

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update May 30, 2019 ***(25th Lyyar, 5779)***

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GERMAN ANTI-SEMITISM OFFICIAL: ‘DON’T WEAR KIPPOT IN PUBLIC’: The German government's commissioner to combat anti-Semitism, Felix Klein, said on Sat. 25 May 2019 that the country's Jewish community should avoid wearing kippot in public because of rising anti-Semitism. Klein is the first federal government representative to declare that Jews cannot practice their religion in public spaces because of the danger in Germany. The German federal ministry of the interior said there was a 20% increase in anti-Semitic crimes in the country last year.

ISRAEL’S PRESIDENT DEFIES GERMAN RECOMMENDATION TO REMOVE KIPPOT: Israeli President Reuven Rivlin issued a defiant statement after Germany’s top official on fighting anti-Semitism suggested that Jewish men should limit the wearing of kippot in public. "We acknowledge and appreciate the moral position of the government of Germany and its commitment to the Jewish community that lives there, but fears about the security of German Jews are a capitulation to anti-Semitism and an admission that, again, Jews are not safe on German soil. We will never submit, will never lower our gaze, and will never react to anti-Semitism with defeatism - and we expect and demand our allies act in the same way."

PARIS: MURDERER OF SARAH HALIMI WILL AVOID CRIMINAL TRIAL: A leading French Jewish organization said last weekend that it had “learned with consternation” that the man accused of murdering Jewish pensioner Sarah Halimi in April 2017 will not face a criminal trial. The BNVCA, a Paris-based group that works with victims of anti-Semitic attacks said that the investigating magistrate in the Halimi case had concluded that the murderer, Kobili Traore, was heavily intoxicated on marijuana when he committed the killing, and mentally unfit to stand trial. Referring to the numerous political and legal obstacles encountered by the Halimi family in their fight for justice for over two years, the BNVCA said that it had “sensed from the beginning of the investigation that this crime would go unpunished.” Halimi, 65-years-old at

the time of her death, was subjected to a frenzied beating and then hurled from a third-floor window in the early hours of 4 Apr. 2017, by Traore, a neighbor in the same public housing project in eastern Paris who broke into her apartment.

Terrified neighbors who alerted police after hearing her cries for help reported that Traore had shouted the words, “Allahu Akhbar,” during Halimi’s ordeal. Police investigations later revealed that Halimi had told relatives that she was scared of Traore, who insulted her visiting daughter as a “dirty Jewess” a few weeks before the murder. Traore’s lawyers, however, have insisted throughout that their client was too intoxicated from his ingestion of cannabis to be held responsible for his actions. The BNVCA pointed out the “paradox that a driver under the influence of alcohol has his sentence heavily aggravated, and a drug user is exonerated.” The group added that it was now “very pessimistic about the real possibilities of eradicating anti-Semitism when the culprits are neither tried nor sentenced.” It concluded: “We fear that this decision will encourage other so-called mentally ill people to commit other anti-Jewish crimes.”

CORBYN TO FACE FORMAL PROBE INTO ANTI-JEWISH ALLEGATIONS: Jeremy Corbyn is expected to be told this week that he faces a formal investigation into the anti-Semitism crisis gripping his party. Sources say the move by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) comes after it received “compelling” evidence of Labour’s failure to deal with anti-Jewish prejudice among its members. One close ally said: “This will be a real blow to Jeremy and it will go on for months and months. It’s the last thing we need.” The prospect of a full-scale inquiry has been hanging over Corbyn since March 2019, when the EHRC called on Labour to respond to its concerns. The party formally submitted a response to the watchdog last month. The EHRC was said to be “deeply unimpressed” by the submission in which the party apparently suggested the anti-Semitism problem was down to a “small number of individuals”. Sources claimed evidence submitted by the Jewish Labour Movement via its legal team proved “compelling” to the watchdog. JLM sources say its lawyers have since been supplied with a further raft of alleged anti-Semitic incidents. An EHRC investigation would be likely to result in Labour being handed an action plan to implement changes in their approach to handling complaints. An inquiry lasting up to a year would be a crushing setback to Corbyn’s attempts to draw a line under the affair which has beset his leadership.

