

***Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update September 22, 2017
(2th of Tishrei, 5778)***



ROSH HASHANA 2017: Rosh Hashana - the Jewish New Year also known as the Feast of Trumpets begins in the evening of Wed. 20 Sept. The first of the Biblical autumn festivals, Rosh Hashana celebrates the birth of the world and humanity. Symbolic foods such as apples and honey are central to the holiday, symbolizing the sweetness, health, success and good deeds which we hope the coming year will bring. In the midst of the troubled Middle East, we will pause in Israel to thank God for His sovereign goodness to us and to others throughout the exiting year. May His blessing be showered upon all of you who love Israel. A sweet and a good year from your friends at Vision for Israel.

REPORT: ISRAELI POPULATION CONTINUES TO INCREASE IN ALL SECTORS: 88% OF ISRAELIS WERE SATISFIED WITH THEIR LIVES IN THE PAST YEAR: The Central Bureau of Statistics released its annual report on Mon.18 Sept. 2017 ahead of Rosh Hashana. The report looked at population trends in Israel over the course of the year and includes information on education, social welfare, public attitude and employment trends. According to the data, Israel's population is on a consistent incline. Israel's population grew by 156,000 or 1.8% since last year's report. In terms of public attitude, 88% of Israeli citizens aged 20-years-and-older said they were "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with their lives. 21% or some 1.1 million people feel stressed on a constant basis. 6% of the population of 340,000 admits to feeling lonely on a regular basis and 34% say they

find it difficult to cover their monthly expenses. Today, Israel's population is estimated at approximately 8.743 million. The Jewish population makes up approximately 6.523 million or 74.6% of the total population. The Arab population is about 1.824 million, 20.9% of the population and the rest make up about 396,000 or 4.5%. Each of these sectors experienced consistent growth since the previous report. (J.Post)

USA PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP WISHED AMERICAN JEWS A HAPPY ROSH HASHANA: USA President Donald Trump released a videotaped message to Jewish families on Mon.18 Sept. 2017, wishing them "many blessings" and a happy new year as they enter the holiday season. "The High Holy Days are a time of both reflection on the past year and hope for renewal in the year to come," Trump said. "Jewish communities across the country, and around the world, enter into a time of prayer, repentance, and rededication to the sacred values and traditions that guide the incredible character, and spirit, of the Jewish people. We reaffirm the unbreakable bond between the United States and Israel, and we ask God to deliver justice, dignity, and peace on Earth," he added. "Melania and I wish everyone a sweet, healthy, and peaceful year, which we hope will bring many blessings to all." (J.Post)

TRUMP SLAMS THE UN IN HIS FIRST UN APPEARANCE: President Trump used his inaugural address at the United Nations on Mon.18 Sept. 2017 to criticize the world body for not living up to its potential because of bureaucracy. "Despite a ballooning budget and a doubling of staff since 2000, Trump said, "We are not seeing the results in line with this investment" and encouraged UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to focus more on people than bureaucracy." We encourage all member states to look at ways to take bold stands at the United Nations with an eye toward changing business as usual and not being beholden to way of the past, which were not working," he said, pledging the USA would be full partners in the reform efforts. Trump also said none of the 193-member nations should shoulder a "disproportionate share of the burden – militarily or financially." And he called on creating "clearly defined goals and metrics for evaluating the success" of the UN's peacekeeping mission around the globe. With the changes, Trump said, "I am confident that if we work together and champion truly bold reforms, the United Nations will emerge as a stronger, more effective, and greater force for peace and harmony in the world." In his address, Guterres said what keeps him up at night is the "bureaucracy, fragmented structures, Byzantine procedures and endless red tape" of the UN. I even sometimes ask myself whether there was a conspiracy to make our rules exactly what they need for us not to be effective," he said. (N.Y. Post)

NETANYAHU SATISFIED WITH MEETING WITH TRUMP: Netanyahu, met with USA President Donald Trump for the third time this year at the Plaza Hotel in Manhattan on Mon.18 Sept. 2017. The Israeli premier expressed his desire for a tougher stance vis-a-vis Iran in a bid to frustrate its ambitions to produce a nuclear weapon. Netanyahu later expressed satisfaction with his meeting with the USA President: "Under your leadership, the alliance between the United States and Israel has never been stronger," Netanyahu tweeted. He also thanked Trump for standing alongside Israel in the UN. "Under President Trump, the USA position toward Israel in the UN has been unequivocal; it's been strong; it's got both clarity and conviction. I want to thank you on behalf of the people of Israel and Israel's many friends around the world." At the start of his meeting with Trump, Netanyahu said, "I look forward to discussing with you how we can address together what you rightly called is the terrible nuclear deal with Iran and how to roll back Iran's growing aggression in the region, especially in Syria. As you said, we will discuss the way we can seize the opportunity for peace between Israel and the Palestinians and between Israel and the Arab world, I think these things go together and we look

forward to talking about how we can advance both,” he added. Netanyahu has recently expressed grave concern at Tehran’s attempts to spread its influence throughout the Middle East, and particularly to Syria and along Israel's northern border. (INN/Ynet)

