

Yachad Ministries' Israel's News Update July 6, 2023 (Tamuz 17, 5783)



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IDF Strikes in Jenin, Launches Major Counterterrorism Campaign; 10 Palestinians Killed; Israeli military forces launched a major operation in the West Bank city of Jenin early Monday morning, July 3, focused on the city's restive refugee camp, with airstrikes carried out against multiple targets. A senior government official said that "the goal of this extensive operation is to end Jenin's role as a 'city of refuge' for terror, and it will last as long as it needs to." IDF spokesman Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari also told reporters "We did not come to occupy the refugee camp. This is not an operation against the Palestinian Authority but against the terror groups in Jenin." The campaign appeared to be the largest in the West Bank in 20 years, and came as tensions were sky-high following a series of deadly terror attacks carried out by Palestinians from the Jenin area. As of Monday afternoon, at least 10 suspected Palestinian terrorists are dead and dozens wounded, according to IDF sources. The Palestinian Authority health ministry said 50 people were wounded, 10 of them in serious condition. Palestinians reported that residents had been sent text messages asking them to remain indoors, while some members of armed groups had received texts urging them to lay down their arms and turn themselves in. Members of the Jenin Battalion, a local Islamic Jihad wing, claimed its members had opened fire on Israeli troops in the city and targeted military vehicles, including a D9 bulldozer, with explosive devices. The IDF said that during the operation, forces located a makeshift rocket and a number of explosive devices, among other weapons and military equipment. At least 20 suspects were detained, a military spokesperson said. The IDF said troops demolished a laboratory used to manufacture explosive devices. (TOI / VFI News)

'We Are All Behind You': Opposition Gives Its Blessing to Jenin Military Operation; Lawmakers from the coalition and opposition threw their support Monday, July 3, behind the major military operation launched early in the morning against terror infrastructure in the West Bank city of Jenin. Opposition leader Yair Lapid tweeted his support for the operation and for IDF troops on the ground, writing: "We are

all behind you. This is a justified action against terrorist infrastructure,” he said, adding that he supported actions “against terrorist infrastructures and the attempts to build missile production systems in Jenin with Iranian assistance.” National Unity party leader Benny Gantz, also of the opposition, said: “We are all one front against terror.” Gantz’s No. 2 Gideon Sa’ar wrote: “The entire nation is behind the campaign against the terrorists.” In the US, Israeli Ambassador Mike Herzog tweeted overnight: “Over the past two years, Jenin has become a major hub of terrorism and an Iranian stronghold close to Israeli population centers. Most of the terror attacks against Israelis originated from Jenin. No nation would sit idly by as terrorists strike its citizens.” IDF spokesman Daniel Hagari said that since last year, some 50 shooting attacks were carried out by residents of the area, and 19 wanted Palestinians escaped to Jenin to seek refuge there from Israeli forces. (TOI / VFI News)

Israel Informed US Before ‘Unavoidable’ IDF Action in Jenin; The Israeli government informed the US of its plan to enter Jenin, a senior diplomatic source said on Monday, July 3. Jerusalem told Washington about 10 days ago that it plans to try to root out terrorism from the West Bank city, without saying when it would do so or providing further specific details, the Israeli source said. “We said that security officials think that we cannot avoid entering Jenin, though we had not yet made an exact decision of how and when we would do it,” the source stated. “We said we would enter for a focused action when we have enough intelligence.” American interlocutors understood the necessity of the actions, according to the source, who compared it to the US Army fighting ISIS in Iraq or Syria: “Sometimes, you know you can’t wait.” The source argued that Israel put off the action for two years, but it became necessary: “We tried to avoid it and made an effort to stop the terrorist cells when they got out of the [Jenin refugee] camp. We hoped the Palestinian Authority would take responsibility, but they didn’t.” “What the Americans care about is stability and de-escalation, and they know, like we do, that the terrorists want to destabilize and escalate,” he stated. Both Hamas and Islamic Jihad have each transferred millions of shekels to their cells in Jenin during 2023. (JPost / VFI News)