OVER 1,000 FIRES EXTINGUISHED THROUGHOUT ISRAEL: The more than one thousand fires which led to the evacuation of thousands of people from their homes have been extinguished. The fires, aided by dry and hot weather conditions, burned from Thurs. 23 May 2019 until late Sat. 25 May 2019. Among the causes of the fires were faults in electrical cables, embers from Lag B’Omer bonfires, arson and incendiary balloons launched from Gaza at southern Israel. The fires burned down nearly 2,000 acres of forests, with the worst damage in the Ben Shemen Forest in central Israel. More than 1,000 firefighters battled the blazes throughout the country.

EGYPT SENDS MILITARY HELICOPTERS TO BATTLE WILDFIRES: More than 70 years after the last Spitfires of King Farouk’s Royal Egyptian Air Force were seen in the skies above Ashdod and 40 years since Israel and Egypt signed a peace treaty, Egypt’s Air Force was back on Fri. 24 May 2019 for a different kind of fight with their former enemy. This time their mission was to assist in battling wildfires. They joined some 1,000 firefighters from the National Fire and Rescue Authority battling some 1,023 fires which were wreaking havoc across the country, from Judea & Samaria to Lake Kinneret in the north and around the Gaza border area. The fires caused authorities to evacuate close to 3,500 people and left dozens of families homeless after entire neighborhoods were engulfed by the flames. While 50 homes were destroyed, there were no casualties reported. Crews came from Greece, Croatia, Italy, and Cyprus to battle the flames. But it was the Egyptian helicopters, which were filmed flying side-by-side next to Israeli police helicopters, which grabbed the attention of many people. Israeli PM Netanyahu thanked “my friend the Egyptian president Abdel Fatah al-Sisi, for sending two helicopters.” The two Egyptian Air Force Mi-8s which were back in Israeli skies over the weekend marked the first time since the War of Independence that Israelis saw such a site: two former enemies helping each other battle large fires near Ashdod.

MOSSAD TEAM THAT INFILTRATED IRAN TO RECEIVE ISRAEL SECURITY PRIZE: The Israel Security Prize will be awarded to the Mossad team that broke into the Iran nuclear archive and smuggled out secret documents. The documents, which were smuggled out of Iran in 2018, included 55,000 pages and 183 CDs. According to reports, they were taken out in one night. A committee headed by PM Benjamin Netanyahu made the decision to award the prize, citing the significant risk that was involved in the operation. The prizes are given to Israelis recognized for improving the state's security and maintaining its power and qualitative advantage on the battlefield, technologically and operationally. In a nationally televised broadcast in 2018, Netanyahu described the hiding place of the documents. "This is where they kept the atomic archives. Now, from the outside, this was an innocent-looking compound. It looks like a dilapidated warehouse. But from the inside, it contained Iran's secret atomic archives locked in massive files," he said. "And here's what we got; fifty-five thousand pages and another 55,000 files on 183 CDs. Everything you're about to see, is an exact copy of the original Iranian material," he said, adding: "Where are the originals? Well, I can say they're now in a very safe place."

ISRAELI YOUTH SUFFER HIGH RATE OF SEXUAL ABUSE: Sexual abuse is far more prevalent among Israeli youth than drug addiction, according to the annual Elem report presented to President Reuven Rivlin on Sun. 26 May 2019. The report found that 25% of the young people with whom Elem is in contact use drugs, though not all are addicted. However, four out of five young people have been subjected to some form of sexual abuse. Founded in 1982, Elem has helped tens of thousands of adolescents and young adults whose lives are in turmoil. Elem activists, cruising in vans, often find youth at risk in the streets and talk to them on their own turf. Many have run away from violently dysfunctional families, with one in five reporting domestic abuse or abuse through social media. The majority of the victims of sexual abuse are young women and girls, some of whom have turned to prostitution to earn money for food and to temporarily have a roof over their heads.