BAHRAIN RULER DENOUNCES ARAB BOYCOTT OF ISRAEL: King Hamad bin Isa al Khalifa of Bahrain condemned the Arab boycott of Israel in Los Angeles, California last week. King Hamad made the remarks during an event denouncing religious hatred and violence at the Simon Wiesenthal Center in LA. Bahrain, a kingdom of some 1.5 million people in the Persian Gulf, currently does not have diplomatic relations with Israel. King Hamad also told Simon Wiesenthal Center director Rabbi Abraham Cooper that Bahraini citizens are free to visit Israel as they please. Rabbi Cooper said that he was encouraged by King Hamad's softening stance on Israel. "If I had to predict, I would tell you that the Arab world’s relationship with the state of Israel is going to dramatically change,” he said, adding that the Bahraini king is “ahead of the pack and smart.” (INN)

NEW QUESTIONS OF ‘WHO IS A JEW’ IN ISRAEL: Israel’s Chief Rabbinate has a blacklist of Israelis who are not eligible to get married in Israel, even though they are listed as Jewish in the country’s Population Registry. Israel has no civil marriage and the Chief Rabbinate has a monopoly on conducting marriages for Jews. According to Israeli press reports that list is growing quickly. The Chief Rabbinate has begun to summon immigrants to Israel for background checks, after doubts were raised about the religious status of relatives seeking to marry in the country. The issue is expected to deepen tensions between the Chief Rabbinate and Jews living abroad, especially in the USA. (Media Line)

USA AVIATOR WHO HELPED FORM ISRAELI AIR FORCE DIES AT 94: Mitchell Flint, an American aviator who helped form the Israeli Air Force in 1948 and served in Israel's first fighter squadron has died. He was 94. Flint, a former USA Navy fighter pilot, died 16 Sept. 2017 in Los Angeles of natural causes, said his son, Michael Flint. Flint was one of the founding members of "Machal," a group of non-Israelis who fought in the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. He was one of the original members of the Israeli Air Force's first fighter squadron and helped train Israel's first military pilots, his son said. Flint and other members of the Machal had flown in German planes that were captured during World War II and covered the Nazi insignia with Stars of David. When he returned to the United States, Flint moved to Los Angeles and became a lawyer. He continued flying until last year, his son said. "He was a humble man who did what he did and never looked for glory," Michael Flint said of his father. (Times of Israel)

TRUMP TO JEWISH LEADERS: ‘I LOVE ISRAEL’: USA President Donald Trump told American Jewish leaders in a phone call on Friday 15 Sept. 2017 that he loves Israel. In the nine-minute call, which comes ahead of the Jewish High Holy Days, Trump expressed his strong support for Israel, and promised to fight back against attempts to hurt Israel at the UN. The call began with brief remarks by Jared Kushner, the President's Jewish son-in-law and senior adviser, who said that this is the most important time of year for the Jewish people, and added that Trump is proud to hold the call. Trump then spoke to the participants and said that under his leadership, the United States will always support Israel. Not just because of security, but because of shared values. "On a personal level, and I just returned from Israel not too long ago, I can tell you that I love Israel," he added. Trump promised that his administration will continue to focus on changing the bias UN treatment of Israel. (Arutz-7)

COLOMBIA'S PRESIDENT PRAISES ISRAEL FOR HELP IN MASSIVE LANDMINE CLEARING EFFORTS: Israel has offered its expertise in the “very humanitarian” effort of helping Colombia clear its countryside of anti-personnel mines, Colombia's President Juan Manuel Santos said last week after meeting PM Netanyahu at the palatial Casa de Nariño presidential residence. After Afghanistan, there are more anti-personnel mines in Colombia - which is just emerging from a 52-year war between the government and the Marxist-Leninist FARC terrorist organization - than any other country in the world, he said. An estimated 25,000 people have been killed by these mines over the last 25 years. “Your country has been a friend of Colombia, and recently a great ally in the construction of peace in the country,” Santos said. “We would like to strengthen this magnificent relationship.” The prime minister responded that Israel was “excited” about the “post-conflict” possibilities for cooperation: first in agriculture, secondly in water management, and thirdly in the area of cyber security. As he did in all his public speeches in Argentina, Netanyahu also highlighted Iran's global spread of terrorism. (J.Post)

