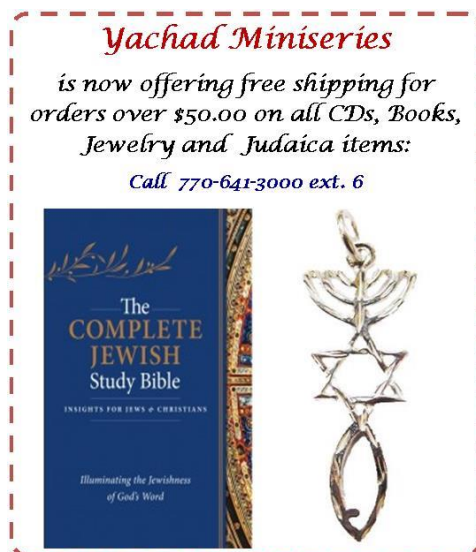


Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update October 29, 2020 (11th Cheshvan, 5781)



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Al Qaeda's Second in Command Killed in Afghanistan; Afghanistan claimed Sunday it killed a top Al Qaeda propagandist on an FBI most-wanted list during an operation in the country's east, showing the militant group's continued presence there as U.S. forces work to withdraw from America's longest-running war amid continued bloodshed. The reported death of Husam Abd al-Rauf, also known by the nom de guerre Abu Muhsin al-Masri, follows weeks of violence, including a suicide bombing by the Islamic State group Saturday at an education center near Kabul that killed 24 people. Meanwhile, the Afghan government continues to fight Taliban militants even as peace talks in Qatar between the two sides take place for the first time. The violence and al-Rauf's reported killing threatens the face-to-face peace talks and risks plunging this nation beset by decades of war into further instability. It also complicates America's efforts to withdraw, 19 years after it led an invasion targeting the Taliban for hosting Al Qaeda leader Usama bin Laden after the September 11 attacks.

Sudan Announces Ties with Israel; A joint US-Israel-Sudan statement said Sudan and Israel's leaders "agreed to the normalization of relations...and to the end the state of belligerence between their nations," as well as economic and trade ties. Delegations from Israel and Sudan are expected to meet in the coming weeks to negotiate cooperation agreements. Agriculture will be one of the major focuses of the new ties, as Sudan has large swaths of unused arable land and hopes Israeli agri-tech will help improve its economic situation. The statement also mentions that the delegations will discuss "migration issues," as thousands of Sudanese migrants have moved to Israel in the past 15 years. Asked if repatriation of migrants, which Netanyahu has sought over the past decade, was on the table, an Israeli official said "the issue is still ahead of us." Sudanese nationals illegally entering Israel could not be deported previously because of the humanitarian situation in their country and because Israel did not have ties with Sudan.

Israel to Send \$5 Million of Wheat to Sudan; Israel will send \$5 million worth of wheat to Sudan, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's office said Sunday, just days after an announcement that the two countries have agreed to normalize relations. "We are looking forward to a warm peace and are sending \$5 million worth of wheat immediately to our new friends in Sudan," Netanyahu's office said on Twitter. Sudan has embarked on a rocky transition under a joint civilian-military administration since the April 2019 ouster of

autocrat Omar al-Bashir, but it has struggled with severe economic woes, including a sharp depreciation of the Sudanese pound and skyrocketing consumer prices. A tripling of the bread price late in 2018 was the initial trigger for street protests against Bashir that led to his ouster. The northeast African country consumes two million tons of wheat annually, according to official figures, relying heavily on imports.

Palestinians Condemn Israel-Sudan Accord; The Palestinian Authority said on Friday that it “condemns and rejects” the normalization of relations between Arab countries and Israel. A statement by the PA presidency in Ramallah said that normalization with Israel violates the Arab summit resolutions and the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative. The statement was published hours after the announcement that Sudan and Israel have agreed to normalize their relations. Previous statements by the PA condemned the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain for agreeing to establish relations with Israel, drawing sharp criticism from the two Gulf states. Friday’s statement by the PA, however, did not accuse Sudan of betraying the Palestinians or stabbing the Palestinian people in the back, as was the case with the UAE and Bahrain.

