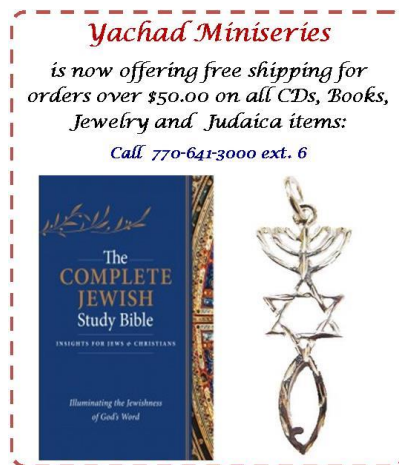


Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update October 20, 2022 (25th Tishrei, 5783)



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US State Department Says Iran Nuclear Talks No Longer A Focus for White House; State Department spokesman Ned Price told reporters on Wednesday, October 12, that the Iran nuclear deal was “not our focus right now,” instead, vowing to “support” the “bravery and courage” of Iranian protesters. Asked by a reporter whether the US was still interested in pursuing the nuclear talks, Price responded “That’s not our focus right now. I think it is very clear, the Iranians have made very clear that this is not a deal that they have been prepared to make.” “A deal certainly does not appear imminent. Iran’s demands are unrealistic; they go well beyond the scope of the JCPOA. Nothing we’ve heard in recent weeks suggests they have changed their position,” Price told the department briefing. Instead, Price said US focus “is on the remarkable bravery and courage that the Iranian people are exhibiting through their peaceful demonstrations, through their exercise of their universal right to freedom of assembly and to freedom of expression.”

The Russia-Iran Drone Axis Is Now A Global Threat – Analysis; Russia’s use of Iranian drones in Ukraine is growing, and it is clear that the threat now must be taken seriously – not just in the Middle East or Ukraine, but on a global scale. This is because Iranian-style drones have also been exported, either in pieces or their blueprints, to the Houthis in Yemen, Hezbollah and Hamas. They now have much larger ranges than in the past, and new technology that enables more precise strikes. The fact that Russia is openly using these types of “kamikaze” drones, or what are known as “loitering munitions,” shows that Iran’s drone program is now growing beyond something that is used by militant and terror groups. According to reports on Thursday, October 13, Moscow used a "kamikaze" drone in an attack on the Kyiv region. "Initial reports indicate a kamikaze drone attack. Rescuer teams have responded" Ukrainian authorities said. A report has noted that some 60% of the drones Russia has launched have been shot down or crashed. Israel has been providing Ukraine with "basic intelligence" on the Iranian drones used by Russia in its invasion, American media have stated. This illustrates two key points. First, countries are now concerned about the proliferation of Iran’s armed drones. Russia is trying to wreak havoc with them and this harms civilians. In addition, the US and others have been concerned about Iran’s drones for years,

especially in the Yemen war, Iraq and the Gulf. The expansion of the Iran-Russia drone axis means that Iran's drones may now be acquired by more countries, such as Ethiopia, Venezuela and the drones are apparently being made in Tajikistan. With Iran's attendance at meetings of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) the previous week in Kazakhstan, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in Uzbekistan recently, its drones may find customers in even more countries in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and other places.

Latest US National Security Strategy Pushes Regional Peace, 2-State Solution; US President Joe Biden has released his second National Security Strategy, expressing the nation's intention to further promote Abraham Accords-style peace agreements between Israel and its regional neighbors, as well as a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with Israel's Jewish democratic identity at its core. The document does not specifically name countries that may be primed for a peace agreement with Israel. The National Security Strategy, which is required by law, provides an annual outline of the US administration's national security concerns and its policies for addressing those issues, including the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Biden's 2022 version of the document included more detail on the region than last year's, which stated only that the US was aiming to "maintain our ironclad commitment to Israel's security." This year, the administration referred to "meeting Palestinian aspirations for a secure and viable state of their own," and included a quote from Biden during his West Bank visit in July, when he said, "Two states along the 1967 lines, with mutually agreed swaps, remain the best way to achieve equal measure of security, prosperity, freedom, and democracy for Palestinians, as well as Israelis."

Palestinian Doctor, Claimed as Terror Group Member, Dies in Jenin Gun Battle; A Palestinian doctor died after being wounded in a fierce gun battle between Israeli troops and Palestinian gunmen in the Jenin refugee camp, in the northern West Bank on Friday morning, October 14, which left another gunman dead. An Israeli security source said Abdullah Abu Tin, the doctor, was armed and directly involved in the battle and the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades terror group claimed Abu Tin as a member. In a poster announcing his death, the group said he died "in an armed clash" with Israeli forces "defending the homeland." The poster showed him posing with five assault rifles. According to the Israel Defense Forces, troops operated in the area to arrest a wanted Palestinian, a member of the Hamas terror group, who was responsible for a series of recent shooting attacks in the West Bank and planned further attacks. Amid the raid, armed Palestinians hurled explosives and "fired massive volleys of gunfire at the forces," the Israeli military said in a statement.

