

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update June 16, 2022 ***(17th Sivan, 5782)***



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Iran Says Any Response to Israel 'Will Not Be in a Third Country'; An Iranian foreign ministry spokesman said Monday, June 13, that any “response” the Islamic Republic would make against Israel would take place inside Israel, a day after it was reported that Israeli and Turkish security agencies last month uncovered an Iranian plot to kidnap Israeli tourists in Turkey. “If we want to respond to Israel’s activities, our answer will be given in its place and not in a third country,” Saeed Khatibzadeh said. Israeli security officials tipped off their Turkish counterparts about the plan and asked that they take action to thwart the attack. Iranian government spokesman Ali Bahadori Jahromi said on Monday that Iran “will take whatever retaliatory measure necessary in response to any external action by [the Israeli] regime.” Israeli security officials believe there are still Iranian terror units operating in Turkey aiming to carry out kidnappings or shooting attacks, the Ynet news site reported, and intelligence services are working to counter those threats. “For any mistake made by the enemy, we will raze Tel Aviv and Haifa to the ground by the order of the Supreme Leader,” said the Islamic Republic’s ground forces commander, Kiumars Heydari. Israeli diplomatic missions have been on alert, expecting Iran to seek revenge for the assassination last month of a senior officer in the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. However, Kan reported that the attempted kidnapping in Turkey happened before the officer’s killing. The National Security Council in recent days has considered issuing a top-level travel warning, explicitly telling Israelis not to travel to Turkey at all in the coming period. It has already advised against making non-essential trips to the country. Israeli security officials believe there are still Iranian terror units operating in Turkey aiming to carry out kidnappings or shooting attacks, the Ynet news site reported, and intelligence services are working to counter those threats.

Two Iranian Aerospace Scientists Die under Mysterious Circumstances; Two Iranian aerospace scientists died under mysterious circumstances just hours apart, according to reports by the state-controlled Fars outlet Monday, June 13. On Sunday, Ali Kamani, a scientist who worked for the Iranian air force’s aerospace unit, was reportedly killed in a car crash in Khomein. Iran’s Tasnim outlet hinted that the crash may not have been an accident, calling Kamani a “martyr” who died during a “mission to protect” Iran. The second engineer was identified as Mohammad Abdous, who was reportedly working on the Iranian air

force's satellite program, drone aircraft, and ballistic missiles. The two deaths follow a string of high-profile deaths of both Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps officers and Iranian scientists linked to the military's aerospace unit.

European Commission President Heads to Israel with Gas Deal in the Works; European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen is expected to arrive in Israel on Monday, as Jerusalem, Cairo, and Brussels make strides toward a natural-gas export deal. The European Union Embassy in Israel said von der Leyen was arriving "to advance relations between the EU and Israel, especially cooperation in the area of energy. The president will also discuss with Israeli government representatives the global reaction to the food crisis and the situation in the Middle East." During her two-day visit, von der Leyen is expected to meet with Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, President Isaac Herzog, and Foreign Minister Yair Lapid, to visit Yad Vashem and to accept an honorary doctorate from the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. She also plans to meet with Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Mohammed Shtayyeh in Ramallah. Her visit comes days after the European Commission proposed a deal to export gas from Israel to Europe via Egypt to reduce reliance on fossil-fuel imports from Russia following the war in Ukraine. The draft of the deal, which was seen by Reuters and dated June 7, needs approval from member states. The deal establishes the principles for enhanced cooperation between the three partners but does not say how much gas the EU would import nor set any timelines for deliveries. Shipments would include the use of liquefied natural gas (LNG) infrastructure in Egypt, which plans to become a regional hub for natural gas. The memorandum of understanding would run for nine years from its signature. Egypt already exports relatively small amounts of gas to the EU. Israel and Egypt expect to ramp up production and export of gas in the coming years. Israel is on track in the next few years to double gas output to about 40 billion cubic meters (bcm) a year as it expands projects and brings new fields online, according to industry officials. Israel has said it hopes to reach a deal to supply gas to Europe and is also considering building a pipeline to export more gas to Egypt. The EU imported 155 bcm of gas from Russia last year, accounting for about 40% of the bloc's overall consumption.