COUNTRIES COME TO ISRAEL'S AID AGAINST WILDFIRES: Israeli PM Binyamin Netanyahu said Egypt is among several countries that sent special aircraft to help the Jewish state battle a spate of wildfires as it continues to face withering – and in some cases record high – heat. Temperatures continue to soar over the weekend, reaching as high as 48°C., (118°F.). The fires have burned thousands of acres of land in numerous locations around the country, in one case destroying most of a rural community about half-way between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. Some 3,500 people were warned to evacuate elsewhere as well. The other four countries that sent firefighting aircraft are Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, and Italy. Some of the fires that broke out last week along Israel's border with the Gaza Strip were caused by helium-filled incendiary balloons released into the air within the coastal enclave before floating eastward toward Israeli territory. "The damage is enormous, not just to the woodland, but also to the animals," said a Jewish National Fund (JNF) official. "Large swaths of the woodland, the green lung of the Dan region [greater Tel Aviv], were burnt". Some of the fires in the Jerusalem area were reportedly caused by falling electric wires. Israel Police officers on Friday, 24 May 2019 arrested an Arab suspect who was documented setting fire to a number of locations in Jerusalem's Mount Scopus area. The person was identified by lookouts and his actions were documented.

NIKKI HALEY RECEIVES THE SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER'S HIGHEST HONOR: The Simon Wiesenthal Center (SWC) granted its highest honor to former USA Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley on Thur. 23 May 2019 in Chicago. The Center selected Haley to receive the Humanitarian Laureate Award for "her courage and compassion in protecting global human rights and the state of Israel." "Nikki Haley personifies the legacy of Simon Wiesenthal, who reminded the world that freedom is not a gift from heaven, rather, it is something that we must fight for each and every day," said Rabbi Marvin Hier, SWC Founder, and Dean. "There is true evil in the world and we must come together to fight for human rights around the world," Haley said upon receiving the award. Haley also shared with the audience about her

experience being an "other" in American society, growing up in an immigrant family from India. She said that her experience being different strengthened her and led to her taking true pride in being an American.

THRESA MAY TO STAND DOWN IN JUNE: British PM Theresa May will stand down as Conservative leader on 7 June 2019. Speaking to her countrymen outside Downing Street, May said her decision was a result of her failure to convince Britain's Parliament to back Brexit. "I have done everything I can to convince MPs to back that deal," she explained. "Sadly I have not been able to do so. I am proud of the progress we have made over the last few years. We have helped more people than ever secure a job." Emphasizing that her position has been "the honor of her life," she added, "Our politics may be under strain but there is so much that is good about this country - so much to be proud of - so much to be optimistic about." British Jews thanked May for being a "true friend" to their community following her announcement that she is stepping down.

USA CALLS FOR THE DISMANTLING OF UNRWA: The United States, last week, called for the dismantling of UNRWA. Addressing the UN Security Council, USA adviser Jason Greenblatt said UNRWA was a "band-aid" and that it was time to hand over services assured by the UN agency to countries hosting the Palestinian Arab refugees and NGOs. "The UNRWA model has failed the Palestinian people," Greenblatt told the council. Last year, President Donald Trump's administration cut all funding to UNRWA, arguing that it was flawed as Washington pressed ahead with work on proposals for an Arab-Israeli solution. Greenblatt, who along with Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner is drafting the peace proposals, said it was time to "start a conversation about planning the transition of UNRWA services to host governments, or to other international or local non-governmental organizations, as appropriate." Founded in 1949, UNRWA provides education and health services to some five million [so called], refugees and their descendants in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Gaza Strip, and Judea & Samaria. The organization has faced criticism for expanding the definition of "refugee" to include all descendants of refugees regardless of whether they have received citizenship in another country. The United States will hold a conference in Bahrain next month focused on the economic aspects of the peace plan that Greenblatt said has the potential to unlock a prosperous future for the Palestinians. "It would be a mistake for the Palestinians not to join us. They have nothing to lose and much to gain if they do join us. But it is, of course, their choice," he added.

