

# **Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update December 25, 2025 (Tevet 5, 5786)**

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**For the Yachad Report Newsletter For December 2025**

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## **Israel-Hamas Cease-fire; IDF Says It Killed Iranian Quds Force Member in Southern Lebanon Strike**

- *Israel will allow Jewish settlers to live in northern Gaza, Defense Minister Katz says*
  - *In first Christmas sermon, Pope Leo decries conditions for Palestinians in Gaza*
- *Defense minister: Israel leading 'de facto' annexation of West Bank with more Jewish settlements, expelling Palestinians from 'terror camps'*
  - *IDF, Shin Bet say Quds Force operative killed in south Lebanon*
  - *Knesset votes to advance Netanyahu gov't-backed October 7 'cover-up' probe*
  - *Hamas tells Turkey it met cease-fire deal terms, says Israeli strikes block phase two*
    - *Ex-IDF chief Eisenkot forms team to 'ensure the integrity of the elections'*
- *Netanyahu says Israel 'not looking for conflicts with Iran' amid reports of aims to renew strikes*

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***Operation Hawkeye: U.S. and Jordan Bomb ISIS Targets in Syria;*** The United States carried out a major wave of strikes across Syria after two American soldiers were killed in an ISIS ambush on Saturday, December 13, 2025. The action was described as a direct response meant to punish the attackers and to disrupt ISIS infrastructure that could be used to plan or inspire future terror plots. The operation was framed as a regional security mission rather than a move toward a wider war, with U.S. officials emphasizing that ISIS remains a threat even after years of sustained pressure against the organization. The U.S. Central Command said the operation involved strikes on more than 70 targets spread across multiple locations in central Syria. The mission included a combination of fighter jets, attack helicopters, and artillery. Jordanian forces also supported the effort with fighter aircraft, underscoring the partnership between Washington and Amman in counterterror activity. The operation used more than 100 precision munitions aimed at known ISIS infrastructure and weapons sites, with the intent of degrading the group's ability to regroup, rearm, and coordinate attacks. CENTCOM commander Adm. Brad Cooper said the strikes were critical to preventing ISIS from inspiring or directing attacks against the American homeland. He emphasized that the United States intends to keep pursuing terrorists who seek to harm Americans and regional partners. This language signaled both urgency and continuity: urgency in the immediate response to the deaths of U.S. troops, and continuity in the broader objective of keeping ISIS from exploiting instability in Syria. (*INN/VFI News*)

***Report: Israel Warned US: Iranian Missile Drills May Be Cover for Strike;*** Israeli officials have warned the United States that a missile exercise by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps could be used as cover for an attack on Israel. The concern centers on the possibility that large-scale movements, presented publicly as a drill could allow Iran to mask preparations for a surprise strike. The warning reflects an atmosphere of heightened caution, with Israeli officials indicating that the margin for error is far smaller than it was before the Hamas invasion on October 7, 2023. According to the information described, the intelligence collected at this stage points to movements inside Iran, without clear proof that an attack decision has been made. Even so, the situation has been treated as serious enough to prompt close consultation at the highest levels. One Israeli source described a climate in which leaders are unwilling to assume that visible activity is "only an exercise," even if the likelihood of an actual strike is assessed at under 50 percent. The same source noted that similar warnings were raised around six weeks earlier after missile movements were detected, but that episode ended without any Iranian action. American intelligence officials have conveyed a more restrained assessment, saying they have not seen indications of an imminent Iranian strike. Still, quiet coordination has continued. IDF Chief of Staff Eyal Zamir spoke with CENTCOM commander Adm. Brad Cooper on Saturday, December 20, to communicate Israel's concerns and to encourage close U.S.–Israeli defensive coordination. Zamir warned that missile

activity and other operational movements could be used as cover for a surprise attack, with a focus on ensuring that defensive measures are aligned quickly if the threat picture changes. *(INN/VFI News)*