Israel to Boost Building Starts in Bid to Rein in Soaring Housing Costs; Israel's government plans to sharply boost construction starts and expand a discount scheme aimed at restraining rapidly rising housing prices as demand continues to outstrip supply. Under a joint plan by the finance, interior, and construction and housing ministries, Israel aims to start building 280,000 housing units by 2025, or 70,000 on average a year. That compares to around 55,000 a year over the past decade. Construction and Housing Minister Ze'ev Elkin noted that the various incentives would mean a loss of as much as 20 billion shekels (\$5.89 billion) to the country's lands authority, which allocates Israel's land to developers. "The plan is not a one-step magic solution," Elkin said at a press conference on Sunday, June 12. "(But) we believe (it)... will stabilize Israel's housing market." The proposal, parts of which require parliament approval, also includes other measures, such as cutting red tape and building more housing units for rentals. It is the latest government attempt to contain housing costs, with previous ones failing to stabilize prices.

Spanish-Israeli Team Finds Mechanism to Make Blood Cancer Cells Harmless; New research led by scientists in Barcelona, Spain – with significant participation by colleagues at the Department of Human Genetics and Biochemistry of Tel Aviv University's Sackler Faculty of Medicine: Prof. Gideon Rehavi, Nitzan Kol, Chen Avrahami, and Sharon Moshitch-Moshkovitz – has managed to do this. They have just published their findings in the high-impact journal *Leukemia* under the title, "Remodeling of the m6A RNA landscape in the conversion of acute lymphoblastic leukemia cells to macrophages." The article describes how leukemia cells become normal cells that no longer multiply by changing the chemical modifications – the so-called epigenetics – of a type of its genetic material called messenger RNA. The Spanish participants included Alberto Bueno-Costa, a researcher with the group of Dr. Manel Esteller, who heads the Josep Carreras Leukemia Research Institute at the University of Barcelona. Experimental results

showed that the reversal of the malignant cells into macrophages involved a tremendous revision in the chemical changes occurring on their messenger RNA – the carriers that help proteins form. The changes especially affected the distribution of an epigenetic mark named methylated adenine. This change in the angle formed between two adjacent chemical bonds of these molecules causes instability of the proteins that define leukemia while favoring the appearance of microphages – proteins characteristic of the normal cells that are being born. Although this line of research has not yet been tried on patients, the team said it seems quite promising and is worth further exploration as a new approach in the fight against leukemia. The more strategies developed to fight leukemia, the more hope there is for the half a million patients around the world who are diagnosed annually with blood malignancies.

Ancient Cloth with Bible's Purple Dye Found in Israel, Dated to King David's Era; Three scraps from 1,000 BCE, the earliest such finds in the region, point to the Edomite kingdom described in the Bible; vibrant and lasting 'royal' dye, the mark of the elite, comes from murex sea snails. Israeli researchers have found three textile scraps near the southern tip of Israel colored with the biblically described "argaman" royal purple dye, and dated them to circa 1,000 BCE — the era of King David. The earliest ever such finds in this region, the vibrant cloths add tangible weight, in particular, to the Bible's account of an Edomite kingdom in the area at that time. Colored with the most precious dye of the ancient world, the textile scraps were excavated in the Timna valley near Eilat, and offer startling new insight into an ancient elite class. The tiny, vibrantly colored Iron Age cloth pieces are the earliest evidence of this precious dye in the entire Southern Levant and shed new light on the early Edomite kingdom and Israelite kingdoms 3,000 years ago — a period when the Bible details the conquering of the Edomites by King David. Also called "true" or "Tyrian purple," the vibrant, millennia-lasting color is produced by dye glands gathered from three species of live murex sea snails on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. To reach the famed King Solomon Copper Mines at Timna near the shore of the Red Sea, the cloth would have traveled hundreds of kilometers, which only added to its prestige and value. "It is a very early period to find 'true purple' in use and it's a very strange location," Tel Aviv University Prof. Erez Ben-Yosef told The Times of Israel Thursday, June 2. "It's deep in the desert, where we didn't [traditionally] think these prestigious materials were in use." The discovery, said Ben-Yosef, offers "additional evidence for our new understanding of nomadic people at that time period, at the time of the emergence of these ancient kingdoms of Israel, Edom, Moab, Amon, the local kingdoms of the biblical time." Ben-Yosef has excavated at Timna since 2013.

