

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update January 23, 2020 ***(16th Tevet, 5780)***

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For the Yachad Report Newsletter For January 2020

Israel Intel Used in Soleimani Assassination; The use of Israeli intelligence was reportedly involved in this month's elimination of the head of Iran's Quds Force, Maj.-Gen. Qassem Soleimani. According to reports, informants in Damascus tipped off the CIA about exactly which plane Soleimani would be on, which Israeli intelligence verified. After flying to Iraq from Damascus, he was killed in a targeted USA rocket attack on a convoy at Baghdad International Airport. According to media sources, PM Benjamin Netanyahu was the only USA ally informed about the impending assassination in a conversation with USA Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. Soleimani as head of the IRGC was crucial in spreading and sustaining Iran's influence in the region through acts of brutality and terrorism. His assassination has further ignited tensions between the USA and the Islamic Republic.

Iran Calls On Students to Sign Up For Suicide Missions; Leaflets were distributed this week at Iran's Islamic Azad University urging students to sign up for Jihad assignments against the United States and Israel. The missions to be carried out, according to the flyer, are to avenge the USA-directed assassination of Iranian general Qassem Soleimani. "Registration for volunteers to commit a suicide attack against the United States and Israel," it blares. "Anyone looking to volunteer for the mission is asked to leave their first and last name, birth certificate number, education level, current occupation, phone number and fill in an area marked "tell us about your talents." News of the search for Jihadists was reported by Iranian media.

Anti-Government Protests Erupt Across Iran; Anti-government protests erupted at Iranian universities across the country starting on Saturday 11 Jan. 2020, following Iran's claim that it unintentionally shot down a Ukrainian passenger plane with surface-to-air missiles, killing all 176 people who were on board. Some 82 Iranians, among several other Iranians with dual citizenship, were among the victims of the crash. Crowds of students chanted for the Revolutionary Guards to "let go of the country!" and also condemned deceased Gen. Qassem Soleimani, saying that he "was a murderer" and "his leader is too!" Students shouted for the resignation of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Protests continued in Tehran on Mon. 13 Jan. 2020 including students at a Tehran university who chanted "They killed our elites and replaced them with clerics", in reference to the Iranian students who had died on flight UA752. In a video surfacing on the internet, many

Tehran university students openly refused to walk over the American and Israeli flags which have been the symbol of the country's foreign policy of anti-Americanism and anti-Zionism since the inception of the Islamic Republic. The flags had been painted on sidewalks and streets so that protesters would walk over them.

On Saturday 11 Jan. 2020, USA President Donald Trump tweeted a message of support to the protesters, "To the brave, long-suffering people of Iran: I've stood with you since the beginning of my Presidency, and my Administration will continue to stand with you. We are following your protests closely, and are inspired by your courage." Trump also warned the Iranian government against any draconian reaction to the protesters. "The government of Iran must allow human rights groups to monitor and report facts from the ground on the ongoing protests by the Iranian people," Trump wrote. "There cannot be another massacre of peaceful protesters, nor an internet shutdown. The world is watching."

Iran Resorts to Brutality Against Protestors; Amnesty International said on Wed. 15 Jan. 2020 it had evidence Iranian security personnel used "unlawful force" over the weekend during peaceful protests after Tehran admitted it accidentally shot down a Ukrainian airliner. The rights group cited verified images and eyewitness testimonies indicating authorities had targeted protesters with rubber bullets, tear gas and pepper spray, along with pointed air-gun pellets normally used for hunting. It said security forces also beat demonstrators with batons, kicked and punched them and made arbitrary arrests during protests the previous Saturday and Sunday. Amnesty cited verified videos in which people helping the wounded are heard saying they had been shot, as well as X-rays showing pellets lodged in two protesters' legs. It added that the Iranian security and intelligence forces were "maintaining a heavy presence in hospitals raising fears they plan to arrest patients." Several protesters had not sought hospital treatment for wounds for fear of being detained, it added, while some facilities in Tehran had turned away the wounded, warning they could be arrested. News sources have reported that the Iranian families of the victims of the Ukrainian airliner crash have also been threatened and intimidated by Iranian security agencies. They have been told that if they want the remains of their loved ones, they must refrain from giving interviews to Persian-language media outside of Iran. Many families say that their every move is under surveillance and security forces even interfere in their private mourning ceremonies and make threatening calls. One family member said she was called several times and told to ask Persian-language media outside Iran to remove photographs of her loved ones from their sites.

