

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update May 4, 2023 (Iyar 13, 5783)

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National Security Advisor: If Iran's Uranium Enrichment Continues - Israel Will Act; National Security Advisor Tzachi Hanegbi spoke to Israeli media on Friday, April 28, and stated that if Iran continues to advance its nuclear program, Israel will not wait. "If the intolerable uranium enrichment continues - Israel will act," he said, adding, "Iran is in trouble, for several years it has been unable to respond to the blows it has been receiving from Israel. Zero practical success. It is practically isolated, and what has been happening lately is that Iran sees that Israel is encroaching on it, thanks to the promotions of relations with Morocco and the United Arab Emirates." On the security policy of the previous government headed by Bennett and Lapid, Hanegbi claimed "It did not make any changes from the central line that Netanyahu led on the security issue: Against Iran, terrorism and a possible campaign against Hezbollah." "There is increasing boldness and defiance in all the arenas around us with a feeling that the State of Israel is crumbling," he said, though he clarified that enemy countries are not expected to start a war against Israel due to the internal crisis in the country. "The split in Israel is interpreted by our enemy as a weakness, we will make it clear to them that there is no such weakness. We estimate that the crisis may lead to actions that were not considered before, such as the attack in Megiddo that failed. All arenas are deterred by war, but there is a chance that the conflict will escalate if it appears that Israel is in distress," said Hanegbi. (INN / VFI News)

Iran's Foreign Minister: The Zionist Collapse Is Near; Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian on Friday, April 28, visited Lebanon and met with Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah. "I received accurate situation assessments from Nasrallah and confirmation that the Lebanese and Palestinian resistance groups are in the best condition they have ever been," Amir-Abdollahian said at the end of their meeting, as quoted by Israeli media. The Iranian minister also visited the Lebanese village of Maroun al-

Ras, which is located near Lebanon's border with Israel. "All positive developments in the region will lead to the collapse of the Zionist entity," he said in a speech given close to the border. "The Zionists only understand power. We support the resistance and the fight against the Zionist enemy. Iran will stay with Lebanon even in difficult times," added Amir-Abdollahian. The visit is the second time in three months that the Iranian Foreign Minister has visited Lebanon. (INN / VFI News)

Iran Seizes Ship in Gulf of Oman, US Navy Says; The U.S. Navy announced Thursday, April 27, that the Islamic Republic of Iran had seized a foreign vessel in the Gulf of Oman. The Marshall Islands-flagged oil tanker Advantage Sweet was taken by Iranian forces after leaving Kuwait on its way to Houston, Texas. "The oil tanker issued a distress call during the seizure," the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet said. "Iran's actions are contrary to international law and disruptive to regional security and stability." The statement added, "Iran should immediately release the oil tanker." US Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT) released a statement attributing the vessel's seizure to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy. "Iran's continued harassment of vessels and interference with navigational rights in regional waters are a threat to maritime security and the global economy." "The Islamic Republic continues to prove that its terrorism and regional destabilization is not limited to land, air, or even international waters. Tehran's threat to international shipping is almost as old as the Islamic Republic itself," Behnam Ben Taleblu, senior fellow and Iran expert at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, told American media. "Iran's continued hostage-taking of oil tankers and harassment of other vessels blows a hole through the theory that greater Chinese involvement in the Persian Gulf might restrain the regime's bad behavior," he added. (FN / VFI News)

Countries Around the World Wish Israel Happy Independence Day; Ukraine's Foreign Ministry congratulated Israel on its 75th Independence Day as one of several nations to wish the Jewish state a happy birthday. "Our nations have been paying an immense price for freedom," the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry tweeted. "We are ready to stand together in the face of our common challenges and threats. May the friendly land of [Israel] be filled with peace, joy & prosperity!" German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier shared a video on social media Tuesday, April 25, in honor of Israel's Independence Day. "The Declaration of Independence in 1948 gave the Jews in the Diaspora more than just a geographical homeland. It gave them a spiritual home. It gave them a promise of a better future – in freedom, justice, security, and peace." Romanian Ambassador to Israel Radu Ioanid, who is also a noted Holocaust historian, also wished Israel a happy birthday on behalf of his country. "Romania was one of the first countries to recognize Israel in 1948, maintaining uninterrupted diplomatic relations ever since," Ioanid tweeted, adding that he was "Very proud of the human and cultural bond fostered by Romanian aliyah and its contribution to Israeli development." "The strong ties between the UK and Israel over the past 75 years is a testament to the strength of our close and historic relationship," UK Foreign Secretary James Cleverly said in a statement. (JPost / VFI News)

