

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update February 9, 2026 (Shvat 21, 5786)



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Israel-Hamas Cease-fire; IDF Says It Killed 4 Militants in South Gaza, as Medics Say Farmer Killed in Central Strip

- *Three killed, including a toddler, in IDF attack on southern Lebanon*
- *Iran's atomic chief says Tehran could dilute its highly enriched uranium in exchange for all sanctions being lifted, ISNA reports*
 - *Israeli troops kill four militants in Gaza, farmer shot dead in separate incident*
- *Thousands of protesters gather in Melbourne against President Herzog's visit to Australia*
 - *Israel to expand law enforcement in Palestinian-controlled West Bank areas*
 - *Pro-Palestine protest planned in Sydney against Israeli President Herzog's visit*
 - *Iranian Nobel Peace Prize winner sentenced to additional prison time*
- *40 murdered in 39 days: Man shot dead in northern Israeli Arab city, woman moderately wounded*

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Standing with Israel!

Houthis Poised to Target Israel and US Ships if Washington Strikes Iran; Israeli assessments indicate Yemen's Houthi forces are repositioning missiles and drones with plans to resume attacks on Israel and US naval assets should Washington initiate strikes on Iran. The outlook follows intelligence shared with American officials, suggesting a renewed threat across the Red and Arabian Seas. The report frames a volatile backdrop in which a regional flare-up could come quickly if diplomacy falters. The timing coincides with efforts to start new US–Iran nuclear discussions. Statements from Tehran and Washington point to intense behind-the-scenes maneuvering over scope and format, even as Israeli officials continue preparations for potential escalation. The security picture highlights how proxy actors could move in tandem with, or in response to, progress or breakdowns at the negotiating table. In Jerusalem, security planners are also weighing maritime risks tied to commercial shipping lanes and US carrier groups. The Houthis' track record with long-range drones and anti-ship capabilities amplifies concern that any strike on Iran could trigger a wider exchange, impacting civilian traffic and drawing in multiple fronts. Israel's defense posture remains calibrated for quick response while diplomatic tracks remain uncertain. (*JPost/VFI News*)

Planned US–Iran Meeting Canceled amid Dispute over Venue and Terms; A meeting expected for Friday between US envoy Steve Witkoff and Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has been called off after disagreements over location and format. Washington reportedly insisted on the original plan—talks in Istanbul with additional participants—while Iran sought changes; when the US declined, the discussion collapsed. The episode underscores the fragility of current diplomacy and the short window to define any new framework. Following the cancellation, US officials signaled a tougher line and hinted that military options could be considered if talks stall without progress. The diplomatic whiplash—oscillating between tentative engagement and renewed pressure—illustrates how quickly strategic calculations are shifting around sanctions, missiles, and nuclear constraints. For Israel and regional partners, the back-and-forth complicates planning and raises the risk that events could outpace negotiations. Regional analysts note that even a brief breakdown can ripple into related files—hostage issues, maritime security, and missile proliferation—raising the stakes for any future venue or format that might bring the parties back to the table. The day-to-day uncertainty leaves limited room for confidence-building steps while maintaining pressure for concrete outcomes. (*INN/VFI News*)

Trump Warns Iran's Leader to Be "Very Worried" as Washington Weighs Options; In a televised interview, President Donald Trump said Iran's leadership should be "very worried," asserting that the US had previously destroyed key elements of Tehran's nuclear program and would act again if necessary. The remarks came amid shifting signals over whether talks might resume in Oman after earlier cancellations, reflecting a fluid mix of pressure and potential engagement. The messaging blended deterrence with conditional openness. Administration statements have emphasized support for protest movements inside Iran, as well as a readiness to address ballistic missiles, nuclear activities, and regional proxy warfare in

any comprehensive understanding. Allies watch carefully for indications of the balance Washington intends to strike between sanctions enforcement and diplomatic pathways. The contours of any new framework remain uncertain. For Israel, the tone from Washington reflects a familiar pendulum between outreach and resolve. The emphasis on missiles and proxy activity aligns with Israeli threat assessments, while public warnings serve to deter escalation. Whether rhetoric yields concrete steps will depend on the coming weeks of regional developments. (INN/VFI News)

US F-35C Downs Iranian Shahed-139 Near Carrier Group; Harassment of Tanker Reported;