Hamas Urges Young Palestinians to Join Fighting in Jenin; Saleh al-Arouri, deputy head of the political bureau of Hamas, urges all young men in the West Bank to join the fight in Jenin, claiming there are already “hundreds of thousands willing to sacrifice their lives.” “To our heroes in the West Bank, from the south to the north: This is your day, young men. Fight with all the weapons, all your anger and with any means possible to defend our honor in Jenin, ” he says in a statement. "The bloodshed on the land of Jenin will determine the nature of the next stage in all directions and paths, and our people and their resistance in all their places know how to respond to this barbaric aggression," said Ismail Haniyeh, the head of Hamas's political bureau Haniyeh. "Jenin will not surrender, and our fighters are determined to confront and fight no matter the sacrifices," added the Islamic Jihad. Meanwhile, around 1:15 p.m. on Monday, July 3, the IDF and a large group of armed Palestinians engaged in a wider gun battle near a mosque. Israeli media reported that some of the armed Palestinians were firing from inside the mosque itself and therefore the IDF did not respond with any sort of airstrike in order to avoid damaging the mosque. Also, the IDF spokesman in Arabic, Avichay Adraee, denied Arabic reports circulating on social media according to which the IDF attacked the Freedom Theater in Jenin during the operation. Adraee called the reports "lies" and "baseless," and attached a video clip in which the theater can be seen from the air, untouched by IDF airstrikes. (TOI / VFI News)

Mossad Black Ops Mission Takes out Hit Squad Looking to Kill Israelis, Captures Terror Chief in Iran; Israel’s Mossad intelligence agency revealed the thrilling raid on Iranian soil and arrest of a man who led a terrorist cell in Cyprus that aimed to kill Israelis on the island. "We will reach whoever foments terrorism against Jews and Israelis around the world, including on Iranian soil," a senior Mossad official said in a statement released Thursday, June 29, along with a video confession from Yusef Shahabazi Abbasalilu, the head of the Iranian cell. Abbasalilu reportedly received detailed instructions and weapons

from senior IRGC members in Iran before traveling to Cyprus, where he and his operatives planned to kill Israeli businesspeople. Cypriot authorities announced earlier that they had apprehended several members of a cell of Iranian-affiliated terrorists, thwarting a planned attack. Abbasalilu alone was able to elude capture and returned to Iran. But Mossad carried out a counterterrorist operation on Iranian soil, finally capturing Abbasalilu. He revealed all the details of the operation of the cell as well as his involvement in an attempted assassination and how he tried to carry it out, including hiding a weapon. He said the group had carried out an assassination in the past and that they helped him illegally enter the Greek part of the island from the Turkish held north. His confession allowed the Cypriot security services to fully dismantle the remainder of the terrorist cell in the country. (FN / VFI News)

Police Seized over 400 Illegal Weapons in Israel's North since Start of 2023; Four hundred different weapons have been seized by the Northern District Israel Police since the beginning of the year, the Police spokesperson said on Sunday, July 2. Two hundred and seventy nine of the seized weapons were firearms, 162 of them pistols, and 117 rifles. The police also confiscated 90 grenades and 28 other explosive devices. On June 5, the northern district police said that they had seized 340 weapons since the start of the year. Sixty illegal weapons had been taken from criminals over the past month. Over the weekend, police said that they had seized six weapons from Nahf and Kfar Kanna. This included two Carlo-style machine pistols, two pistols, two M-16 rifles, and ammunition of various calibers. The police said that they had increased their presence in the area due to violence leading up to the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Adha. The Israel Police said that the fight against crime was its top priority, “Many forces are deployed in the field openly and covertly for the purpose of preventing and detecting crime. We view incidents of violence seriously, and will continue to invest resources, forces and tools to fight against crime for the good of the personal safety of citizens.” (JPost / VFI News)

