

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update March 9, 2023 (Adar 16, 5783)



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Iran Can Make Enough Fissile for One Nuke in '12 Days,' US Official Says; Iranian scientists could construct the key components of a nuclear bomb in less than two weeks, a top US defense official told lawmakers Tuesday, February 28. Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Colin Kahl told the House Armed Services Committee that Iran's nuclear program had made "remarkable" progress since former President Donald Trump pulled the US out of the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, signed by the Obama administration, Iran, and five other world powers. "Back in 2018, when the previous administration decided to leave the JCPOA, it would have taken Iran about 12 months to produce one fissile — one bomb's worth of fissile material," Kahl said after Rep. Jim Banks (R-Ind.) asked why the Biden administration had attempted to resurrect the deal. "Now, it would take about 12 days. "And so, I think there is still the view that if you can resolve this issue diplomatically and put constraints back on their nuclear program, it is better than the other options," Kahl added, "but right now, the JCPOA is on ice." Earlier, officials did not believe Tehran was proficient enough with the technology needed to actually construct a nuclear bomb, and Iran has denied having any such ambition. However, President Joe Biden's administration is reportedly "very, very" worried by Iran's progress toward nuclear weapons-grade uranium, a top diplomat also acknowledged Wednesday.

Israel Slams Dangerous Docking of Two Iranian Warships in Brazil; Israel warned Brazil that it was dangerous to allow two Iranian warships to dock in Rio de Janeiro, noting that their presence in the southern Atlantic Ocean was a "dangerous and regretful development"- "It is still not too late to order the ships to leave the port," the Foreign Ministry stated Thursday, March 2, in a sharply worded statement. "The Iranian regime has executed dozens of terror attacks against ships, putting in danger the maritime freedom of navigation. Two of the attacks occurred in recent weeks," it said. Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's government granted permission for the ships to dock, despite pressure from the United States to bar them. The IRIS Makran and IRIS Dena warships arrived Sunday morning, February 26. The ships are part of the Iranian navy that works with the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps fleet, which is a designated terror entity by the United States, the Foreign Ministry said. The Biden administration had specifically issued sanctions against the ships and their geographical location in Latin America places them just one continent away from the US shores. US State Department spokesman Ned

Price said Wednesday that the Biden administration wanted to make sure that the “IRGC – which Iran more broadly is not able to acquire a foothold, is not able to take advantage of others in this hemisphere.”

Iranians Protest as Over 1,000 Schoolgirls Poisoned in More than 50 Schools; Reports of Iranian schoolgirls being poisoned at school continue to stream in from across Iran, with over 1,000 students in more than 50 schools impacted so far, according to opposition reports the previous week. The poisonings were first reported in late November, with the pace of reports rising in recent weeks. Iranian officials have varied in their responses to the poisonings, with some claiming the symptoms being reported are largely caused by stress, some calling the incidents "subversive operations" and "intimidations", and others stating that the incidents seem to be intentional and that security forces are investigating. Footage from hospitals throughout Iran shows girls being brought to emergency rooms and put on oxygen. Footage from the schools shows girls sitting outside, some collapsing and others coughing heavily. At least one individual has been arrested in relation to one poisoning incident at a school in Shahin Shahr, according to Iranian state media. According to a social media account which covers anti-government protests in Iran, some students have seen plainclothes security agents outside the schools right before the poisonings. Some reported eyewitness accounts have claimed that a small explosion was heard at some of the schools, followed by a strong smell and then the symptoms of poisoning began. Videos reportedly from Tehran showed students and parents chanting "death to the dictator" and "death to the child-killing government" in protests against the poisonings. On Wednesday, March 1, the Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute assessed with moderate confidence that the Iranian government is tolerating the poisonings, as there is indirect evidence that the regime is not sufficiently responding to the attacks.

Israeli Forces Capture 8 Terrorists Tied to Shooting Attacks; Israeli security forces recently apprehended eight wanted terror suspects believed to be responsible for a series of shooting attacks across Judea and Samaria, the IDF censor cleared for publication Tuesday, February 28. The eight suspects were arrested in a series of operations in recent weeks carried out by the IDF and the Shin Bet internal security agency. None of the shooting attacks attributed to the eight terrorists resulted in injuries. The attacks include multiple incidents in or around the town of Nabi Salih, near Ramallah, in December and January, in which two of the suspects opened fire on IDF forces. In a separate attack, one of the suspects opened fire on an Israeli car which drove near Rawabi in Samaria. One of the most recent shootings attributed to the suspects was carried out two weeks ago at the Qalandia checkpoint on the northern edge of Jerusalem.

