

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update July 2, 2020 (10th Tamuz, 5780)



[For the Yachad Report Newsletter For July 2020](#)

Belgian Chamber of Representatives Rebukes Netanyahu's Annexation Plans; The lower house, the Chamber of Representatives, passed a nonbinding resolution Friday morning calling on the Belgian government to push for the European Union (EU) to draw up a list of countermeasures against Israel if it "annexes occupied" territory. Though likely a symbolic gesture, it's the first official public reference to sanctions on Israel by a legislative branch of an EU member state. There were no votes against the resolution in the chamber, which has 150 members — 101 lawmakers voted for it and 39 abstained. The European Union has expressed its opposition to Israel's stated plans to apply Israeli civilian law to parts of Judea and Samaria that Israel now controls under military law. Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu has said the annexation could start as early as July 1.

'Tear Them Down': Activist Shaun King Calls to Remove Depictions of "White Jesus"; Activist Shaun King called Monday for the removal of statues, murals and stained-glass windows that depict Jesus as a "white European," which he claimed, "are a form of white supremacy." "Yes, I think the statues of the white European they claim is Jesus should also come down," King wrote on Twitter. "They are a form of white supremacy. Always have been." King's targeting of religious artwork comes as various activist groups have moved beyond tearing down Confederate statues and are now calling for the removal of other historical monuments. "In the Bible, when the family of Jesus wanted to hide and blend in, guess where they went?" he added. "EGYPT! Not Denmark. Tear them down."

Pastors Form Small Militia to Defend Against "Religious Discrimination"; A group of evangelical pastors gathered at Seattle's CHOP zone earlier this week to pray and declare that they will defend houses of worship and statues of Jesus after activists called for tearing them down amid Black Lives Matter protests. Brian Gibson, the founder of the Peaceably Gather movement and pastor of His Church, denounced Shaun King's call to remove "white Jesus" statues and other activists trying to remove Christian symbols and monuments in a movement that began with the removal of Confederate statues. "Christians across America must stand against this violent religious discrimination and stand to protect sacred ground," the megachurch pastor added. "This threat particularly targets the Catholic Church, and every Christian, despite denomination,

and every person of the Good Book, should stand together in unity against this evil." Pastor LaShund Lambert of Resurrection Church in Auburn, Wash., said it's "despicable" to see the attacks when "we should be talking about racial reconciliation, equality, justice, and fair treatment by law enforcement and the law."

Israeli Researchers: Ibuprofen Does Not Aggravate COVID-19 Infections; An Israeli research team has found that ibuprofen does not aggravate symptoms caused by the coronavirus. This comes after the reigning controversy that rose after the French government claimed in March that ibuprofen could aggravate infections. Following the announcement made in France, researchers from the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev in Beersheba did a follow up study that aimed to evaluate whether the use of ibuprofen in coronavirus patients was associated with more severe cases compared with patients who used paracetamol, also known as acetaminophen, or no antipyretics, a substance that reduces fever. The study, called Ibuprofen use and clinical outcomes in COVID-19 patients, was published in the Clinical Microbiology and Infection journal. Results found that there was a similar outcome between patients who took ibuprofen versus patients who took paracetamol. Researchers stated that they "did not observe an increased risk for mortality or the need for respiratory support in patients treated with ibuprofen."

Hadassah Treats First COVID-19 Patient with New Concentrated Passive Vaccine; Hadassah Medical Center has treated its first COVID-19 patient with a new "passive vaccine" that the hospital developed in conjunction with Israeli biopharmaceutical firm Kamada. According to Hadassah's head Zeev Rotstein, "the patient reacted positively." He said: "She started to improve hemodynamically... We have our fingers crossed for the successful treatment of this patient." Though he could not share details about the patient, he described her as a young woman suffering from several underlying medical conditions. She has been hospitalized for weeks and is intubated. He said other treatments have not shown any results. The antibody (immunoglobulin or IgG) concentrate was developed using plasma that Hadassah harvested from recovered corona patients: those who had the disease and now test negative for the virus.

Brazil: Luiz Fux, Jewish Judge, Becomes Head of Supreme Court; Luiz Fux, the first Jewish justice on Brazil's highest court, is now its first Jewish president. Brazil rotates the top post among its 11 justices on the Federal Supreme Court every two years. "I will always strive for moral values, republican values, the struggle for democracy," Fux, 67, said Thursday in a speech. "May God protect me." The Rio native's grandparents fled Romania during World War II. His grandmother is a former president of the Israelite Children's Home in Rio. "It's a great pride for the Brazilian Jewish community to have Luiz Fux at the head of the Supreme Court," Fernando Lottenberg, president of the Brazilian Israelite Confederation, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. "He has deep legal knowledge and well-known humanism, in line with the Jewish tradition of valuing knowledge and life."