Albania to Host First-Ever Balkans Forum Against Antisemitism; The Albania parliament announced it would host the first-ever Balkans Forum Against Antisemitism, bringing officials and lawmakers from the region and beyond together to make a unified front to fight antisemitism. Taking place online on October 28 at 4:00 p.m. CET (11:00 a.m. EST), the event will include a wide range of notable figures from across the world. Speaking ahead of the landmark event, Combat Antisemitism Movement director Sacha Roytman-Dratwa said that: “There is simply no place for antisemitism, racism or hatred in modern, open and decent societies. The Balkans Forum Against Antisemitism is designed to establish clear steps which will help make this a reality across the region.” The announcement comes days after Albania officially adopted the IHRA definition of antisemitism, becoming the first Muslim-majority nation to do so.

Survey: 83% of Israelis Expecting 3rd COVID-19 Closure; The vast majority (83%) of Israelis are convinced that the country is on its way to a third coronavirus lockdown, according to a new survey published over the weekend. The survey found that the majority of Israelis (56%) said they do not trust the government’s handling of the pandemic. A similar number (55%) said that the government’s efforts were “less good” than in most other countries around the world. As a result, 56% of Israelis say they are living with stress and anxiety. The survey found that most worrying for Israelis is expected economic damage (32%) - less than one-third of the public (31%) has continued to work as before the pandemic. Everyone else was either laid off (9%), sent on furlough (17%), or has started working mostly from home (21%). Some 28% of Israelis say getting sick with the virus is their top worry, although two-thirds said they were afraid of getting sick in general. A quarter of Israelis personally know someone who died from the disease.

Bahrain to Combat Anti-Semitism, Anti-Zionism; Elan Carr, the United States Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism, signed a historic agreement with Bahrain’s 'King Hamad Global Centre for Peaceful Coexistence'. The agreement aims at fighting Antisemitism together "in the Middle East and beyond". Carr noted on Twitter that Bahrain is the first state ever in the Arab world to agree to combat what the agreement defined as “all forms of anti-Semitism”, including anti-Zionism and the de-legitimization of the State of Israel. US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo Tweeted: "Thank you to His Majesty King Hamad bin Issa Al Khalifa of Bahrain and The King Hamad Global Centre for Peaceful Coexistence for signing an agreement on combatting anti-Semitism with the U.S. Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism". "We're proud to have a strong partner in Bahrain as we aim to eradicate anti-Semitism and promote peace", Pompeo concluded.

U of Illinois Students Faced Anti-Semitic Harassment; A complaint filed with the Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights alleges that Jewish students at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign “faced an unrelenting campaign of anti-Semitic harassment.” A Friday statement announcing the complaint said that Jewish and pro-Israel students in the past five years “have been subjected to an alarming

increase in anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism” and that the university did not take adequate action. The complaint was prepared by the Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law and Arnold & Porter Kaye Scholer LLP on behalf of Jewish students at the university. It was done in consultation with the Jewish United Fund, and Hillel International. A summary of the complaint, originally filed in March, detailed a number of incidents where swastikas were found on campus and Jewish buildings and ritual items were vandalized. It also included events that displayed virulent anti-Israel rhetoric, which it said made campus inhospitable for Jewish and pro-Israel students.

Iran Regime Celebrates End of UN Embargo; The UN arms embargo on Iran expired after 13 years on Sunday, as the signatories of the Iran Deal refused to cooperate with US efforts to extend it. In light of the US triggering “snapback sanctions” meant to stop the restrictions on Iran from expiring, “virtually all UN sanctions on Iran returned, including reimposition of the UN arms embargo,” US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on September 19. However, the other parties to the Iran deal did not accept the American move as valid. “Every nation that seeks peace and stability in the Middle East and supports the fight against terrorism should refrain from any arms transactions with Iran,” Pompeo said. “Providing arms to Iran will only aggravate tensions in the region, put more dangerous weapons into the hands of terrorist groups and proxies, and risk increasing threats to the security of Israel and other peaceful nations.” Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif called it “a momentous day for the international community, which, in defiance of malign US efforts, has protected” the Iran deal.

New Tel Aviv-UAE Air Route Established; Israel and the United Arab Emirates have agreed to establish a new air route for commercial flights, linking the Tel Aviv metropolitan area with Dubai and Abu Dhabi. On Sunday, the Israeli Transportation Ministry and UAE officials agreed to set up the new air route with 28 weekly flights between Tel Aviv and Dubai and Abu Dhabi. The deal will be formally signed by the two sides on Tuesday, during a ceremony with Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu. In addition, the agreement will permit flights from the UAE and Ramon Airport in southern Israel, near the city of Eilat, with no limit on the number of commercial flights. Furthermore, 10 cargo flights will be permitted between the UAE and Israel every week. It is expected that the first flights between Israel and the UAE will begin within a matter of weeks.