Rioters Vandalize Holocaust Memorial in Paris; Rioters vandalized a Holocaust memorial site in the Paris suburb of Nanterre amid the large wave of anti-police protests. Video footage of the incident on Thursday, June 29, shows rioters shouting and writing anti-police slogans on the wall of the Memorial to the Martyrs of the Deportation. “The vandalization of this monument desecrates the memory of the victims of the Nazis. Amid the social unrest currently roiling France, Holocaust memorials must be respected and protected,” said the Combat Anti-Semitism Movement. “The Memorial to the Martyrs of the Deportation in Nanterre honors the 200,000 people who were sent from Vichy France to German concentration camps during WWII,” it tweeted. The protesters that vandalized the site were angered by the death of 17-year-old Nahel by police. Reports say that he drove away from a traffic checkpoint in Nanterre when he was killed. (JPost / VFI News)

Israel Warns of Human Trafficking Risk of Surrogate Mothers Abroad; The rights of surrogate mothers in nations and territories such as Albania, Kenya and northern Cyprus are being exploited and violated, the Justice Ministry's National Anti-Trafficking Unit (NATU) warned late last month. Legal concerns include “indications of a violation of the basic rights of the surrogate women and their dignity, while objectifying them and limiting their freedom.” Furthermore, “in serious cases, there is even a suspicion of human trafficking.” Additionally, the unit claims that “substantial concerns have been raised about the involvement of criminal organizations in the surrogacy procedures.” According to the statement, these organizations take vulnerable women from their families in other foreign countries, forced into prostitution before, during, and/or after the surrogacy procedure, and are under constant watch. NATU also found that the initial agreement signed by these women to be part of a surrogacy procedure in the first place was highly dubious. “It is possible to consistently find indications of their exploitation as part of the procedure,” the announcement explains. Things such as economic freedom and freedom of movement for women in these surrogacy roles seems highly doubtful. (JPost / VFI News)

Israel Seizes Millions in Iran Quds Force, Hezbollah Crypto Assets; The defense establishment seized millions of dollars in cryptocurrency belonging to the IRGC's Quds Force and Hezbollah just days ago, Defense Minister Yoav Gallant announced Tuesday, June 27. He said this was the largest seizure of cryptocurrency from those groups to date. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Quds Force is Iran's elite intelligence agency for terror, spying, and fomenting unrest overseas, and Hezbollah in Lebanon is one of its main proxies. Cryptocurrency has been a boon to terror groups and other illegal organizations as it allows them to avoid stricter banking regulations and tracking mechanisms. The defense minister confirmed that the funds were specifically designated to be used for terror purposes. He said the Defense Ministry's Division for Economic Warfare against Terror worked closely with the Mossad, IDF intelligence, the police, and other authorities (the Justice Ministry has a special division for combating terror financing) on utilizing new technological tools to track terror financiers' new techniques for trying to conceal their movement of funds. (JPost / VFI News)

Israel Helped UAE Fend off Major Cyberattack, Emirati Cyber Chief Says; Israel recently helped the UAE fend off a serious DDoS (distributed denial of service) cyberattack, UAE cyber chief Muhammad al-Kuwaiti said on Tuesday, June 27. Speaking at the Tel Aviv Cyber Week Conference, he said, "Thank God for the Abraham Accords... I am sure you heard my dear friend, Gabi [Israeli cyber chief Gabi Portnoy] when he mentioned the importance of working together. Our cyber strategy has five main pillars," one of which is partnerships with allied states. It has a pillar about protecting and defending." "And this is where we plug into the great Start-Up Nation [Israel] where we have many of those companies helping us as a matter of fact to build up that cyber dome or to extend that cyber dome," to defend against cyberattacks. Earlier at the same conference, Israel National Cyber Directorate (INCD) chief Portnoy addressed cyberattacks by the group MuddyWater, which he identified as associated with the IRGC and which attacked the Technion - Israel Institute of Technology a few months ago. "The Israeli cyber community knows Iran's cyber operations inside-out and works to thwart it in many ways. Iran's intelligence personnel, the IRGC and Hezbollah who are involved in cyber operations against Israel know exactly what I am talking about." He added, "I want to back the actions of the US against Iran's violence, as well as the sanctions which they placed on two key players in Iranian intelligence: Farazin Karimi and Majteba Matzafi, who set up the Radwan Academic Group, which trains hackers for bad purposes." (JPost / VFI News)