Nine Israeli-Founded Unicorns Now Based in New York State; Nine Israeli unicorns, which refers to privately held start-up companies valued at over \$1 billion, are now based in the state of New York, highlighting the growing influence of Israeli companies in the US, according to a Tuesday press release from the New York – Israel Business Alliance (NYIBA). Some of the companies listed include prominent names in the tech world, focusing heavily on software and consumer payment services, such as Riskified, Sisense, VAST Data, and Via join Compass, Lemonade, Payoneer, Taboola and The We Company, all of whom are now valued at \$1 billion or more. "It's remarkable that the number of Israeli-founded unicorns based in New York has nearly doubled over the past year," said Aaron Kaplowitz, NYIBA president. "As Israel transforms from the Start-Up Nation to the Scale-Up Nation, New York is becoming more and more indispensable to Israel's innovation ecosystem," he added.

MI5: Far-Right Extremism on the Rise, But Majority on Watch List are Islamists; Britain's top anti-terror officer Neil Basu has repeatedly said that right-wing extremism poses the fastest-growing terror threat to the UK. But while MI5's watchlist—a cumulative tally of all cases, both open and closed—has

doubled to 43,000 this year, experts say nine-tenths of these are jihadis. New separate statistics from the Home Office on terrorists in custody, also show that of 238 people held for terrorism in Great Britain, 183 were Islamist extremists while just 44 were far-right. It is an increase of just 11 people from the same period last year. The numbers came a day after senior military and intelligence expert Colonel Richard Kemp told the MailOnline he believed the focus on far-right terror was a 'false emphasis'. Both sets of figures emerged in the aftermath of the Reading terror attack, which killed three people and saw another trio seriously hurt.

Turkey's Airstrikes in Northern Iraq Threaten Christian Villages; Civilians have been killed and villagers threatened by Turkey's widespread airstrikes in northern Iraq. Ankara claims to be fighting "terrorists" but has used disproportionate force. Activists fear that Christian minorities, already threatened by Turkey's invasions of northern Syria, will have to flee again. The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom has condemned Turkey's operation "Claw Eagle," launched last week. Airstrikes pounded Sinjar, the area where Yazidi minorities are recovering from the 2014 ISIS genocide. Following the airstrikes, Turkey launched wide-ranging attacks into the mountains of northern Iraq in the autonomous Kurdistan region. Although Turkey claims it is fighting the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), there have been no terror attacks on the country. Turkish-backed extremists, which US memos labeled "jihadi mercenaries" attacked civilians, murdering Kurdish female activist Hevrin Khalaf. Turkish far-right pro-government media labeled the murder of Khalaf, who was unarmed, as the "neutralization of a terrorist." There was no evidence that she or the other 300,000 people forced to flee by Turkey's invasions engaged in terrorism.

IDF Chief Kochavi: Iran the Most Dangerous Country in the Middle East; Despite its distance from Israel, Iran is the most dangerous country in the Middle East, IDF Chief of Staff Lt.-Gen. Aviv Kochavi said Sunday evening. "It's made significant progress with its nuclear program, but the nuclear [threat] is no longer the only threat. Iran also possesses conventional weapons," Kochavi said at a ceremony marking Strategy and Third-Circle Directorate, an entirely new position on the General Staff, which will focus principally on Israel's fight against Iran. Speaking at the ceremony, Kalman said that the reality of the global and regional environment "has changed significantly" and that while "the IDF has strengthened its position as a player in international security...faced with these challenges, the IDF is required to operate in a variety of arenas and dimensions."

Tel Aviv to Recognize Same-Sex and Interfaith Couples; The Tel Aviv-Jaffa municipality will recognize same-sex, interfaith, and other couples who are otherwise not eligible to be married by the state's religious authorities, announced Tel Aviv-Jaffa Mayor Ron Huldai, in honor of the city's Pride Week, on Sunday. "We hope the government also will move towards the 21st century and promote in law the rights of the (LGBT) community — the right to marry, to equal parenting, to protection from hate crimes and workplace bullying and more," Huldai said. Those couples who live together will be allowed to register their relationship with a statement to the city. They will be eligible for municipal benefits, including housing tax discounts, and easier enrollment of their children into public daycares and schools. The recognition on the municipal level has no impact on recognition on the national level. Same-sex and interfaith marriages are not performed by the rabbinate, and those performed in Israel are not recognized by the state. Marriages performed outside of Israel can be registered with the state.

