

# ***Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update June 8, 2023 (Sivan 19, 5783)***

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***Three Israeli Soldiers Murdered on Egyptian Border Laid to Rest;*** The funerals of the three soldiers who were killed by an Egyptian police officer at the Israeli-Egyptian border on Saturday, June 3, were held on Sunday afternoon. The Egyptian policeman shot and killed two of the Israeli soldiers, Sgt. Lia Ben-Nun and St.-Sgt. Uri Itzhak Ilouz, sometime between 6 a.m. and 7 a.m. on Saturday morning. The soldiers were manning a guard post near the border and were found lifeless at the post around 9 a.m. by an officer who had been sent to check on their wellbeing after they failed to respond to their radios. Immediately after, military officials declared a terror incident in the area and began searches. The intruder was spotted by a drone and soldiers converged on his position. The attacker opened fire at a group of soldiers approaching the area — some 200 meters (656 feet) away — fatally hitting St.-Sgt. Ohad Dahan. Several minutes later, another group of soldiers closed in on the Egyptian, killing him. One non-commissioned officer was lightly wounded in the second clash before noon. Sgt. Lia Ben-Nun's funeral began at 4:30 p.m. at the military cemetery in Rishon Lezion. Ben-Nun was 19 years old and from Rishon Lezion. She was promoted to the rank of sergeant after her death, the IDF announced. St.-Sgt. Ohad Dahan was laid to rest at 5 p.m. in the military plot of the cemetery in the southern Israeli town of Ofakim. Dahan was 20 years old when he was killed. He was from Ofakim and posthumously promoted to staff sergeant from sergeant. St.-Sgt. Uri Itzhak Ilouz's funeral took place at 5 p.m. at the military cemetery in Safed, in Israel's north. Ilouz was 20 years old when he died and like Dahan, he was posthumously promoted from sergeant. (JPost / VFI News)

***Egyptian Border Terrorist Was Carrying Koran, Likely Motivated by Extremism;*** The terrorist who killed three IDF officers at the Egyptian border on Saturday, June 3, was likely motivated by religious extremism, according to new information presented by Israeli media on Sunday morning. In addition to a

Koran and a firearm, he was found to be carrying a knife that he used to cut the zip ties at the border barrier, and six magazines of ammunition. During the exchange of fire in which St.-Sgt. Ohad Dahan was killed, the terrorist was the one who opened fire. The brigade commander drew closer to the terrorist in a military vehicle after he had been identified by an IDF surveillance drone. When he got out of the vehicle, the terrorist fired off several shots at a distance of several hundred meters. Shortly after midday on Saturday, the IDF confirmed an exchange of fire between Israeli forces and the terrorist, who was killed in the exchange. The Egyptian army later said in a statement that the police officer was chasing drug smugglers, adding that "during the chase, the security man was involved in an exchange of fire that caused the deaths of three Israeli soldiers." They did not add how the police officer ended up in a shootout with IDF soldiers when he should have been chasing drug smugglers. MK Eliyahu Revivo called for Egypt to conduct an investigation and to provide an explanation for the incident. "We must demand from our Egyptian counterparts to conduct a comprehensive investigation and to provide clear answers about the terrible event," said Revivo. (JPost / VFI News)

***Italian Media: Intelligence Agents Were Tracking Transfers between Russia and Iran;*** An Italian news website hypothesizes that the Israeli and Italian intelligence agents met to spy on a Russian money transfer to Iran. The website states that "Russian figures" have recently transferred their investments from Lake Como to luxury hotels on Lake Maggiore, where a shipwreck occurred. An Israeli Mossad agent Erez Shimoni was killed when the boat he was on with Italian intelligence agents capsized in Lago Maggiore in Italy. Four people were killed in the incident, which Italian media are calling "The 007," a nod to the fictional spy James Bond, including two local agents and the wife of the boat's captain. Immediately following the incident, Israel and Italy covered their tracks: the injured were quickly removed from the hospitals and hotel rooms so their details would not be discovered. Israel sent a special airplane that landed in Milan and reportedly returned ten Israeli agents to Israel. Erez Shimoni was laid to rest on Wednesday, May 31, at the Ashkelon Military Cemetery. On Monday night, the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed that the person killed on the ship was a retired Israeli security service employee. (INN / VFI News)