Simon Wiesenthal Center Slams Hateful Annual Anti-Jewish Nation of Islam Event; The Simon Wiesenthal Center (SWC) denounced this year's Nation of Islam Savior's Day conference, an annual event featuring anti-Semitic rants by Louis Farrakhan and other speakers. The Center slammed Farrakhan's latest speech, "The War of Armageddon Has Begun," in which he "unleashes a tsunami of Jew hatred." The address included accusations that Jews control world governments, the media and financial institutions. The Nation of Islam leader, 89, also again referred to the Jewish community as the "Synagogue of Satan." Farrakhan further repeated his claim that Jews control Black celebrities, defending Kanye West and Kyrie Irving. He praised West as "a very great brother, a genius." SWC Associate Dean and Director of Global Social Action Agenda, Rabbi Abraham Cooper, slammed Farrakhan for "four decades of non-stop vicious Jew-hatred." "Words lead to action and his toxic hatred has been absorbed by many, including Kanye West." "We urge all our neighbors to reject his hate and we must commit to strengthen our relationships for the betterment of all Americans whatever their color creed or orientation" Rabbi Cooper said.

In Apparent Gesture to Netanyahu, Orban to Move Hungary's Embassy to Jerusalem; Hungary will move its embassy in Israel to Jerusalem next month, apparently in a special gesture to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu from his Hungarian counterpart Viktor Orban. The two reached an agreement on the

matter in recent days, with the details hashed out during intensive talks between Foreign Minister Eli Cohen and Hungary's top diplomat Peter Szijjarto, senior Foreign Ministry officials told Israeli media on Friday, February 3. Following the United States, several other countries have since moved their embassies to Jerusalem or announced their intention to do so, with Hungary now agreeing with Israel to transfer its embassy from Tel Aviv to the capital. The move will make Hungary the first European Union member state to open an embassy in Jerusalem, which the bloc opposes in the absence of a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians. Senior Foreign Ministry sources who confirmed the planned embassy transfer linked the move to Orban's desire to help out Netanyahu, granting the premier a diplomatic achievement amid political instability over his government's contentious plans to overhaul Israel's judicial system.

Israeli Hospital Ranked as One of World's Best Medical Centers; Sheba Medical Center, Israel's largest hospital, was recognized as one of the best hospitals in the world for the fifth time in a row by Newsweek and Statista Inc., the world-leading statistics portal and industry ranking provider. The 2023 ranking evaluated the best hospitals across 28 countries including the United States, France, the United Kingdom, Israel, and more. Four data sources were used for the evaluation: recommendations from more than 80,000 doctors, hospital managers and healthcare professionals; patient experience surveys; patient reported outcome measures; and hospital quality metrics which include patient safety, hygiene measures, waiting times, and quality of treatment. Sheba ranked as the number one hospital in Israel for the fifth year running, and the number one hospital in the GCC/MENA (Gulf, Middle East) regions. "It is a testament to our talented and innovative medical staff, which on an annual basis treats nearly two million people from all walks of life in Israel and around the world, to be nominated for the fifth consecutive year by Newsweek and Statista as a World's Best Hospital," said Professor Yitshak Kreiss, Director General of Sheba Medical Center.

Evidence of 3,500 Year-old Brain Surgery Discovered in Biblical Megiddo; in 2016, archaeologists discovered the skeletal remains of two brothers buried more than 3,400 years ago in Megiddo, located in the Jezreel Valley in Northern Israel. After analysis, researchers now claim the brothers suffered from health problems and one was even treated by trepanation; the removal of a piece of bone from his skull. The study, titled "Cranial trepanation and infectious disease in the Eastern Mediterranean: The evidence from two elite brothers from Late Bronze Megiddo, Israel" was published in a nonprofit open-access publisher. The article explained that the older brother had a square piece, about three centimeters long, removed from the front of his skull. The marks in the skull bear no signs of healing, leading researchers to conclude that the procedure was done just before his death, perhaps in a desperate yet unsuccessful attempt to save his life. "The totality of the evidence suggests that this was a person who had been ill for a long period of time, so maybe they had some kind of surgery or an attempted life-saving procedure," Rachel Kalisher, a doctoral student in archaeology at Brown University and lead researcher, said. "We have evidence that trepanation has been a widespread form of surgery for thousands of years. But in the Near East we don't see it that often, only about a dozen cases of trepanation have been found in the whole region," she added. The hole was made by scoring the skull and carefully levering out pieces from the center. If the assessment is accurate, this would be the most ancient case of trepanation discovered to date.