UAE Delegation Arrives in Israel; A delegation from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) took off on Tuesday morning towards Israel's Ben-Gurion Airport as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and UAE Financial Affairs Minister Obaid Humaid Al Tayer will meet to sign several agreements between Israel and the UAE. One such agreement states that citizens can travel between the two countries without the need for visas, according to the Prime Minister's Office. The delegation took off, accompanied by a number of representatives from the United States, including US special representative for international relations Avi Berkowitz, who tweeted a photograph of his flight ticket to Israel from the UAE.

Israeli Chamber of Commerce Inks Deal with Bahraini Counterpart; Israel's Chamber of Commerce has signed an agreement of cooperation with the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI), marking the opening of trade ties between the two countries following the establishment of formal ties on Sunday, according to a government press release. The two commerce bodies agreed to a Memorandum of Understanding for business cooperation, which was signed by Uriel Lin, president of the Israeli Association of Chambers of Commerce, and Ze'ev Lavie, director of the association's foreign relations division. They were joined by an official delegation of representatives from the BCCI. Lin praised the decision to build closer trade ties with Bahrain, saying in a statement that “This is another move that the Association of Chambers of Commerce is making today to expand two-way trade relations with the Gulf states, starting with direct cooperation agreements with countries with which we have peace agreements and diplomatic relations – and from there also as a springboard to all the Gulf states.”

Israel's Pension System Ranked 3rd Best Worldwide; The Mercer CFA Institute Global Pension Index rated Israel's pension system 74.7 out of 100, giving it a B grade and placing it third out of the 39 countries surveyed. This was Israel's first year being included on the 12-year-old index. The two countries that placed ahead of Israel, the Netherlands and Denmark, were the only two given an A grade, and are already widely regarded as having the best pension systems in the world. For comparison, the US and UK both were graded C+. More than half of the countries on the list saw their ratings drop this year as global economies contend with the economic fallout from the COVID-19 crisis. Broken down, Israel's pension system ranked fourth for sustainability, seventh for integrity, and 12th for adequacy. "Israel's retirement income system comprises of a universal state pension and private pensions with compulsory employer and employee contributions," the report said. "In most cases, annuities are paid from the private pension system."

Over 70% of Holocaust Survivors Need Financial Aid; Some 70% of Holocaust survivors require financial assistance, up 3% from three years ago, according to a report published Monday by State Comptroller Matanyahu Englman. Three years ago, the Foundation for the Welfare of Holocaust Victims, which is under the Finance Ministry, was advised to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the needs of those who survived the Holocaust and are now living in Israel. It was provided with a budget of NIS 17 million and was able to obtain data on 22% of known survivors in three years. Distress buttons, which summon medical help when pressed by the elderly in their homes, are funded by donations, and the 9,000 survivors who currently have them might lose them. The website maintained by the foundation as a primary source of information used by survivors to claim their pensions and rights was said to be "in need of improvement."

French Police Conduct Raids Following Beheading Attack; French police on Monday launched a series of raids targeting Islamist networks, three days after a history teacher who had shown his pupils a cartoon of the Prophet Mohammed was beheaded in a suburb of Paris. Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin vowed there would be "not a minute's respite for enemies of the Republic", after tens of thousands took part in rallies countrywide on Sunday to honor the teacher, Samuel Paty, and defend freedom of expression. 15 people have been detained so far, including four pupils who may have helped the killer -- an 18-year-old of Chechen origin who was killed by police -- to identify the teacher in return for payment. Law enforcement carried out 40 raids on Monday, mostly around Paris, with many more planned, AFP reported. "We want to harass and destabilize this movement in a very determined way," one ministry source said.

Thousands of Israelis Vie for World Record: Largest Beach Clean-Up; Thousands of volunteers are expected to take part in an attempt to break the world record for the largest beach clean-up on Israel's coasts along the Mediterranean Sea and the Sea of Galilee (Kinneret) on October 30. The event was organized by the Mediterranean People coalition, environmental groups, local authorities, and thousands of volunteers. The goal is to raise awareness of the importance of cleaning the environment and beaches and to influence decision-makers concerning establishing additional marine reserves, banning plastic at beaches, and enforcement. Local authorities have continued working throughout the coronavirus crisis to keep beaches clean along the Kinneret. Every year, about eight million tons of plastic are thrown into the world's seas and oceans.

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