***Iran May Supply Mali with Weapons, Impacting West Africa and Sahel – Analysis;*** The defense minister of Mali, was in Iran last week for meetings that could see Iran sending arms to Mali in North Africa. Malian Defense Minister Colonel Sadio Camara had meetings with Iranian Defense Minister Mohammad Reza Ashtiani. Iran's pro-regime media reported that "the defense minister of Iran expressed the country's readiness to provide Mali with military equipment and experiences in the fight against terrorism." Ashtiani said Iran is prepared to share equipment, experiences and capabilities in training with Mali. "The Islamic Republic of Iran will spare no effort to strengthen Mali's defense power against the threats posed by terrorist groups," the Iranian general who is also the defense minister added. Iran also said that Western governments were meddling in Africa and that the presence of the West in those areas was a continuation of the legacy of "colonial" policies. Iran blamed the West for creating instability: "Although the Westerners claim hypocritically to be after security in Africa, history shows that they spread terrorism in order to justify their presence in the region and interference in the internal affairs of independent states, such as Mali." Iran also praised Mali for supporting "Palestine and its people." Clearly, Iran's goal in this case is to extend its influence to more countries in Africa. Iran already has a presence, through Hezbollah and other influencers, in some countries in West Africa. (JPost / VFI News)

***Hungary to Be the First EU State with Embassy in Jerusalem, Cohen Says;*** Hungary will be the first EU member state to move its embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, Foreign Minister Eli Cohen announced during a visit to Budapest on Wednesday, May 31. "Hungary supports us in the international arena," Cohen said, speaking at a Chabad synagogue. "More good news...is that in a number of weeks, Hungary will be the first EU state to announce that it is moving its embassy to Jerusalem. This is great news for

Jerusalem, the capital of the Jewish people for over 3,000 years,” he added. Hungarian Ambassador to Israel Levente Benkő said: “Hungary has been operating a trade office in Jerusalem since 2019 and there has been no decision on further steps so far.” Paraguay’s newly elected president also said he plans to move his country’s embassy back to Jerusalem when he enters office in August. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called president-elect Santiago Pena to congratulate him on his victory and praised his plan to move the embassy. The US moved its embassy from Tel Aviv to Israel’s capital, Jerusalem, in 2018. There are currently three other embassies in the capital as well: Guatemala, Honduras and Kosovo. Ten countries have diplomatic offices in Jerusalem, and several countries promised to move their embassies since 2018, most of which are in Africa, like Malawi, Togo and Uganda. During Cohen’s visit to Budapest, Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter Szijjarto also agreed to petition the International Court of Justice against the Palestinian Authority’s “pay for slay” practice, of paying terrorists who attack Israelis. (JPost / VFI News)

***Israel's Eli Cohen Makes Historic Visit to Philippines, South Korea;*** Foreign Minister Eli Cohen traveled to the Philippines on Sunday, June 4, for a historic multi-day visit, the first visit by an Israeli foreign minister in 56 years. He will continue from there to South Korea. The visit follows an important trip to central Europe and also one to Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan in April. Cohen is expected to meet the President of the Philippines Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and his counterpart, Foreign Minister Enrique A. Manalo. In South Korea, he is expected to meet Foreign Minister Park Jin. In Manila, the business delegation will focus on agriculture, energy, cyber and security as well as health and emergency preparedness. In South Korea, it will also focus on robotics, artificial intelligence and automotive sectors, catering to the strengths of Seoul. There will be business seminars in both countries. Cohen’s trip takes place in the context of Israel seeking to deepen political and economic relations with not just the Philippines and South Korea, but other countries in Asia. Cohen noted, in the statement from the MFA, that Asia is a continent with tremendous potential and of great importance to Israel. (JPost / VFI News)

***Ziv Medical Center Launches US Charity to Step up Care for Needy Communities;*** For the 300,000 Israelis living in the Golan, Upper Galilee and Safed - a diverse population of Jews, Arabs, Christians and Druze - the services offered by the Ziv Medical Center in Safed make the difference between life and death, or between the ability of receiving appropriate care for a chronic disease or not. With its 370 beds, Ziv’s vision is to deliver its community the most excellent and comprehensive medical care so that they can find a solution to every medical problem close to home. In order to fulfill this vision, the hospital’s Director General Prof. Salman Zarka announced that he would be launching the “Partners of Ziv” charity. “I am an Israeli Druze,” he said. “I served in the Israeli Defense Forces for more than 25 years. After I retired, I knew I had to help upgrading our standards of healthcare, for the population in the North of Israel.” “In our region, we saw a disparity of access to care that is alarming,” Zarka, who also served as Israel’s Coronavirus Commissioner, added. “Our people in the North, Sarah and Moshe, Said and Jamila deserve the same standard of care of those in Tel Aviv or Jerusalem.” Many of the residents of the area that Ziv serves come from low socio-economic backgrounds, which translates into several health issues. For example, cases of diabetes are common and when diabetes is not properly treated, patients risk losing a limb, with a terrible impact on their quality of life. The goal is to expand their services to offer the same level of care in all fields. (JPost / VFI News)