In First, New York Sanctions Yeshiva for Falling Short on Secular Education; New York State officials have for the first time ruled that a Jewish day school is violating the law by not providing sufficient secular education, amid an ongoing legal battle over the massive education system. New York Education Commissioner Betty Rosa ruled that Brooklyn's Yeshiva Mesivta Arugtah Habosem had failed to meet state standards for secular education two weeks ago. The yeshiva, in the Williamsburg neighborhood, will be required to formulate an improvement plan with city education officials. The state ruling came in response to a lawsuit from Beatrice Weber, who said her child was being deprived of a secular education by the school. Weber recently became the head of Young Advocates for Fair Education, or Yaffed, a group that has led the push for reforms in New York's yeshiva system. State authorities have sought a balance between religious beliefs and values and secular education requirements in non-public schools. New York yeshivas have long been required to provide secular education that is "substantially equivalent" to lessons at nearby public schools.

Police on High Alert as Thousands Gather at Western Wall for Priestly Blessing; Police deployed across Jerusalem's Old City on Wednesday, October 12, with tens of thousands of Jewish worshipers attending the traditional priestly blessing event at the Western Wall, amid heightened tensions in the city

and across the West Bank. Traditionally, Jewish pilgrims make their way twice a year to the Western Wall on the intermediate days of the Passover and Sukkot festivals, with crowds of men and women spilling out from the Wall's plaza to surrounding areas. The ceremony has frequently seen clashes between security forces and Palestinians on the Temple Mount compound, which sits above the Western Wall, who have sometimes thrown stones and objects at the Jewish worshipers below. The ceremony, which sees male descendants of the Kohanim priestly caste gather to bestow a benediction, involves the raising of hands to perform the blessing, with those conducting the blessing wrapped in prayer shawls. The event appeared to pass peacefully, but hundreds of police and Border Police remained deployed in the Old City to secure access routes to the Wall, as well as protect the many visitors who were expected to the Old City during the day. Old City roads were shut to traffic. This year's ceremony comes after two deadly shooting attacks against IDF soldiers in recent days, and during wide scale ongoing manhunts in East Jerusalem and the northern West Bank to find the shooters.

Videos from Iran Prove that Protests Only Continue to Grow – Analysis; In recent days, Iran has tried to flood the city of Sanandaj in western Iran with security forces on motorcycles, in an attempt to regain control over the area, and yet the willingness of protestors to confront security forces is apparent in videos that have been circulating online. A series of videos obtained by the Middle East Center for Reporting and Analysis capture several minutes of footage of protesters confronting Iranian regime forces in at least two different locations. One video shows dozens of regime members arriving on motorcycles, some of whom appear to carry weapons. Throughout the video, explosions can be heard in the background, although it is unclear if the noise is the sound of live gunfire or not. The security forces in the footage may be members of the IRGC Basij forces, or they may be other security forces and regime anti-riot police, as it is not uncommon for the regime to send plainclothes agents to attack protestors. These clashes come after several nights of fear that Iran is trying to cut Sanandaj and other Kurdish cities off from the rest of the country and the outside world. Some sources say that Iranian regime forces have been firing on crowds and into homes, smashing up cars and cutting off social media and phone connections. It is hard to verify the death toll from these incidents. Iran has also carried out drone and missile attacks against Kurdish dissident groups in neighboring Iraq, subjecting them to over ten days of artillery bombardment.

Oil Workers Join Iran Protests: 'We'll Destroy Everything We Built'; Contract workers at petrochemical plants and oil refineries across Iran went on strike on Monday and Tuesday, October 10-11, as protests following the killing of Mahsa Amini continued across the country for a fourth week. Workers at the South Pars Phase 14 Conventional Gas Field stated in a video shared on social media that they were giving Iranian forces attacking protestors three days to lay down their weapons, warning that otherwise "we will destroy everything we have built." Another video showed a worker announcing his cooperation with striking oil workers, and repeating the warning that workers would "destroy everything" they built if the suppression of protestors did not cease. The Organizing Council for Protests of Oil Contract Workers had warned late last month that petrochemical workers would strike if the suppression of protestors continued. The Council addressed oil and petrochemical workers across the country on Monday, stressing that "now is the time to protest widely and prepare ourselves for nationwide and back-breaking strikes." The council demanded that the government release all arrested protestors and stop attacking protestors. At least 11 striking oil workers have been since Monday, according to the council.

