

# ***Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update November 24, 2022 (30<sup>th</sup> Cheshvan, 5783)***



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***Georgia Stops Iranian Attempt to Assassinate Israeli;*** Georgia foiled an Iranian plot to assassinate an Israeli residing in the country, its State Security Service said Tuesday, November 15. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Quds Force orchestrated the plan to kill Itzik Moshe, a businessman who also worked to advance Israel-Georgia relations, with a number of teams from different countries, it said. One team of assassins from Pakistan have ties to al-Qaeda and arrived in Tbilisi to gather intelligence on the target. Another was arrested two weeks ago and found with weapons and ammunition, as well as other incriminating evidence. In addition, Georgian authorities arrested two dual Georgian-Iranian citizens on charges of smuggling weapons from Turkey to the assassins. The teams received instructions from an Iranian citizen named Mohammad Reza Ebadi Arablu, who worked in the past for the Quds Force in Georgia. His boss is Ali Feyzipour, of the Quds Force, who works on terrorist attacks around the world, the State Security Service said. The hiring of Pakistani and Georgian citizens for the assassination attempt is a part of an Iranian pattern of using foreign terrorist fighters to try to cover its tracks. “Thanks to the actions of Georgian security forces, the plan was revealed and the threat was removed,” an Israeli security source said. “After the plot was uncovered in Georgia, their security forces worked with the Israeli intelligence community.”

***Iran Hit Tanker to Distract from Georgia Assassination Plot - Israeli Officials;*** Iran attacked an oil tanker connected to an Israeli businessman in an attempt to distract from a failed assassination plot against an Israeli businessman in Georgia, Israeli officials said on Wednesday, November 16. The oil tanker, the Pacific Zircon, is a Liberian-flagged ship operated by Singapore-based Eastern Pacific Shipping, which is owned by Israeli billionaire Idan Ofer. The tanker itself is owned by Japanese firm Taihei Kaiun Company, according to Lloyd’s List Intelligence. A statement by Eastern Pacific confirmed that the vessel, sailing in the Gulf of Oman, had been hit by a “projectile,” lightly damaging the hull. No injuries were reported in the attack. Israeli officials said the Israeli connection to the tanker was very limited. They added that the same type of Iranian drone being used by Russia in Ukraine, the Shahed 136, executed the attack. “This is another event that proves that Iran acts as a global exporter of terrorism. This

is another time that Iran is harming global freedom of navigation,” said the officials. “Iran undermines security in the Gulf and, along the way, undermines stability during the World Cup,” which started on Sunday, November 20 in Qatar. The US Navy’s Fifth Fleet was aware of the incident, Commander Timothy Hawkins said, and National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan condemned the attack, saying Iran likely conducted the attack using a UAV. “There is no justification for this attack, which is the latest in a pattern of such actions and broader destabilizing activities. This action further threatens freedom of navigation through this crucial waterway, international shipping and commerce, and the lives of those on the vessels involved,” said Sullivan.

***Israel Successfully Tests Naval Iron Dome Air Missile Defense System;*** The Israeli Navy carried out a successful C-Dome interception test from the Sa’ar 6 INS Oz, marking a “significant” milestone in enhancing the capabilities of the new Magen-class corvettes. The interception test was carried out by the Israeli Navy, the Defense Ministry’s Israel Missile Defense Organization (IMDO), and Rafael Advanced Defense Systems as the primary contractor and developer, by the Israel Aerospace Industries’ Elta as the radar manufacturer, and by mPrest as the c2 manufacturer. The test simulated real threats and included the system’s successful detection and interception of targets in challenging scenarios. “The C-Dome system expertly identified threats and successfully intercepted them by launching Iron Dome interceptors toward them from the sea,” said IMDO head Moshe Patel. The C-Dome is an advanced configuration of the Iron Dome aerial defense system and is operated from the four Sa’ar 6 Magen-class corvettes that have been received by the Navy in the last two years. The Sa’ar 6 missile ships will guard strategic infrastructure such as the natural gas rigs, and protect the commercial shipping lanes which bring in 98% of Israel’s imports. The IDF has decided not to place Iron Dome batteries on oil rigs themselves for safety reasons – instead, the C-Dome has been placed on the Sa’ar 6. According to the Defense Ministry, the operational system was created through the integration of multiple different systems, utilizing full operational capabilities that will be used by sailors.