ISRAEL WARNS TRUMP THAT IT WILL ATTACK SYRIA AGAIN, IF NECESSARY: Israel sent a clear message to the Trump Administration that it will not hesitate to again attack neighboring Syria if forces embroiled in a bloody civil war there cross two red lines. Speaking at a pre-Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year) gathering that included a large number of senior USA officials, Israel's ambassador to Washington, Ron Dermer, stated: "Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu has been very clear about Israeli red lines in Syria, and Israel has acted to enforce them. Those red lines are the transfer of "game-changing" weapons from the Syrian regime to its Hezbollah [terrorist] allies, and the establishment of an Iranian "beach head" in Syria. While it has never officially admitted to doing so, Israel has repeatedly launched aerial strikes against Syrian convoys transferring weapons to Hezbollah. The Syrian regime has threatened serious retaliation against the Jewish state, but has never followed through on those threats. (Israel Today)

FUNDS INTENDED FOR TERRORIST'S FAMILY SEIZED BY ISRAELI SECURITY FORCES: About \$13,500 in local currency that was intended for the family of a terrorist who killed an Israeli woman has been intercepted by security forces. The killer, who was only 16-years old at the time of the incident, was captured and sentenced to a life term in prison, fined and his parents' home was destroyed. The victim was the mother of six young children. American, Israeli and other governments have pressed the Palestinian authorities to end the practice of paying rewards and stipends to the families of those captured or killed while carrying out attacks against Israeli targets. (Medialine)

IRAN PAYING \$830 MILLION A YEAR TO HEZBOLLAH, \$70 MILLION TO HAMAS: Iran has boosted its financial support for the Lebanon-based Hezbollah terrorist group to \$830 million a year and is providing Hamas in Gaza with \$60-70 million. Iran also is spending hundreds of millions of dollars for its terror militias in Syria and Iraq, as well as supporting Houthi rebels in Yemen. (J. Post)

‘HAMAS TERRORIST WILL FIND ONLY DEATH IN THEIR TUNNELS’: Maj. Gen. Yoav 'Poli' Mordechai, the Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories, warned Thurs. 14 Sept. 2017, that Hamas operatives were digging terrorist tunnels. Gen. Mordechai wrote on his Facebook page in Arabic: "All that Hamas' people will find in the tunnels is death. That is what happened to the Hamas activist, 32-year-old Khalil al-Damyati, after a tunnel he was in mysteriously collapsed today in western Gaza City." [In a later update, Hamas reported that actually two terrorists died in separate tunnel collapses in Gaza overnight Thursday.] “In the past two years, 27 tunnels have caved-in and at least 30 Hamas operatives have been killed in those collapses in the Gaza Strip. It seems Hamas does

not care about its operatives and is sending them to die in the tunnels it digs," Mordechai wrote. (Arutz -7)

ISRAELI FIRM CHOSEN TO BUILD PROTOTYPE OF US-MEXICO BORDER WALL: Elta North America, an Israeli-owned defense manufacturer with USA headquarters in Maryland, was one of four companies chosen to build a prototype for the border wall between the United States and Mexico. The company is a subsidiary of Israel Aerospace Industries. Some 200 companies vied for the tenders, which will provide a \$300,000 to \$500,000 grant to develop a model. In total, eight companies are building prototypes for the nearly 200,000-mile-long wall. Four will be concrete and four will have see-through or "smart" walls. Elta was chosen to work on the see-through walls project. The final project could cost up to \$25 billion. Elta manufactures radar systems and components for branches of the American military. In its Israeli headquarters, Elta manufactures radar systems for Arrow missiles, the Iron Dome anti-missile system, espionage and fighter jets. President Donald Trump has praised Israel for its southern border wall meant to stop African migrants from illegally entering the country. (Ynet)

AYELET SHAKED CHOSEN AS ISRAEL'S 'MOST INFLUENTIAL WOMAN:' Lady Globes magazine has chosen Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked as 'Israel's Most Influential Woman'. In a survey commissioned by the magazine, 20% of respondents said that Shaked was the most influential woman in Israel, with actress Gal Gadot coming in second at 13%. Israel Bank Governor Karnit Flug took third place with 8%, followed by Culture and Sport Minister Miri Regev and outgoing Supreme Court President Miriam Naor. "Thank you to all the readers for selecting me. It's a compliment." Shaked tweeted. In July 2017 Forbes magazine chose Shaked as 'Israel's Woman of the Year.' The list included 50 women from various fields: scholars, philosophers, businesswomen etc. who have a significant influence on Israeli society. (INN)

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