Israel Is the Second-Most Pro-America Country in the World, Poll Finds; Israel is the second-most pro-America country in the world and Israelis have a more positive view of the US than Americans by some measures, according to a Pew Research poll released on Tuesday, June 27. 87% of Israelis have a positive view of the US; the only country in which the US has a higher favorability rating is Poland, at 93%. The lowest score was from Hungary, at 44%. Israel's current view of the US is the most positive since 2000, and improved slightly from last year, at 83%. That 68% of Israelis have confidence in US President Joe Biden's "leadership of world affairs" is similar to how he is viewed in Sweden, Kenya, Nigeria, Germany, and the Netherlands. Biden's highest score came from Poland and the lowest from Hungary. Israelis' view of Biden improved eight percentage points since last year but has not yet reached former president Donald Trump's peak at 71%. Trump's high score tied with former president Barack Obama's in 2013, but they are also tied for the lowest score since 2000, 56%, which they received in 2009 and 2017. For over 20 years, Pew has asked respondents around the world whether they believe the US takes countries like theirs into account, and most typically say no. In Israel, however, 80% said yes, the highest score of all. The international median is 49%, and 71% of Americans said yes. (JPost / VFI News)

Longtime ADL Leader Foxman Slams Biden for 'Boycotting' Netanyahu, Meeting with Tyrants; "I believe that President [Joe] Biden isolating Prime Minister [Benjamin] Netanyahu is a misguided policy and borders on what I would even call hypocrisy," Abe Foxman, the former Anti-Defamation League

(ADL) head and one of the most senior leaders of the American Jewish community told Israeli media on Tuesday, June 27. Foxman explained that Biden not meeting with Netanyahu “also sends the wrong message [not only] to Israel’s enemies, but also to its friends and allies.” He stressed that “when friends disagree, they need to, and should meet, speak to each other. This lack of invitation has become a politicized issue.” For this phenomenon, he gave examples from both the Left and Right: “Republicans in the US charge the president with animus Israel, that that’s why he’s not inviting the prime minister. On the other side, some of the progressives in the Democratic party would like to isolate the prime minister, even before he was elected; before the judicial reform. He added that he sees an “element of hypocrisy” here. “If you will, the president of the United States just welcomed the prime minister of India, a certainly flawed democracy with serious religious and civil rights abuses. He just welcomed Jordan’s King Abdullah to the White House, not exactly the paradigm of a democratic country.” Foxman’s request to Biden would be to “invite his friend of 40 years, the prime minister of one of the closest allies, to the White House. And if there are concerns, differences, he should share them face to face.” (JPost / VFI News)

France Says It Uncovered Major Russian Disinformation Effort; Israel Said Targeted; France on Tuesday, June 13, said it had uncovered a major Russian disinformation campaign, with false news items hostile to Ukraine made to look like they were published by prominent French news media. The campaign also appears to have targeted Israeli and Jewish media. Western states have been acutely concerned about an intensification of Russian-led disinformation campaigns, as Moscow seeks to influence public opinion across the world over its invasion of Ukraine. “This campaign is based in particular on the creation of fake web pages impersonating national media and government sites as well as the creation of false accounts on social networks,” French Foreign Minister Catherine Colonna said. The campaign is believed to have involved techniques including producing fake articles on a page identical in all respects to those of the legitimate sites of media organizations, but with different domain names — for example, .ltd instead of .fr. A counterfeit Israeli site published content critical of Ukraine, including an article headlined, “Solidarity with Ukraine costs too much.” Some of the stories had bylines and photos of well-known Israeli writers. (TOI / VFI News)