Food Delivery Service 'Wolt' Launches in Haifa; Haifa residents can now order food from the application-based meal-delivery service Wolt. On Monday, June 13, Wolt launched its service in Haifa. The service will include about 100 restaurants throughout the city and more than 100 couriers – out of around 1,000 who have already applied. After three-and-a-half years in which Wolt operated in Tel Aviv, Rishon Lezion, Netanya, Binyamina, Beersheba, Jerusalem, and other cities around the country, Wolt has now reached the North, with its first stop being Haifa. Wolt's Haifa delivery area will encompass every Haifa neighborhood, from downtown to Carmel, the city's industrial centers, the factory area in Haifa Port, the Matam area, and the campuses of the University of Haifa and the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology. Wolt's couriers will also reach Rambam, Assuta, Carmel, and Bnei Zion hospitals, the Baha'i Gardens, Eli Cohen Park, Hecht Park, and a host of beaches. Hours of operation will be every day from 10 a.m. until 11 p.m., with plans to expand those hours. The selection of available foods ranges from falafel to coffee to prescription medication, with deliveries available from establishments such as Falafel Orion, Italiano, McDonald's, Arcaffe, and Be Pharm. Wolt Israel CEO Lior Eshkol expressed her pleasure with the service's launch in the country's northern region, which she said was a long time coming. "Haifa residents deserve to enjoy an excellent service experience and the revolution of instant shipments that we lead, which many Israelis already enjoy," she said. "After three-and-a-half years in Israel, we are already

looking forward to coming to Haifa, and we are all excited and ready to serve the local businesses and the residents of the city.”

Iranian General Threatens to ‘Raze Tel Aviv and Haifa to the Ground’ On Tuesday, June 7, Iran threatened to “raze” the cities of Tel Aviv and Haifa. “For any mistake made by the enemy, we will raze Tel Aviv and Haifa to the ground by the order of the Supreme Leader,” the Islamic Republic’s ground forces commander, Kiumars Heydari, said. The threat came less than a day after a report said that Thai security forces had thwarted several recent Iranian attempts to harm Western and Israeli targets in the Southeast Asian country — a popular tourist destination for Israelis. Iran has reportedly been trying to retaliate for several high-profile assassinations and mysterious deaths in the Islamic Republic in recent months, including of an Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps colonel and a top scientist. While the attempts in Thailand seem to have failed, Tehran is still believed to be planning attacks against Israelis there and elsewhere. Most notably, Israel has issued a rare direct warning to Israelis traveling or planning to travel to Turkey.