Iran: Olympic Medalist, News Anchors Say "Enough"; Iranian female Olympic medalist Kimia Alizadeh, who won a bronze medal in taekwondo at the Rio Olympics in 2016, says she has defected. "I am one of the millions of oppressed women in Iran whom they've been playing for years," she wrote on social media. "I wore whatever they told me and repeated whatever they ordered. None of us matter for them, we are just tools." Also this week, presenters working for the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) announced they have quit their jobs over coverage of the shooting down of the Ukrainian jetliner. Zahra Khatami said: "Thank you for accepting me as anchor until today. I will never get back to TV. Forgive me." Her fellow anchor Saba Rad said: "Thank you for your support in all the years of my career. I announce that after 21 years working in radio and TV, I cannot continue my work in the media. I cannot." The Tehran-based Association of Iranian Journalists said: "The publication of false information has had a severe impact on public confidence and public opinion. This incident showed that people cannot trust official data."

Iran to Reach Nuclear Military Capabilities in Two Years; Against the background of this month's escalating concerns about the possibility of war in the Middle East following Iran's shooting down of a civilian passenger jet and the USA targeted-killing of the head of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, tensions have been driven even higher following the publication of a security assessment by Israel's Military Intelligence Directorate. The report released this week predicts Iranian nuclear weapons within two years. Tehran announced on Sunday 5 Jan. 2020 that it would no longer abide by any of the negotiated restrictions placed on its uranium enrichment. This has followed other breaches by the Islamic Republic, including,

perhaps most significantly, the resumption of nuclear activities at the underground Fordow facility. In the wake of Iran's most recent violations of the 2015 Nuclear Deal, European countries on Tue. 15 Jan. 2020 triggered a dispute mechanism in their nuclear agreement with Iran, a move that could lead to the return of United Nations sanctions on Tehran. Britain, France and Germany said that they had been "left with no choice" but to make the move.

Spotify To Remove Anti-Semitic Playlist Titles; Music streaming service Spotify announced last week that it would remove playlist titles deemed to contain anti-Semitic hate speech. The action took place following a report by Israeli media sources that users were ignoring Spotify's ban on hateful lyrics by presenting them in the titles of playlists they produce. One such playlist was titled "Gas the Jews music." Another was named "The Holocaust was an exaggerated game of hide-and-seek." Several playlists contained titles that justified Hitler's actions, such as "Hitler did nothing wrong." A Spotify spokesman said in response to the media report: "The user-generated content in question violates our policy and is in the process of being removed. Spotify prohibits any user content that is offensive, abusive, defamatory, pornographic, threatening, or obscene." Spotify provides access to over 50 million tracks of music.

UK: Two Wings of Hezbollah Equal One Terrorist Group; Britain's finance ministry on Friday 17 Jan. 2020 announced it had added the entire Hezbollah organization to its list of terrorist groups subject to asset freezing. The ministry previously only targeted Hezbollah's military wing but has now listed the whole group - which includes both the political and military facets - as a terrorist organization. The change requires any individual or institution in Britain with accounts or financial services connected to Hezbollah to suspend them or face prosecution. The Treasury said in a notice posted on its website, "The Hezbollah group in its entirety is assessed to be involved in terrorism. This listing includes the Military Wing, the Jihad Council and all units reporting to it, including the External Security Organization." Hezbollah, which is designated as a terrorist organization by the United States, was established in 1982 by Iran's Revolutionary Guards and is an integral part of a regional Tehran-led alliance.

Israel's FM Praises UK's Stand Against Hezbollah; Israeli Foreign Minister Yisrael Katz (Likud) responded to the British Finance Ministry's announcement on Friday 17 Jan. 2020 that it had added the entire Hezbollah organization to its list of terrorist groups subject to asset freezing. "I applaud the British government for its decision to include all Hezbollah organizations, including the political echelon - under the legislation that allows freezing all of its assets as a terrorist organization," Katz said. "This is a great achievement for the State of Israel in the fight against Iran and its proxies in the region, mainly Hezbollah." Katz added that he had raised the issue in his meeting with the British Foreign Minister, and is thankful for the Minister's decision to act on the matter.