Israel's Annexation Plans Remain a Partisan Issue for US Lawmakers; Top congressional Republicans penned a letter backing Israel's plan to apply sovereignty over parts of Judea and Samaria. The letter comes as another is already circulating among Democrats in the House that warns Israel of the perils of applying sovereignty over parts of Judea and Samaria. The Republican letter, shared with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, was spearheaded by the first, second, and third-ranked Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives: Kevin McCarthy, Calif., Steve Scalise, La., and Liz Cheney, Wyo., respectively. It has garnered 116 signatures out of 198 Republicans in the House. The Democrat letter has so far garnered 170 signatures, including top pro-Israel leaders like Steny Hoyer of Maryland, the majority leader.

A Spanish State Declares BDS Movement Anti-Semitic; A Spanish state has, for the first time, passed legislation declaring the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement against Israel a form of anti-Semitism. The parliament of the Balearic Islands Autonomous Community — one of 17 such entities that make up the semi-federal state kingdom of Spain — made the declaration in a June 11 motion that was passed unanimously and finalized last week. It said the Balearic Islands condemn “any form of anti-Semitism” as defined by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, and “particularly the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement, or BDS, and calls to boycott Israeli products, scientists, artists and athletes from Israel,” the motion reads. It also spoke about the need to research and educate about the unique Jewish history of the region, whose capital city, Palma, is on the island of Mallorca. The definition of anti-Semitism referenced in the resolution includes some examples of anti-Israel vitriol, including comparisons between the Jewish state and Nazi Germany. Spain’s judiciary has repeatedly defined BDS as a discriminatory endeavor, but legislation reflecting this view rarely passes.

Austria Breaks Ground for New Holocaust Memorial; Austria broke ground on a new memorial to the country's 65,000 Jews killed during the Nazi era, according to an AP report. “The Memorial to the Jewish Children, Women, and Men of Austria who were Murdered in the Shoah” being erected in Vienna's central Ostarrichi Park will consist of large slabs set in the ground in a circle, engraved with the names of the 64,000 victims who have been identified. Another 1,000 are known to have been killed by the Nazis, but their names have been lost. At the time of Germany’s annexation of Austria in 1938, around 210,000 Jews lived in the country. Many fled, but later found themselves in Nazi hands again as the German armies swept westward to the English Channel and deep into the Soviet Union in the east. The memorial is to be completed by next spring and is envisioned as a place of reflection, and both a tribute to those who lost their lives and a reminder of the perils of anti-Semitism.

Israeli Gov’t Report: Vaccine for Coronavirus May Be Ready by Winter; Researchers at an Israeli government center say that tests of a coronavirus vaccine have been successful on hamsters, and the vaccine could be ready by the end of winter if human trials are allowed in the coming weeks. The vaccine developed at the institute in central Israel uses a VSV virus, which does not cause the disease in humans. None of the hamsters that received the vaccine became sick with the coronavirus, according to the report. The report noted that a vaccine being developed at Oxford University could be approved for use in specific cases as early as October, and one being developed by the American biotech company Moderna also is promising. Israel signed a deal last week with Moderna to purchase its vaccine should trials be successful, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced during a meeting of the government’s so-called Coronavirus Cabinet. No details on the deal were released.

Rare Solar Eclipse Dims Israel; As the moon passed between the sun and the earth it first appeared to touch the sun's edge at 7:25 a.m. in Jerusalem, a minute later in Tel Aviv, moving to maximum eclipse at 8:24 in Jerusalem when approximately 35% of the sun was blotted out. The spectacle lasted until 9:30 a.m. in the capital when the moon finally left the sun's edge behind. The phenomenon won't be seen again in Israel until 2027. Solar eclipses happen between two and five times a year and are normally named for their maximum point, when the moon covers the most area of the sun. 2020 sees two solar eclipses. Sunday’s June 21 eclipse happened to fall on the longest day of the year, but another will pass across South America and the Pacific and Atlantic oceans in December, when the moon will block the sun's light entirely as it will be closer to Earth at that time.

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Robert I. Solomon: Messianic Rabbi, rabbisolomon@yachad.com

Jeffery Blalock: Ministries Coordinator, jeffery@yachad.com

Yachad Ministries, 950 Pine Grove Road, Roswell, Georgia 30075

E-mail: info@yachad.com, Web Page: www.yachad.com

Phone: 770-641-3000 (ext. 6)

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