Iran Removes Two IAEA Surveillance Cameras from Nuclear Facility; Iran removed two surveillance cameras of the International Atomic Energy Agency from one of its nuclear facilities on Wednesday, June 8, in response to an expected censure from the nuclear watchdog’s Board of Governors. The move marked a mild escalation, but still fell short of potential Iranian threats to completely kick out the IAEA, withdraw from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, or enrich its uranium stock up to the 90% weaponized level. “So far, the IAEA has not only been ungrateful for Iran’s extensive cooperation but has also considered it as a duty. From today, relevant authorities have ordered that surveillance cameras of the Online Enrichment Monitor (OLEM) be shut down,” reports said. The United States, Britain, Germany and France angered Iran by submitting to the IAEA’s governing board a draft resolution criticizing Iran for not fully answering the watchdog’s questions on uranium traces at undeclared sites. The resolution text, seen by Reuters and little changed from a draft circulated last week, will be debated and voted on at this week’s quarterly meeting of the IAEA’s 35-nation Board of Governors, possibly as soon as Wednesday night. Several diplomats said the resolution was likely to pass easily despite Iranian warnings of retaliation and consequences that could further undermine already stalled talks on rescuing Tehran’s 2015 nuclear deal with world powers. Iran’s ally Russia, one of the powers, opposes such a resolution.

Ukraine Wants Iron Dome Sale from Israel, Blasts Anti-Tank Missile Refusal; Kyiv wants to purchase Israel’s Iron Dome air defenses system and for Jerusalem to sign off on the transfer of its Spike SR anti-tank guided missile system from Germany to Ukraine, the country’s ambassador, Yevgen Korniychuk, told reporters on Tuesday, June 7. “Last week, from what I know for sure, Americans gave permission for the anti-spike missiles to be transferred from Germany to Ukraine, and Israel said no,” said Korniychuk, adding that Berlin wanted to make the transfer. In so doing, he confirmed a report that Israel had refused to sign off on the transfer of its anti-tank defense system, produced by the Israeli company Rafael Advanced Defense Systems. Rafael has already sold the SPIKE 5th-generation ATGM (anti-tank guided missile) to 18 European Union and NATO members. The Israeli missile, which is capable of penetrating 99.06 cm (39 inches) of armor, can be operated in either a direct attack or mid-course navigation based on target coordinates only. These modes enable the destruction of long-range hidden targets with pinpoint precision, damage assessment and obtaining real-time intelligence. With non-line-of-sight capabilities, SPIKE has a range of up to 32 km., and can be fired from vehicles, helicopters, ships and ground launchers. The ATGM has advanced electro-optic seekers that include the capabilities of a smart target tracker with artificial intelligence features, increasing its lethality. Designed to be used against new modern targets with a low signature and time-sensitive characteristics, the SPIKE ATGM can be fired at grid target coordinates, including advanced armor and protection systems, making it one of the only missiles in the world with this capability. The ambassador had just returned from Ukraine, where he

witnessed firsthand the war Russia has been waging on his country since February 24. Israel is no longer focused on the war, Korniychuk charged. “Ukraine has been removed from the Israeli press almost completely,” he said. “So there is no war anymore.” The absence of war news is reflective of the government’s unease with the war, he said, such that it is more comfortable placing the war on the back burner. Israel has hesitated to provide Ukraine with any military assistance, even that of a defensive nature, given that it has attempted to maintain ties with both Moscow and Kyiv, serving both sides as a go-between negotiator. Korniychuk said that the Iron Dome system is not a weapon, but a tool that will save civilian lives.

UN Blames Israel for Conflict with Palestinians; Israel is largely to blame for its conflict with the Palestinians, the United Nations charged in the initial report by its highly contentious Commission of Inquiry, which plans to focus in part on issues of discrimination by the Jewish state both within and without the country's sovereign borders. “The findings and recommendations relevant to the underlying root causes were overwhelmingly directed towards Israel, which we have taken as an indicator of the asymmetrical nature of the conflict and the reality of one state occupying the other,” Navanethem Pillay, who heads the three-member panel that conducted the probe, said. Pillay is the former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. Unlike past UN probs, this one focuses not just on Israeli actions in the territory which the UN holds will eventually be part of the final borders of a Palestinian state, but it also plans to look at Israeli actions within its sovereign borders including with respect to issues of discrimination. Israel has feared that the three-member Commission of Inquiry (COI) would charge Israel with crimes of apartheid, similar to reports that have already been issued by a number of non-governmental human rights groups. It has rejected the apartheid argument which would place issues of race at the core of the conflict with the Palestinians, Israel has argued that its conflict with the Palestinians is territorial, temporary in nature and has no bearing on issues of race. The report makes no mention of the word apartheid. It did speak of Israeli discriminatory practices and what it perceived to be its failure to comply with the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. It spoke in particular of its concern regarding the 2018 Nation-State Law. It explained that this law could "exacerbate pre-existing and systematic structural discrimination against non-Jews in Israel," it said. The commission noted that "ending the occupation alone will not be sufficient, however. Other steps must be taken to ensure that all people in Palestine and in Israel are able to enjoy all of their human rights, equality and in full, without any discrimination."