PMW REPORT: FATAH REPOSTS OFFENSIVE VIDEO QUESTIONING HOLOCAUST: An offensive video that was removed from Al Jazeera's online website has resurfaced on the internet on the official Facebook page of Fatah, the party of Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas. The video, which led to the suspension of two journalists, questioned the number of Jews killed in the Holocaust and claimed Jewish organizations seek to manipulate the media to gain attention and sympathy. Al Jazeera condemned and removed the video, suspending the two journalists, and released a statement saying, "Al-Jazeera stated today that it has taken disciplinary action and suspended two of its journalists over video content produced on the Holocaust." Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah Party disagreed with the decision to remove the offensive video and re-posted it online via Facebook, complete with a transcript of the entire video.

FLORIDA GOVERNOR RON DESANTIS UNVEILS HUGE ISRAEL TRADE DELEGATION: More than 90 delegation members joined Florida's Governor Ron DeSantis on Saturday 25 May 2019 as he led a business development mission to Israel, his first international trip since taking office in Jan. 2019. Elected officials, state workers, businessmen, senior academics and religious leaders are participating in the six-day trip with DeSantis, who has repeatedly promised to be the "most pro-Israel governor" in America. "This group of diverse Florida leaders will represent our state and nation proudly on this historic business development mission to Israel, the only democracy in the Middle East," said DeSantis. "Our delegation includes professionals and experts from a wide range of policy and business areas, representing every corner of our state. During this trip, we will affirm Florida as the most pro-Israel state in the nation and strengthen the bond between Florida and Israel for decades to come." DeSantis will also give the keynote address at the 2019

Israel-American Business Summit, hosted by the Federation of Israeli Chambers of Commerce and the USA Embassy on 29 May 2019 where he is expected to present opportunities for Israeli companies in Florida.

NETANYAHU TO MODI ON ELECTION VICTORY: 'WELL DONE, MY FRIEND': With preliminary results revealing that India's PM Narendra Modi is headed for another five-year term, PM Netanyahu wasted no time in congratulating the leader who has brought Indo-Israeli ties to new heights. "Heartfelt congratulations, my friend, on your impressive victory in the elections," Netanyahu wrote in a tweet. "The election results are more validation of your leadership and the way in which you lead the largest democracy in the world. Together, we will continue to strengthen the great friendship between us and between India and Israel, and bring it to new peaks." Israeli-Indian ties soared following Modi's victory in 2014. In a testament to the strength of the relationship, Modi became the first Indian prime minister ever to visit Israel, when he did so in July 2017. Netanyahu reciprocated with a visit to India in Jan. 2018.

REMAINS OF 1,000 HOLOCAUST VICTIMS UNCOVERED IN BELARUS REBURIED: Volunteers in Belarus reburied the remains of more than 1,000 Holocaust victims whose bodies recently were discovered during construction work in the city of Brest. The burial last week was conducted by volunteers from the ZAKA Jewish search and rescue organization and overseen by a local Chabad rabbi. The remains were put into several coffins and placed in the ground in a religious Jewish burial ceremony. The mass grave was found in Feb. 2019, containing human remains belonging to adults and children as well as clothes, shoes and other personal items. The local contractor, Pribuzhsky Kwartia suspended construction on a housing project and called the authorities. Mayor Alexander Rogachuk said the bones belonged to "victims of ghettos," meaning Jews imprisoned there by the Nazis during the Holocaust.

CHRISTIANS FACE EXTINCTION IN IRAQ AFTER ISIS FORCED 125,000 TO FLEE THEIR HOMES: Christians are facing extinction in Iraq after ISIS forced 125,000 people to flee their homes, the Archbishop of Erbil has warned. Rt Rev. Bashar Warda said the Christian community had been reduced by 83% between the end of Saddam Hussein's regime and 2014. It then dwindled further when ISIS invaded the country. He said: "Christianity in Iraq, one of the oldest Churches, if not the oldest Church in the world, is perilously close to extinction. Those of us who remain must be ready to face martyrdom." Although the jihadist group had been expelled from Mosul in July 2017, many Christians have not returned because their homes and churches were destroyed. Warda also claimed that many fear speaking out about the persecution of Christians because they do not want to be accused of Islamophobia. He accused Britain's Christian leaders of bowing to political correctness. Warda added: "Friends, we may be facing our end in the land of our ancestors. We acknowledge this. In our end, the entire world faces a moment of truth. Will peaceful and innocent people be allowed to be persecuted and eliminated because of their faith? And, for the sake of not wanting to speak the truth to the persecutors, will the world be complicit in our elimination?"