***Ukraine Slaps 50-year Sanctions Package on Iran Amid Latest Drone Strikes;*** After repeated attacks on the country by Russian forces using Iranian-made drones, Ukraine’s parliament — the Verkhovna Rada — approved 50-year sanctions against the Islamic Republic on Monday, May 29. The sanctions include a total ban on trade, movement of resources, direct flights, and withdrawal of capital by Iranians. They also stop a range of electronic payments between Ukraine and Iran. Investment in Iran and the transfer of intellectual property rights and technology were also banned by the measure. “The resolution synchronizes Ukrainian sanctions with the actions of the entire civilized world on the path to the

complete isolation of Iran,” the parliament said in a statement. The measures come days after a massive drone attack on Kyiv overnight Saturday, the largest since the invasion in February last year. Russia launched the “most massive attack” on the city with Iranian-made Shahed drones, said Serhii Popko, a senior Kyiv military official. The attack lasted more than five hours, with air defense reportedly shooting down more than 40 drones. A 41-year-old man was killed and a 35-year-old woman was hospitalized when debris fell on a seven-story nonresidential building and started a fire, Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko said. (TOI / VFI News)

***Taliban Claims: 'We Will Conquer Iran Soon' Amid Water Dispute;*** The Taliban threatened on Sunday, May 28, that it could conquer Iran as tensions increase over water disputes between Afghanistan and Iran, leaving at least three people dead. In a video released by the Taliban, a senior commander in the terrorist organization running Afghanistan warned that the Taliban would fight the Islamic Republic's Revolutionary Guard "with more passion" than they fought the US forces. He added that the Taliban "will conquer Iran soon if the Taliban's leaders give the green light. As well as the Taliban commander's video, another video released by the terrorist organization, taunting Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi went viral on social media. In the video a Taliban member fills a single yellow jerrycan with water, sarcastically telling Raisi "Mr. Raisi, take this water barrel and don't attack, we're terrified." Iranian media has not explained what the clashes are about, claiming only in one report that they were to do with drug trafficking. Iran also claims that the Taliban shot at IRGC officers on the border first. The Taliban, however, claim the opposite. Other media sources report that the clashes happened over a water dispute, a report that would explain the Taliban's video. Earlier in May, Raisi warned the Taliban not to violate Iran's rights to the Helmand River which is shared between the two countries. (JPost / VFI News)

***Ship-mounted Iron Dome System Aces Fresh Tests;*** The Defense Ministry and Navy said Monday, May 29, that they had recently successfully carried out a new series of tests of a ship-mounted version of the Iron Dome air defense system. The test came after the system, known as C-Dome, was declared operational on the Sa'ar 6-class corvette INS Oz in November. During the recent test, the C-Dome mounted on the Sa'ar 6-class corvette INS Magen intercepted projectiles simulating threats the system is likely to face at sea. “The C-Dome system constitutes a significant leap forward in our defense capabilities and ensures the Israeli defense establishment’s superiority and operational capabilities in the face of growing threats in the maritime arena,” said Defense Minister Yoav Gallant in remarks provided by his office. The C-Dome, much like the ground version of the Iron Dome, is capable of downing rockets, cruise missiles, and drones, the ministry said. Brig. Gen. (Res.) Daniel Gold, head of Israel’s Defense Research and Development Directorate (DRDD), said the tests were part of a broader range of efforts aimed at improving Israel’s air and missile defense technology at its disposal. “The campaign’s success further strengthens our confidence in the defense systems and their ability to protect extensive areas as well as the State of Israel’s strategic assets on land and at sea,” he said. (TOI / VFI News)