Biden Proclaims May as Jewish American Heritage Month: We Must Put an End to Anti-Semitism; US President Joe Biden on Friday, April 28, issued a statement in which he proclaimed the month of May as Jewish American Heritage Month. "I call upon all Americans to learn more about the heritage and contributions of Jewish Americans and to observe this month with appropriate programs, activities, and ceremonies," said Biden. The statement also notes, "Jewish Americans continue to enrich every part of American life as educators and entrepreneurs, athletes and artists, scientists and entertainers, public officials and activists, labor and community leaders, diplomats and military service members, public health heroes, and more." "But there is also a dark side to the celebrated history of the Jewish people — a history marked by genocide, pogrom, and persecution — with a through line that continues in the record rise of antisemitism today." "It is our obligation to ensure that hate can have no safe harbor in America and to protect the sacred ideals enshrined in our Constitution: religious freedom, equality, dignity,

and respect. That is the promise of America. I have made clear that I will not remain silent in the face of this antisemitic venom, vitriol, and violence.” “At my direction, we are also developing the first national strategy to counter antisemitism that outlines comprehensive actions the Federal Government will undertake and that reflects input from over a thousand Jewish community stakeholders, faith and civil rights leaders, State and local officials, and more.” “This Jewish American Heritage Month, let us join hands across faiths, races, and backgrounds to make clear that evil, hate, and antisemitism will not prevail.” Former President George W. Bush was the first to proclaim the month of May to be Jewish American Heritage Month on April 20, 2006. Since then, annual proclamations have been made by Presidents Bush, Barack Obama, Donald Trump, and Biden. (INN / VFI News)

Nearly Half of Democrats See Israel as Apartheid, Support BDS, New Poll Shows; Some 44% of Democrats believed that Israel is an apartheid state as compared to 20% of Republicans, according to a new survey published by the University of Maryland. The university released its Critical Issues Poll on Tuesday, April 25. Some 13% of the respondents believed Israel was a flawed democracy. In this case, 16% of Democrats believed Israel was a flawed democracy as compared to 9% of Republicans. Some 7% described Israel as “a state with restricted minority rights.” 8% of Democrats believed this was true as compared to 4% of Republicans. A similar percentage of Democrats (44%) believe Israel is an apartheid state as compared to Republicans (41%) who believe it is a “vibrant democracy”. A total of 94% of Democrat respondents believed that Israel is, at best, a flawed democracy. This compares to 67% of Republicans who believed that Israel is, at worst, a flawed democracy. This partisan chasm is also apparent in the responses to, “What role do you want the United States to play in mediating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?” where 47% of Republicans felt the US should lean towards Israel as compared to 12% of Democrats. Some 25% of independents felt this to be the case. Some 2% of Republicans felt the US should lean towards Palestine, 6% of independents, and 14% of Democrats. Some 49% of Republicans felt the US should not favor either side, compared to 68% of independents and 72% of Democrats. When asked about the anti-Israel Boycott Divestment Sanctions movement, a plurality expressed that they had no opinion. 65% of all respondents were either unfamiliar with the subject or had no opinion. When these respondents were excluded, 41% of Democrats supported BDS while only 7% of Republicans supported the boycott. Some 65% of Republicans opposed BDS while only 20% of Democrats opposed BDS. (I365N / VFI News)

2023 Sees Sharp Increase in Non-Jewish Immigration to Israel; The Central Bureau of Statistics' new publication reveals that Jews are now only 73.5% of the population, whereas Arabs are 21%. Compared to last year's data, there was a significant decrease in both communities. In 2022 Jews were 73.9% of the population, and Arabs were 21.1% of the general population. The "others", non-affiliated religiously, marked an increase and are now 5.5% of the population. On Independence Day last year, there were 478,000 people who were classified as "Others," whereas this year, they count for 534,000, an increase of 56,000 during the past year. Dr. Yona Cherki from the Israeli Immigration Policy Center, which analyzed the CBS publication, stated: “The bulk of non-Jewish immigration to Israel is Aliyah, according to the Law of Return, which receives encouragement from the official Aliyah bodies, including the Nativ organization and the Jewish Agency. As long as elected officials do not act actively and determinedly to amend the Law of Return, the trend of shrinking the Jewish majority will only increase.” Dr. Cherki added that there is an intensification of the phenomenon of non-Jewish immigration to Israel. “The public in Israel is sensitive to the issue of infiltrators and the issue of illegal residents, but it should be understood that the main cause of non-Jewish immigration to Israel is precisely the constitutional framework created by the Law of Return, which is why it is so urgent to amend the law.” (INN /VFI News)