The US military says an F-35C from the USS *Abraham Lincoln* shot down a Shahed-139 drone roughly 500 miles from Iran's southern coast, with no injuries or damage reported on the American side. Shortly after, the US detailed an incident in which Iran's Revolutionary Guard boats and a Mohajer drone approached the merchant vessel *Stena Imperative* at high speed, threatening to board before disengaging. The close calls underscore a precarious maritime environment. As these incidents played out, discussions involving US envoy Steve Witkoff and Israeli leadership continued in Jerusalem, while US–Iran contacts were still being eyed for the coming days despite fresh complications. Statements from Washington emphasized that negotiations could proceed in multiple venues, even as military vigilance remains elevated to deter further escalations at sea and in the air. Forces across the region remain on alert for harassment or reconnaissance flights. The dual track—deterrence paired with diplomacy—reflects a calculus shaped by alliance commitments, commercial shipping, and air operations. Each encounter at sea or in the air risks miscalculation, while ongoing talks attempt to set boundaries on behavior and weapons activity. For Israel, the American posture offers reassurance even as containment challenges persist. (TOI/VFI News)

IDF and ISA Eliminate Hamas Commander Who Murdered Hostage Noa Marciano;

Israeli forces eliminated Muhammad Issam Hassan al-Habil, identified as the Hamas cell leader responsible for murdering Corporal Noa Marciano during her captivity. Marciano was abducted from the Nahal Oz outpost during the October 7 attacks; intelligence gathered by her division contributed to the operation that targeted her killer. Officials described the strike as a measure of closure for the family and units involved. The action followed a spate of ceasefire violations and renewed concerns about hostages and captives still unaccounted for. Israeli security services stress that targeted operations against those directly implicated in killings continue alongside broader pressure on Hamas command-and-control networks. The announcement highlighted the cooperation between the IDF and the Israel Security Agency in tracking perpetrators. Families of hostages continue to press for answers and for the safe return of their loved ones, urging that military pressure be matched with focused rescue efforts. The operation has renewed attention to the personal cost of the conflict and to the imperative of accountability for crimes committed against captives. (INN/VFI News)

New IDF Footage: Hamas Exploits Ambulances, Hospitals and Schools for Military Use;

Freshly released IDF material alleges systematic abuse of Gaza's emergency and civil infrastructure by Hamas, including the use of ambulances, medical facilities, and schools as cover for movement of operatives and weapons. Israeli officials say such practices continue even after ceasefire arrangements, complicating military operations while endangering civilians. Documentation presented aims to clarify the tactical environment forces face. The IDF reiterates that, under international law, medical sites lose protected status when converted to military purposes, and that forces will act against threats embedded in civilian areas while attempting to minimize harm. Officials argue that terror groups embed within population centers precisely to complicate response and leverage human shields. Claims will likely be scrutinized by international monitors. The release adds to a broader information effort to shape understanding of urban warfare constraints. Israeli briefings emphasize the need for precise intelligence, humanitarian corridors, and de-confliction, while warning that violations of protected status degrade

essential services. The tension between military necessity and civilian protection remains at the forefront of operational planning. (*INN/VFI News*)

Cabinet to Vote on New International Airport in the Negev to Ease Ben Gurion Congestion;

After years of debate, Israel is poised to approve a new international airport near the Ziklag area, west of the previously considered Nevatim site and not far from Rahat, Netivot, and Beersheba. A joint announcement from government offices says the cabinet vote is scheduled for Sunday, aiming to create capacity relief for Ben Gurion Airport and support long-term passenger growth. Planners cite both economic and logistical imperatives. Earlier reviews flagged concerns about airspace overlap and proximity to Gaza when assessing locations; officials now argue that the Negev site will be engineered to reduce congestion while aligning with security and flight-path requirements. Ben Gurion's capacity is listed at 40 million passengers annually, with projections of some 80 million by 2050—figures that underscore the urgency of a second major hub. Infrastructure phasing is expected to be central to the plan. Local leaders in the Negev highlight potential benefits for employment and regional development, while aviation experts point to the need for resilient transport links, customs facilities, and integration with rail. The cabinet decision, if approved, would mark a significant step from concept to implementation after years of stalled proposals. (*TOI/VFI News*)

In Sderot, Music and Friendship Fill the Night as a War-Scarred City Finds Its Rhythm;

Months after evacuations and repeated barrages, Sderot's evenings are slowly brightening. Student-run spots like Basel Bar have become magnets for young people returning to the city, mixing affordable menus with live music and social initiatives. Across town, Resek and The Salon draw artists, DJs, and neighbors into shared spaces where conversation and culture begin to displace the still-present anxiety of sirens and memories. The revival is modest and fragile, but it signals determination: a community choosing togetherness over isolation. Locals speak of grief and resilience in the same breath, of honoring the fallen with life-giving moments—pizza fresh from the oven, a Negroni at the bar, a set that gets everyone dancing for a while. For many, the simple ability to gather safely is itself a victory. Small businesses credit a web of volunteers and municipal support for making events viable again. The hope is that consistent nights of music, food, and friendship will rebuild habits of normalcy, offering space to process trauma while strengthening bonds between long-time residents and those newly drawn to the city's creative pulse. (*YNN/VFI News*)



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