

# **Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update September 30, 2021** **(24<sup>th</sup> Tishrei, 5782)**



## [For the Yachad Report Newsletter For September 2021](#)

***Gantz: Israel Could Accept Return to Iran Nuke Deal If US Has 'Plan B'***; Israel could accept a return to a US-brokered Iran nuclear deal, but they are calling on Washington to have a demonstration of power ready should negotiations turn sour, Defense Minister Benny Gantz told Foreign Policy on Tuesday, September 14. “The current US approach of putting the Iran nuclear program back in a box, I’d accept that,” Gantz told Foreign Policy, referring to US President Joe Biden's efforts, but added that he wants the US to have a plan B with economic sanctions, and referred to Israel's plan C, which involves a military response. Gantz explained to Foreign Policy what he would consider a viable plan B: full political, economic, and diplomatic pressure by the US, Europe, Russia, and China. However, he explained the IDF is preparing military means to stop Iran from getting nuclear weapons, should it come to that. The issue of the Iran nuclear deal has been a prominent one in Israeli and international politics for almost a decade now, especially with fears that Iran could be getting close to a nuclear weapon.

***Mossad May Have Destroyed IAEA Equipment at Iran Nuclear Site***; An incident at Iran’s Karaj nuclear facility in June, which was attributed by many to the Mossad, may have destroyed some of the IAEA’s monitoring equipment, International Atomic Energy Agency Director-General Rafael Grossi said Monday, September 13. He did not mention who caused the incident, but it is possible that Iran used it to take action against the agency’s equipment. Grossi said the loss of the data was a negative development, and he seemed to disapprove of actions against Iranian nuclear facilities. Next, Grossi said his agency did not know how much monitoring data was lost regarding Iran’s nuclear program from its broken and damaged cameras. “We still need to see the degree of the gap” of the missing data, he said, adding that he hoped other monitoring redundancies of the IAEA would help uncover any data missing from individual cameras. Neither the Prime Minister’s Office, the Defense Ministry nor other intelligence sources responded to inquiries from The Jerusalem Post about Grossi’s implied accusation.

***Israel Shuts Down for Yom Kippur, Forces on High Alert***; Israel shut down on Wednesday evening, September 15, for Yom Kippur, the Jewish Day of Atonement and the holiest day of the Jewish calendar, even as security forces remained on high alert amid a recent spike in attacks and with two escaped Palestinian security prisoners still on the run. This Yom Kippur came as the country is battling a fresh wave of coronavirus and Wednesday saw long lines and a rush to get tested before most testing stations also shut for

the holy day. All flights in and out of Ben Gurion airport ceased at 1:35 p.m. The airport reopened Thursday night with arrivals starting at 9:30 p.m., while departures resumed at 11:30 p.m. During this period Israel's air space was also closed to flights passing through. Border crossings also shut just after noon and reopened at 10 p.m. on Thursday. As sundown approached, all local radio and television broadcasts gradually fell silent. Public transport also halted with buses and trains stopping their routes until after the fast day. Inner-city buses gradually restarted from 8 p.m., while inter-city transport restarted from 9:30 p.m. Thursday. Roads were largely clear of cars by early evening as is the national tradition — to be replaced with multitudes of people on bicycles and other non-motorized vehicles. Driving during the Jewish Day of Atonement is considered taboo, and many secular Israelis have turned the day into a biking holiday, taking advantage of the car-free roads.

***Tens of Thousands of IDF Soldiers Flock to Jerusalem for 'Introspection'***; Over the past few weeks, tens of thousands of Israeli soldiers have passed through Jerusalem and its Old City, sometimes during the day, but mostly at night, as part of an annual ritual ahead of Yom Kippur on Thursday, September 16. These are so-called Selichot tours, named for the traditional penitential and supplicant prayers said in the period before the Day of Atonement (some Jews start saying these a month before Rosh Hashanah, others the Saturday night a week or so before Rosh Hashanah). For the Israel Defense Forces, these tours — mostly through Jerusalem, but also Safed and other cities — are not explicitly religious in nature, with even predominantly non-Jewish units taking part in them, but are instead meant to encourage contemplation and soul-searching. Lt. Col. Nadav Danino, the head of the Education Corps' Jewish Awareness and Identity Division, told The Times of Israel last week. "This is time for unit-wide introspection. This isn't a debriefing that you do after an incident or an investigation after an exercise. This is a time where we're using the Hebrew calendar, this time between the Hebrew month of Elul and the month of Tishrei, a time of introspection," Danino said.

