

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update September 1, 2022 ***(5th Elul, 5782)***



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Iran Receives US Response to Nuclear Deal Draft, Lapid Decries Deal; Iran received the US government's response to the latest demands from Tehran in nuclear negotiations, via the talks' EU coordinator on Wednesday, August 24. Tehran made the demands the previous week after the EU tabled what it said was a final draft of the agreement. Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanani said the Islamic Republic began a "detailed review of the American side's comments and... will announce its views in this regard to the coordinator after completing the review." Prime Minister Yair Lapid had earlier said US President Joe Biden would not be fulfilling his commitment to stop Iran from developing a nuclear weapon if it joins the Iran deal as it stands. "In our eyes, [the Iran deal] does not meet the standards set by President Biden himself: preventing Iran from becoming a nuclear state," he said. At the same time, Lapid said the US and Israel maintain an open dialogue. "I appreciate their willingness to listen and work together," he said. "The United States is and will remain our closest ally, and President Biden is one of the best friends Israel has ever known." In recent days Lapid also spoke with French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, whose countries are parties to the Iran talks. He said he has a "close, almost daily, dialogue with the UK."

Lapid: US Adopted Israeli Stances in Iran Response; The US adopted some of Israel's points opposing Iran's latest demands in nuclear talks, Prime Minister Yair Lapid said on Thursday, August 25, the day after Washington submitted its response to the most recent draft of the deal. "This is a bad deal... The Americans accepted a large part of what we wanted them to put into the draft and that is a welcome change," Lapid said at a Yesh Atid faction meeting. "The dialogue with them is good and we will continue." In response to a question about opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu's criticism that the government is not being aggressive enough in its opposition to the Iran deal, Lapid said, "We are working with the US administration in the right way, with patience and determination, and bringing results." The prime minister also attributed Israel's success in influencing the American position to National Security Adviser Eyal Hulata's "intensive talks" in Washington this week, including with his counterpart, Jake Sullivan, and US Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman.

Iran Deal Draft Reportedly Includes 4 Phases, Would Take Full Effect After 165 Days; According to an unsourced report, the EU draft proposed last month included four incremental steps in the halting of Iran's nuclear activity, and in the lifting of Western sanctions on the Islamic Republic, with the fourth and final step taking effect 165 days after the deal is signed. The first step, taking effect on the day of the signing, would see Iran freeze its uranium enrichment, although it will be allowed to hold on to the enriched uranium it will have stockpiled before that date. The report said the second step would take 30 days and will see the administration of US President Joe Biden bring the deal to Congress for approval. The third step, 60 days after congressional approval, would see Washington notify the UN Security Council and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) about its decision to rejoin the pact. The fourth and final step — after an additional 60 days — would see the US formally return to the deal, with the sides removing more sanctions and halting their violations of the JCPOA, according to the report.

Israeli Strike Destroyed Over 1,000 Iran-Made Missiles in Syria – SOHR; An airstrike Thursday, August 25, on the Syrian city of Masyaf attributed to Israel hit a missile warehouse containing more than 1,000 Iranian-made missiles, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) reported on Saturday. The warehouse, in the city's Syrian Scientific Studies and Research Center (SSRC) complex, stored thousands of medium-range, surface-to-surface missiles assembled under the supervision of Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps "expert officers," the report said. Syrian air-defense systems were activated in northwestern Syria on Thursday, with Syria's state news agency SANA reporting that local forces were "confronting hostile targets" above Masyaf. Later, the agency said the airstrike was an Israeli attack. According to SOHR's report, 14 Syrian civilians sustained injuries with varying levels of severity during the Masyaf airstrike, in addition to casualties reported among officials of Iranian-backed militias guarding the SSRC.

Two More Medical Vehicles for MDA / Vision for Israel; Over the last few years, we donated 5 ambulances and 3 medi-cycles to MDA (Magen David Adom). And so far, over 30,000 emergency responses have occurred with these vehicles. Saving lives and saving people is what it is all about. Now, Vision for Israel is proudly adding two new vehicles to the list of donations: a bloodmobile and a mobile intensive care ambulance. Thanks to you, our generous faith-led donors, 30,000 people have been able to receive medical assistance.