***Report: Israel Preparing for Strike on Iran;*** Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is expected to present President Donald Trump with options for renewed strikes on Iran during a meeting later this month at Mar-a-Lago. The discussions are described as being driven by deepening Israeli concern over Iran's continuing efforts to rebuild and expand key military capabilities after the June conflict known as Operation Rising Lion. While Iran's nuclear activity remains a central worry for Jerusalem, the most immediate focus described in the early details is the ballistic missile threat, which Israeli officials see as urgent and rapidly evolving. Israeli officials have voiced concern that Iran is not only repairing sites and equipment damaged in June, but is also working to expand its ballistic missile program. The fear is not merely that Iran will restore what it lost, but that it could emerge with a larger and more resilient production capacity than before. In the same assessment, Iran's nuclear program is still viewed as dangerous, but the missile threat is described as closer at hand, because missiles can be produced, deployed, and used with less warning than a nuclear breakout scenario. Netanyahu is expected to brief Trump on the dangers posed by Iran's current trajectory for Israel and the wider region, and to present possible pathways for U.S. involvement—either joining in a strike or assisting in other ways. The meeting had not been formally set in the early reporting, but was expected to take place on Monday, December 29. The approach described suggests that Israel seeks not only political backing, but operational support, and wants clarity on the level of U.S. participation should military action be considered. *(INN/VFI News)*

***Netanyahu to Present Trump with New Iran Attack Plans During US Visit — Report;*** Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is expected to bring new options for a possible renewed attack on Iran when he meets with President Donald Trump during an upcoming U.S. visit. The thrust of the planned discussion is Israel's view that Iran has been working to restore and potentially expand capabilities damaged during the 12-day war in June 2025. Israeli concerns are not limited to one arena; they include both Iran's missile production capacity and the possibility that nuclear enrichment activity could be reconstituted after being hit. In the early description of Israel's worries, the most pressing issue raised is Iran's ballistic missile production. Israeli officials are concerned that Tehran is rebuilding and even expanding missile output in the wake of the June war, potentially changing the scale and tempo of the threat Israel could face. At the same time, there is continued alarm that Iran is rebuilding parts of its nuclear enrichment program that were heavily damaged. Even a partial recovery could increase pressure on Israel's defense establishment, which views Iran's nuclear ambitions as a uniquely dangerous strategic challenge. Netanyahu and Trump are expected to meet at Mar-a-Lago, with the timing described as being toward the end of the month. While Israeli public messaging has long framed Iran's nuclear program as an existential threat, the officials cited in the initial details said the ballistic missile issue is currently treated as the more urgent challenge. The logic described is that missile production can translate into immediate battlefield pressure, and that a larger missile arsenal could be used not only for direct attack, but as a shield that makes it harder to confront Iran's proxies or to take additional action against nuclear facilities. *(TOI/VFI News)*

***Report: Hezbollah Rebuilds Weapons-Smuggling Network through Syria;*** A senior American official has warned that Iran continues to arm affiliated militias across the Middle East through what was described as a sophisticated regional smuggling apparatus. The picture presented is one of steady, methodical resupply: weapons moving along multiple routes, toward multiple actors, with the overall purpose of strengthening Iran's network of partners and proxies. This kind of activity is especially significant in the current regional climate, because it can quietly rebuild capabilities even when public attention is drawn to more visible flashpoints. In recent weeks, Iran is said to have transferred weapons to

a Kurdish militia in northern Syria. The militia operates in the name of Kurdish interests and sees itself as facing pressure from multiple directions: Turkey to the north, and the new Syrian government closer to home. This kind of transfer highlights that Iran's smuggling network is not described as serving only one group. Rather, it is framed as an adaptable system that can shift arms and resources to whoever Tehran sees as useful in a given theater. At the same time, Hezbollah is said to have succeeded over the past year in rebuilding a smuggling network that runs from Iran through Syrian territory. The route is described as benefiting from the Syrian regime's weakness and the lack of effective control over large parts of the country. In that environment, a well-organized logistical pipeline can operate with fewer interruptions, allowing weapons and materiel to move with greater consistency. The continued operation of that pipeline, in this telling, is also enabled by the limited capabilities of the Lebanese army along the Syrian border. (*INN/VFI News*)