Israel's Ambassador to UN Elected Vice President of UN General Assembly; Israel’s ambassador to the United Nations, Gilad Erdan, was elected as a vice president of the UN General Assembly on Tuesday, June 7. Erdan will assume the position for a year beginning with the convening of the GA in September. He will chair General Assembly meetings, and take part in setting the agenda for GA deliberations. “I am proud of the right to represent Israel in a position that is at the heart of what is happening at the UN, and I will also act through it to combat the existing discrimination in the UN against Israel,” said Erdan. “This is an important victory, which will give us another platform to present the truth about Israel and its contribution to the world.” “This achievement joins a series of important achievements that Israel has made at the UN in recent years, along with a clear message to our enemies that they will not prevent us from integrating into key positions at the UN and in the international arena and increasing our influence.” The appointment of Erdan comes after Israel was elected for the first time to serve as a member of the UN Economic and Social Council, and Israeli Odelia Fitoussi was elected to serve in the UN Committee of Experts on Disability.

Clinical Trial Sees Rectal Cancer Remission for All Participants; A small clinical trial in New York City sent rectal cancer into remission for every patient that was involved by using a unique immunotherapeutic treatment. The trial gave all the patients involved the immunotherapy treatment

"Dostarlimab," which then stunned doctors as it returned a 100% success rate for all patients in clinical trials. The immunotherapy had shrunk the tumors the patients had much quicker than the medical professionals were expecting. The treatment was being tested for colorectal cancer. The trial was backed by drugmaker GlaxoSmithKline and was led by doctors at the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. One of the paper's authors, Dr. Luis A. Diaz, told The New York Times that he "believes this is the first time this has happened in the history of cancer." Other experts said that the trial needs to be replicated.

Israel Faces Severe Shortage of Radiologists; Israel is currently facing a shortage of about 250 radiologists required for carrying out essential medical services such as X-rays, CT scans and MRIs, Radiology Association chairman Prof. Ilan Shelef told the Knesset Health Committee Monday evening. The shortages were partially due to certified radiologists in Israel choosing to do remote work for medical companies abroad rather than inside the Israeli medical system, Shelef told the committee. As a result of these shortages, a person who is referred for a CT scan might need to wait for up to two months for an appointment, and the situation is even worse for those in need of an MRI, with a wait of around eight months, he said. The wait does not end once the appointment comes, Shelef said. Due to a severe shortage of people in Israel who can decipher the results, receiving the results can take between one and two months, meaning that for some people, the entire process of receiving an MRI examination can take close to a year, he said. "And therefore, even after the promise of additional machines, waiting times will not be shortened because there will be nobody who can decipher the tests," Shelef said. "This delay fatally harms the health of civilians and even endangers their lives." The situation is even worse in the North and South, Katz said, adding that the imaging devices the country does have are distributed unevenly, with less attention being paid to the periphery. "There was a time when there were no doctors working in the field of premature infants, and it became almost an extinct profession until the Health Ministry found a solution," Margi said, adding that it was important to find a similar solution to the shortage of radiologists. Not only is the situation bad now, it is expected to worsen in the coming years. Many doctors currently working in the field are nearing the age of retirement, and there are fewer and fewer people choosing to specialize in the field of radiology, meaning they do not have the required numbers to replace them.



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