***Successful but Scrappy: Air Force Marks 75 Years Since Its 1st-Ever Strike Mission;*** The Israeli military on Monday, May 29, marked 75 years since the Air Force conducted its first-ever strike mission, during the War of Independence in 1948. A memorial plaque for the operation and for one of the pilots who was killed in the mission was also unveiled. The daring airstrike at the Ad Halom site, close to the modern coastal city of Ashdod, is thought to have prevented the Egyptian army from marching on Tel Aviv just two weeks after Israel declared itself a state. The mission was led by Lou Lenart, an American fighter pilot who helped smuggle the plane parts into Israel and later helped establish the Air Force’s 101st Squadron. His number two in the mission was Ezer Weizman, who later became the chief of the Air Force, defense minister, and president. The third pilot was Modi Alon, an Israeli-born pilot who had volunteered for the Royal Air Force during the British Mandate of Palestine. The fourth was Eddie Cohen, a South African fighter pilot in World War II who moved to Israel. While the strike did not cause significant

damage to the Egyptian division, it stunned them, as they believed Israel had no air force. The Egyptian army halted its advance, a move thought to have changed the course of the war, which ended in Israeli victory nearly a year later. During the ceremony on Monday, Air Force chief Maj. Gen. Tomer Bar noted the surprise action. “The story of the first attack quartet is significant in shaping the ethos of the Air Force that we are so proud of. We arose thanks to Jewish volunteers and lovers of Israel, volunteers from abroad,” Bar said, referring to Lenart, Cohen, and the Mahal volunteer unit. (TOI / VFI News)

***New Findings on Deep Sea Whales, Dolphins Prompt Call to Stop Israel’s Search for Gas;*** The first extensive exploration of Israel’s deep-sea economic waters, or exclusive economic zone (EEZ), has yielded evidence of endangered sperm whales, vulnerable Cuvier’s beaked whales, and species of dolphin, prompting calls to abandon further gas and oil exploration, or to at least carry out further research before such exploration can start. The discoveries of these creatures, in waters up to 200 marine miles (370 kilometers) from the Mediterranean coast, were made by a joint Israeli-UK team. According to a paper presented at a European Cetacean Society Conference in Spain in April, sperm whales were found feeding around 10 kilometers (six miles) off the coast of Haifa, at a depth of 370 to 1720 meters (1215 feet to 5,645 feet). Whales, and especially Cuvier’s beaked whales, are particularly sensitive to underwater sound, and mass stranding events have been linked to naval sonar, the researchers said. Greenpeace Israel’s director, Jonathan Aikhenbaum, said, “Israel’s deep sea is a marvel that we are only beginning to get to know and it is vital to protect it at all costs. Promoting polluting fuel drilling in such a sensitive area and at such a critical time of climate emergency is unthinkable.” (TOI / VFI News)

***Israel to Bring Thousands More Foreign Workers to Tackle High Living Costs;*** The Israeli government announced in late April a plan to bring thousands of workers from India and China to lower the high cost of living in the country. The workers will be assigned mainly to two fields. Some will be caregivers, where a major gap exists between families who need full-time assistance, and others will be employed in construction. The high cost of living is one of Israel’s most pressing issues. According to the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), the consumer price index has risen consistently in recent months. One of the biggest drivers of that increase is the price of housing in the country. As the population continues to increase at one of the fastest paces in the developed world and housing prices consistently rise, there is an acute need for more housing units to be built. “We need to build a lot more, a lot faster. This is done also by increasing the number of workers; this is where we come in,” said Inbal Mashash, director of the Foreign Worker Administration at PIBA. Last week, Mashash participated in an Israeli delegation to China in which 5,000 Chinese candidates were tested for work in Israel. (JPost / VFI News)

***Near the Western Wall, Jewish Radicals Shout at Christian Evangelicals to ‘Go Home’;*** Christian worshipers who prayed at an archeological park bordering the Western Wall on Sunday, May 28, were met by hundreds of Jewish protesters, including Jerusalem’s deputy mayor, shouting at them to leave. The protesters were responding to an Evangelical Christian call for prayer at the Davidson Center, which is situated south of the Western Wall Plaza and features access to a segment of the Jewish holy site. On Christian websites — including the one devoted to advertising the prayer gathering — the event was described as promoting the safeguarding of Jerusalem and God’s “purpose for Israel.” At least one glass door of the Davidson Center was smashed, and at least one person was detained amid the clashes. The Davidson Center is an archaeological park adjacent to the egalitarian plaza, south of the Western Wall central plaza, that currently serves as a restriction-free prayer space for non-Orthodox Jews. Asked to comment on the incident, the Foreign Ministry said it condemns “any harm to the freedom of religion and worship in Jerusalem,” and any attacks on religious figures in the city. The statement added that the State of Israel views such freedoms in the capital, “which is holy to Jews, Christians and Muslims, as a central value in the fabric of life in the city.” (TOI / VFI News)

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