Israel Seized 300 Illegal Weapons on Egyptian, Jordanian Borders in 2022; Security forces have seized an estimated 300 weapons on the Jordanian and Egyptian borders this year, a report released on Sunday, August 28, said. In addition, more than 2,100 kg. of drugs (over 4,600 lbs.) have been seized along the borders. How did Israeli security forces do it? The drug haul, worth around NIS 135 million, involved 40 thwarted smuggling attempts. In addition, 18 thwarted attempts to smuggle ammunition across the Jordanian border resulted in the seizure of some 300 weapons. An IDF statement said these numbers "reflect an increase in the scope of the attempts to smuggle drugs and weapons into Israeli territory, alongside a significant increase in the scope of countermeasures. "Our forces will continue to act... to maintain the security of the residents of the south, alongside strengthening the necessary partnership with other security bodies in the region." In all of 2020, NIS 150m. worth of drugs were seized, and in 2021, NIS 209m.

Terror Charges Filed Against Islamic Jihad leader, Whose Arrest Sparked Gaza Conflict; Military prosecutors on Thursday, August 25, filed an indictment against a senior Palestinian Islamic Jihad member, whose arrest at the beginning of the month sparked a round of fighting between Israel and the terror group in the Gaza Strip. Bassem Saadi's indictment included charges of membership in a terror group (the PIJ), conducting operations on behalf of the terror group, incitement to terrorism, assisting others to contact an enemy, and assuming a false identity. Saadi, the leader of the terror group in the West

Bank, was arrested on August 1 by Israeli troops in the Palestinian city of Jenin. His arrest followed intelligence information indicating that Saadi had continued to be active in the PIJ, a military source said. According to the indictment, Saadi worked to assist two other Palestinians to “advance activities” of the PIJ’s student council, which is considered by Israel to be a part of the outlawed group. The pair received \$5,000 from a terror operative in the Gaza Strip for the activities, according to the indictment.

The Algorithms Behind the Spread of Online Anti-Semitism; Anti-Semitic incidents have shown a sharp rise in the US. The Anti-Defamation League, a New York-based Jewish civil rights group that has been tracking cases since 1979, found that there were 2,717 incidents in 2021. This represents an increase of 34% over 2020. In Europe, the European Commission found a sevenfold increase in anti-Semitic postings across French language accounts, and an over thirteenfold increase in anti-Semitic comments within German channels during the pandemic. Hatred against Jews on social media is often expressed in stereotypical depictions of Jews that stem from Nazi propaganda or in denial of the Holocaust. Anti-Semitic social media posts also express hatred toward Jews that is based on the notion that all Jews are Zionist – that is, they are part of the national movement supporting Israel as a Jewish state – and Zionism is constructed as innately evil. However, today’s antisemitism is not only directed at Israelis, and it does not always take the form of traditional slogans or hate speech. Scholar Sophie Schmalenberger found that antisemitism is expressed not just in blunt, hurtful language and images on social media, but also in coded forms that may easily remain undetected. For example, on Facebook, Germany’s radical right-wing party Alternative für Deutschland, or AfD, omits the mentioning of the Holocaust in posts about the Second World War. It also uses antisemitic language and rhetoric that present antisemitism as acceptable.

Life-saving Breakthrough for Heart Disease at Hadassah Medical Center; Instead of performing open-heart surgery, with all its risks, to repair a defective aortal arch that has an aneurysm – a bulge in a blood vessel caused by a weakness in the blood vessel wall – interventional cardiologists at the Hadassah-University Medical Center in Jerusalem’s Ein Kerem are the first in Israel to fix it by minimal catheterization. The first case, on an elderly man at high risk of death, was performed in May without official Health Ministry approval on compassionate grounds. There have been two more cases since then. The fourth patient who underwent the two-and-a-half-hour procedure on Thursday, August 25, Meir Yitzhak of Kiryat Yam, is only 55. He was the first case in which the \$32,000 implant was a commercial product recognized by the health ministry and paid for by his health fund, Maccabi Health Services. It is threaded toward the heart via arteries in the leg and/or the arm and covers the balloon-like aneurysm in the aorta that then doesn’t have to be removed. Several hundred patients in Europe and New Zealand underwent implantation of the delicate Dacron implant called Nexus – developed by the Endospan company in Herzliya Pituah – in clinical trials. It now has certification from the European CE authority after the product was deemed to meet EU safety and health requirements.