Iran Racing to Expand Enrichment at Underground Plant, IAEA Report Shows; Iran is rapidly expanding its ability to enrich uranium with advanced centrifuges at its underground plant at Natanz, and now intends to go further than previously planned, a confidential UN nuclear watchdog report showed on Monday, October 10. While indirect talks between Iran and the United States on reviving the 2015 Iran nuclear deal have stalled, Tehran has brought onstream an ever larger number of advanced centrifuges the deal bans it from using, to produce enriched uranium. These machines are far more efficient than the first-

generation IR-1, the only centrifuge that the deal lets Iran use to grow its stock of enriched uranium. Iran has been adding them, particularly at two underground sites at Natanz and Fordow that may be designed to withstand potential aerial bombardment. At the underground Fuel Enrichment Plant (FEP) at Natanz, Monday's ad hoc report to member states showed Iran has quickly completed the installation of seven cascades, or clusters of advanced centrifuges that were either not finished, or at a very early stage of installation according to the last quarterly International Atomic Energy Agency report issued on September 7. Iran has also informed the IAEA that it plans to add an extra three cascades of IR-2m machines at the FEP, on top of the 12 already announced and now installed, the report showed. Of those three extra IR-2m cascades, installation has already started on two of them, the report said.

Russians Search for Jewish Roots, to Flee Putin's Army Draft for Israel; At a Red Cross center in Moscow, a dark-haired woman nervously held a phone to her ear, trying to dig out details about her Jewish roots to help her son flee President Vladimir Putin's drive to mobilize troops to fight in Ukraine. "Mum, your grandfather Moishe was born in 1870, like Lenin, right?" she asked. "Getting an Israeli passport is the only way for my son not to go to fight in Ukraine," the exhausted woman, who declined to give her name for security reasons, explained. Tens of thousands of Russians have fled the country since Putin sent troops to Ukraine in February and then announced a nationwide military call-up in September. Many have scrambled to find their Jewish roots to open up the doors to Israel. Under Israel's Law of Return, anyone with at least one Jewish grandparent is eligible for Israeli citizenship, as are people who convert to Judaism. More than one million of Israel's 9.4 million residents have roots in the former Soviet Union. Israel has said immigration applications from Russia and Ukraine have tripled since the conflict started. The Central Bureau of Statistics counted 20,000 arrivals from Russia and more than 12,000 from Ukraine, since the end of February.

Government Supports Maritime Agreement Between Israel and Lebanon; The cabinet approved the principles of the Lebanon maritime delineation agreement with a "large majority" and Prime Minister Yair Lapid's proposal to bring it to the Knesset floor for review, but not for a vote. The principles of the agreement and its influences on Israel's national security and regional stability were presented to the cabinet, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said in a statement. In addition to the Knesset floor, the agreement will also be presented in the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, according to the statement. In twelve days, it will be brought before the cabinet for final ratification, pending the Attorney-General's approval throughout. Interior Minister Ayelet Shaked voted against the proposal, arguing that it needed to be voted on in the Knesset. Communications Minister Yoaz Hendel said that although he also believed that the deal needed to be voted on in the Knesset, he held "ministerial responsibility" for the agreement. The proposal not to put the agreement up for a vote in the Knesset countered Attorney-General Gali Baharav-Miara's preferred option. However, according to the A-G, the law did not require this. The Security Cabinet called to approve the US-mediated maritime boundary agreement between Israel and Lebanon as soon as possible earlier on Wednesday, October 12.

Groundbreaking Israeli Research Uncovers What Protects Us from Heart Disease; A groundbreaking new Israeli study has revealed that two biological factors could be the key to preventing high-risk individuals from developing heart disease. Conducted by the Assuta Ashdod Public Hospital in collaboration with the Rabin Medical Center, the research found that endothelial progenitor cells – which help repair the inner lining of a blood vessel following vascular injury – as well as telomere length, may play a critical role in preventing heart disease. The results of the study were recently published in the *Coronary Artery Disease* medical journal. Led by Dr. Einat Shaked and Prof. Eli Lev of Assuta Ashdod's Cardiology Department, the research set out to uncover why some people never develop heart disease despite having high-risk profiles (diabetes, smoking, excess cholesterol, etc.), while others do. Researchers found that patients with a high risk for coronary artery disease, but with healthy arteries had greater

endothelial progenitor cell function than patients with existing heart disease. In addition, they also discovered that these cells had longer telomeres (which indicate a cell's lifespan) in individuals with normal arteries. Telomere length has previously been shown to be correlated with overall cell health. The findings indicate that these two factors could serve as a protective mechanism against atherosclerosis, which results from the buildup of fats and cholesterol on the artery walls.



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