Hamas Threatens: The Attacks Will Spread to All of Judea, Samaria and Jerusalem; Hamas spokesman Abdul Latif al-Qanoua welcomed the shooting attack in the Jericho area on Monday, February 27, in which a 27-year-old man was murdered. The Israeli-American man who was shot and killed during the terror attack in the West Bank was named as Elan Ganeles, an Israel Defense Forces veteran, originally from West Hartford, Connecticut. According to the IDF, multiple gunmen arrived by car on the Route 90 highway, close to the Nevo military base, and opened fire at an Israeli-owned vehicle. The terrorists then continued driving and opened fire at another car near the Beit Ha'arava Junction, before continuing and

shooting at a third car nearby. "The shooting action in Jericho came as part of the response to the crimes of the Zionist occupation and its hordes of settlers, and the latest of which was the savage aggression against our people in Huwara," said al-Qanoua, referring to the clashes that broke out in Huwara on Sunday night, following a terrorist attack in which two Israeli brothers were murdered. "We salute the heroes of the resistance and the knights of the Lions' Den who confront the occupation and perform heroic actions against its soldiers and herds of settlers in defense of our people and our country." "Never will the crimes of the occupation and its hordes of settlers not be met by further stabbing, shooting and ramming, and they will set flames and fires all over the West Bank and Jerusalem," said al-Qanoua.

Netanyahu Rushes to Deny Settlement Freeze Announced After Aqaba Summit; Israel committed to halting new settlement projects Sunday, February 26, during a summit in Aqaba, according to a joint communiqué issued after the meeting, though Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu swiftly denied there would be any construction freeze over the Green Line. Israel agreed to "stop discussion of any new settlement units for four months and to stop authorization of any outposts for six months," said the statement after the five-way meeting. A senior official confirmed that Israel had told its interlocutors that there would be no additional announcements about settlement construction in the coming months. But hours after the joint statement was released, Netanyahu tweeted that "the building and authorization in Judea and Samaria will continue according to the original planning and building schedule, with no change," using the biblical term for the West Bank. "There is not and will not be any freeze," he continued. National Security Adviser Tzachi Hanegbi insisted too that "there is no change in Israeli policy." "In the coming months, Israel will authorize nine outposts and will approve 9,500 new housing units in Judea and Samaria," he said in a statement. "There is no settlement freeze or change in the status quo on the Temple Mount, and there is no limitation on IDF activities." During the summit, it was agreed that the parties will hold another meeting before Ramadan, under the auspices of Egypt, in order to examine the progress in the field of security.

IDM Gallant to US Sec. of Defense: We Must Increase Our Efforts against Iran; Minister of Defense Yoav Gallant spoke Friday, February 24, with his US counterpart, Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin. The discussion focused on security developments in the Middle East region, including Iran's nuclear ambitions and the Palestinian arena. Minister Gallant briefed Secretary Austin on the counterterrorism activities conducted by Israel's security forces in Nablus, operating against a group of terrorists responsible for shooting attacks in Israel and for planning additional terrorist attacks to be conducted in the future. Minister Gallant and Secretary Austin discussed ways to ensure stability in the region during the upcoming holiday period. At the same time, Minister Gallant stressed the importance of maintaining a decisive position against terrorism in Judea and Samaria. The parties also discussed the Iranian nuclear threat. Minister Gallant expressed his concern regarding Iran's continued nuclear enrichment and emphasized the importance of preventing a nuclear Iran. Minister Gallant thanked Secretary Austin and the US Administration for their partnership and commitment to the security of the State of Israel. They agreed to continue the discussion in person.

Iran Claims: We Developed A Cruise Missile with A Range of 1,650 km; Iran said on Friday, February 24, that it developed a cruise missile with a range of 1,650 km, in a move likely to raise Western concerns after Russia's use of Iranian drones in the Ukraine war, British media reported, citing Iranian media. An Iranian television report broadcast what it said was the first footage showing the new Paveh cruise missile. Iran's ballistic missile tests and satellite launches in recent years have been condemned by the West and particularly the US, which says that Iran's ballistic missile tests are a violation of UN Security Council resolution 2231, which enshrined the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers. Iran denies its ballistic missiles violate this UN resolution. Separately, Amirali Hajizadeh, the head of the Revolutionary Guards aerospace force, also spoke of Iran's often repeated threat to avenge the US killing

of a top Iranian commander, saying, "We are looking to kill (former US President Donald) Trump." "Our cruise missile with a range of 1,650 km has been added to the missile arsenal of the Islamic Republic of Iran," Hajzadeh was quoted as having told state TV. "God willing, we are looking to kill Trump. (Former Secretary of State Mike) Pompeo ... and military commanders who issued the order (to kill Soleimani) should be killed,"