Iran Deal: Israel Urges France Not to Cave to Tehran on Terms; Israel on Monday, August 22, urged France and the United States not to cave to Iranian terms for the revival of the 2015 nuclear deal, as the European Union waited for Washington’s response to Tehran’s demands to clinch the agreement. “Iran cannot be allowed to endlessly buy time and receive more concessions while it advances its nuclear program and spreads terror worldwide,” Prime Minister Yair Lapid said in a phone conversation with French President Emmanuel Macron. Israel would not be obligated by such an agreement, he said, adding, “Israel will continue to do everything to prevent Iran from attaining a nuclear capability.” Lapid also warned that the offer to the Iranians has elements that differ from the original JCPOA and that “pave the way for significant investment to flow into Iran’s terrorist network and to strengthening the Iranian military,” the Prime Minister’s Office said. The conversation came one day after Biden spoke with Macron, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz about the Iran deal. Lapid also spoke with Scholz about the deal last week. Defense Minister Benny Gantz told the media that

he was “very worried” the deal would be revived, particularly since it does not do enough to prevent Iran from enriching uranium and that it allows for resources to enter Iran that will help it strengthen its military might.

Iran Must Answer to IAEA Probe, US Says; Iran must respond to the International Atomic Energy Agency’s probe against it, US State Department spokesman Ned Price said in a statement that could complicate a quick conclusion of an Iran deal. “Iran needs to answer the IAEA’s questions,” Price told reporters in Washington. “Our position [on this] is not going to change, regardless of where we express it, in the text of an understanding on a mutual return to full implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action [the Iran deal], in public or elsewhere,” he added. “We will not take one day longer than necessary to provide our response,” Price said, noting that the US would have accepted a text done in March, but Iran had rejected it. Price dismissed criticism against a return to the deal, noting that since the Trump administration exited the deal in 2018, the Iranian threat had grown rather than diminished. It is not possible to curb Iran's nuclear ambitions solely through economic sanctions, he said.

Report: China Cautions Israel Against Allowing US Pressure to Dictate Relations; Senior Israeli Foreign Ministry sources said that one of China’s top diplomats last week warned Israel not to allow American pressure to harm relations with Beijing. Liu Jianchao, the head of the Chinese Communist Party’s international affairs department, reportedly conveyed the message during a meeting with the Israeli ambassador to China, Irit Ben-Abba. American media described the overture as the most straightforward to date that Beijing has conveyed regarding the “U.S.-Israel-China triangle.” “This is a critical test point for the relations between China and Israel,” Liu reportedly said, adding: “The Jewish people have a lot in common with the Chinese people. There is no reason for us to hurt each other. If Israel hurts China because of external pressure, it will be making the wrong policy decision.” Liu specifically urged Israel to avoid being “dragged” into the U.S. position that China is perpetrating genocide in Xinjiang, according to the report. Israel ratified a resolution at the UN Human Rights Council in June, criticizing China’s conduct in the region, reportedly under pressure from Washington.

Gantz Warns Hezbollah Attack on Israeli Gas Field May Trigger War; Defense Minister Benny Gantz on Monday, August 22, warned Lebanon’s Hezbollah that any attack on its gas assets could spark war after the terror group threatened to “sever” Israel’s hands if it taps a disputed offshore field. The warning came amid lengthy negotiations between the eastern Mediterranean neighbors, which do not have diplomatic relations, to settle a dispute over their maritime border. Tensions spiked in June when a production vessel chartered by Israel arrived near the Karish offshore gas field, which Lebanon claims is within contested waters. Last month, the Israeli military shot down four unarmed Hezbollah drones flying toward Karish. Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah said on August 9 that “the hand that reaches for any of this wealth will be severed” and over the weekend warned of an “escalation” if Lebanon’s demands aren’t met in the US-mediated maritime talks.