***Alert Resident Prevents Major Attack: Two Soldiers Wounded in Ateret Terror Stabbing;*** Two IDF soldiers were wounded on Tuesday, December 2, when a terrorist attempted to carry out a stabbing attack near the community of Ateret in Samaria's Binyamin region. The attacker was shot and killed by Israeli forces after pulling a knife and beginning to stab soldiers who had been sent to intercept him. The incident highlights the continued danger faced by communities and soldiers in Judea and Samaria, where attacks can unfold quickly and often hinge on minutes and decisions made under pressure. The events began when a resident noticed a suspicious individual walking along the road carrying a bag. Instead of dismissing what he saw, the resident immediately alerted security authorities. That phone call triggered a rapid, coordinated response that included tracking and engagement—actions that were later credited with preventing a potentially larger assault. In situations like this, the difference between tragedy and a contained incident can come down to whether citizens and local security systems act decisively at the earliest warning signs. A preliminary IDF assessment described how the regional defense system detected the suspicious person and how troops from the Paratroopers Brigade were dispatched off Route 465 near the Ateret Spring. During the initial inspection of the suspect, he suddenly drew a knife and began stabbing. Only then did the soldiers respond with gunfire, ending the attack. Magen David Adom teams treated the two soldiers at the scene, and their injuries were described as light. The emphasis in the initial description is that lethal force was used only after the attacker initiated the knife assault. (*i365/VFI News*)

***Israel to Receive First Iron Beam Laser Defense System by Year's End;*** Israeli defense officials say the country is approaching a new milestone in air defense, with the first operational capability of the Iron Beam laser system expected to be delivered to the IDF by the end of 2025. Brig. Gen. (Res.) Dr. Danny Gold, head of the Directorate of Defense Research & Development, announced on Monday, December 1, at the Defense-Tech conference in Tel Aviv that the directorate—together with Rafael and Elbit—plans to deliver the laser weapon system to the Air Force's air-defense branch before the year ends. The system is also known in Hebrew as "Eitan Or," named in memory of fallen soldier Eitan Oster. Gold said the initial capability would be handed over to the IDF on Tuesday, December 30. He also emphasized that delivery is not the end of the process, because the military must still integrate the system into existing defenses and carry out training to use it effectively. In other words, the handover is presented as a key step in a longer operational journey, moving from development and testing into real-world deployment, where procedures, coordination, and readiness determine how new tools perform under pressure. Gold described the system as one that could "change the rules of the battlefield," and said it was ready to be handed over after completing development and a testing sequence that proved its capabilities. He also pointed to a broader shift in Israel's defense-technology ecosystem, saying the "game has changed" and that startups now compete with major defense firms and can prevail. He cited a recent example in which a group of startups teamed up, competed against major defense industries in a directorate tender, and was selected to supply an attack-drone array to the IDF. (*YNN/VFI News*)

***MAGA Civil War over Israel Erupts into the Open at Turning Point USA Conference;*** Turning Point USA's AmericaFest gathering in Phoenix became a public stage for sharp disagreements inside the Make America Great Again movement about Israel and about the movement's relationship with figures accused of antisemitism. The conference was the first major Turning Point gathering since the murder of founder Charlie Kirk, and it featured prominent speakers taking direct aim at one another. The disputes were framed not only as policy disagreements but as clashes over moral boundaries and the kind of voices that should be welcomed or rejected. On Thursday, December 18, 2025, and Friday, December 19, 2025, leading figures used their speeches to denounce rivals and accuse opponents of either legitimizing extremists or weaponizing the memory of Kirk. Ben Shapiro opened with a pointed critique of Tucker Carlson, focusing on Carlson's decision to conduct an uncritical interview with Nick Fuentes, a self-described white nationalist. Shapiro argued that granting such a platform elevated someone he viewed as fundamentally dangerous and hostile. Shapiro returned to the theme repeatedly, saying that Fuentes should not have been given publicity and that those with large audiences carry moral responsibility for who they amplify. He also broadened his criticism beyond one interview, urging conservative leaders to confront conspiratorial claims and to call out those who spread them rather than excusing or ignoring the harm they cause. The conflict was presented as part of a larger battle over whether a political coalition can remain cohesive when its members disagree about how to treat extremist rhetoric and anti-Semitic insinuations. (TOI/VFI News)



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