Oct. 7 memorial bill title

• By KESHET NEEV

The Prime Minister's Office has requested that the word "massacre" be removed from the title of a bill that proposes to establish a national day of commemoration for the October 7 Hamas attacks.

PMO representative Yoel Elbaz presented the position on Wednesday during a Knesset Education, Culture, and Sports Committee meeting that convened to advance the bill, sparking outrage from bereaved families in attendance.

Rather than using the word "massacre" in the bill's title, Elbaz said the PMO decided that the wording for the attacks should be "events" and "incidents."

"We went through a lot of strategy and decided to call it 'events' and 'incidents,' because it wasn't only a massacre; there was also a massacre, and the word appears later in the proposed text," Elbaz told the panel.

**Gadi Moses proposes detailed Oct. 7 inquiry, Page 2**

He said the "1929 events were called that [events], not the '1929 massacre,' because remembrance builds resilience."

Acting committee chair Shas MK Yosef Taieb said the word "massacre"

had indeed been removed from the bill's title for now. He added that the matter would be discussed again before a final committee vote.

Hila Abir, the sister of Lotan Abir, who was murdered at the Supernova music festival, expressed outrage over the decision.

"Where is the death of our brothers and our children? You are erasing it," she told the panel. "This law will pass over my dead body," she said.

"It doesn't make sense for the Prime Minister's Office to manage the event while it prevents investigation into the attacks," Abir added.

"We waited two and a half years and

See MEMORIAL, Page 7



WHITE PICKUP trucks are seen on the Egyptian side of the border with Israel yesterday. (Screenshot/X)

## White pickup trucks spotted again along Egyptian border

• By MIRIAM SELA-EITAM

The IDF will not launch an offensive against the white pickup trucks spotted approximately 100 meters from the Israel-Egypt border, a report said on Wednesday.

This was the second incident of pickup trucks being spotted along that border in 24 hours.

According to Ynet, IDF observers were monitoring the situation, and the Egyptian army was "at the scene and working to remove the residents in these trucks."

The report came after public

broadcaster KAN reported that the IDF would carry out "measured fire" against the trucks, further noting that it had deployed tanks, an attack helicopter, and drones to the area.

The Eshkol Regional Council said several gatherings of this type along the Egyptian side of the border have been reported in recent days and that it has been in continuous contact with the military.

The council added that the IDF said the border is "peaceful" and the gatherings do not pose a security threat.

Despite this, the council affirmed that it requested both military and government involvement to "move the gatherings away from the border and increase vigilance in the area."

## 600 EX-DEFENSE OFFICIALS WARN:

# Creeping W. Bank annexation will sabotage Gaza plan

• By YONAH JEREMY BOB

Gradual and creeping annexation of the West Bank will sabotage the Trump administration's plan for Gaza and harm Israeli national security in other ways as well, 600 former Israeli defense officials warned Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Until Sunday, a series of rules were in place requiring extra approvals from the IDF legal division and

Civil Administration, the Palestinian Authority, and others when it came to purchasing or building on land in the West Bank.

On Sunday, the government announced that it was repealing or streamlining many of those rules to make it easier for Jewish Israelis to acquire land in areas where, previously, doing so had been much harder.

According to the group Commanders for Israel's Security (CIS), led by

former major general Matan Vilnai, and including former heads of the Mossad, the Shin Bet (Israel Security Agency), the police, and other top IDF officials, this latest move could anger the US administration and even cause phase two of the Gaza ceasefire to unravel.

"The timing of the decision - on the eve of your meeting with the president of the United States, who has publicly expressed his firm opposi-

tion to the annexation of territories - raises questions about the judgment of the cabinet and its leadership," CIS wrote in a letter.

"Furthermore, your decision may be perceived as yet another attempt to disrupt President [Donald] Trump's efforts to advance an arrangement for the Gaza Strip, undermining his 20-point plan."

See SABOTAGE, Page 7

## ASHDOD REFINERY TRAGEDY:

# Oxygen suit malfunction suspected cause of two deaths

• Jerusalem Post Staff

Two women were declared dead after being found unresponsive in a lab at the Ashdod Refinery on Wednesday, Magen David Adom and United Hatzalah confirmed.

Early reports suggest that a malfunction in their oxygen suits may have prevented them from receiving adequate air.

Both victims were in their mid-40s, and one left three young children, aged five, eight, and 10.

The Ashdod Refinery, employing some 400 workers, is responsible for around 40% of the country's fuel and cooking gas.

"When we arrived at the scene, we were directed to two women who were lying without a pulse and not breath-



A PARAMEDIC is parked outside the Ashdod Refinery, where two women died, possibly from an oxygen suit malfunction, yesterday. (Liron Moldovan/Flash90)

ing," MDA-Hatzalah South volunteers Simcha Hassid and Moshe Dweck said.

"Together with additional

Magen David Adom teams, we carried out prolonged resuscitation efforts, including chest compressions,

administering medication, and ventilation. Sadly, despite our many efforts, an MDA paramedic was forced to

pronounce them dead."

The refinery said its certified in-house first aid team provided initial treatment until outside responders arrived. It added that the police, the Fire and Rescue Authority, the Environmental Protection Ministry, and other relevant authorities were notified and that the company will investigate and provide updates.

The Israel Police announced that they have opened an investigation into the circumstances of the accident, emphasizing that "at this moment, there is no risk of hazardous materials leaking outside the facility and no danger to the public."

In 2013, two men were killed at the refinery after being

See OXYGEN, Page 7