***Ambitious Plan Sees Israel as Heart of Middle East Medical Supply Chain for US;*** A concerted effort is underway to turn Israel into the hub of a potential regional US medical supply chain that reduces American dependence on China. The heart of the campaign is a bipartisan push on Capitol Hill to mandate and fund the opening of a US Food and Drug Administration office in Israel, which would assist companies within Israel and Arab countries that recognize it to produce medicines and medical supplies for the lucrative US market. The drive is spearheaded by the United States-Israel Education Association, a small faith-based nonprofit organization headquartered in Alabama. Over the past decade, the USIEA has brought senior congressional leaders to Israeli settlements in the West Bank, has worked with the same lawmakers to secure hundreds of millions of dollars in US funding for the Iron Dome anti-missile system, and has developed ties between Israeli and Palestinian business communities. The COVID-19 pandemic and disruption to global supply chains underscored how dependent the US is on China for everything from surgical masks to semiconductors. “Those are very precarious and tenuous supply lines,” Peter Pitts, former associate commissioner of the FDA, told Israeli media by phone. “We have to be able to protect our supply of necessary medical products to the United States. And theoretically, by working with Israel, for example, or the United Arab Emirates or Morocco or Bahrain, we can move some of the manufacturing for these essential medical products out of China; for example, have them manufactured in countries more friendly to the United States.”

***President Herzog to Make First-ever State Visit to Bahrain Next Month;*** President Isaac Herzog will head to the Gulf next month to meet with the leaders of Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates, his office announced on Wednesday, November 16. The president is slated to take off for a state visit to Bahrain on December 4, at the invitation of King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa. He will be the first Israeli head of state to visit Bahrain. In January, Herzog visited the UAE’s Abu Dhabi and Dubai in a two-day

trip. While in Bahrain he will meet with members of the local Jewish community and senior government officials, and will lead a group of Israeli businesspeople to meet with the Bahrain Economic Development Board. The next day, Herzog heads to the UAE to meet with his Emirati counterpart Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Abu Dhabi ruler known colloquially as MBZ. This will be the fourth meeting between the two leaders. According to Herzog's office, the leaders will discuss "strengthening Israel-UAE relations, the importance of peace, and the expansion of bilateral cooperation." Earlier the previous week, presumptive incoming prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu held a phone call with Bahrain's Crown Prince and Prime Minister Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa.

***Netanyahu, Erdogan Declare 'New Era' in Israel-Turkey Relations;*** Prime Minister-designate Benjamin Netanyahu and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan agreed to advance ties between their countries in a phone call on Thursday, November 17. "The two leaders agreed to act in cooperation to establish a new era in relations between Turkey and Israel," Netanyahu's spokesman said, adding that "President Erdogan and the prime minister-designate discussed ways to significantly strengthen economic and diplomatic ties between the countries." Netanyahu sent condolences to the citizens of Turkey for the victims of the terrorist attack in Istanbul on Sunday, November 13, and offered Israel's help in fighting terrorism. Erdogan similarly expressed his condolences for the victims of the terrorist attack in Ariel on Tuesday, November 15. The Netanyahu-Erdogan call follows efforts by the outgoing government to improve relations between Jerusalem and Ankara, which were initiated by Turkish overtures. Some of the greatest tensions between the countries came following events during Netanyahu's previous tenure in office.

***Israel and Jordan Pen Agreement to Clean up Jordan River;*** The Israeli and Jordanian governments signed a declaration of intent on Thursday, November 17, to partner in the ecological restoration and sustainable development of the Jordan River. The document was signed at the UN COP27 climate conference in the Egyptian resort of Sharm el-Sheikh by Environmental Protection Minister Tamar Zandberg and the Jordanian minister of water and irrigation, Mohammed Al Najer. According to the Environmental Protection Ministry, restoration of the Jordan River is a major goal for both countries due to its great ecological value, its rich historical and religious heritage, and its importance as a major tourist site. The agreement gives practical expression to Annex 4 of the 1994 Israel-Jordanian Peace Treaty, which contains clauses regarding environmental cooperation in the Jordan River. These include the ecological restoration of the waterway, protection of water resources from pollution, control of agricultural pollution and waste, pest control, the creation of nature reserves and protected areas, and tourism and historical heritage. Gideon Bromberg, the Israel director of EcoPeace, a Middle East environmental peace organization, welcomed the agreement, saying, "The agreement signed today between Jordan and Israel should build on Peace Treaty commitments and the 2014 decision of the two governments that created a sub-committee on their Joint Water Committee, focused on rehabilitating the Jordan River."

***Rare Shakespeare Manuscripts Among Documents Donated to National Library of Israel;*** Rare copies of works attributed to William Shakespeare have been donated to the National Library of Israel, the library said Wednesday, November 17. The donated works include a first-edition copy of "The First Folio," a collection of Shakespeare's plays first published in 1623. The donation also includes a copy of the second edition of Shakespeare's work, titled "The Second Folio," published in 1632. A first-edition small booklet including poems by the 16th-century wordsmith was also included in the lavish donation. The oldest piece of work given to the museum was an incurable — a text printed in the earliest stages of printing in Europe, meaning between 1440, when the printing press was invented, and 1500. Other donated works include two volumes of Samuel Johnson's Dictionary of the English Language from 1755, considered one of the most important dictionaries of its time. All seven texts, spanning over 400 years of human literature and history, were donated anonymously, the National Library said. "We welcomed the

valuable donation, which significantly enriched the library's collections," the National Library said in a statement. Established in 1925, the National Library is home to world-class collections of over four million books and 2.5 million photographs, as well as manuscripts, artifacts and maps.