Israel and Lebanon Close to an Agreement on Maritime Border Dispute; A final agreement in the maritime border negotiations between Israel and Lebanon over the dispute surrounding the Karish gas field could be signed as early as next month, Israeli officials assessed on Monday, August 22. Russian state-owned media outlet reported last week that the two Middle East neighbors are closing in on an agreement that would see their maritime border clearly defined. According to the report, a Lebanese source confirmed that an agreement is very close, adding that they will soon announce it to US mediator Amos Hochstein. This is despite threats made recently by Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah. Energy Minister Karin Elharrar claimed earlier this month that Jerusalem made a serious offer to Beirut, hoping to successfully bring maritime border talks to an end. “I call on Lebanon to take what is a very significant step for them towards becoming a country that produces gas, in order to solve their economic and energy crisis,” Elharrar added.

Momentous Changes in the Relationship Between Russia and Saudi Arabia — Opinion; On the sidelines of the St. Petersburg Economic Forum last June, Saudi Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman said relations between the kingdom and Russia are as warm as the weather in Riyadh. This description summarizes the current state of strategic cooperation between the two countries. This state of affairs angers Riyadh's strategic allies in the West, primarily, of course, the United States. But it remains the best option for Saudi foreign policy in light of overall circumstances and the realities of the existing world order. Of course, everyone in the region and internationally is waiting to see the results and implications of US President Joe Biden's visit to Saudi Arabia, last month. In particular, there were unspoken expectations or aspirations that Saudi Arabia might oblige its US partner by increasing oil production in isolation from its OPEC+ fellow members, although Riyadh has repeatedly stressed that this issue is not on the table. The strategic vision of oil-producing countries, both within and outside OPEC, particularly Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Russia, is certainly based on an objective view of markets and the need to maintain their stability and balance. This is critical for both exporters and consumers. Meanwhile, the US and its Atlantic allies are under tremendous domestic economic pressure from policies, that they are responsible for. They want to subordinate the policies of oil producers to those policies and use that production to isolate and punish Russia. These are things that others have nothing to do with.

Seeking to Woo TV and Filmmakers, Israel Offers 30% Rebate to Sweeten the Deal; Local filmmakers and TV studios have been shooting award-winning movies and series in Israel for decades, taking advantage of the country's desert vistas and ancient cities. But it's expensive to film in Israel, which may serve as a deterrent to foreign production companies. Now, the country is marketing itself as a location for international shoots with a 30 percent rebate incentive for foreign productions. Announced jointly by the ministries of culture and sports, foreign affairs, finance, and tourism earlier this month, the two-year incentive will offer reimbursement of up to NIS 16.6 million (\$4.9 million) for film and TV series shot in Israel. "We know that Israel is known as an expensive country, but this is a country with great locations," said Raz Frohlich, director general of the Culture and Sports Ministry. "You can access green hills, desert, history, and cities within short distances, and there's plenty of English here. There's lots of reasons to come here, but the [new] tax return is a big plus."

Israeli Artistic Gymnast Dolgopyat Wins Gold at European Championship; Israeli artistic gymnast Artem Dolgopyat won a gold medal for his floor routine at the European Artistic Gymnastics Championship in Munich on Sunday, August 21, despite suffering an injury to his foot a month ago. Dolgopyat received a result of 14.966 for his performance, putting him in front of the seven other finalists. Hungary's Christopher Masaruch took the silver medal with a score of 14.600, and Jake German from Britain won the bronze, with a result of 14.433. "I am very, very tired now, but happy," Dolgopyat told a German reporter and said that he had only managed to train for two weeks due to his injury. "But I did it and I am delighted. Thank you to everyone for the encouragement," he added. Culture and Sports Minister Chili Tropper congratulated Dolgopyat on his achievement and praised him as an "amazing gymnast and athlete."

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