IRAN CLAIMS TO HAVE QUADRUPLED URANIUM ENRICHMENT: An official Iranian source has claimed that the Islamic Republic has quadrupled its enrichment rate of low-enriched uranium. According to the official, Iran no longer accepts the restriction on uranium enrichment, as it was written in the nuclear agreement. Earlier this month, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani signed a letter to the ambassadors of the signatories to the nuclear agreement saying that his country had decided to stop fulfilling some of its obligations under the nuclear agreement. The letter was delivered to the British, French, German, Russian and Chinese ambassadors. In the letter, Iran presented a two-month ultimatum to the superpowers to find solutions to the sanctions imposed by the USA and declared that it would not limit the enrichment of uranium in its territory. Iranian President Hassan Rohani said that "the Zionists and AIPAC exerted pressure on the Trump government to withdraw from the nuclear agreement." He added, "We have not withdrawn from the nuclear agreement, it is still in force, we are showing the other side of the coin today, and the agreement means that if the other parties do not fulfill commitments, we can lower our level of commitment."

BRITAIN WARNS IRAN: DON'T UNDERESTIMATE THE USA: British Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt earlier this week warned Iran not to underestimate the resolve of the USA, warning that if American interests were attacked then Washington would retaliate. "I would say to the Iranians: Do not underestimate the resolve on the USA side," Hunt told reporters on the sidelines of the World Health Assembly in Geneva. "They don't want a war with Iran. But if American interests are attacked, they will retaliate. And that is something that the Iranians need to think about very, very carefully," he added. Hunt's comments come amid rising tensions between Tehran and the USA. Hunt added on Mon. 20 May 2019 that the UK has had discussions with USA Secretary of State Mike Pompeo over the rising tensions. He said he hoped Iran starts to "pull back from the destabilizing activities" it conducts in the region. "We want the situation to de-escalate because this is a part of the world where things can get triggered accidentally," he said.

400 CONGRESS MEMBERS URGE TRUMP: SAFEGUARD ISRAEL DURING SYRIA EXIT: Nearly 400 members of Congress signed a bipartisan letter to President Donald Trump calling on him to safeguard Israel's interests with Syria's civil war coming to an end. The letter sent on Mon. 20 May 2019 from members of the House of Representatives and the Senate urged Trump to ensure that Israel has the support and material to maintain its qualitative military edge in the region. It also wants economic and diplomatic pressure on Russia and Iran to retreat from their support for the Assad regime, and intensifying sanctions on Hezbollah, the Lebanese terrorist militia that is Iran's ally. "With the region in flux, it remains critical that we reiterate to both friend and foe in the region that we continue to support Israel's right to defend itself," it said. The letter was spearheaded by the top foreign policy lawmakers in each chamber. The House and Senate have a combined total of 535 lawmakers.

IRANIAN IRGC REPORTED TO BE IN SYRIA'S LATAKIA: Jorf News, a Syrian news site, reported that Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps began a naval combat training course in Latakia province in northern Syria. Latakia is where Russia's Khmeimim airbase is located. A "source" told Jorf News that 100 men from the Afghan Fatemiyoun were involved in the training along with members of the Shi'ite Imam Muhammed al-Baqir brigade and also IRGC members. The report said it was the first course of its kind. It claims that the "IRGC share many positions with the Syrian regime's forces and its officers and members wear the uniform of the regime's soldiers and raise the Syrian flag." According to a second source, Iran and Syria already signed a protocol for the training of naval forces in Syria. In August 2018 Iran and Syria signed several deals for military cooperation. Iran also leased air and ground bases in July 2017. In April 2019 reports indicated Iran would lease part of Latakia port. Iran would gain access to The Mediterranean and receive a container port. Paperwork posted online showed Iranian goods arriving in Latakia in Feb. 2019. Iran has also hosted Russian aircraft at its Nojeh air base in Hamedan.