Trump: EU Must Scrap Nuke Deal or Else; USA President Donald Trump has threatened to impose a 25 percent tariff on the import of cars manufactured in Europe if continental powers continue to back the 2015 multilateral nuclear deal. Reports to this effect were confirmed by the defense minister of Germany, which along with Britain and France earlier this week triggered the accord's dispute mechanism following a series of violations by Iran. In response, Tehran's foreign minister said that London, Paris and Berlin had caved to USA pressure and accused President Trump of acting like a "high school bully." Trump in May 2018 withdrew Washington from the agreement and re-imposed crippling economic sanctions on the Islamic Republic. Iran recently announced that it would no longer abide by any of the restrictions placed on its uranium enrichment program. Tensions between Washington and Tehran reached a crescendo this month with the targeted killing in a USA drone strike of Iranian Quds Force commander Qassem Soleimani, to which Iran responded by launching a coordinated ballistic missile attack on Iraqi bases housing American soldiers.

Jewish Community in USA “Stands With the Iranian People”; Arthur Stark, Chairman, and Malcolm Hoenlein, Vice Chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, last week issued a statement of solidarity with the Iranian people protesting against the regime. "The brutal treatment of innocent Iranians in recent days is unacceptable and must be forcefully condemned by the international community and all who value human and civil rights." The people of Iran began protesting this month after the IRGC admitted that it downed Ukraine International Airlines Flight 752, killing all 176 people on board, many of them Iranians. "The violent crackdown aimed at silencing the legitimate grievances of a proud people demonstrates the regime's ruthless disregard for the well-being of its citizens. This follows a similar brutal response to protests that took such a heavy toll in human life several weeks ago," Stark and Hoenlein wrote. Iranian supreme leader Khamenei ordered his security apparatus to put down at all cost the protest that engulfed Iran in November 2019, which led to the killing of 1500 demonstrators and the injuring and arrests of thousands

Former Iranian Crown Prince: End of the Regime in Sight; The “beginning of the end” of the Iranian regime has started, former crown prince of Iran Reza Pahlavi said last week in a talk at the Hudson Institute in Washington. “People smell the opportunity for the first time in 40 years,” he added. “This time is very different from 2009, even very different from 1997. The people have had it. Today’s generation of young Iranians cannot take it anymore. They want to have an opportunity for a better future. They want to be on the path of modernity and freedom. The only thing that stands between them and the free world is this regime. To the forces that are employing repression as a tool, all I can say is that there are not enough people they can kill to maintain this regime in power. They better stand down and join with their brethren,” he highlighted. He called on Western nations not to take an approach of appeasement with Iran. “All such efforts have focused on changing the regime’s behavior. All have failed. It is time to recognize that this is not a normal regime and that it will not change its behavior.” He added: “For 40 years, the regime has shown that its agenda is not Iran and the Iranian people, it’s survival at the expense of oppressing people and repressing them to the point of killing.”

192,000 Holocaust Survivors Live In Israel; Israel lost 14,800 Holocaust survivors last year, bringing the total number living in the Jewish homeland to approximately 192,000. Of the remaining survivors living in Israel, 64% were born in Europe, including 36% who came from the former Soviet Union, 18% from Romania, and 6% from Poland, according to figures released last week by Israel’s Survivors’ Rights Authority. Many of the non-European survivors had their roots in the Middle East where persecutions were also rife. 18% were born in Morocco and Algeria, where Jews suffered under the French Vichy regime overseen by Nazi rule.

The Holocaust; The "Holocaust" refers to the period from 30 January 1933, when Hitler became Chancellor of Germany, to 8 May 1945, the end of the war in Europe. Millions of Jewish men, women, and children were murdered by Hitler and his brutal cohorts during this time. While it is impossible to ascertain the exact number of Jewish victims six million is the round figure. Auschwitz concentration camp was a network of concentration and death camps built and operated by the Third Reich in Polish areas annexed by Nazi Germany during World War II. Buchenwald was a German Nazi concentration camp established near Weimar, Germany, in July 1937, one of the first and largest of the concentration camps on German soil. It was in holes such as these that Jewish victims were starved, tortured, subjected to slave labor, beatings, inhumane medical experiments and murdered in gas chambers by the millions. Elderly Holocaust survivors in Israel suffer mental and physical torments to this day. Their children in many cases bear traumatic scars as a result of being raised by such emotionally and physically shattered parents.

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