Israeli Plastic Surgeons Perform Innovative Skin Cancer Treatment; An improved way to treat skin cancer with fewer side effects was carried out for the first time in Israel by plastic surgeons and oncologists at Jerusalem's Shaare Zedek Medical Center (SZMC). The technique involves electrochemotherapy that combines the introduction of low-dose chemotherapy directly into the tumor or through the vein, along with damage to the cellular membrane of the tumor cells by an electric current delivered in a targeted manner to the tumor tissue. This makes possible the selective introduction of chemotherapy into the tumor. The resulting synergistic effect, the team said, improves the effectiveness of the treatment and reduces the side effects. This treatment has shown effectiveness in clinical studies in the field and is used in Europe in about 200 different centers. Dr. Yoav Gronovich, director of the plastic surgery department, and Prof. Nir Peled, director of the oncology unit, advocated bringing the treatment to SZMC. Dr. Ido Lisi, a senior doctor in Gronovitch's department, learned the treatment in Italy, and in collaboration with Dr. Hadar Dressler, a senior oncologist, prepared the appropriate treatment protocol and performed the first treatments. The treatment is intended for a wide variety of skin cancer tumors including basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma, melanoma with local cutaneous/subcutaneous recurrence, Kaposi's sarcoma (caused by a virus called the human herpesvirus 8), breast cancer with local cutaneous/subcutaneous recurrence, a metastatic/spreading tumor in the liver or pancreas, metastatic bone tumor and more. (JPost/VFI News)

Israel's Population Nears 10 Million, a 12-fold Increase Since State's 1948 Founding; The population of Israel is edging toward 10 million, making it a dozen times larger than it was on the day the Jewish state was established, according to figures released by the Central Bureau of Statistics on Monday, April 24, ahead of the country's 75th Independence Day celebrations. 9,727,000 people are living in Israel, CBS said. Of those, 7,145,000 are Jewish, or 73.5 percent, along with 2,048,000 Arabs (21%) and 534,000 members of other minorities (5.5%). Since last year, the population grew by 216,000 people, an increase of 2.3%. There were 183,000 babies born and 79,000 new immigrants arrived, while 51,000 people died. Over a quarter of Israelis, 28%, are children aged 14 or under, while 12% are over the age of 65. When the state was founded on May 14, 1948, 806,000 people were living in the country, meaning it has grown twelvefold over the decades. By 2030, the population is expected to reach 11.1 million, and by 2040, 13.2 million. In Israel's centenary year, 2048, the population is predicted to hit 15.2 million. According to the figures, at the end of 2021, 46% of the world's total Jewish population was living in Israel. (TOI / VFI News)

Jerusalem Terror Attack: Seven Wounded in Car Ramming, Terrorist Killed; Seven people were wounded in a terrorist car-ramming attack in Jerusalem on Monday, April 24. The victims include a man in his 70s who is in serious condition, a woman in her 30s and a man in his 50s in moderate condition, and two 25-year-old men who were lightly wounded. The victims were taken to Shaare Zedek Medical Center and Hadassah University Medical Center. One of the victims was hospitalized due to shock, a Hadassah representative said. The terrorist was identified as Hatem Abu Nijmeh, 39, of Beit Safafa in east Jerusalem. He was shot and killed by a civilian at the scene. Nijmeh was a married father of five who was unknown to security forces but reportedly had a history of mental illness. The terrorist attack occurred in the area of Davidka Square about a block away from Mahaneh Yehuda Market. Nijmeh arrived at the intersection and sped up, deliberately hitting pedestrians, including people crossing the street, the police said. When he slowed down and then stopped, an armed civilian shot and killed him. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who spoke at a Remembrance Day ceremony in Jerusalem minutes after the attack took place, said it "reminds us that the State of Israel was bought with great suffering." (JPost / VFI News)

Swastika Carved into US Jewish Teen's Back at School; Culprits Not Found in 6 Weeks; A US Jewish boy with special needs had a swastika carved into his back last month, allegedly by fellow students in his high school in Las Vegas, according to various media reports. The 17-year-old student has autism, is

nonverbal, uses a service dog, and has a full-time staffer shadowing him, according to US and other media reports. He was wearing a kippah during the attack, indicating he's a religious Jew. His mother, who quickly alerted authorities to her son's injury, has said he is the only identifiably Jewish student at Clark High School. She said she has pulled her son from the school, deeming it an "unsafe environment." The mother, who asked not to be identified, told Jewish media last week that in addition to the swastika-shaped injury, she found that the equipment bag carried by the boy's service dog had been torn and resewn. Six weeks after the incident, the culprits haven't been found — the school doesn't have CCTV cameras in most areas — and the FBI is reportedly involved in the anti-Semitic hate crime investigation. (TOI / VFI News)