'Stupid Fing Jews': Goyim Defense League Harasses Florida Jewish Community Members;*** Anti-Semitic protesters from the Goyim Defense League (GDL) harassed Jewish people at the entrance of the Chabad in Orlando, new video footage posted on social media on Wednesday, February 22, showed. Videos posted on Twitter show members of the anti-Semitic organization approaching a car driven by an ultra-Orthodox Jewish man. The GDL protesters were also shown approaching police vehicles holding signs promoting anti-Semitic conspiracy theories, who drove by the protesters. "Leave our country, go back to Israel. You know, where you bomb Palestinian kids?" a GDL protester holding a megaphone said in the video. He also accused the Jewish man he was harassing of trying to run him over. A report stated that the protester holding the megaphone is GDL founder Jon Minadeo. "You look like a Jewish horse. Look at the horse-face on this Jew," Minadeo said. Other remarks he used to harass Jews include "filthy" and "piece of s***."

Papua New Guinea to Open Jerusalem Embassy, Israel Announces; Papua New Guinea will move its embassy to Jerusalem this year, Israel announced on Sunday, February 26. Foreign Minister Eli Cohen spoke last week with his Papua New Guinean counterpart, Justin Tkachenko, according to the Foreign Ministry. Papua New Guinea does not have an embassy in Israel but does maintain a consulate near Tel Aviv. Israel's relations with the island nation are handled from its embassy in Australia. The two countries established ties in 1978. Papua New Guinea is one of the Pacific nations that regularly vote with Israel at the United Nations, and Tkachenko told Cohen that his country would continue to do so. In December, Papua New Guinea was one of the 25 countries that joined Israel in opposing the UN General Assembly resolution requesting that the International Court of Justice weigh in on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. However, in 2018 it voted to condemn the US recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital, while five other Pacific nations rejected the condemnation. According to the Israeli readout of the call, the two also discussed expanding bilateral economic ties, particularly in agricultural technology. Cohen called the embassy plan "further evidence of the warm and important relationship between the countries

Designed in Italy with Israeli Knowhow, Startup Debuts Compostable Footwear; with the chic of Milan and the tech developed in Tel Aviv, an Israeli materials science startup has rolled out fashionable footwear made of fully compostable material, in an effort to replace polluting plastic currently used by fashion brands for clothing and shoes. Balena's shoes are made of 100% BioCir, a flexible biodegradable material consisting of natural ingredients bound by polymers and modifiers, which decomposes back into the earth without leaving harmful waste and chemicals. Designed and manufactured in Italy, the Tel Aviv company in December debuted cinnamon-scented flip-flops for both men and women, selling the first thousand pairs in Tel Aviv for NIS 180 (\$49) each. Once users decide they are done wearing their shoes, they can bring them to designated flower or plant stores around Tel Aviv, where they will be taken to an industrial compost facility in the south of Israel, rather than ending up in a landfill. Balena CEO David Roubach says the startup has debuted the world's first fully compostable plastic fashion product made to provide an alternative to the toxic, fossil fuel-based materials used in the fashion industry. For Roubach, footwear is only the start for the potential use of biodegradable plastic in fashion, clothing and other consumer products.

Ancient Inscription with Name of King Darius Found in Israel; In December 2022, Eylon Levy, international media advisor to the President of the State of Israel Isaac Herzog, and his friend Yakov

Ashkenazi, visited the Tel Lachish National Park and chanced on a small potsherd with some inscribed letters. When they reported it to the Israel Antiquities Authority, the ostrakon was examined in the advanced Analytical Laboratory, and studied by Saar Ganor of the Israel Antiquities Authority and Dr. Haggai Misgav of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. To their astonishment, it turned out to be a rare find furnishing evidence for the Persian royal administration at Lachish in the Achaemenid period, at the turn of the fifth century BCE. The Aramaic inscription on the fired potsherd reads “Year 24 of Darius,” dating it to 498 BCE. The short text thus records the name of the Persian king Darius the Great (Darius I), the father of Ahasuerus—also known as the biblical Achashverosh from the Book of Esther, which is read annually on the Jewish festival of Purim. This is the first discovery of an inscription bearing Darius the Great's name anywhere in the Land of Israel. During his long reign (522–486 BCE), the Persian Achaemenid Empire expanded, reaching its greatest extent under his son Hishrash (Ahasuerus, Xerxes in Greek), who ruled most of the ancient world. It appears that the inscribed ostrakon, discovered in the area of the Persian building, may have been an administrative note, akin to a receipt for goods or for their dispatchment.



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