US Man Charged for Attempted Antiquity Smuggling from Syria; A Los Angeles man was convicted on Wednesday, June 21, for illegally importing antiquities from Syria into the US. The smuggled piece in question was an ancient mosaic depicting Hercules, the Roman demigod, and is believed to be 2,000 years old, the US Department of Justice (DOJ) reported. Mohammed Yassin Alcharihi, 56 years old and from Palmdale, California, had allegedly illegally imported a mosaic dating back to the Roman Empire. The item came from Syria, and he had claimed to be importing items for just over \$2,000, although his items were worth far more than that. The prices of the items were hundreds of thousands of dollars, leading him to be convicted for falsely classifying goods. He could serve up to two years in prison for his charge of entry of falsely classified goods. This case, with evidence dating back to 2015, enacted a resolution that condemned Islamic State and similar groups for the destruction of Syria’s ancient cultural heritage. The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Art Crimes unit in Los Angeles. Across the world, in Italy, sixteen people were arrested and more than 3,500 artifacts were recovered as Italian police broke up what they called a ruthless network of archaeological looters and international traffickers in ancient Greek and Roman relics. (JPost / VFI News)

Web of Biblical Cities Depicts King David as Major Ruler, Says Israeli Archaeologist; A network of fortified cities around Jerusalem has been dated to the time of King David, more than 200 years earlier than previously thought, offering support to the theory that King David ruled over a complex and large kingdom. In a new academic paper, Prof. Yosef Garfinkel of the Institute of Archaeology at Hebrew University claims he has found evidence of urban settlement in organized cities dating to around 1,000

BCE, during the reign of King David. His article, published Monday, June 26, in a peer-reviewed publication of Hebrew University, supports the theory that King David ruled over a well-developed kingdom, complete with roads connecting between cities. Garfinkel explains, “If you take all these sites, they have the same urban concept, they are all sitting on the border of the kingdom and sitting where you have a main road leading to the kingdom. These cities aren’t located in the middle of nowhere. It’s a pattern of urbanism with the same urban concept.” This runs counter to the belief of some scholars from the minimalist school of thought who have previously suggested that since there is scant evidence of cities during King David’s reign, his position as a ruler of a great kingdom as written in the Bible could be exaggerated. (TOI / VFI News)

Israelis Bring Home 25-Medal Haul from Special Olympics in Berlin; Israel’s Special Olympics delegation is returning from the games in Berlin with a haul of 25 medals, up from 19 at the last games in 2019. The 35 athletes representing Israel won nine gold medals, eight silvers, and eight bronze medals across all eight disciplines in which they competed at the international competition, which wrapped up on Sunday, June 25. “As promised, we are coming back to Israel with a multitude of medals,” said Sharon Levy-Blanga, CEO of the Special Olympics Israel organization, in a statement on Sunday. Runner Ron Beck, 16, brought home a gold medal in the 3000m men’s race. He also won a silver medal in the 5000m and – alongside Adi Madmon, Saar Buchbinder, and Pele Abudy – brought home a bronze for Israel in the mixed 4x400m relay. Buchbinder, 30, also took home two gold medals, in the 5km and 10km races, while Madmon won a bronze medal in the women’s 100m. The women’s soccer team, making its debut in Berlin, took home a silver medal when it lost 2-0 to Bangladesh in the gold medal match in the F3 division. Judokas Ido Rabinovich and Levav Barkan both won gold medals, in the first and third levels of the sport, respectively. In table tennis, David Kersenti also took home a gold medal in the men’s singles under-17 division. Israel racked up three swimming medals: gold for Sapir Bar Yoel in the men’s 50m freestyle, gold for Meir Segal in the men’s 100m freestyle, and silver for Aran Bar-Peled in the women’s 800m freestyle. (TOI /VFI News)



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