Report: Jordanian MP Caught Smuggling Guns into Israel Is a Hamas Sympathizer; Israel's Shin Bet security agency has launched an investigation into the attempted smuggling of hundreds of firearms into Israel by a Jordanian lawmaker. On Sunday, April 23, Jordanian MP Imad al-Adwan was arrested at the Allenby Crossing on Israel's eastern border, after he crossed the King Hussein Bridge and was attempting to enter Israel on his parliamentary passport. Despite reports in Jordan Sunday that al-Adwan smuggled both gold and guns, on Monday it was revealed that al-Adwan had no gold in his vehicle at the time of his arrest. Rather, the lawmaker had falsely claimed to Israeli border personnel that he was transporting a large quantity of gold. Instead, however, al-Adwan's vehicle was carrying hundreds of guns, including 17 M-16 assault rifles and roughly 160 pistols. Based on a tip they had received, customs inspectors at the border carefully inspected al-Adwan's vehicle, discovering the contraband. The MP was arrested and transferred to the Shin Bet for interrogation. The Shin Bet is currently working to determine on whose behalf al-Adwan was attempting to smuggle the weapons, and how he obtained the guns. A member of the Jordanian Parliament's Palestine Committee, al-Adwan has openly supported Arab terrorist groups including Hamas, Israeli media reported, while castigating the Jewish state. (INN / VFI News)

Germany Arrests 28-year-old Syrian Over 'Radical Islamist' Bomb Plot; German authorities arrested a 28-year-old Syrian national on Tuesday morning, April 25, one of two brothers suspected of planning to blow up civilian targets using a homemade explosives belt for "radical Islamist and jihadist" reasons, a statement said. Public prosecutors in the northern port city of Hamburg carried out searches as part of a joint probe with police, arresting the man whom they believed bought raw materials for bomb-making off the internet over several weeks. His brother, who lives in the southern state of Bavaria, helped and encouraged his efforts, the statement said. Both men were unnamed and prosecutors have no indication of a specific target. A total of 250 police officers were involved. "The two Syrian nationals are said to have planned an attack with a home-made explosive belt, out of a radical Islamist and jihadist motivation in order to carry out an attack against civilian targets," the statement said. (JPost / VFI News)

Chinese Foreign Minister: We're Ready to Help Facilitate Israel-PA Peace Talks; China's Foreign Minister, Qin Gang, told his Israeli and Palestinian Arab counterparts that his country is ready to help facilitate peace talks between the two sides, American media reports. Qin made separate phone calls to the two officials on Monday, April 17, according to the report, in which he expressed China's concern over intensifying tensions between Israel and Palestinian Arabs and its support for a resumption of peace talks. Qin stressed in his talks with Foreign Minister Eli Cohen that Saudi Arabia and Iran have set a good example of overcoming differences through dialogue, a statement about that phone call said. He told Cohen that Beijing encourages Israel and the Palestinians to show political courage and take steps to resume peace talks. "China is willing to provide convenience for this," he was quoted as saying. Israel's Foreign Ministry said in a statement that Qin and Cohen discussed "the importance of maintaining quiet at the Temple Mount, particularly in the final days of Ramadan." It said that Cohen conveyed "the threat that we see in Iran's nuclear program" and called on China to help prevent Tehran from obtaining nuclear weapons. Qin also told Riyad al-Maliki, the Palestinian Authority (PA) official in charge of foreign affairs,

that China is willing to play an active role in the resumption of talks, a second statement said. (INN / VFI News)

Israel Offers to Host Sudan Peace Summit, as 72-hour Truce Announced; Israel offered to host ceasefire talks between warring Sudanese factions as the United States said a temporary 72-hour truce would take effect starting Tuesday, April 25, to allow Western, Arab, and Asian nations to extract their citizens from the country. "If there is a way in which Israel can help stop the war and violence in that country [Sudan], we would be very happy to do so," Foreign Minister Eli Cohen said. In announcing the truce, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said that "following intense negotiation over the past 48 hours, the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) have agreed to implement a nationwide ceasefire starting at midnight on April 24, to last for 72 hours." Fighting erupted between Sudan's armed forces and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) paramilitary group on April 15 and killed at least 427 people, knocked out hospitals and other services, and turned residential areas into war zones. Cohen had flown to Khartoum in February before the April outbreak of violence, to finalize Israel's normalization deal with Sudan, a move which pulled on his past close ties with the countries and that of his director-general Ronen Levy. (JPost / VFI News)

Erdogan Awards Certificate of Appreciation to Israeli Col. Who Led Rescue Delegation; Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan Tuesday, April 25, presented a certificate of appreciation to Col. (Ret.) Golan Vach, the commander of the Israeli rescue team which was dispatched to Turkey to rescue civilians following the devastating earthquakes which struck the country in February. Erdogan held a special ceremony today in which he gave awards to the international delegations that helped Turkey in its hour of need, including Col. Vach. The colonel was accompanied at the ceremony by Deputy Chief of the Mission of Israel to Turkey Nadav Markman. Nearly 60,000 people were killed in the earthquakes which devastated parts of southern Turkey and northern Syria. The Israeli delegation rescued 19 people from the rubble. During the rescue mission, Vach said: "Our goal is to save lives. We believe that life could be saved still in this time slot, the conditions and the circumstances are difficult, the weather is cold, and the destruction is severe." (INN / VFI News)

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