***Moroccan FM: Israel Must Be Stakeholder Not Outsider in the Middle East***; Israel must be part of a new Middle East order bound together by both regional opportunities and the need to combat joint threats, Moroccan Foreign Minister Nasser Bourita said on Friday, September 17, at a virtual event marking the anniversary of the Abraham Accords. "There is a need for a new regional order where Israel is a stakeholder and no longer an outsider in its own region," Bourita said at the event hosted by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken. "This new regional order should not be perceived as against someone but rather to benefit us all." Also this new regional order should be based on an updated joint assessment of threats but also how to generate opportunities that favor stability and development for all," he said. The event with US, Israeli, Moroccan, Bahraini and Emirati officials was held two days after the actual September 15, 2020 anniversary date of the White House ceremony that launched the Abraham Accords that allowed for Arab states to normalize ties with Israel. Prior to the accords, Israel had normal ties only with Egypt, which whom it signed a peace treaty in 1979, and Jordan, with whom an agreement was reached in 1994.

***Egypt's President Hosts Israel PM Bennett for Talks, First Such Visit in Decade***; Prime Minister Naftali Bennett met with Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi in Sharm el-Sheikh — on the southern tip of the Sinai Peninsula — on Monday, at a markedly warm summit. The Monday, September 13, meeting marked the first public visit of an Israeli premier to Egypt in more than a decade, since former prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu met former Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak in 2011. A spokesman for the Egyptian presidency said ahead of the talks that the two leaders were to "discuss bilateral issues related to bilateral relations, ways and efforts to revive the peace process as well as recent developments in the region and international arenas." An El Al flight carrying the prime minister departed from Tel Aviv to Sharm el-Sheikh early Monday afternoon. Bennett was expected to return home to Israel later on Monday. Bennett was invited to visit Egypt and meet with Sissi last month, during a meeting he held with Egyptian intelligence head Abbas Kamel in Jerusalem. The prime minister said last month that he had accepted the invitation, and would soon visit in order "to strengthen and expand relations between the countries in the region."

***Israel to Ease Travel Through EU's Digital COVID Passport Program;*** Travelers will have an easier time entering and leaving the country now that Israel has joined the European Union's digital COVID certificate program, the Health and Foreign ministries said Wednesday, September 15. The program is supposed to take effect in early October, according to a joint statement. This coronavirus travel program will enable vaccinated and recovered Israelis to travel to EU member states and other countries that are members of the program and have their certificate recognized by their country of destination. At the same time, travelers from member countries will also have their vaccination and recovery certificates recognized in Israel. The Health Ministry has not yet decided if it will allow people with testing certificates to participate. The program also allows Israelis to have access to the EU's green pass, which gives entry to restaurants, cultural centers, public institutions, and the like in accordance with the coronavirus guidelines in each country. It likewise prepares the ground for the opening of the Israeli tourism sector to European visitors. "The ability to travel and visit the world is a basis for ensuring ties between peoples and countries," Foreign Minister Yair Lapid said.

***UK Muslim Doctor Delights in Helping Separate Jewish Israeli Conjoined Twins;*** A Muslim doctor from London has spoken of his pride and joy at helping separate Jewish Israeli conjoined twins just over a week ago, saying it illustrates that "from a doctor's point of view, we're all one." Staff at Soroka University Medical Center in Beersheba successfully completed the operation on the twins conjoined at the head and said that the babies are now likely to grow up to live normal lives. The medical team managed this despite never having performed such a surgery, which involved complex on-the-spot decisions regarding which blood vessel to give to which twin, and assessing in real-time the impact that immediate decisions were having on the functioning of the brains. Now, the man who brought the experience to the table has told his story to The Times of Israel — and said it should serve as a reminder that medicine transcends all divisions. Dr. Noor Ul Owase Jeelani, a pediatric neurosurgeon at London's Great Ormond Street Hospital, has performed four other separation surgeries on twins who were conjoined at the head with fused skulls, intertwined brains, and shared blood vessels. He and his colleague, Professor David Dunaway, are seen as the world's experts on such cases.



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