***3 Dead in Samaria Terror Attack, 4 Wounded;*** Three people were killed and four more wounded in a stabbing attack at three separate locations in and around the Israeli city of Ariel in Samaria, Tuesday morning, November 15. IDF paramedics, along with MDA and United Hatzalah personnel, treated the victims at the scene before evacuating them to Beilinson Medical Center in Petah Tikva via ambulance. One of the victims, a man in his forties, was critically wounded and later succumbed to his wounds. A second man of approximately the same age who was wounded at the gas station, was initially listed in serious condition, and also succumbed to his wounds. A third victim, who was in his thirties, was also fatally wounded next to the 'Ten' gas station in Ariel. Four others were wounded in the attack, and are all listed in critical or serious condition. The attack occurred at two sites in the industrial zone of Ariel in central Samaria, when two Arab terrorists attacked Israelis at the entrance to the industrial zone, and at a gas station. The terrorist fled the scene, an army spokesperson said, but was located by IDF forces on westbound Route 5 near the town of Peduel, where he was shot and killed. While attempting to evade authorities, the terrorist caused an accident involving eight cars on Route 5.

***Chief of Staff: Operation Break the Wave to Continue' After Deadly Stabbing Attack;*** Tuesday evening, November 15, the Chief of the General Staff, LTG Aviv Kohavi, arrived at the scene of the morning's stabbing attack near the Ariel Industrial Zone. The Chief of the General Staff held a debrief at the area of the incident together with the Commanding Officer of the Central Command, MG Yehuda Fuchs, the Commanding Officer of the Judea and Samaria Division, BG Avi Bluth, and the Commanding Officer of the Ephraim Brigade, COL Mordi Weiss. The Chief of the General Staff expressed his condolences for the murdered and injured victims of the attack and conveyed his appreciation for the soldiers who neutralized the terrorist. He said: "Today's shooting attack was severe and murderous, and should have ended differently. We will debrief and draw lessons. I offer my condolences to the families of the murdered and a quick recovery to the injured." "Those who neutralized the terrorist were young soldiers who strived for contact and acted calmly in order to bring an end to the murderous killing spree. The IDF will continue Operation "Break the Wave" for as long as necessary and will operate anywhere and at any time, in order to fulfill its mission and maintain the sense of security of the residents living in Israel every day."

***Biden Scrambles for a Plan B with Iran Nuclear Deal on Life Support;*** The global push to constrain Iran's nuclear program has entered uncharted territory as the U.S. and its allies signal that negotiations with Tehran are all but dead, and it's not clear whether the Biden administration has a viable plan B to keep Iran's theocratic regime from acquiring a nuclear bomb that the agreement was supposed to prevent. The high-stakes multilateral talks have collapsed as Tehran deepens its diplomatic and military ties with Moscow, stoking fears that the Kremlin will offer covert help with Iran's nuclear program in exchange for more drones and missiles for Russia's war in Ukraine. Analysts say it has become clear that Iran, at least for now, has virtually given up on diplomacy with the West and decided that aligning with Russian President Vladimir Putin offers greater benefit than continuing down the path of talks with the U.S. and Europe. The negotiations were aimed at reviving the Obama-era Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, which limited Iran's nuclear program in exchange for economic sanctions relief. The demise of those talks, combined with Tehran's deepening military partnership with Moscow, has thrust U.S. policy toward Iran into uncertainty.

***Iran Has Built a Hypersonic Weapon that Can Fly Five Times the Speed of Sound, Tehran Claims;*** Iran claims to have developed a hypersonic missile that is unstoppable by all current anti-air

defenses. General Amirali Hajizadeh, head of the IRGC's aerospace unit, said Thursday, November 10, that Tehran now possesses a ballistic missile that moves at 'high speed and can maneuver in and out of the atmosphere' - making it harder to shoot down. General Hajizadeh said the missile is designed to target enemy anti-air systems and is a 'generational leap' forward in terms of Tehran's military technology. Until now, only Russia was known to possess hypersonic technology. China is thought to have tested a similar weapon last year, while the US is also in testing. North Korea has shown off what appear to be hypersonic missiles at military parades, but it is unclear if the technology is functional. Iran had not publicly acknowledged working on such a weapon before now. 'This hypersonic ballistic missile was developed to counter air defense shields' Hajizadeh said, quoted by Iranian media. 'It will be able to breach all the systems of anti-missile defense' said the general, adding that he believed it would take decades before a system capable of intercepting it is developed. 'This missile, which targets enemy anti-missile systems, represents a great generational leap in the field of missiles.'