GREENBLATT: HISTORY WILL JUDGE PA HARSHLY FOR PASSING UP OPPORTUNITY: Jason Greenblatt, the USA Special Representative for International Negotiations, has expressed his frustration over the Palestinian reaction to the economic workshop in Bahrain next month, in which the administration is set to reveal the financial part of its peace plan. "It's difficult to understand why the Palestinian Authority would reject a workshop designed to discuss a vision with the potential to radically transform lives and put people on a path toward a brighter future," he told media sources. "Palestinians deserve dignity, opportunity and a better way of life," Greenblatt added. "Also, by encouraging Palestinians to reject the workshop, the PA is shamefully trying to block their path toward a better future. History will judge the Palestinian Authority harshly for passing up an opportunity that could give the Palestinians something so very different, and something so very positive, compared to what they have today." He said that the administration's economic plan is an "ambitious but achievable" vision, which presents an alternative path with the potential to unlock a prosperous future for the Palestinian people if they choose to follow it. On Tues. 21 May 2019, a senior PA official said: "We will boycott the Bahrain workshop".

PALESTINIANS OPPOSE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY: Hebron businessman Ashraf Jabari recently announced the establishment of the new Reform and Development Party that calls for focusing on economic prosperity for Palestinians. In response, Palestinians have waged a massive smear campaign against him, with many denouncing him as a "traitor" and "collaborator" with Israel and Jews. Some have even called for his arrest or execution. The Palestinian news website Wattan called for bringing Jabari to trial for treason. In the eyes of many Palestinians, the struggle against Israel should be paramount, even if they have to eat and drink that struggle instead of the food they could buy through engaging in economic initiatives such as those proposed by Jabari. The upcoming peace plan talks about giving the Palestinians billions of dollars and raising money for them from wealthy Arab countries. Yet, as Jabari's case makes clear, the Palestinians are less invested in gaining economic stability than they are in hating Israel. Jabari was the first to ignore the Palestinian Authority boycott on USA President Trump's June 2019 peace plan meeting in Bahrain. Earlier this week, he received and accepted an invitation to the Bahrain meeting, where Trump is to unveil economic portions of his peace plan to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Jabari will go to as the representative of the Judea & Samaria Chamber of Commerce.

MAJOR CHRISTIAN NETWORK TV STUDIO IN JERUSALEM DESTROYED BY FIRE: CHURCHES IN JUDEA & SAMARIA VANDALIZED: The Jerusalem studio of Daystar, a large Christian television network, was firebombed last weekend, news sources reported on Mon. 20 April 2019. The facility overlooking the Mount of Olives and Mount Zion was undergoing significant renovations. An arsonist threw a firebomb at the facility starting a fire that caused severe damages. "The control room is totally devastated," Dave Sharett, the contractor overseeing the renovations told CBN. The fire destroyed a large amount of filming equipment and furniture, as well. Daystar has pledged to rebuild the facility. On Thur.16 May 2019 assailants broke into the Church of God in the village of Aboud in Judea & Samaria and stole some of the contents of the church. Photos showed damaged furniture and smashed windows. Two days earlier, a similar incident took place at Saint Charbel Monastery in Bethlehem. The perpetrators cut the fence surrounding the monastery and stole some of its contents, including expensive equipment and surveillance cameras. Local Christians have expressed concern that the PA security forces are not doing enough to protect Christian holy sites in Judea & Samaria.

JERUSALEM RANKED AS 8TH BEST ECOSYSTEM FOR LIFE SCIENCE STARTUPS: The 2019 Global Startup Ecosystem Report ranked Jerusalem as the 8th best ecosystem for Life Science startups. "Jerusalem should be a light to the world from a creative and innovative perspective. It is a place where new solutions emerge that can solve real-world problems in health, automotive, and any industry that can make life better," the report stated. In terms of Life Sciences, Jerusalem holds the title of "highest density of Life Sciences startups in the world," along with San Diego, naming some of the most renowned companies such as BrainQ and Orcam. The Global Startup Ecosystem Report ranks cities for their contribution, promotion, and success in different startup sub-sectors.



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