***Jordanian King, Sudanese Military Ruler Congratulate Netanyahu on Election Win;*** Jordan's King Abdullah II on Monday, November 14, phoned Likud chief Benjamin Netanyahu to congratulate him on his election victory, the prime minister's designate office said. The statement on the call gave no further details and there was no official confirmation from Jordan. Netanyahu and Abdullah had a prickly relationship when the Likud leader was last in power, with ties between Amman and Jerusalem deteriorating significantly. The call was Netanyahu's latest with a foreign leader since his right-religious bloc won a majority of seats in the November 1 vote, amid international hand-wringing over his far-right coalition partners. Netanyahu's office also said Monday that he received a congratulatory letter from Sudan's military ruler, Gen. Abdel Fattah al-Burhan. During Netanyahu's last stint as premier between 2009 and 2021, ties between Jerusalem and Amman deteriorated markedly, with Abdullah saying in 2019 that relations were "at an all-time low" after a series of incidents that prompted Jordan to recall its ambassador to Israel.

***Syrian Airbase Hit by Alleged Israeli Airstrike Used by Russian Military;*** Two Syrian soldiers were killed and three others were injured in alleged Israeli airstrikes that hit the Shayrat airbase southeast of Homs on Sunday evening, November 13, according to Syrian state media. The airbase is frequently used by Russian forces stationed in the country. The airstrikes were conducted from over Lebanese airspace in northern Lebanon, according to the same media. Syrian journalist Nour Abo Hasan reported that the airstrikes targeted a shipment of weapons intended for Hezbollah which was on its way to Lebanon near the airport. The last Israeli airstrikes to target Syria were reported on October 27, when alleged Israeli airstrikes targeted sites in the Damascus area. Two additional waves of airstrikes targeted the Damascus area in the days preceding those strikes. The runway and underground facilities at Shayrat, including aircraft shelters, have undergone a major expansion by the Russian military in the last three years, the military source said. Russia, which maintains a major military presence in Syria, has forces stationed near Shayrat air base and uses the base, security sources say.

***Israelis in Istanbul Advised to Remain at Hotels After Deadly Bombing;*** Israeli tourists in Istanbul were advised Sunday, November 13, to remain in their hotel rooms and not explore the Turkish city, following a bombing on a popular pedestrian street that left six dead and dozens wounded. An unnamed security source quoted by Hebrew media recommended that Israelis stay in their hotels until the situation became clearer, and to listen to local security. The source also called on Israelis to avoid travel to Turkey for non-essential reasons. There was no indication that the explosion, which Turkish leaders have said appears to be a terror attack, targeted Israelis. Israelis visiting Turkey have been advised to shelter in their rooms on previous occasions over attack fears, including this June, when Turkish authorities arrested numerous suspects linked to an alleged Iranian attack plot. Istanbul, just a two-hour flight from Tel Aviv, is a popular tourist destination for Israelis. The Foreign Ministry said it was not aware of any Israelis

wounded in Sunday's blast, although many were nearby when the explosion went off. Israeli leaders expressed condolences to Turkey after the explosion. "On behalf of the people of Israel, I send my sincere condolences to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and the people of Turkey following today's heinous terrorist attack in Istanbul," Prime Minister Yair Lapid said in a statement. "Our nations stand together in the fight against terror." The blast took place as Istanbul's Jewish community was hosting a Jewish culture day, in which they welcomed large crowds into the Neve Shalom synagogue. The event was cut short as news spread about the blast, which took place just blocks away.

***Miss Israel Beauty Pageant Canceled After More than 70 Years;*** The Miss Israel beauty contest will not be held this year, ending a run of annual competitions that started in 1950. As a result, Israel will not be sending a contestant to the international Miss Universe contest to be held January 2023 in the US. The move by organizers of the Israel contest, which was quietly announced this month, drew a range of responses from past winners, from lamenting the development to welcoming the event's demise. In recent years the pageant has faced criticism for judging women on their physical appearance. Sella Sharlin, Miss Israel 2019, told media on Friday, November 11, "I think that the competition, for those who aren't familiar with it in depth, today gives a lot of tools to anyone who is chosen." She spoke about the work that winning the contest had led to, including "lectures that I later got to give to youth. I founded a group of associations that deal with financial education for youth. "At the end of the day, this competition gives a platform and a place for women to lead, to initiate, and not necessarily to talk about beauty," Sharlin said. She suggested changes could have been made, such as dropping the swimwear section of the contest and placing more emphasis on "standing in front of an audience, speaking, leading things, giving space to female power. Not for beauty or the looks of women."



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